

# ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES

*What about the question of roles and responsibilities in your marriage? Who does what and why? Does he or she do it? Is it because of tradition or because of what the church has said? Or is it because that is the way it was done in your parents home?*

Failure to state clearly the role each of you will take in your relationship could be a major cause of marital disruption. As a couple you will be involved in an almost endless number of activities and responsibilities. Each couple getting married should discuss together, before they get married, who is most competent to do which task in their marriage. Assignment of tasks should not be made simply because of parental example, because it is expected of your social group, or because of tradition. When an individual's abilities, training and temperament make it difficult or unnecessary to follow an established cultural norm for a role, the couple will need to have the strength to establish their own style of working together. It is imperative that a couple communicate and mutually develop the rules and guidelines for their relationship as husband and wife. By establishing clear cut lines of communication this will eliminate any chaos in the relationship.

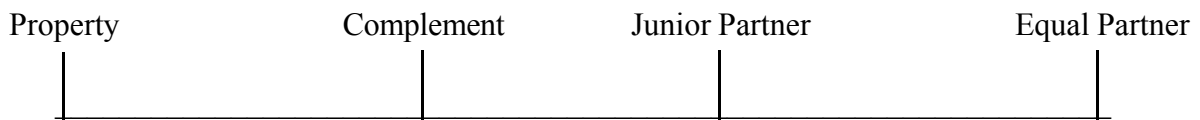
What are the roles of a husband and of a wife? Let's spend some time NOW thinking about your role as a wife or husband.

*Property* - wife has almost no rights and privileges compared to those of the husband. Husband is the family provider. Often the wife is merely a chattel for the husband's sexual expression.

*Complement* - wife's rights have increased. Marriage is the wife's central life interest. Husband is chief provider and has more authority than wife. She is a friend to her husband. He achieves and she supports him.

*Junior Partner* - wife's rights increase because she works outside the home for pay. Her main motive is to improve the family's life-style. She has more authority (rights) than a non-working woman.

*Equal Partner* - wife and husband share equal rights and responsibilities.



In the above chart place your future spouse's initials where you feel they are and place your initials where you feel your future spouse feels you are.

Complete the following sentences. After you are finished share with your future spouse.

1. In marriage I believe a "role" is \_\_\_\_\_

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2. My main role in our marriage is \_\_\_\_\_

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3. I began to form this belief about my role when \_\_\_\_\_

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4. My future spouse's role in our marriage is \_\_\_\_\_

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5. In a marriage a wife should \_\_\_\_\_

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6. In a marriage a husband should \_\_\_\_\_

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7. I can best help my future spouse fulfill their role in our marriage by \_\_\_\_\_

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# ROLE CONCEPTS

The following exercise is to find out what you see your role is in your marriage and what you feel your future spouse see your role to be. Read each statement and circle the appropriate number. On the left side of the paper is your response. Go through the exercise and answer how you see your role. When you finish go back and answer how you feel your future spouse see's your role. Use the right side for their response.

(1). Strongly agree      (2). Agree      (3). Not sure      (4). Disagree      (5). Strongly disagree

Me		Future Spouse
1 2 3 4 5	The husband is the head of the house	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The wife should not be employed outside the home	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband should help regularly with the dishes.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	It is all right for the wife to initiate love making with her husband.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband and wife should plan the budget and manage the money matters together.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Neither the husband nor the wife should purchase an item costing more that \$30 without consulting the other.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The father is the one responsible for disciplining the children.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	A wife who has special talent should have a career.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	It is the wife's responsibility to keep the house neat and clean.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband should take his wife and out somewhere twice a month.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The wife is just as responsible for the children's discipline as the husband.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	It is the husband's job to do the yard work.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The mother should be the teacher of values to the children.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Children should be allowed to help plan family activities.	1 2 3 4 5

Me		Future Spouse
1 2 3 4 5	Children develop better in a home with parents who are strict disciplinarians.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Money that the wife earns is her money.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband should have at least one night a week out with his friends.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The wife should have at least one night a week out with her friends.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The wife should always be the one to fix the meals.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband's responsibility is to his job and the wife's responsibility is to the home and the children.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband and the wife should go to church together.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Marriage should be thought of as a partnership.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Major decisions should be made by the husband.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Arguments are detrimental to marriage relationships.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband is the head of the family.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Neither the husband or the wife should bring dependent parents into the home to live.	1 2 3 4 5

One important thing to remember in doing this exercise is that it is OK to disagree. If there are disagreements between the two of you they need to be talked about out in the open and NOW! Disagreements are something that should not be put off discussing, the longer you put them off, the harder it is to talk about them.

What does the Word of God say concerning the role of the wife and the role of the husband?  
Read the following taken from *Ephesians 5:21,33*

*"21 Submit yourselves to one another because of your reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands as to the Lord. 23 For a husband has authority over his wife just as Christ has authority over the church: and Christ is himself the Savior of the church, his body. 24 And so wives must submit themselves completely to their husbands just as the church submits itself to Christ.*

*25 Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave his life for it. 26 He did this to dedicate the church to God by his word, after making it clean by washing it in water. 27 In order to present the church to himself in all its beauty-pure and faultless, without spot or wrinkle or any other imperfection. 28 Men ought to love their wives just as they love their own bodies. A man who loves his wife loves himself. (29 No one ever hates his own body. Instead he feeds it and takes care of it, just as Christ does the church. 30 for we are members of his body.) 31 As the scripture says, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife and the two will become one." 32 There is a deep secret truth revealed in this scripture., which I understand as applying to Christ and the church. 33 But it also applies to you: every husband must love his wife as himself, and every wife must respect her husband.*

Please answer the following:

1. What one word summarizes a wife's responsibility to her husband? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What do the words "as unto the Lord" (v 22) suggest about the wife's role? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. According to verse 33, what should the wife's attitude be toward her husband and what does this mean in everyday life? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What does the word "submission" mean to you? Write a definition. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In the Sacrament of marriage each one gives to and receives from the other. Marriage is built upon each person being a complement to the other. "When a man and woman unite in marriage, humanity experiences a restoration to wholeness. The glory of the man is the acknowledgment that woman was created for him; the glory of the woman is the acknowledgment that man is incomplete without her. The humility of the woman is the acknowledgment that she was made for man; the humility of the man is the acknowledgment that he is incomplete without her. Both share an equal dignity, honor and worth. Yes, and each shares a humility before the other, also. Each is necessarily the completion of the other; each is necessarily dependent upon the other."

As was mentioned in the scripture reading, one of the roles of the husband is that of a servant. What are some creative ways that a husband can be a loving leader-servant?

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In the reading from Ephesians verse 31 says, "For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife and the two will become one." What does the phrase, "and the two will become one" mean to you?

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In verse 33 it says, "every husband must love his wife as himself and every wife must respect her husband." What does "respect her husband," mean to you?

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