

HTPC Marriage Class- *Reforming Marriage*

Week 5: April 17, 2022 — He Is Risen Indeed!

Chapter 2: “Headship and Authority” and Chapter 3: “Duties of Husbands and Wives”

Chapter 2: “ Headship and Authority”

1. Inescapable Headship (pp. 23-26) *Indicatives and Imperatives*

A. What is the relationship between the indicative and the imperative regarding the Gospel of Jesus Christ and our lives in relationship to that Gospel? Why is this essential no matter what area of Christian life we are considering?

B. What, specifically, do you see as the practical implications of the indicative and the imperative matters applied to your marriage relationship? (E.g., Ephesians 5:23) That is, what does the "inescapable leadership" of the husband remind us about marriage? (See especially pp. 24-25.)

2. Love and Respect (pp. 26-28)

Qualifier: I greatly(!) appreciate Wilson's willingness to accent the biblical structure of marriage, something modern evangelicalism is increasingly reluctant to do. But I cannot agree with his basically unqualified suggestion that the husband only loves his wife and the wife only respects her husband. "Love your neighbor as yourself..." is a universal command and of course applies to wives as they relate to their husbands, just as the Golden Rule requires that we respect the person with whom we are interacting as we would hope they would respect us; that is especially true for husbands as they relate to their wives.

With the qualifier above in mind, what does it look like for a husband love his wife sacrificially? Again, be very specific. (Truth is a very specific thing.) And what does it look like for a wife to honor and submit to her husband "in everything"?

3. She Was Made for Him (pp. 29-32)

Qualifier 2.0: I think Wilson way overstates his case here, while I also so appreciate the important case that needs to be made about headship. A few things to keep in view: 1. Absolute equality between man and woman by virtue of creation. 2. Marriage as a good creation ordinance in which Eve was given as a helper suitable to Adam. But the wife is called to help her husband, not to help all men. Crucial distinction here. 3. Man and woman equally fallen. 4. Man and woman equally redeemed (Galatians 3:27). 5. Headship for the man is within the marriage relationship (and by extension, in the family of God, the church), not within society more broadly. There is tremendous freedom in the wider world of relationships and callings which we must preserve while also accenting fully the structures of the home and church.

How can we walk the biblical tightrope in this area of thought? What might it look like in action?

4. Responsibility

Do you agree that destructive, overbearing men and abdicating men are two sides of the same coin? Do you agree that men are responsible for all of the problems in the home? (Wives, you are not allowed to answer. 😊)

5. Weaker Vessels (pp. 33-36)

Qualifier 3.0: I do not agree with Wilson's take on "weaker." See comments above. I believe that a woman is a weaker vessel by virtue of having placed herself in a position of vulnerability in submitting to a co-heir.

A. In what ways has marriage amplified the person you are, for good or ill?

B. Men, in what ways have you turned your marriage into a competition? Discuss the terrible tendency of "projecting" back onto a wife a problem of which he husband is guilty.)

6. The Level Playing Field.

7. The Servant's Heart.

8. The Evangelical Husband.

Chapter 3: "Duties of Husbands and Wives"

The Privileges of Marital Duty (p. 41)

What does your practical/functional theology of the relationship between love and law look like in your home? Do you know the joy of disciplined, joyful expressions of active love?

For the following two sections, please prayerfully and SPECIFICALLY write down what your life looks like in these regards. Men, I will say again, if we were to consider God's requirements of us as Christian men and repent of particular sins particularly and go to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, so many other things in our homes, in the church and even in the culture would simultaneously be addressed. May God grant the gift of true repentance and fruit in keeping with it.

Biblical Duties of the Husband (pp. 42-45)

1. "A husband must always remember that he is a living picture of the Lord Jesus" (p. 42). 2. "...he must learn to imitate Christ in character as well" (42). 3. "A husband must be jealous and protective" (43). 4. "...a husband must supply his wife with the food she needs...[and] the clothing she needs" (43-44). 5. "A husband must also meet his wife's sexual needs" (including child-bearing) (44). 6. "A husband must be content with his wife" (44).

Biblical Duties of Wives (pp. 46-49)

1. "...a wife must respect her husband" (46). 2. "...bear children" (46). 3. "...being industrious in the home" (47). 4. "...keep the home well-supplied with food and clothing" (47). 5. "A wife must meet her husband's sexual needs" (48). 6. "A wife must carefully avoid nagging and arguing" (48). 7. "...a wife should be a disciple of her husband" (49). 8. "A Christian wife should be hard-working in works of charity" (49).

Chapter 4: "Efficacious Love"— Men, again, buckle your seat belts. While we need to be careful not to overreach (and I think Wilson borders on overreaching in a place or two), we must hear the truth of this chapter. We simply must.

Love Bestows Loveliness (pp. 51-53)

Discuss the relationship between a woman's beauty (in the fullest sense of that word) and the treatment of her father and/or husband. Do you agree that when a woman gets married, "all who know them should expect to see her flourish and grow unloveliness in the years to come"? (52) Men, is this what you signed up for when you got married, or what you think about as you consider marriage?

The Fact of Physical Beauty, True Beauty (pp. 53-57)

How do you assess Wilson's discussion of beauty? Where are you inclined to err in this discussion? How do we rightly stress the truths Wilson has identified while also maintaining individual responsibility? How does the Gospel of Jesus Christ keep us properly aligned?

Courtesy (pp. 58-61)

Wilson says that typically the weak defer to the strong (think of how we treat celebrities). But the Bible calls the strong to defer to the weak. Are you a courteous husband? Courteous Christian in your actions and speech? What would your children say about how courteous you are to your wife? Or to them?

Romantic Love (pp. 61-64)

Have you gotten trapped in this vicious cycle of "romantic" love and its expectations? Do you agree with the "emotional impossibility" of retaining the early sensations of a relationship and that relationships "are supposed to mature"? Do you agree that our manifold callings in this world must inform what healthy romance involves?

"She is discontent because she thinks that her orientation should govern the relationship. He is oblivious to her discontentment because he thinks his orientation should govern the relationship. They are both wrong. She wants him to spend far more time devoted directly to her. He wants to spend more time than he ought on the job" (63). What do you think true romance looked like for pre-Fall Adam and Eve? What might it look like for a Christ-centered husband and wife?

Summary: Write down one specific area of your life you believe you need to address more fully from these two chapters. What is a first action point you will begin to take?