

Biblical Roles of Men & Women in Marriage

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Outline

- Why discuss biblical roles in marriage?
- Does Scripture identify specific roles for the husband and wife? What are they? What are the roles intended to reflect?
- Cultural vs biblical

Before we Begin

- Time doesn't allow an in-depth study of this topic.
- Content in this webinar is meant to encourage / challenge us to live into God's roles in our marriage, not to win an argument.
- We need to accept none of us live into these roles perfectly and we can continue to learn and grow.
- We will not be able to cover all your questions.

Why Discuss Biblical Roles in Marriage?

Ephesians 5:31-32 "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

Genesis 1:26-27 "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over...every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them."

Husbands

Specific Role for Husband from Creation

1 Corinthians 11:3, 8 "...the head of every man is Christ; the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God...For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man."

Genesis 2:21-23 "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

Specific Role for Husband from Creation

- There is a clear order established by God.
- Adam's rib was the source through which Eve was formed.
- Head is reflective of order, not value. Adam is not superior to Eve.
- Head doesn't mean that woman is subordinate to/less than man (God's rule).

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Sin's Distortion – Humans Seek to Rule

Genesis 3:16 "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

- Husbands need to guard against seeking dominion over wife or disengagement (Man's rule)
- Wives need to guard against unhealthy dependence or rejection of God's order (Man's rule).

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Husband's Role – Reflective of Christ

Ephesians 5:25-27 "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

- Jesus loved and gave for the benefit of the Church.
- Jesus taught the exercise of power should only be done in service of others, not to please self (John 13:1-17)
- True headship takes responsibility to lead and set an example of love while providing protection in the home, winning the wife's obedience to God and presenting her to God without blemish.

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Examples of Husband's Biblical Role

Situation	Ruling Leader	Passive Non-Leader	Servant-Leader
Purchasing a new car	Purchases without considering needs of wife and family.	Puts off discussion, shopping and research is done by wife alone, becomes non-communicative or angry when doesn't like choice.	Engages wife, make a joint decision based on input and desires of wife, places needs of family / wife before his own.

Preparing for Marriage (Rainey Et al., 2010)

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Wives

Specific Role for Wife from Creation

Gen 2:23 "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

Gen 2:18 "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."

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Specific Role for Wife from Creation

- Eve is the sameness (bone of my bones) and otherness (woman).
- “Help meet” implies making up for something lacking in strength or characteristic.
- Same word used in *Psalms 33:20* “Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is **our help** and our shield.”

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Wife's Role – Reflective of Church and Christ

Ephesians 5:21-24 “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 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.”

- Submission begins to each other in reverence to God.
- Submission is a gift given, not forced or coerced.
- This doesn't call wives to put husbands in place of Christ.
- Jesus didn't become less divine through submission (*Phil. 2*) rather his divinity was revealed in his perfect submission.

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Examples of Women in Scripture

Proverbs 31:11 “The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.”

- Attributes of the woman in Prov. 31 - generous, proactive, industrious, strong.
- Her words can “build up the heart of her husband” – power of her impact as an encourager in his life.

Titus 2:4 “That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,”

- Role of modeling for next generation
- Clear-minded/focused love for family provides a foundation for stability in a marriage.

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Cultural Doesn't Necessarily Mean Biblical

Consider the messages that are described by culture:

- men like blue and are unemotional / women like pink and like babies
- men get dirty and are mechanics / women bake and clean

Is it a possibility that sometimes our view is smaller than God's?

- Was David more of a man when he was killing Goliath or playing a harp and writing poetry?
- What about men gifted with “cunning works” (*Ex 31:4* – artistic design)?
- Deborah led Israel to war. Ruth worked in the field. Abigail served as a life-saving mediator. Are these considered roles of a woman?

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Resources

- **Biblical Headship and Submission**
 - <https://accounseling.org/marriage/maritalenrichment/biblical-headship-submission/>
- **Roles, Responsibilities, and Decision Making in Marriage**
 - <https://accounseling.org/marriage/preparingformarriage/roles-responsibilities-decision-making-in-marriage/>
- **The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God** by Timothy and Kathy Keller

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