

25 Ways for a Husband to be a Servant Leader

From The Quest for Authentic Manhood
by
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Prepared originally by Robert Lewis, this is timeless. Print it, and highlight what you need to work on.

Marriage at the core is two equals with different roles. The wife's role is that of "helper" as she serves the marriage with a nurturing role of care and support. The man role is "the head" – not as authoritarian, but as a servant-leader – he serves with courage and responsibility. (There is a great line in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*: "The man is the head, but the woman is the neck. And she can turn the head any way she wants".)

High Level: A wife needs four things:

- a companion,
- security – financial - that she is safe and financially secure; that she doesn't need to work if she doesn't want to;
- she needs significance and praise; and
- Emotional responsiveness from her husband... she needs you to listen to her and to hear "I love you" and "I am committed to you for life!"

1 Include your wife in envisioning the future. It is your responsibility to put this plan together with your wife and do planning. What do we want to do, what do we want to have, how to raise our kids, etc. Envision your future.

2. Husband needs to accept spiritual responsibility for your family. If a wife or child attend church, there is a 20% chance that the family will attend. If Dad attends church, 97% chance the family will come to church. The husband is the pace setter. You are the one who should have the courage to engage in spiritual discussions and lead your family to church. Families need to be engaged in a community – not “doing religion alone”.

3. Husbands must be willing to say “I’m sorry” to your family. “Will you forgive me?” “I messed up”

4. Husband needs to discuss household responsibilities – after 5pm, is the workload fair?

5. Husband should seek consultation with his wife on financial issues. Wife needs to be included on financial decisions, investments, giving, budgets... you need to be in sync.

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11. Husbands need to manage distractions so he can talk and listen to his wife and kids...be engaged. No TV during dinner! Date your wife and kids and talk and listen. "How are you doing; how are you feeling..." Stay in touch by engaging them;

12. Husband needs to take the initiative to pray with his wife on a regular basis. Don't be intimidated to do this. Before you turn the lights out in your bedroom at night, take the initiative and lead her in prayer by praying out loud together. This breaks down walls between you, defuses anger, and brings you very close/intimate.

13. Husband needs to initiate meaningful family traditions. Calling sons and daughters into man or womanhood through ceremonies

14. Husband needs to initiate fun outings – keep laughter and fun in the home. Go bowling, play outside, play board games...not just watching TV. This creates great memories with the family and teaches your kids how to have fun without being entertained;

15. Husband needs to take time to give children practical instructions for life. Teach them basic things they need to know to not make clumsy mistakes in life...when kids feel ill-prepared, they get very frustrated and embarrassed. Teach your son how to tie a tie, have a firm handshake and dribble a basketball; teach your kids how to write thank you notes, look people in the eyes when they talk, table manners, take care of a car, how to date and what to look for in someone they'll date, how to pray...etc. This builds confidence.

16. Husband needs to manage the schedule of the home. Oversee it to ensure you're not over-scheduled...kids just want to have fun with dad and mom; How does your family spend its time?

17. Husband needs to manage the finances and keep the family out of dangerous debt. Most marriages end over financial trouble. There is good debt, and bad debt...never borrow too much.

18. Husband needs to have a financial/emergency plan: Make sure to have a will and a letter to your wife updated annually with your balance sheet and contact info of who to call...if you die tomorrow, will she know what to do, where your assets are and will you leave your family in a good financial spot? Do you have an estate plan to take care of your family?

19. Husband needs to let your wife and kids into your life. Tell them stories about when you were young. Share who you are with them. Open your heart to your wife. This makes you closer to each other.

20. Honor your wife in public and build her up in front of others. Let others know how much you love and honor your wife. Give her compliments in front of others...she'll pretend she's annoyed, yet love it.

21. Explain sex to your kids at an early stage of their lives. How to keep it sacred. This takes courage and time....talk to them about it early.

22. Encourage your wife to grow as an individual – what are your dreams? Help her fulfill them.

23. Establish sound biblical values with your wife. What are our common values about money, debt, values, raising kids? What values do you both want your kids to leave home with... will your kids be able to name your families core values when they leave for college?

24. Join a “small group” to have accountability and sounding board...build an advisory board (not of yes-men). We can convince ourselves of anything...we need people in our lives that we trust and that we’ll open up with who will speak the truth to us. Listen to these people – don’t get defensive!

25. Provide time for your wife to pursue her own personal interest. Just like you need your time, she needs time to have fun.

Compiled by Barrington Men's Fraternity based on
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