

Roles of Husband and Wife

Reflection

(For those who are married) How did we meet our spouse? What is one of the things we love about him/her?

(For those who are not married) What qualities are we looking for in a spouse?

Inspiration from the Holy Bible

The watchmen found me, as they made their rounds in the city: "Hirh whom my soul loves - have you seen him?" Hardly had I left them when I found him whom my soul loves. I held him and would not let him go... (Song of Solomon 3:3-4)

Inspiration from the Holy Qur'an

"Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard. But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance [first] advise them; [then if they persist], forsake them in bed; and [finally], strike them. But if they obey you [once more], seek no means against them. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted and Grand." (Surah An-Nisa 4:34)

Hadith

Mu'awiyah bin Haidah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: "I asked Messenger of Allah (PBUH): "What right can any wife demand of her husband?" He replied, "You should give her food when you eat, clothe her when you clothe yourself, not strike her on the face, and do not revile her or separate from her except in the house". (Abu Dawud)

Narrated Abdullah bin Umar. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Everyone of you is a guardian and everyone of you is responsible (for his wards). A ruler is a guardian and is responsible (for his subjects); a man is a guardian of his family and responsible (for them); a wife is a guardian of her husband's house and she is responsible (for it), a slave is a guardian of his master's property and is responsible (for that). Beware! All of you are guardians and are responsible (for your wards)." (Sahih al-Bukhari)

What are the roles in a marriage?

a. God is at the center of a marriage. Since marriage happens by God's design, He is committed to us and to our marriage as a covenant (our sacred agreement). When God is at the center of our marriage, it is stronger, like a braided cord with three strands. Through whatever trial, triumph or test we and our spouse face, He has promised to never leave us nor forsake us.

A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:12)

b.

The man is the leader in a marriage. As such, God designed him to take on the responsibility of protector and provider. A husband is expected to love his wife, give himself up for her, love her the way he loves himself, be considerate and sensitive to her needs, praise her and not be harsh with her, and be thankful for her, appreciating what she does for him and their family.

For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church... In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. (Ephesians 5:23,28)

c.

The woman is the helpmate "who is just right (suitable)" for the man. The Bible says that God Himself makes a wife that is perfectly suited for a man. As such, God designed her to honor and respect her husband, acknowledge that he is head of the family, love and give herself wholly to him, praise and encourage him, exercise her power to do good in his life, and help him become the man God intended him to be.

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him." (Genesis 2:18)

However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (Ephesians 5:33)

Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." (Proverbs 31:28-29)

Challenge

What is our most significant learning today? How will we apply it to our own life?

Prayer

Praise God for His goodness and grace in our life. Ask forgiveness for our sins. Thank Him for the blessings we have received.

If we have any prayer requests, let us pray for one another.

We end the meeting with this declaration of faith: Lord, teach us to realize that life is short, so that we may grow in wisdom. Guard our minds, hearts and tongues so that our thoughts, words and deeds focus on things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Help us to speak words of faith, words of power, words of love and words of life to our families and to each other. Encourage us to count our blessings and be grateful for everything You have given.