

The Real Husband

By Bill Scheidler

First “Let’s take a look at last year’s “Husband of the Year Awards (See: power point)

I would like to read an email received after last Sunday’s message:

“May I make a comment in light of this morning’s sermon? Firstly, I applaud the Real Man campaign. Even though I’m a single, 38 year old woman who has never been called to marriage and children I can say that if I had ever met a Real Man - one who would truly love me as Christ loves the church - then I might well be married! Speaking on behalf of most woman Real Men are what we want. However, I would like to make three points as a highly educated woman, leader in my field of work, boss of two fantastic research teams (which include men!) and living in the 21st century.

“Firstly, I do agree that in a marriage relationship the man should be the head of the household and love his wife (and family) as Christ loves the church. Within society men should be leaders whilst serving God and edifying fellow human beings in humility. And, I don’t disagree that the women’s liberation movement has done no favours for men (or women!) but it is important to understand *why* women’s lib eventuated. It was because throughout history men have only ever attempted to be the head of the household and leaders in society but have forgotten the love and servitude bit of the equation. Until the last century Western women have been oppressed, abused and violated. Throughout much of the rest of the world this is still the case. I’ve worked in many developing countries - including the townships here in South Africa - and thank God every day that I am a single, educated, British woman - compared to 99% of the woman in the world I am in a truly fortunate position. My point is, just as woman can’t have it both ways neither can men. Yes, please do highlight that modern day women’s lib has - unfortunately - skewed the role of men in society but don’t gloss over history and why this has come about. Please look at Christ as the shining example of a woman’s liberationist! - the way He treated woman was quite contrary to the norms of that culture and era.

“Secondly, consistent with 1 Corinthians 7, Matthew 19 and the marital status of Jesus, Paul and the disciples, if you can live without sex being single is the preferable way to be. Yes, in a marriage relationship the man should be the head however please don’t forget the leadership role unmarried men have in society. There was a definite sense from today’s sermon that men are not ‘responsible’ until they’re married. This is clearly wrong.

“Finally, I repeat that I am a single, 38 year old woman that has actually never wanted to marry or have kids. I strongly believe that God has blessed my work and lead me down my career path - I absolutely have achieved things that in my own strength could never have been achieved without the Holy Spirit’s help. So, please don’t allow woman to think (as I did this morning) if we’re working rather than married with kids we’re somehow sinning. Paul makes it quite clear that unmarried Christian men *and women* (should be) entirely focused on God’s *work* rather than have their attention divided towards pleasing their spouse. And, God’s work may entail being managed or being the manager - I’m in both situations and I don’t apologise for it (refer Ken Costa’s excellent book *God at Work*).

“Anyway, all I ask is that balance is conveyed throughout the campaign to ensure that married men lifted up into their God given place in the family and society but that single men and woman and married woman are not left to feel unless or sinful.”

Kind regards,

This is what I get from reading this woman’s letter:

She wants a real man who...

1. Will love her as Christ loved the church.

She is saying that they are very hard to find. But she is not going to marry just for the sake of having any man. There are much worse things than being single.

She wants a real man who...

2. Will uses his headship in loving service to his wife and family.

Most men live for themselves and their wives and family are merely afterthoughts.

She wants a real man who...

3. Will take the lead in the home and society in the spirit of humility.

Humility is not weakness, it is strength under control.

The leadership needed here is for the single man as well as the married man.

Single men and women can make a real impact. I have heard guys say, “I am going to get married and settle down.” You don’t have to wait for marriage to “grow up” and take responsibility. Take responsibility now and it might be a lot easier for you to find a wife.

She wants a real man who...

4. Will accept his God-given role and exercise true spiritual leadership.

She is talking about a man who is strong in the spiritual side of his life not only in the gym, hunting, fishing or other natural pursuits.

How strong are you? I am so strong I can gargle peanut butter. I am so strong I can lift myself up over my head. Are you equally strong in prayer, worship and the word?

She wants a real man who...

5. Will strive for the balance demonstrated by Jesus—strong, yet tender.

If it is alright with you I want to build my thoughts around the six things that are brought out by this very sharp lady.

Let's look at these thoughts individually.

1. A Real Man is a man who... Will love his wife as Christ loved the church.

Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

This is the most challenging verse in the Bible for husbands. How has Christ demonstrated His love for the Church?

Christ's love is:

- **An Unconditional Love (Rom. 5:6b-8)**

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Christ's love was not earned or deserved by anything that we did or could potentially do for Him. Christ's love was unconditional in the sense that there were no strings attached. He had no "ifs" attached to His gift of love (i.e. "I will do this...if you will do that.).

- **A Willful Love (Deut. 7:7-8)**

The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Christ's love was an act of His will. He chose to set His love on us. It was calculated and deliberate. It was not a decision based on His emotions. It was not based on what we could do for Him. There was nothing about our beauty, our strength, our potential contribution to Him that made Him want us. It was based on promises made and covenants given in the past.

- **An Unending Love (Rom. 8:38-39; Jer. 31:3; Heb. 13:5; Deut. 31:8)**

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing,

shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 8:38-39

What situation would there be that could separate you from the love of your spouse?

The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you." Jeremiah 31:3

For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Hebrews 13:5

And the LORD, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed. Deuteronomy 31:8

Does your spouse know this about you? Have you ever threatened your spouse with abandonment? Have you ever used the "D" word in a time of argument?

1. This love is "until death do us part."
2. This love is "in sickness and in health" or in good times or bad times.
3. This love is everlasting.
4. This love is not able to move to a place of separation.

- **A Purposeful Love (Eph. 5:25-27)**

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Christ's love works for our improvement. He has a vision of what we can be. He found us one way, but He is going to love us into a "glorious condition."

Our love should work for the improvement of our spouse.

- a. Does your wife sense this from you? That you are seeking her enrichment?
- b. Is her life going to be better because you have touched it?
- c. Do you do everything that you can to build her self-esteem?
- d. Are you the one who helps or hinders her from reaching her full potential in God?
- e. Do you encourage your wife's ministry? Without being competitive.

- **A Manifested Love**

Christ demonstrates or shows us His love by specific actions toward us. He does not just tell us He loves us. His love is clearly seen by what He does.

- He protects us.
- He intercedes for us.
- He guards us.
- He guides us.
- He strengthens us.
- He helps us.
- He defends us.
- He teaches us.
- He comforts us.
- He equips us.
- He empathizes with us.
- He provides for all of our needs.

No husband has ever fully loved his wife in this way or to this extent.

2. A Real Man is a man who... Will use his headship in loving service to his wife and family.

John 10:11

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

In other words a real man is willing to defer his own rights for the sake of others. Jesus went on to say...

No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father. John 10:18

Christ's love laid it all down for us even to the point of death. Are you willing to put your whole self into your marriage? Christ's love girded itself with a towel and served us. Christ's love demonstrated leadership by providing a model of self-sacrifice. Being the leader in the relationship means that you are the family's biggest servant.

3. A Real Man is a man who... Will take the lead in the home and society in the spirit of humility.

Philippians 2:1-8

Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and sympathetic? 2 Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one heart and purpose. 3 Don't be selfish; don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. 4 Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing. 5 Your attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had. 6 Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. 7 He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. 8 And in human form he obediently humbled himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross. —NLT

Let this mind be in you. This mind humbles itself and says...

“YOU are more important than I.”

“In am interested in what YOU are interested in.”

“I am here to serve YOU.”

4. A Real Man is a man who... Will accept his God-given role and exercise spiritual leadership in the home.

I Corinthians 11:3

But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

What does it mean to take the lead or to have headship in the marriage relationship?

I will tell you what it does not mean...

- It does not mean that the man is superior to the woman.
- It does not mean that the man is smarter than the woman.
- It does not mean that the man is more important to God than the woman.

It simply means that God made men and women different and has assigned to them different roles based on His own eternal purpose.

As such:

- He made men physically different from the women.

They have different:

- Metabolism
- Skeletal Structures
- Internal Organs
- Blood Content
- Brute Strength Factor
- Heart Beats
- Lung Capacity
- Emotional Make-up
- Vocal Ranges

“Refusal to face the differences between men and women borders on intellectual insanity.” --Tim LaHaye

- He created the man before He created the woman (I Tim. 3:13; I Cor. 11:8-9).

- He created the man to be the leader under Christ and equipped him to be:

A protector

A principle provider (more strength and endurance)

- He created the marriage relationship to prophetically reflect Christ relationship to the church.

This arrangement is temporary and ends when the process of redemption ends. In the resurrection role distinctions will no longer apply. Male and female will be under the direct headship of Christ. We will not longer be tied to each other in marriage, but we will all become part of the Bride of Christ.

5. A Real Man is a man who... Will work at being balanced as Jesus was balanced—strong, yet tender.

What women really want in a man! What wins the heart of a woman?

There are many myths about what women want.

Some feel that all women want a man who is tall, muscular, and handsome.

Some feel that all women want a man who is rich.

Some feel that all women want a man with a full head of hair.

Some feel that all women want a man who will take them out every weekend and buy them a lot of stuff.

The following insights were given to me by a woman:

Top Ten Things a Woman Wants in a Man

1. She wants a man who is sensitive yet masculine.

In other words, he has feelings of compassion, listens to the concerns of others, is able to cry and is able to sense the moving of the Holy Spirit in his life.

2. She wants a man who is ambitious yet considerate.

In other words, he is motivated and has direction and vision for his life without being pushy or harsh with others.

3. She wants a man who is sober minded yet fun.

In other words, he has a mind in touch with reality, doesn't live in a fantasy world yet he is able to laugh at himself and the circumstances of life.

4. She wants a man who is spiritual yet natural.

In other words, he has a strong appetite for spiritual things and lives a transparent life without hypocrisy but does not become unrelatable (weird) to real people in a real world.

5. She wants a man who is self-controlled yet tender.

In other words, he disciplines himself so that he can be more effective in his ministry to the needs of others (financially, keeping work in balance).

6. She wants a man who is faithful yet flexible.

In other words, he gives the security of structure to the lives of others without being so “schedule-orientated” that a personal agenda becomes more important than the needs of people.

7. She wants a man who is friendly yet discreet.

In others words, he is well mannered, loves and respects people and does what is proper in social relationships, careful not to show undue or special attention to members of the opposite sex.

8. She wants a man who is bold yet humble.

In other words, he is bold and confident in God yet easily entreated and approachable in areas where some adjustment is needed.

9. She wants a man who is honest yet kind.

In other words, he is truthful in his dealings with people with tactfulness and love without being harsh or unfeeling.

10. She wants a man who is well-groomed yet clearly masculine.

In other words, he keeps himself clean, dresses with care, smells good, keeps his fingernails clean yet he looks like and carries himself like a man.

And the women who like this list said, “Amen!”

Men,

If you are like me, you can see we need God’s help. Without God’s help we cannot do these things. This is why men without Christ are bound to have difficulty.