



Taking the Next Step With Joy: *In the Role of the Wife – Part 1*

1. We're continuing our series: Taking the Next Step with Joy & applying this year's theme to our Marriages & Families
2. This is an important series for a lot of reasons:

Input: Why are we having this series?

 - 1) Because God gave marriage (His idea) and it can/should bring glory to Him!
 - 2) Because marriage is a picture of Christ's relationship to the church
 - > the Gospel is impacted by the way we conduct our marriages and
 - 3) Because of the '*influence*' of marriage
 - > kids watching along w/extended family / bro & sisters in Christ (Church Family) / friends
3. We know we are in a spiritual warfare, and Satan doesn't want us [Men/Women] to bring ANY glory to God
 - Satan hates godly men (why do you think he goes after the leadership in the home?)
 - ❖ **Matthew 12:29** "Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong *man*? And then he will plunder his house."
 - so we have to be on the alert AND working hard to obey God's Word
4. What is "The Role of the Wife"?????
5. Remember our goal is to glorify God and to strengthen our marriages, families, and our church!
 - We cannot over emphasize this:
 - * **Strong Christians and Strong Marriages and Strong Families = Strong Churches!**
6. If your family is going to be STRONG (growing, serving, outreach, bringing glory to God), we have to be strong in our relationship with Christ & have strong marriage relationships & strong families where:
 - Problems are being solved (Gen. 3 "*bush living*" vs. 1 John 1 "*walking in the light*")
 - Jesus Christ is the CENTER of attention – Matt. 6:33; Col. 1:18
 - The goal in life is please God by being like Jesus Christ – 2 Cor. 5:9; 1 Cor. 10:31

[Open your bible's to: READ Ephesians 5:15 – 21 for the context, then vs. 22-24

- We're asking this question:

Q: Do the ladies in the church who are married understand their role as a wife and are they rejoicing about it and seeking to GROW in obedience and bring glory to God?

- true joy is found only in being what God wants us to be and doing what God wants us to do!

* 4 key concepts to help a wife understand her role in a marriage relationship

I. The Wife's PURPOSE: To be a "*helper suitable*" for her husband– Gen. 1:26-31; 2:18-25

- it's important to understand that because:

⇒ **Purpose provides direction (the course you take, where to go)**

⇒ **Purpose promotes effectiveness (how much you accomplish, meaningful)**

Example: Jesus – He understood His purpose of redemption and He accomplished that 'mission' when He cried out "IT IS FINISHED"

- we also asked the question:

A. What does this term '*helper suitable*' mean?

⇒ **Helper Suitable (NAS) = lit. one who helps** – but the term also communicate the idea of **completing, complementing, corresponding to, fitted perfectly to, custom-made to meet needs**

- This term is used several times to describe God being my "*help*" or "*helper*"

- therefore, the term is a positive term, not a negative one – no one should view the purpose of a wife as being demeaning or making the wife as inferior to her husband!

B. God designed the wife's role for a unique purpose.

- the wife's role is . . .

1. Unique in *companionship* – Gen 1:26-28; 2:18, 20, 24

- Because we are made in God's image (Gen. 1:26-27), we are relational beings, therefore, we have the ability to experience and develop relationships

> The wife is the husband's *unique* companion . . . his BEST friend . . . a 'one flesh' relationship where the wife is able to . . .

* **Help her husband intellectually . . . emotionally . . . and . . . spiritually**

2. Unique in the *sexual* relationship – Gen. 1:28; 2:25

3. Unique in *responsibilities* – Gen. 1:28

- both in WORK (keeper of the garden) and MINISTRY (use of gifts/abilities in the church)

4. Unique in *parenting* – Gen. 1:28; 2:24

- A wife needs to remember that she and her husband are a '*one flesh*' relationship, and she has great influence on the children

- Now let's take the NEXT step in understanding the Role of the Wife:

II. The Wife's **POSITION**: To be "submissive" to her husband – Eph. 5:22-24

- Many (both men/women) don't like the term *submission* due to a misunderstanding of the term!

A. Develop a biblical view of submission!

- all this STARTS with understanding that . . .

1. Submission is God's divine plan for function and order.

- it's important that we understand the definition of the term 'submit'

NOTE: The words '*be subject*' are in italics and referring back to the verb in 5:21 "be subject"

❖ Ephesians 5:21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

***submission* = a military term to voluntarily (an act of the will) "arrange yourself in rank under"; to put in subjection, to be under the authority of; take a subordinate place (position)**

- as is the case with the wife being a '*helper suitable*' is NOT a bad term, neither is *submission* a bad term and/or something to be avoided

> although we do try to avoid submission because of the effects of the curse of sin (Gen. 3)

- this may encourage you and help you in the process, but did you know that . . .

2. Submission is present in the Godhead – Gen. 1 (cf. John 1:1-3)

- Every use of the term 'God' in Gen. 1 is in the plural form – i.e. in reference to the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son [clarified in John 1:1-3], and God the Holy Spirit)
- > the Father is the functional authority and the Son and the Spirit are submissive to the will of the Father

Example: Jesus said, *"I came to do the will of Him Who sent me"* (John 6:38)

Point: The Trinity models submission!

- Therefore, if submission is present in the Godhead, and we are made in His image and likeness, submission is a part of our lives and . . .

3. Submission is good because its foundation is in the nature and character of God!

- Since God is holy (completely separate from sin), submission is good thing, not a bad thing

* Submission existed BEFORE the curse of sin!

- God told Adam the boundaries were about the Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil
- That was the problem in Gen. 3 – Adam rebelled (rejected submission to God's authority)
- Throughout the OT and into the NT, God repeatedly promises to bless obedience to His Word

> and He will judge or discipline those who reject His authority – Examples:

- ❖ **Deuteronomy 11:26 "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: ²⁷ the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today; ²⁸ and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known.**

Cf. Hebrews 12:4-11

- this will be encouraging to you ladies, but . . .

4. Submission is a way of life for every believer, not just the wife – Eph. 5:22

❖ *Ephesians 5:21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.*

- Women are not the only ones that struggle with submission, ALL of us struggle with it

Input: What is it that hinders us from being submissive as God wants us to be?

Answer: P R I D E

- Consider what some other passages say about pride:

- ❖ **Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate.**
- ❖ **Proverbs 11:2 When pride comes, then comes dishonor, But with the humble is wisdom.**
- ❖ **Proverbs 14:16 A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is arrogant and careless.**
- ❖ **Proverbs 16:5 Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; Assuredly, he will not be unpunished.**
- ❖ **Proverbs 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling.**
- ❖ **Proverbs 16:19 It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud.**
- ❖ **Proverbs 28:25 An arrogant man stirs up strife, but he who trusts in the LORD will prosper.**
- ❖ **Proverbs 29:23 A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor.**

- Daniel 4:37 "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise, exalt, and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."
- James 4:6 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore *it* says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
- 1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

- that's not ALL the verses that deal with pride, but how many verses does God have to give before we 'get it' and respond in a godly way?
- in addition to the problems with pride, and the consequences, God also clarifies that . . .

5. Submission reveals a lot about a person.

- one of the areas that need to be addressed when dealing with this subject is:

a. It reveals one's love for God – John 14:15, 31

❖ *John 14:15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."*

- But Jesus never expected anything from us that He didn't model Himself:

❖ *John 14:31 but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me.*

b. It reveals a wife's heart (inner man) & impacts her true beauty (outer man)

– 1 Pet. 3:1-6

- This passage reminds me of what the Lord said to Samuel:

❖ *1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

c. It reveals one's attitude toward God – Eph. 5:22

❖ *Ephesians 5:22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*

- In reality, a wife's response to her husband actually reveals what she thinks about God

Point: A wife's submission is NOT 1st and foremost a response to her husband, but to her God!

Q: How should these truths impact the way you respond to your husband?

[various answers]

NOTE: Men, are we making it easier for our wives to submit to us because of the way we lead, communicate, and the example we set in how we obey God, authority, etc?

6. Submission is picture of the church obeying Christ - Eph. 5:22-24

- While a wife doesn't have *perfect* authority to follow (as the church does in following Christ who is the Head of the church), she still has the responsibility to MODEL that picture to others

- This is part of giving "*glory to God*" (i.e. to give the right opinion of God!)

> since submission is even present in the Trinity, we have to give the right view of God

7. Submission is limited only by biblical mandate, not personal preference – Acts 5:29

- Paul clearly writes that "the husband is the head of the wife", and Eph. 5:24 does say ". . . to their husbands in everything"

Q: Does that mean literally EVERYTHING (no exceptions)?

A: NO – because you have to remember this:

> You interpret the Bible in light of the Bible (i.e. the unity principle)

> You can't make one passage fight against the weight of the rest of God's Word
 - Here's an important point to remember:

*** God never gives ALL of His authority to any one specific person or institution.**

❖ ***Acts 5:29 But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."***

Application: A husband has no authority to ask his wife to sin!

Input: What are some examples of areas where a husband could ask his wife to sin?

- ✓ like taxes
- ✓ legal issues when confronted
- ✓ lying about HIS or HER sin and/or what he has done or NOT done that would merit church discipline, etc.]

Conclusion:

Q: On a scale of 1 – 10, how would your husband rate your submission level?

Q: What steps do you need to take to fulfill your position as a wife?

Q: Are you willing to take those steps of growth?

NOTE: Next week, we'll be dealing with the 2nd half of our study on submission:

- B. Remember the history & future of a lack of submission (i.e. rebellion to authority)
- C. Recognize that submission is often MISUNDERSTOOD and therefore MISREPRESENTED
- D. Focus on the perfect picture of submission: The Life of Christ - 1 Peter 2:21-23