

Rules of Engagement

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ACTIVITY SHEET



When the apostle Paul addresses the topic of authority in marriage, he commissions husbands and wives to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. This is indicative of military language. It's as though Paul is trying to convey 'there is a battle being waged over marriage'. The enemy's plans are to divide and conquer. So, if the enemy has a plan to destroy your marriage, what's your battle plan to protect the sanctity of your marriage?



SESSION OBJECTIVES

This Rules of Engagement session is designed to help you:

- (a)** understand God's principles for building and maintaining healthy relational dynamics
- (b)** understand the difference between equality of value/importance and God given spiritual authority
- (c)** understand what exercising spiritual authority looks like in a healthy, secure and mature marriage

Building & maintaining a healthy relationship.

Directly before God declared He would make Adam a helpmate, he bestowed upon him the authority to 'work' and 'watch over' the garden in which he had been placed. The same important principles apply to marriage. To cultivate a beautiful and vibrant relationship, you have to WORK on it. To keep your relationship healthy and thriving, you have to WATCH over it.



The following examples either relate to 'working on' or 'watching over' your relationship. Connect the example with the relevant category.

I tweaked my work schedule to make sure I'm spending adequate time with the one I love

Doing my fair share to make sure the household runs smoothly (clean and in good working order)

I try to be aware when they're not feeling so great in order to be extra sensitive toward them

When we have a difference of opinion or disagreement, we try and work towards a resolution

To safeguard myself/my relationship, I don't spend unnecessary one-on-one time with the opposite sex

I intentionally take an interest in things they're involved in so as to support and encourage them

I regularly think "how can I be a blessing to them today... what could I plan, prepare do or say?"

To improve my relationship, I'm willing to seek guidance and support (wise council or mentorship)



WORKING ON IT



WATCHING OVER IT

**FROM A BIBLICAL
STANDPOINT...**

**everyone is
equal in value!**

**HOWEVER, SPIRITUAL
AUTHORITY IS
UNIQUELY BESTOWED.**



Equality of value, and importance versus spiritual authority.

Marriage is under greater attack today than perhaps at any other time in history. The enemy's plans are to divide and conquer. So, if the enemy has a plan for your marriage, what's your battle plan for your marriage. When you understand the difference between value, importance and authority, you become well positioned for success.



From a Biblical standpoint, only six of the following statements are true. Discuss each statement to see if you can agree on which statements are correct and which are false?

TRUE	FALSE	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Husbands and wives are equal in value
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Both husbands and wives are granted the authority to be leaders
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	The one with the most important career should have special privilege
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Husbands and wives are equal in importance
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Husbands have been granted spiritual authority over their home
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Having authority means taking responsibility
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Before respect can be given, it has to be earned
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Husbands and wives should be receptive of each other's influence
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Having authority means having the right to do what you want
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Submission means surrendering decision making to the one in authority

**THEN GOD BLESSED THEM AND SAID,
“BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY.
FILL THE EARTH AND GOVERN IT...”
GENESIS 1:28 (NLT)**

govern

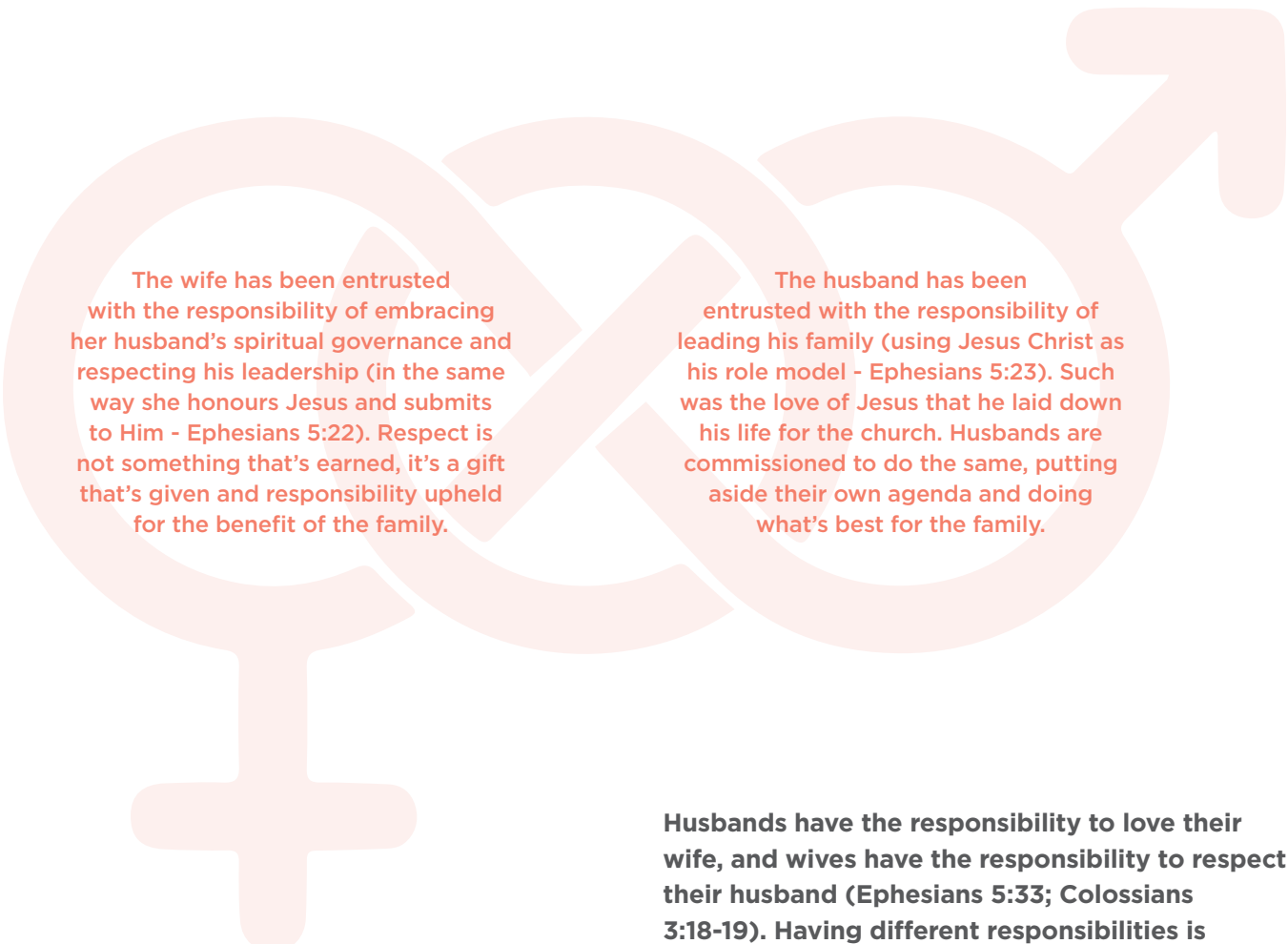
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**DEVELOP POLICY,
IMPLEMENT**



Keeping it real.

Adam and Eve were first blessed, then commissioned to subdue the earth and govern it. In the same way, husbands and wives are authorised to influence, inspire and impact their kingdom. In God's economy, both husbands and wives are leaders; being equal in value and importance (Galatians 3:28). Together, husbands and wives are given the responsibility of working out their battle plan in mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21), making important decisions and implementing strategies for success. However, even though decisions may be made together, God has specifically appointed husbands to be the spiritual authority in their home (1 Corinthians 11:3). In other words, husbands are required to give an account for any and all decisions the couple makes.



The wife has been entrusted with the responsibility of embracing her husband's spiritual governance and respecting his leadership (in the same way she honours Jesus and submits to Him - Ephesians 5:22). Respect is not something that's earned, it's a gift that's given and responsibility upheld for the benefit of the family.

The husband has been entrusted with the responsibility of leading his family (using Jesus Christ as his role model - Ephesians 5:23). Such was the love of Jesus that he laid down his life for the church. Husbands are commissioned to do the same, putting aside their own agenda and doing what's best for the family.

Husbands have the responsibility to love their wife, and wives have the responsibility to respect their husband (Ephesians 5:33; Colossians 3:18-19). Having different responsibilities is not inequality, it's raising the quality. Love and respect are two different expressions of the same thing. It's called...

servant leadership in action.

Healthy secure & mature relationships.



The following statements are reflective of healthy, secure and mature relationships. Carefully consider the statements in each category and record your response:

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP	“We discuss important things together, making sure we are respectful and loving towards each other’s viewpoints. We make decisions together as equals, not based on what we want, but what’s best for our family.”
RESPONSE	Do you agree? If yes, why? If not, why not?
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP	“We listen to one another’s point of view, even if they differ from our own, and we take on board each other’s suggestions. Where we can’t agree, we commit to praying about it and allow the Holy Spirit to be our guide.”
RESPONSE	Do you agree? If yes, why? If not, why not?
SECURE RELATIONSHIP	We acknowledge that we don’t always know the right answer. Therefore, when making important decisions, we gather the facts rather than argue with emotion. If we’re still unsure, we are not ashamed to seek wise counsel and get advice.
RESPONSE	Do you agree? If yes, why? If not, why not?
SECURE RELATIONSHIP	If a decision’s been made that I disagree with, rather than being upset, I take it to the Lord. I ask God to show them if the decision was wrong or reveal to me that I am in error. I admit when I am wrong and don’t rub it in when I’m right.
RESPONSE	Do you agree? If yes, why? If not, why not?

MATURE RELATIONSHIP	Instead of needing to 'be right', we do what 'is right'. Where there's ambiguity, we pursue unity. We walk away from our armoury in pursuit of harmony. Our words are not weapons of war, rather they are used to rebuild, repair and restore.
RESPONSE	Do you agree? If yes, why? If not, why not?
MATURE RELATIONSHIP	When we cannot agree on a time critical decision, the responsibility by default falls on the spiritual head of our house. We pray that the decision is correct, but even if it's not, both the decision and the person who made it is honoured.
RESPONSE	Do you agree? If yes, why? If not, why not?



DISCUSSION POINTS

Q: When making important decisions in your relationship, are you receptive of each other's input and influence?

Q: If you can't agree on something, or don't like the decision that has been made, how will you come to a resolution?