

PRINCIPLED PATRIARCH #20 – OF UNDERSTANDING

*By Dr. Stephen Phinney*

For those of us men who are married, there is a dreaded reality of having our prayers hindered. A married patriarch is to live with his wife in an understanding way, honoring her, and treating her as a co-heir of a life filled with grace. God tells us in 1 Peter 3:7 that if he doesn’t, his prayers will be hindered.

It is my experience as a counselor that most men go through their lives thinking God is blessing their every move, in spite of having wives who are embittered toward them. Well my friend, it is only a matter of time before God will “close in” on a man who functions in this manner. God has a special place in his heart for women and He is very quick to protect them. God expects us to learn the ways of woman, in order to live with them in an understanding way. It doesn’t matter how bitter or “rebellious” they are, it is our responsibility to lead them in the way of understanding. This happens through the way we care for them.

Women are prone to sudden fear when they see their husbands, fathers, or leaders operating in selfishness and not protecting them. A woman will do whatever is necessary to care for herself. To expect a woman to submit to a patriarch who is primarily interested in his own agenda becomes a difficult request. Even though God requires women to do so, for many, it is their greatest challenge. Men need to wake-up and realize the difficult and defenseless position a woman is in when she is required by God to entrust her life to a man, and many times, a selfish one. This is why men are required to live with their wives in an understanding way. Men need to be reminded how difficult it is to give up mother, father, childhood home, and their former way of life to join the full interest and life of his woman. It is almost awe inspiring!

All of us, as patriarchs, should have a deep understanding that a woman, by her own free and willing choice, places her life in the hands of a man who is to care for her all the days of her life. This comes with great sacrifice – her life.

A man taking special care and consideration of his wife, to make her joyful and at peace, will set himself up for a long and contented life. A man who does not do this will spend his valued resources fighting to “keep his little woman happy.” Women who are not loved within an understanding way, will “milk” their man for everything he is worth. If a woman is not loved and cared for internally, she will - without doubt - turn to externals to find happiness. If a man wants to lose everything he has, all he has to do is live with his wife in a thoughtless or reckless way.

A man who lives with his wife in an understanding way will serve her by meeting her every need, while strategically planning to meet her wants. A responsible leader not only knows the difference between a woman’s needs and wants, but knows how to fulfill them in God’s timing.

Allow me to offer to you a counseling technique. Men who place a special emphasis on their wives submitting to them are admitting to male chauvinism. Men, who are quick to find new ways to serve their wives, are men who understand the language of woman. This kind of man leads by humble service – he leads by empowering those he leads.

To keep it simple, a woman exhibits the characteristics of a king, but as a queen. She is the representative of the authority she serves, which means she must have all the same qualities he has, yet under submission. There is nothing inferior about a woman. In fact, without her, the patriarch is incomplete. He needs her qualities to function in the fullness of his own.

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