

A Biblical View Of Authority Part 3 (The Relationship of the Husband and the Wife)



Since God is the rightful Owner of all things (being their Creator), He therefore is creation's rightful Ruler or Authority. The maxim that undergirds or gives support to this truth is, "ownership establishes authority". In other words, I have the right to do what I want with what I own. In terms of governing, this means that God legitimately possesses the right to govern us (i.e. exercise control over our lives) through giving orders, making decisions, changing plans, establishing rules and enforcing His will. In addition, God's authority includes the right to appoint other persons to function as His governing representatives. As such, these "deputy rulers" possess real (or legitimate) authority that is not dependent on their character or competency, but rather their appointment by God. Unique among those authorities appointed by God, is the husband. **PTS 1-2 [DISCUSSED]**

3. The unique nature of the husband's authority (as owner and a type of Christ) in relation to his wife, establishes unique expectations for himself before God (Eph 5:25-33):

3.1. Like Christ, the husband's authority over his wife is given for the purpose of loving her (25a, 28, 33).

3.2. Therefore the demands, decisions, vision and agenda (see prt.2) of the husband in relation to his wife and household will never cause her (or them) harm, but instead always be lawful or righteous *since this is the definition of love* (Rom 13:8-10 = love follows the Law or is always righteous toward others).

3.3. As such, the rule of the husband must be characterized by those righteous-love or "wisdom from above" traits found in (1Co 13:4-7; Jam 3:17):

3.3.1. Why I am identifying the love of 1Co 13 as righteous/law-fulfilling: 1) the context is divine instruction (8), 2) like the Law, this love "never ends" (8a w/Mat 5:17-18), 3) also like the Law, this love is considered the "greatest" of spiritual gifts given by God for living as His people (12:31 w/13:13-14:1 w/Deu 4:6-8).

3.3.2. Why I believe James' "wisdom from above" is referring to same things as 1Co 13: 1) it is moral wisdom (i.e. wisdom related to righteousness or love – 13-16, 18) versus general wisdom (e.g. Pro 27:14, 23-27), 2) the traits are essentially identical.

3.4. If the husband's rule is truly loving, meaning that it is characterized by the righteous and wise traits found in 1Corinthians 13 and James 3, then it will be apparent in the joyful testimony of his household (wife and children). He will be viewed as a wise and righteous king (Pro 29:2):

3.4.1. Patient/Gentle= A husband who takes the time to disciple his wife understanding and being sympathetic to how God has made her different (1Co 13:4 – "patient and kind"; Jam 3:17 – "gentle"; see 1Th 2:6-7; 1Ti 3:3; see 1Pe 3:7 - "Likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way...showing her honor as the weaker vessel" = Just as your wife is to understand that God has appointed you as her authority and therefore abide in her submission regardless of your character or competency, you too are to recognize that God has made her weaker emotionally, and therefore expects you to be patient and gentle w/her as you attempt to disciple her versus being impatient, blowing up and treating her rough like she is a guy – or should just "get it". This is how you "show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life" and keep your prayers from being "hindered" – meaning if you refuse to show patience and gentleness in the way you handle your wife in her weakness/when she needs your help, don't expect God to extend those things to you when you need His help – Mat 7:1-2; Tit 3:2-4; contra: 1Ki 12:1-14; Mic 3:1-4 w/6:8; consider also Pro 14:28-29).

3.4.2. Sincere = A husband who has nothing but good intentions in what he demands of his wife/household, genuinely believing it to be what God wants for them (1Co 13:4 – "does not envy or boast" = a love that is genuine, possessing no ill agenda; Jam 3:17 – "sincere"; see 1Ti 1:5 w/1Pe 5:3 – "not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples" = Un-hypocritical, I practice what I demand of others as the proof that I sincerely believe this is what God requires of us as His people; contra – Mat 23:1-4)

3.4.3. Teachable/Reasonable = A husband who truly appreciates his wife's advice/input including her concerns, respectful criticisms or appeals, and so carefully listens to her and genuinely considers what she says, ready to acknowledge and change his view – or admit he is wrong when necessary and thank her for her help and faithfulness in this area. (1Co 13:4-5a – "is not arrogant or rude"; Jam 3:17 – "open to reason"; consider Pro 18:1; Ecc 4:13)

3.4.4. Selfless/Impartial = A husband whose decisions for his wife/household are never selfish or partial to himself but an attempt to create an environment that benefits and pleases everyone (1Co 13:5b – "does not insist on its own way"; Jam 3:17 – "impartial")

3.4.5. Forgiving = A husband who doesn't continue to be angry for his wife's past sins or failures but attempts to help her understand/overcome those sins when they reappear (1Co 13:5c – "not irritable or resentful/counting up wrongs"; Jam 3:17 – "full of mercy and good fruits" = forgiveness is the pre-requisite to the fruit of mercy ; Col 3:18 – "embittered" = un-forgiveness is what makes a husband possess a bitter/resentful attitude in the rule/handling of his wife)

3.4.6. Truth-Loving = A husband whose judgment is not presumptive, manipulative, subjective, slanderous, speculative, or based on emotions. He instead does his due diligence and provides the objective and sufficient evidence in making his case. He does not allow his household to operate/act on suspicion or assumptions, but only what is fact. This means also, he is not slack in bringing justice/enforcing the Law (1Co 13:6 – "does not rejoice in wrong-doing, but rejoices with the truth"; Jam 3:17 – "pure"; see Psa 19:8-9; Pro 16:10-13, 22:11)

3.4.7. Persevering In Peace = A husband who never allows there to be unresolved tension or warring but instead always seeks peace and to make things right w/his wife (1Co 13:7 – "bears...believes...hopes...endures all things"; Jam 3:17 – "peaceable...And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."; see also Eph 4:26 = be quick to make peace [before the next day]).

CLOSING QUESTION: Does your wife groan or glorify God for the way you rule over her and the household? Does she view you as a wise and righteous king?