

The Glorious Calling of the Husband in Marriage (Dutch)

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of God's love and understanding in the husband's role within marriage to restore godly standards and build strong family relationships.

Duration: 1:22:27

Scripture: Ephesians 6:4

Topics: "Marriage And Family", "Christian Leadership"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being aware of Satan's attacks on valuable aspects in God's kingdom, such as marriages and the need to uphold God's standards. It highlights the role of fathers as leaders in bringing up children in the fear of God, urging honesty, humility, and mercy in parenting. The message stresses the significance of not judging others but showing mercy, as mercy triumphs over judgment in God's eyes.

Transcript

If you look at the things that Satan attacks, you know the things that are most valuable in God's kingdom. If you see the things that Satan counterfeits, also you know the things that are valuable in God's kingdom. We know there are a lot of counterfeit gifts of the Holy Spirit.

That means the original gifts of the Holy Spirit must be very valuable. And in the last 50 to 100 years, there has been a massive attack by Satan on marriages in Christianity. About a hundred years ago, divorce was almost unheard of in Christendom.

But now it has become so common that it's accepted. Even people are in the Christian ministry who are divorced. The standards of God's word have been thrown away.

And the Bible says that if a man cannot bring up his own children, how can he take care of God's church? Even that standard is thrown away. So it looks as if Christians have gradually rejected God's word. And that is one of the reasons why there has been a decline in the standards of Christianity in every church.

And if you are serious about knowing God's purpose for this particular time, it is to restore those standards that have been lost in Christianity. The standards of godliness in our personal life, the standard of husband-wife relationships in our family life, and the standards that we need to establish in our homes for

raising our children. It's only then that we can build a church as God wants it to be built.

We can say that building a church is like building a three-story building. The foundation is the most important of every building. And the foundation for building the church is the perfect love that God has for us.

The unconditional love of God. If we are not rooted and grounded in that love, we'll never be able to do God's work. We'll never be able to live a holy life if we are not rooted and grounded in that love of God for us.

I find many Christians living under condemnation, and discouragement, and depression, and always the reason is they are not sure that God loves them. And I'll tell you something, if you are not absolutely sure of God's unconditional love for you, you will find it very difficult to love your wife. You'll find it very difficult to love other people.

If you have difficulty loving your wife, it's like you've got a crack in the second floor. The reason is some problem in the foundation. A good engineer looking at a crack in the wall will say, hey, there's something wrong with the foundation.

The three stories are like this, on this foundation of God's perfect love for us, the first story is our personal walk of holiness with God. You can't build anything unless you build that first. Then on top of that, you build a second story.

That is if you're married, your family life. On top of that, we build a church, the third story. Now there are a few cases like Paul who are called to a single life, but they are rare.

At least 98% of Christians are called to a married life. There may be a 2% who are called to a single life by God, but for most of us, the second story is our family life. You can't build a third story if you haven't built a second story.

And you can't build a second story if you haven't built the first story. And you can't build the first story unless you've got the foundation. There are so many people today, Christians, who've got no foundation, no first story, no second story, and they're trying to build the third story, the church.

No wonder the whole thing collapses. Of course it'll collapse if you don't have a foundation and two stories underneath. I found it very easy to love people when I first understood how much God loved me.

When people tell me that they find it difficult to forgive somebody, I say, think how much God forgave you. Many husbands find it difficult to forgive their wives. Why? They've forgotten how much God forgave them.

Or they've never even thought how much God forgave them. We can sing amazing grace, how good the sound has saved a wretch like me. But in your relationship with your wife, you may forget that you're a wretch who was saved by God.

We forget that we were wretches. And then it's very difficult to forgive a wife. I've often asked people this question.

When a husband and wife have a tension or a difficulty or something come between them, who, between the two, should take the first step to reconcile? What do you think is the answer? Well, it's very easy to find the answer. When God and man had a problem, a break in relationship, who took the first step to restore

that relationship? Was it man or was it God? It was God. Why? Because he was more spiritual.

So in a tension, who should take the first step to restore a relationship? The one who is more spiritual. The one who is supposed to be the head. So, if you are the head of your wife, like God is our head, and he took the first step to restore relationship with us, you have to take the first step as the head of the home to restore relationship with your wife.

But if you stand on your dignity and say, I am the head, then how can I stoop to ask to restore relationship? She must come and ask forgiveness from me. Then you are behaving not like God, but like some human dictator. And many Christian husbands have got a wrong understanding of what it means to be the head of the home.

The Bible says that the husband is the head of the wife. That means he must be the leader. But it also means that he must be very sensitive to the wife's needs.

So let me talk about both of these things. First I'll talk about being sensitive to a wife's needs, and then I'll talk about leadership. See, when it talks about the head, it's talking about the brain that controls the whole body.

The Bible says very clearly that the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church. We know that very well-known passage in Ephesians chapter 5. Let me turn there, Ephesians chapter 5. Here, first of all, there is an exhortation to the wife. And very often, husbands make a mistake here.

As I've been stressing these days, let's read the Bible slowly. And when you read the Bible slowly, you will discover certain things that you never saw in the last 25 years. And when you read the Bible slowly, you will discover certain things that you never saw in the last 25 years.

I love to show people things in the Bible they've never seen in all their life. And now, today, I will show you something from Ephesians 5, which many of you have never seen in your whole life. In Ephesians 5, verses 22 to 33, In Ephesians 5, verses 22 to 33, Where does it tell a husband, you are the head of your wife? Where does it tell a husband, you are the head of your wife? Listen to my question.

Where does it tell the husband, you are the head of your wife? Please read carefully and see if it says anywhere there. I don't find it anywhere. Nowhere.

So where did husbands get this idea from? You say, oh, it's written in verse 23. No, no, no, no, no. That is written for wives.

Please be careful. Verse 22 says, wives be subject to your husbands because the husband is the head of the wife. Let me ask you a question.

Do you read letters written to somebody else? Would you open a letter which is addressed to somebody else? I hope not. If you are a Christian, you don't read other people's letters. If God writes something to your wife, you shouldn't be opening it.

So a wholehearted husband, when he reads Ephesians 5, verses 22 to 24, he says, that's not for me, that's for somebody else's letter, let me go on to what God is writing to me. Have you ever seen the Bible like that? That's what I say. When you read the Bible slowly, you discover amazing things you never even knew were there.

In fact, most husbands in the world prefer to meditate on verse 23 than all the other things written for them. They are reading a letter that God wrote to somebody else. I've been married for 41 years.

And I'm very happy in marriage for 41 years. I have four sons who are all following Jesus. They are all married, all happy.

Wholehearted girls who also want to follow Jesus. And they are all seeking also to serve the Lord and build local churches. But I have never gone to my wife and said to her, I'm the head of this house, you better listen to me.

That's not my business. Have you ever heard Jesus come to you and say, listen, I'm your head, you better listen to me? He doesn't talk to us like that. How did Jesus win your heart? We are the bride of Christ.

Like we are husband to our wife, Christ is our husband. I know how Jesus won my heart. He won my heart so thoroughly that I'd do anything in the world for him.

It was never by coming to me and saying, I'm your head, you better listen to me. It was by loving me, forgiving me, serving me, being long-suffering with me, being patient with me, overlooking my faults, and even when I slipped up so many times, forgiving me. There's a song in English which says, Jesus looked beyond my faults and he saw my need.

I like that. He didn't look at my faults, he looked beyond my faults and saw my need. Many a time when your wife is in a bad mood, look beyond her faults and see her need, just like Jesus saw your need.

That is how a husband is to love his wife like Christ loved the church. It says here that the husband must care for his wife, verse 28, just like he cares for his own body. In verse 28 it says that husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies.

He who loves his wife, loves himself. So what does it mean to love my own body? You know, that's what the head does. I'll give you an example.

If a small mosquito comes and sits on my hand, just a little bite, you know what, my head gets a signal immediately. It doesn't take five minutes for the head to realize that one mosquito is sitting there. It's immediate.

And immediately the head sends a signal to the other hand to strike it off. Or if an insect is crawling on your hand, immediately the head senses it. Or if your hand is injured, immediately the head senses it.

And immediately the head says, we've got to do something, we've got to wash it, put some medicine on it. That is what it means to be the head of your wife. To be sensitive to when she's hurt.

To be sensitive to her feelings and her pains and struggles. Do you want to be the head? Be the type of head in your body. Your brain cares so much for your body.

I mean, it's caring for your body all the time. The body says, I'm hungry now. The brain begins to act and say, okay, let's go, there's some food now.

Or the body says, I'd like a cup of coffee or a cup of tea now. And the brain says, okay, let's find out where's the cup of tea and coffee for the body, let's go and get it. The brain is all the time working to see how to take care of this body.

That is an aspect of the headship of the husband, which very few husbands think about. Many husbands only think, I'm the head means I am the king here. I'll come to that in a minute.

I'm not neglecting it. But I think there are two things. The head is sensitive to the needs of the wife and then the head can be the leader of the wife.

You know, these are like two legs we stand on. It's very difficult to stand on one leg for too long. We need both legs.

And the reason why so many husbands are unstable is because they are only standing on one leg. And that means I'm the king in the house. You keep emphasizing that.

But there's another leg God has given us. And that is how the head is sensitive, the brain is sensitive to every need in the body. Maybe when you perspire and you're dirty, the head says, hey, the body needs a shower.

Every need in the body. When the body is tired, the head says, okay, the body needs to sleep now. I mean, this is how a husband must be.

My wife is tired now, she needs a little rest. And maybe she's so tired that I should not pressurize her to have sex with me now. Because she's tired today.

See, this is being sensitive. And I tell you, you'll have a wonderful relationship if you build up this leg of yours as a husband. And not only a wonderful relationship with your wife, but a wonderful relationship with God.

We read in 1 Peter 3, what I'm telling you is written in scripture. See, Peter was a married man. Paul, who wrote Ephesians, was not a married man.

Peter, writing about husbands, is a married man. So he's writing from experience. Paul was not writing from experience.

Now, what does Peter say as an experienced husband? I think Peter was maybe around 60 years old when he wrote 1 Peter. We know he was a married man even when Jesus came. He was such a good married man that he even allowed his mother-in-law to stay in his house.

Not many husbands would permit that. Peter was a good man. God chooses good people to be his apostles.

But he was a man who was very considerate to his wife. Maybe his wife was the only daughter of her mother. Maybe her father had died.

There was nobody to care for the mother. We face many situations like that in India. So Peter said, yeah, sure, let your mom come and stay with us.

And he says here in 1 Peter 3.7 And you know this man is speaking from his life. You husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way as with a weaker vessel. I'm supposing something very small happens in the house, something goes wrong.

And your wife is very upset. And you say, who's bothered about this small thing? It's not because you are more spiritual than your wife. It's because you're a man and she's a woman.

And if you can lift 50 kilos and your wife can only lift 20 kilos What does it prove? It proves you're a man and she's a woman, that's all. Nothing else. In the same way, if you can bear a greater burden and she can't bear so much, it just proves she's a woman, that's all.

But sometimes we don't think that. We expect our wives to be as strong as we are. They're not.

They cry more easily. A few cents lost somewhere disturbs them. Where men are not bothered even if we lost a few euros.

That's not because you love money less than her. But it's because women's nature is made like that, that they are made sensitive to small things. They need that nature because they are created to be mothers.

That's why when a small baby cries, you as a husband don't even know why the baby is crying but the mother knows immediately. I know that from my experience. I had four babies at home.

When they cried, I didn't know why they were crying. But my wife knew. I didn't know.

So, God has made the woman in such a way she has to be sensitive to the babies. And that affects her whole nature. She's sensitive in everything.

That's why they cry so easily. That's why they are worried about small, small things which don't even bother us men. It's got nothing to do with spirituality.

So, all the illusions that you have had that you are more spiritual than your wife, I just want to puncture that balloon and bring it down to earth. Just because she's a woman. And if you are really spiritual, you will understand that.

If you don't understand that, you are not spiritual. So, it says here, live with your wife in an understanding way. Understanding what? That she is a weaker vessel.

That's what it says here. So, a spiritual husband is one who recognizes that she is a weaker vessel. You know, just like you look at a little child and you say, hey, that child is weaker than me.

And so you help that child when he's trying to do something which he can't do alone. It's the same with a woman. To be understanding and considerate.

Thoughtful about the other person. I never realized what a selfish person I was until I got married. When I was single, I thought I was very spiritual.

Then I got married and I discovered I was not so spiritual. One of the blessings we get through getting married, we come down to earth. We float around in the heavens when we are single, thinking we are very spiritual and holy.

And then you get married and you come down to earth and realize you are not so spiritual after all. That's what I found and it was very good for me. It's good for us to humble ourselves and have a sober estimate of ourselves.

There is tremendous amount of selfishness in all of us. But you say, isn't there selfishness in all of us? Isn't there selfishness in the women too? Of course there is. How shall we get rid of that? By being an example.

Jesus spoke about the shepherd and the hireling. And where does the shepherd go? The shepherd always goes in front of the sheep. I live in a part of Bangalore city where very often sheep are driven down the roads to be slaughtered in the slaughterhouse for meat.

And I see a man driving 50, 60 sheep down the road to the slaughterhouse. And I see a man driving 50, 60 sheep down the road to the slaughterhouse. And he is always behind them with a stick.

I know, that's not a shepherd. That fellow is not leading the sheep to green pastures. He is pushing the sheep to be killed.

So whenever I see a husband behind his wife pushing her this way, that way, do this, do that. He is not a shepherd. He is pushing her to be killed somewhere.

He is not wanting to be crucified himself. He wants her to be crucified. The good shepherd goes in front of the sheep.

We are to love our wives like Christ loved the church. I've been a Christian for 50 years. Jesus never came once behind me and pushed me and said, Come on, move.

Not even when I was lazy or sluggish or backsliding. He always drew me by example. He said, Follow me.

He never said, Come on, move forward. That's the sergeants in the military who say that. Jesus is not a sergeant in the military.

He is a shepherd. I tell you, many husbands are military sergeants more than shepherds. Do you feel your wife is not wholehearted? Be an example.

And let her follow you. Be a good shepherd. Follow me as I follow Christ.

And if it takes a little time for her to follow, be patient. Think how long it took for you to follow Christ. Think how slow you have been to be wholehearted.

Then you can be patient with her. And if she keeps making mistakes, forgive her. Because Christ has forgiven you so much.

And another way to live in an understanding way with your wife, it's all in verse 7, written by a married man who is writing from his experience of 30 years of married life. First of all, recognize she's a weaker vessel. Secondly, give her honor as an equal heir of the grace of life.

to live in an understanding way with my wife means I give her honor. As a queen who sits with me as the king on the same throne. No, she's not.

Peter is not saying that she's the queen and you're a slave. No, the husband is not to be a slave of the wife. Yeah, there are some husbands like that.

That is not Christian marriage. No, the husband must be the king in the home. But he must treat his wife like a queen and not as a slave.

So, don't let the wife boss you and rule you but treat her like a queen. That's the meaning of this verse. Fellow heirs of the grace of life.

Now, if you don't live in an understanding way with your wife the Bible says that when you pray, God will not hear you. It says that in verse 7. When you try to pray, your prayers will be blocked. Is it so important that I should live in an understanding way with my wife? For God it is so important that he says I won't even listen to your prayer if you don't do that.

I mean, if God doesn't listen to your prayers you're going to be a useless Christian. And I believe that's why many Christian men are useless Christians. We cannot live if God doesn't answer our prayers.

We cannot live if God doesn't answer our prayers. If you think that you can live on earth as a Christian without answered prayer you've got to be crazy in your head. Do you know what it means for prayers not being heard by God? Do you know what it means for prayers not being heard by God? That means you dial God's number on the telephone and God says I'm not going to pick up that phone.

See, prayer is like telephoning God. God, I've got a problem. It's ringing, ringing, ringing.

He's not picking it up. Because God sees the caller ID and says, oh, it's that person. He doesn't live in an understanding way with his wife.

Let the phone ring. Let the phone ring. Do you feel that your prayers are not answered for that reason? Many Christians have got so used to the fact that their prayers are not answered.

They've accepted it as normal. It's not normal. It's normal to get prayers answered.

I'm not saying God will give us everything. Sometimes God's answer is no. But I know as a father when my children come and talk to me I reply.

I may say sometimes, no, my son, I can't give you that. But I will answer. Answer maybe yes or no or wait.

But if there's no answer that's like my son ringing me up from a long distance and I don't even pick up the phone. Why wouldn't I pick up the phone when my son is ringing me? It's a very serious thing. Why doesn't God pick up the phone when you telephone and say, Lord, I want to talk to you? It says here, the phone line is cut.

Why is it cut? Because you did not live in an understanding way with your wife. So, do you see how important this is? This is a married man. This is not theory.

This is Peter, who's married for 30 years, who's writing this. He's no doubt writing from his own experience. Recognize your wife is weaker.

Don't look down on her. Be a leader. Tell her, follow me, don't push her.

Let her grow at her own pace. You know, the Bible says that sometimes something may be a sin for you, but not a sin for another person. Many people don't understand that.

The same thing can be a sin for you, but not a sin for another person. You know that the Bible says that? Let me show you, Romans chapter 14. This is one of the great chapters that husbands and wives need to recognize.

This is concerning eating food offered to idols. It says when your conscience troubles you that about this meat is offered to idols, I shouldn't eat it. It says here, when your conscience troubles you, that about this meat is offered to idols, I shouldn't eat it.

But another brother, his conscience doesn't trouble him. He says, what is an idol? It's just a block of wood. He eats it.

But you don't eat it. In those days, all the meat was first hung up in the idol temple and then sold in the market. So if you had a problem with food offered to idols, you would be a vegetarian.

But another Christian would say, what is that idol? It's just a block of wood. Somebody has made the man's face there. It's not anything.

It's not a god. So what if they hang up the meat before a block of wood? For me, I have only one God, the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm going to eat it.

And it says one should not judge the other. But it says here, verse 23, if you have a doubt in your heart when you're eating that meat, then you're not eating from faith. And then it is sin.

So you eat with a bad conscience, it is sin. The other brother eats the same meat and it's not sin. Verse 22, last part, happy is the one who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

So here is the same thing being done by two brothers. One brother praises the other. One praises the Lord and it's not a sin for him.

Another brother feels uneasy about it and it's a sin for him. Because whatever is not from faith is sin. So what I'm trying to say is that it all depends on the measure of light we have.

There are two types of sin in our life. One is conscious sin and the other is unconscious sin. Unconscious sin is the part of a sin which we don't understand.

I may be doing something wrong and I don't know it's wrong. But if you know it's wrong and you do it, that's more serious. If I deliberately stamp my brother's foot, that's a sin.

Conscious sin. But if I accidentally step back and step on his foot, he still feels the pain, but it is not a conscious sin. There is a difference between the two.

So where some area we have light, what we do wrong is conscious. If another person doesn't have light on it, it's not conscious sin. And God ignores it.

After the person grows up a little bit, they may realize it's sin. How does this help us in married life? There may be some things in the home which I feel I can't do because it disturbs my conscience. But maybe my wife doesn't have that light.

She feels it's perfectly alright to do it with a clear conscience. It is not sin for her. All husbands must recognize that.

That something which is sin for you may not be sin for her. So don't judge her. That's what the Bible says, don't judge.

In the Christian life is a life of growth. When we are born again, it's like joining the kindergarten in school. We should grow every year.

First grade, second grade, third grade. All the way to high school and college. We can go to PhD in the Christian life.

Yeah, we can do that. But supposing you have two children. One is in the sixth grade.

The other one is in the first grade. Obviously the person in the sixth grade knows many things in mathematics. And the person in the first grade doesn't know all those things.

So if the person in the sixth grade despises the person in the first grade, saying, ah, you don't know all these things. Who is the fool there? Oh, definitely, the older boy. He is a fool.

You are in the sixth grade. Naturally you will know more than somebody in the first grade. See, that's what we must recognize in husband-wife relationships.

Maybe God has given you more light in some area. Maybe she hasn't come up to your grade in school, spiritually. So don't expect her to see those things so clearly as you see it.

Give her time. In five years she will also come to the sixth grade and understand it. But if you expect her to be in the same grade as you, then you are the fool.

See, I am nearly 70 years old. If I expect my 30-year-old son to have the wisdom I have, who is the fool, he or me? I am the fool. Do you understand that? That people, not only our wives, but even other believers, are at different levels in their Christian life.

And if you understand that, you will not judge people. Because when you see somebody doing something, I am not talking about obvious sins like murder, adultery, which everybody knows is wrong. I am talking about so many other areas where we don't all have the same light.

There can be differing opinions on how we should do things. How we should do this or how we should do that. Maybe you plan to go on a picnic.

And there are different opinions between husband and wife, how we should do these things. This has got nothing to do with sin. It's got to do with how each person was brought up in their own home.

For example, someone was brought up in a rich home and they could always give money. And maybe your wife was brought up in a very poor home and had to be very careful with expenditure. And you may think you are very generous and she is very stingy.

No. It's just that you were brought up in a richer home and she was brought up in a poor home. Or it could be the other way.

Maybe she was brought up in a rich home and you grew up in a poor home where you had to be very careful with money. And you may think, oh, she is very careless with all her expenditure. No.

She spent twenty years or twenty-five years living that way. And you are trying to change her in one year. See, we are so foolish sometimes.

It can work both ways. You say, well, doesn't the wife also need to recognize that? Of course. But you've got to be the leader and show her the way.

If you want her to be patient, you've got to show her how to be patient with her. The body doesn't control the head. The head must control the body.

The sheep doesn't go in front and show the shepherd the way. So this is what it means to be sensitive as a head to the needs of the wife. Now I want to speak about the other leg.

The other leg is, the head is also the one who controls the body. The hand doesn't tell the wife or the head what to do. The head tells the hand to do what is best for the body.

So, the husband is like Christ in the church, the leader in the home. And God has given him that position. Let's turn to Genesis chapter 3. And you see the beginning of sin in the world.

How did sin begin in the world? Who? You say because a woman ate from the fruit which was forbidden. Yeah, in one sense that is true. But I want you to see it in another way.

Sin came into the world because a man did not stop his wife from listening to the devil. Have you ever seen it that way? Where was Adam when Eve and the devil were having this conversation? Was he wandering around somewhere else in the garden? No. They were walking hand in hand.

They were happy. I can't imagine Adam wandering away from a newly married wife. They walked towards the tree of knowledge and Adam as the head of his home should have immediately said darling, let's not go here, let's go there.

That's where the failure began. Why did he go and stand in front of that tree? He heard God directly saying don't ever touch that. As far as we know it was God told only Adam that and Adam told his wife what God said.

Can you read that in Genesis 2.16? God gave that command about not eating from the tree of knowledge to Adam before Eve was created. So Adam heard it and he told his wife God has told us not to eat from this tree. So when they wandered in the garden and came near that tree as the head, as the one who heard God directly should have told his wife Eve, we shouldn't be here.

Let's get away from here. This is a thing which God has told us not to eat. If we stand around here we'll be tempted.

Adam failed. That's why sin came. Sometimes a husband fails and that's why the woman sins.

Afterwards you can blame the wife like Adam Yeah, this woman took the fruit and gave it to me. But Adam should have said I made a mistake by stopping there in front of the tree when I should have moved on. See, we don't see our own fault easily.

We see the fault our wives make. But go behind that fault and ask yourself did you make some fault which made her make that sin? The Bible says let every man examine himself and you may discover that behind that there may have been a reason why she fell. One day maybe you find your wife very discouraged and gloomy and because of that she gets upset.

You say why are you so upset? Why are you so gloomy? Yeah, it's easy to find fault. But it may be because in the previous days you never had any fellowship with her. You were so busy with the newspaper or the computer or your work and all that that you had no time to encourage your wife.

And you don't see that as the fault that you are supposed to encourage your wife every day and you never did it. And then you get upset with her because one day she is moody or angry. But you don't go behind that and say well maybe I should have encouraged her the last few days.

Like Adam never saw his fault in not moving on from that tree. It says in Genesis 3 verse 6 that the last part her husband was with her, right next to her. He was standing right next to her.

So close. Now picture this in your mind. Adam and Eve come to the tree.

First mistake Adam doesn't say let's move on. Now you see the second mistake. There's a serpent in that tree.

Oh the devil is clever. He knows if I talk to Adam I may not succeed. So let me talk to the wife.

And so the devil talks to Eve. Adam should have been alert. Hey, this is dangerous.

Somebody is telling my wife to eat from this tree. He should have grabbed his wife and said let's go. He didn't do it.

He did not take his place as the head of the home. That's the second mistake. You got to lead your wife away from danger.

Not just rule her and tell her what to do. Lead her away from sin. And he just watched this conversation going on.

Oh the devil is saying this, my wife is saying this. The devil is saying this and my wife is saying this. Is he a man or a woman? He behaved like a woman there.

He allowed Eve to take over the leadership of that home. He allowed his wife to take the single most important decision that any human being ever took in the history of humanity. To lead the whole human race away from God.

Was it Eve's fault to take the fruit? Yes. But it was Adam's fault that he didn't stop her as the head. And then she gives it to him like a fool he also eats.

I've often wondered why did Adam eat that fruit? I think this is the reason. If I refuse my wife will get upset. So for the sake of peace in the home let me do what my wife says.

Have you ever taken a decision like that? For the sake of peace in the home let me do what my wife says even if it is not the spiritual thing. Then you are not a leader. Then God is not your head, your wife has become your head.

Very often a wife may tell you to do something which is not spiritual. You don't have to follow her. Jesus said if you love your wife more than you love him you are not fit to be his disciple.

No, we have to love Jesus more than we love our wives. We need to say sorry, I don't agree with that. I'm not going to do that.

Let's take a practical case. Supposing your wife is very upset with somebody else in the church. And at home you are both alone about to go to bed and she keeps telling you something.

And your wife keeps telling you how bad somebody in the church is. He's like this and he's like this and he's like this. What should you do? Should you tell her to shut up? No, I wouldn't advise that.

You know what I advise people? Think of it like your wife is vomiting. It's better she vomits into your lap than go and vomit into somebody else's lap and neighbor's lap. You tell me, supposing your wife is physically vomiting.

Would you rather she vomits into your lap or into your neighbor's lap? Now vomiting is not a good thing. But supposing your wife is upset and she's vomiting. I say, okay, vomit into my lap.

I can go and clean myself up. See, because women are under pressure sometimes. And they want to express themselves because they are a weaker vessel.

Let her say everything to me. Like the old saying goes, it comes in through one ear and goes out through the other ear. I don't keep it because I don't want to listen to all this rubbish.

I'm going to keep my heart pure. So I let it all go out. But she's happy that she's vomited everything to me.

And I'm happy because I washed it all away. And we are both happy and can go to sleep peacefully. But if I tell her to shut up, first of all, we'll have attention.

And secondly, she'll go and vomit into some sister's lap tomorrow morning. And that can cause more problems. So be a wise brain.

And don't live by rules. Love your wife, recognize she's a weaker vessel. But don't let her lead the home astray.

Don't let her lead your children astray. That's very, very important. And here's another failure of Adam, that after he has sinned, it says God came into the garden.

Now God knew very well that Eve had taken that fruit. Why does he go to Adam first? He should go to Eve first. Adam ate second.

But he goes to Adam first. Why? Because he's the head of the home. Did your wife do something wrong? God will come to you.

Did you take your place as the head of the home? That's what it says. He came to the man, it says, and said, Where are you? Verse 9 of Genesis 3. And what does Adam say? See, another failure in Adam is, he's not willing to admit his own fault. I want to ask you, brothers, are you willing to admit your own fault as husbands? We may be quick to blame our wives, but what about admitting your own fault? Okay, your wife did something wrong, she ate from that tree.

But what about your fault that you didn't take her away from that tree? What about your fault that you didn't take her away from that tree? What about your fault that you didn't stop that conversation between the serpent and the woman? Oh, we forget about all that. And we say to God, my wife did this wrong thing. And what is worse than that? He says to God, don't forget, you gave me this wife.

Will you give me a wife like that? What can I do? Not only complaining about his wife, but complaining against God. Have you ever said, Lord, why did you give me a wife like this? Well, Adam was the first one who said that. Instead of taking the blame himself.

So there we learn the failure. Now see a difference, another example. In the book of Job, he also had a wife.

And she also tried to lead him astray. She suggested to him, in Job chapter 2, when he had lost his children, lost all his property, lost his business, and lost his health. His wife is fed up with God.

And says in Job chapter 2, verse 9, the last part, curse God and die. That means curse God and commit suicide. Imagine a wife telling her husband to commit suicide.

There is no other meaning to that verse. How can a man choose to die? It means commit suicide. But does he listen to her? He doesn't, for the sake of peace, say something nice.

He says no. No, God is sovereign. He can give me good things, he can give me bad things, I accept it.

No wonder God could point out Job as a godly man. And I believe at the end of the book, though it's not written there, I think Job's life changed, looking at his example. Because it says there that she became again the mother of ten children.

And I'm sure she saw how God blessed her husband. It's a wonderful thing when you can be a husband like that. A leader, who keeps the headship of the house, determining that this is the way our home is going to go.

I want to say one more thing about being the leader and raising children. In Ephesians 6, verse 4, it doesn't say that parents must bring up their children, it says fathers must bring up their children. The command is only to fathers.

Not mothers. Fathers, bring up your children, this in the day of judgment. In the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 6, verse 4. See, that's not a mistake. It's always, even in Colossians, the exhortation is to fathers. Which teaches us that it's the father's responsibility to bring up children in the fear of God.

If the father fails, then the mother has to do the job. You know, it's like a father usually goes to work to earn money for the house. But if a father is sick and paralyzed, then the woman has to go to work and earn money for the house.

But that's not God's first plan. So same way here. It's the father who has the responsibility to bring up children in the fear of God.

That's a command. You instruct them and discipline them. All our children need instruction and discipline.

Now, how we discipline our children is up to each father. But the ultimate goal is that they will become godly children who follow Jesus. So, I don't say that everybody should follow my example of discipline.

You do it in your way. But the ultimate goal must be that they should be godly children. And it's the father's responsibility to pray and pray that our children will all be godly.

And it's the father's responsibility to pray that all children will be godly. You must not allow one of your children to remain behind in Egypt. Pharaoh told Moses, you men go, leave the children here.

Why did he say that? Because he wanted to kill all the children. Moses said, nothing doing. We're going to take every single child out of Egypt.

We're even going to take our cattle out of Egypt. Do you have that same burden that you're going to get all your children out of the hands of the devil? Even if one of your children is unconverted. Lay hold of God in prayer.

You know, I meet many parents whose children are unconverted. It's no use telling them, you made mistakes in your past life. That only makes them weep and condemn themselves more.

No, I say, what shall we do now? Okay, your son or daughter is unconverted. Okay, your son or daughter is 18, 19. They're not listening to God.

I say, I can give you a promise. If you and your wife will kneel down every day before God and pray for that child and say, Lord, you've got to bring that child back into your kingdom and fast and pray. And take it before God every day.

I've said to parents, I can give you a written promise that that child will come into God's kingdom. But if you're lazy and casual about it, that child will be lost and you could be the cause of it. We have about 80 or 100 children in our church back in Bangalore.

Now, I'm not the father of all of them, but I'm the spiritual father of all of them. So I have a responsibility. And I tell the fathers, I say, we have to make it our goal that not one of these 100 children will go into the devil's hands.

See, there must have been four or five hundred thousand children in Egypt that Moses had a burden for. And he had a burden that not one of those 500,000 children should be left in Egypt. Why can't I have a burden for 80 children in our church? They should all be saved.

If you're an elder in your church, you must have a burden for all the children in your church. And if you're not an elder, you must have a burden at least for your own children. Not only every one of them must be saved, they must all become disciples of Jesus.

And they must become witnesses in their generation. But that will only come through prayer. When I look at the way I've done things as a father, I have made so many mistakes.

I've sometimes disciplined my children in anger. But I've repented. I used to weep before God and say, Lord, I'm sorry, I got angry there.

I shouldn't get angry. I must discipline my children without anger. Sometimes I punished them when they didn't deserve punishment.

Sometimes I punished them too hard for something too little, for a small mistake. So I made a lot of mistakes. But one thing I can say, that my wife and I used to pray for our children.

And it was God's mercy that brought them to Christ. I'm not a perfect father. I don't think there's any perfect father in the world.

I never wanted my children to think they had a perfect father. I wanted my children to know that they had an honest father. That means, I told them, I'm sorry, I made a mistake there.

And I tell you, my children respect me highly, not because I was perfect, but because I was honest. I say, I'm sorry, that wasn't right, what I did. So they grew up knowing, Dad is not perfect, but at least he's honest.

None of us are perfect, brothers. But it's not difficult to be honest. Don't try to present to your children an image of a perfect man who never makes a mistake.

Because you know that's a lie. We're not like that. We are not perfect.

But let them see an honest, humble father. Who acknowledges his mistake readily. And that will speak to them more than all your strictness.

And let's be merciful to others. Let's not judge one another. If your children are following the Lord, please, please, please, don't judge somebody else whose children are not following the Lord.

Just fall on your face and say, Lord, thank you for your mercy towards me. Fall on your face and say, Lord, please be merciful to that other brother also. Because already he must be weeping so much over his children going astray.

Don't judge him and make him feel more bad. If you see somebody else's children doing something wrong, if you can help them, help them. If you can help them, help them.

But if you can't help them, at least don't criticize them. Somebody's daughter is not dressing modestly. If you can help her to a more godly life, do it.

At least don't criticize. I decided that long ago. I'm not here to criticize other people's children.

That's not my calling in life. My calling in life is to help people. If I can't help them, I can pray for them and pray for the parents.

But never criticize and judge. God is the only judge. I don't want to sit on his throne.

But sometimes we do that. And when we do that, we suffer the consequences. One last verse.

James 2 It says in James 2 verse 13 Judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy but mercy must triumph over judgment I want to read that verse in relation to parents and children. I want God to be greatly merciful to me and to my children. And it says here If you want God to be merciful to you and your children don't judge other people.

Because if you judge other people and the way they are bringing up their children God will be merciless to you and your children. Because you don't show any mercy to somebody else. I say, Lord, please have mercy on me.

Please have mercy on my children. I want to be merciful to other people. And when you are tempted to judge it says in the last verse of that verse that mercy must triumph over judgment.

Very often mercy and judgment are struggling in our heart. Who's going to win? Shall I judge that person or be merciful to that person? The Holy Spirit says let mercy win every time. And you'll find when you do

that God will be tremendously merciful to you and your children.

But if you have the habit of sitting around the dining table criticizing, criticizing, criticizing I've seen some believers like that. They sit around the dining table They criticize the preacher. They criticize the elders.

They criticize Christians in other groups. They are wrong. They are wrong.

They are wrong. And these children grow up from the age of 5, 6, 7 listening to all this criticism around the dining table. Merciless parents who are criticizing everybody.

Those poor children get no mercy and they go astray. We need to repent of our merciless attitude to other people. Are you a critic like that? I see so many things wrong in other churches.

I want to stand for the truth. I want to warn my children about wrong paths. But I don't want to sit around the dining table and criticize other believers.

I just don't want to do that. Because I will destroy my children. So my closing word to you fathers is this and to you husbands Don't judge your wife.

Be merciful. Don't judge other people. Be merciful.

And God bless the merciful for they shall find mercy. And we want God to be merciful to our families. Let's pray.

So, if God has spoken to you remember this tremendous hope for those who are honest about their failure. We're not perfect, but we can be honest. We can say to the Lord Lord, I've really got a light on myself today.

I can't do anything about the past. But I can do something about the future. I can be merciful to people from today onwards.

I can ask forgiveness for my children for the way I've wronged them in so many ways. I can ask forgiveness for my wife for being hard and unmerciful towards her. Do it.

Do it tonight. And you'll find God is merciful to your family. Heavenly Father, help us, we pray.

We are needy people. I am a needy person. Lord, have mercy on us.

Help us to honor you in our lives. And in our homes. We know you will help us.

We know because you love us. You long for godly homes in every land. And therefore we know you will help us.

And you'll help all of our children to be converted and come into God's kingdom. Not one of them should be lost. Thank you, Father.

You'll help us. Everyone here. In Jesus' name.

Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/YUkDFcqKLTk.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-glorious-calling-of-the-husband-in-marriage-dutch/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net