

Biblical Marriage Study

*Written by Dr. George Kuykendall for Officers' Christian Fellowship
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Study #5

What the Bible says about the husband's spiritual role in marriage.

Whereas Proverbs 31 describes a kind of global criterion for the godly woman and wife, there is not one portion of Scripture that gives a complete criterion description for the husband. Therefore, we must examine different portions of Scripture related to the requirements of the mature and responsible spiritual man.

Someone read 1 Timothy 3:1-7 for us. The NIV uses the term "overseer" for the highest office of spiritual ministry and leadership in the local church body. Does anyone have a version that uses a different title?

What is the meaning of verse 1?

If someone sincerely and earnestly desires the highest ministry position of the local church, he desires a task that is noble in the sight of God.

What does "noble" mean?

Highly worthy in God's sight. Self-sacrificing. Fulfillment of Jesus' goal to serve rather than be served.

In verse 2, what does "above reproach" mean?

Degree of integrity and honor so apparent and real that no one doubts him.

The term "husband of one wife" refers to polygamy. Remember, in Old Testament days a man could legally have several wives. Are there any comments you want to make about this?

Several other terms are used in verse 2 that we should define. What about "self-controlled?"

God knows our every thought. If we control our thoughts, we will control our actions. Self-control implies personal, responsible control of one's own mind, body, and spirit.

How would you define "respectable?"

His good character is such that respect for him is a logical and normal response.

What does "hospitable" imply?

A person who welcomes others and ministers to their needs.

To see some hospitable acts, let's look at Matthew 25:34-40. Would someone read that out loud for us? What are the implications of this Scripture?

Hospitality, meeting the needs of others, is a natural outflow of the spiritual person and is a necessary fruit for one to inherit eternal life.

Back to 1 Timothy: why do you suppose the ability to teach is important?

This is an essential quality of one who is to model the Christian life as well as disciple or equip others.

In verse 3, what does your version use for “not given to drunkenness?” Why is this important?

To have normal control of one’s mind and body, he must not drink an amount of alcohol which changes or impairs his mental abilities.

How would you interpret “not violent but gentle?”

Opposites on the temper continuum. Temper can be controlled by an act of the will if someone maintains awareness of his thoughts and feelings.

Define “not quarrelsome.”

Accepting of others. One who is not psychologically threatened by others, not offensive or defensive in manner of speech and other actions.

What is the meaning of “not a lover of money?”

Money and physical possessions do not dominate his thoughts, actions, or desires.

In verse 4, what are the elements of managing a family well?

The family is a primary focus of his attention. He invests in it what is necessary to do it well.

What must a father do so that his children will obey and respect him?

He teaches them what the Bible says and shows them how to live by...

...spending time with them.

...being committed to meeting their needs.

...being consistently concerned for and about them.

...consistently demonstrating his love and concern for their physical and spiritual welfare.

In verse 5, what are some similarities between the family and the church?

The small group is his family. The larger group is God’s family. The smaller family has approximately the same type of needs as the larger family.

In verse 6, what are the vulnerabilities of being a recent, spiritually immature convert?

1. The tendency to focus on self and take credit for what God does.

2. Unaware of Satan’s ways and traps and how to fight spiritual warfare.

3. Not fully aware of how to live the spiritual life himself, and therefore not a consistent/reliable spiritual model for others.

4. More subject to his own ego needs.

In verse 7, what does reputation have to do with “not falling into disgrace and into the devil’s trap?”

Reputation implies a result of long-term Christian living...he has proven himself by consistently being righteous (a spiritual man). His actions are predictable and reliably righteous.

Which of the traits described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 are most important?

They are all equally important, but reputation is the result of them all.

What are the key elements to being the type of person described here?

Being committed to Christ as Lord.

Being committed to daily being more conformed to the image of Christ as the model for life.

How should a new Christian begin to deal with this model?

By applying Romans 12:2. By focusing on one area at a time on a priority basis until he is able to consistently be a moral/righteous person.

Note that verses 8-13 deal with the qualifications for deacons. What are the major differences between the requirements for being an overseer versus being a deacon?

Ministry qualifications: able to teach.

Whom do you think the requirements of deacon apply to?

Every one who would serve in any capacity of leadership in the local church.

What do you think each of us should do with this Scripture?