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## Husbands and Wives

A wife is not her husband's servant but his equal partner in the pursuit of the Kingdom of God. To see her otherwise is to dishonour her. A husband who does not value and hold his wife in the highest esteem does not understand the relationship between God and Christ and between Christ and his bride, which is the Ecclesia.

The Apostle Paul says a husband must be prepared to give his life to ensure his wife is acceptable to God and, through his behaviour, exemplify the sacrifice of Christ "who gave himself for us". ("Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her..." Ephesians 5:25)

A husband's role is to ensure the spiritual tone and direction of the household. This is his key responsibility and accountability before God. This is the sense in which he is the head of the house. Being head of the house does not mean being a dictator or the sole decision maker but rather the servant of his family. Christ tells us that a true leader is a devoted servant. (Mark 9:35)

The servant-leader's task is to show the wonderful love of God through what he says and does in the family. The servant-leader should help his family see the Kingdom of God as a reality. The servant-leader should encourage his family to see new and better ways to serve God. The servant-leader should be there to bind up the wounds and give comfort when family members are hurting.

Decisions about the spiritual direction of the family should be made by husband and wife together. The means by which spiritual goals might be reached must also be a joint endeavour and acted upon in loving cooperation. In a marriage there is no other effective way.

A marriage based on the Word of God exemplifies the relationship between Christ and the redeemed and will bring joy to the family and to those who witness it.

John Quill

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