

What You Said

Before we get to Proverbs 31 and Ephesians 5 we need to set the stage. Let's start right at the beginning of the marriage. I don't know exactly what was said for vows when you got married, but it probably followed roughly along these lines:

"...you promise to love, honor, cherish and protect her, forsaking all others and holding only unto her ..." and

"I _____, take you _____, to be my wedded wife. To have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness or in health, to love and to cherish 'till death do us part...."

Let's start taking this thing apart and see what we really have goin on - right off the start line you're giving your word/promise/oath/bond/pledge to a bunch of stuff for a term of... life! Sounds like rather serious stuff spanning a potentially long time frame. Just what did you agree to anyway - do you really know??

To begin with, you've just agreed to this woman occupying the position of partner/helpmate in your household. That's what the term 'wedded wife' means. It does NOT mean bitch, whore, go-fer, punching bag (verbal onslaughts and emotional draughts included), slave, or any of a host of other similar lies. It is the #2 position in the household. She is answerable to God/Jesus first and foremost, and THEN to you! Sorry Bubba, but it's true... God/Jesus is the CEO (Creating & Eternal Officer) and you are merely vice president in charge of you're little household, and answerable to the CEO also as a matter of fact. She is your 'one and only' in her role as wife/partner/helpmate.

'To have and to hold...' that sounds promising doesn't it. Not so fast - that still refers to the office, and not the person!! According to Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible there are around four dozen words dealing with the words 'have' and 'hold' and they encompass a few hundred verses, so quoting could get cumbersome. Webster's Dictionary has rather long drawn out definitions too, so I'll paraphrase a bit, OK? Both words deal with control and containment. Stop drooling - this ain't goin where you think.... we're still talking about the office here. As leader of the household you set the tone, parameters and conditions for the office as well as the household in general.

That's right - it all falls back onto you as head of the household!! There is both help and hope though in the other words you spoke in your vows. Love and cherish are words of strong yet tender feelings. Surely you felt those things for a while before the ceremony. Cultivate and nurture them continually by your actions and attitudes. Honor refers to holding someone in high regard or esteem and recognizing they have great value. Does your household reflect that. Is your environment conducive to having things and people of significant value in and around it? If you can manage to keep these things in mind as you make decisions you will stand a greater chance of creating the kind of life you want. Lastly comes protection, and this one can get a little testy if you're not careful.

We're not meant to live in a bunker without contact with anything else. This naturally creates a vulnerability for security and protection. I believe the first thing to realize is that as long as you're doing your best to go by what the Word says, the heavy security issues will be taken care of by 'upper management'. You don't need to micro-manage the what, where and who of every single thing. When you create and attend to a loving, understanding and supportive environment free of unwholesome constraints you will be amazed how wonderful life can become together. We are all meant to grow and try and learn and enrich our souls. That's how God meant for things to be as far back as back goes. We're the one's who have messed it all up by not understanding, misconstruing and trimming God's word, and hence his intent for us.