

## Relationship Between Men and Women

*Marriage is a full partnership.* When we speak of marriage as a partnership, let us speak of marriage as a *full* partnership. We do not want our LDS women to be *silent* partners or *limited* partners in that eternal assignment! Please be a *contributing* and *full* partner. (78-24)

In some places in the world, there are men who do not recognize their wives with full righteousness. The man and the wife are equals; one has to be in authority, and that is the man. That does not mean that he is superior. (77-13)

*Men and women are complementary.* I have mentioned only a few of the special blessings God gives his daughters in helping them to become like him. His sons have their own special opportunities. And in his wisdom and mercy, our Father made men and women dependent on each other for the full flowering of their potential. Because their natures are somewhat different, they can complement each other; because they are in many ways alike, they can understand each other. Let neither envy the other for their differences; let both discern what is superficial and what is beautifully basic in those differences, and act accordingly. And may the brotherhood of the priesthood and the sisterhood of the Relief Society be a blessing in the lives of all the members of this great Church, as we help each other along the path to perfection. (76-23)

We had full equality as his spirit children. We have equality as recipients of God's perfected love for each of us. . . . Within those great assurances, however, our roles and assignments differ. These are eternal differences—with women being given many tremendous responsibilities of motherhood and sisterhood and men being given the tremendous responsibilities of fatherhood and the priesthood—

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"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

"Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." (Ephesians 5:22-24.)

This is no idle jest, no facetious matter. Much is said in those few words.

Paul says, "as unto the Lord."

A woman would have no fears of being imposed upon nor of any dictatorial measures nor of any improper demands if the husband is self-sacrificing and worthy. Certainly no sane woman would hesitate to give submission to her own really righteous husband in everything. We are sometimes shocked to see the wife take over the leadership, naming the one to pray, the place to be, the things to do.

Husbands are commanded: "Love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." (Ephesians 5:25.)

Here is the answer: Christ loved the Church and its people so much that he voluntarily endured persecution for them, stoically withstood pain and physical abuse for them, and finally gave his precious life for them.

When the husband is ready to treat his household in that manner, not only the wife, but also all the family will respond to his leadership.

Certainly, if fathers are to be respected, they must merit respect; if they are to be loved, they must be consistent, lovable, understanding, and kind, and must honor their priesthood. (65-07)

*Men often give women inadequate respect.* I sometimes think our own Latter-day Saint women are "needy" just because some of us are not as thoughtful and considerate of them as we should be. Our pantries can be filled with food and yet our sisters can be starved for affection and recognition. (78-28)

Our sisters do not wish to be indulged or to be treated condescendingly; they desire to be respected and revered as our sisters and our equals. I mention all these things, my brethren, not because

but the man is not without the woman nor the woman without the man in the Lord (see 1 Corinthians 11:11). Both a righteous man and a righteous woman are a blessing to all those their lives touch.

Remember, in the world before we came here, faithful women were given certain assignments while faithful men were foreordained to certain priesthood tasks. While we do not now remember the particulars, this does not alter the glorious reality of what we once agreed to. (79-19)

*The husband presides in marriage.* In the beginning when God created man and the woman, he said to the woman, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule [but I like the word *preside*] over thee." (Genesis 3:16.) (75-24)

*The husband rules only by persuasion.* "No power or influence . . . ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood." (D&C 121:41.)

We have heard of men who have said to their wives, "I hold the priesthood and you've got to do what I say." Such a man should be tried for his membership. Certainly he should not be honored in his priesthood. We rule in love and understanding. (75-11)

*The wife follows the husband only as he follows Christ.* No woman has ever been asked by the Church authorities to follow her husband into an evil pit. She is to follow him as he follows and obeys the Savior of the world, but in deciding this, she should always be sure she is fair. (75-46)

*The husband is head of the family only insofar as he sacrifices for them.* One of the most provocative and profound statements in holy writ is that of Paul wherein he directs husbands and wives in their duty to each other and to family. First, he commands the women:

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.