



Taking the Next Step With Joy: *In the Role of the Wife – Part 3*

Introduction:

1. This is our final study on the Role of the Wife
2. We've been emphasizing this 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. It's important for each person in the marriage relationship to FULFILL the vows they have made
4. Satan will never stop trying to destroy marriages because of the magnitude of the ramifications:
 - 1) Each person involved in the marriage
 - 2) The children upon which the impact will be made
 - 3) Extended family memberships discouraged (parents/brothers & sister)
 - 4) God's family (the church) impacted by these decisions
 - 5) ULTIMATELY: The glory of God is impacted because a broken marriage does not exemplify the relationship of Christ to the church . . . so the GOSPEL is impacted by a bad marriage

Point: There is a lot at stake here!

- > We want to do ALL we can to PREVENT problems and to SOLVE problems when they do come up
- > We all know that problems will occur
- > The issue is WHEN and HOW are you going to respond?
- 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.*
- but he also hates godly women and he tries to deceive them and get them bitter or proud!
- so we have to be on the alert AND working hard to obey God's Word

Q: What did you learn from the last two weeks of the Wife's Role and her purpose as a 'fitting helper' and her position as 'submissive' to her husband?

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 5:22-24,33; 1 Peter 3:1-6

* There are 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

* *Helper Suitable* (NAS) = lit. one who helps – completing, complementing, corresponding to, fitted perfectly to, custom-made to meet needs

- The 2nd concept is given in Ephesians 5:

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

- The wife (and her husband) needs to develop a biblical view of submission!
- And . . . remember the history & future of a lack of submission (i.e. rebellion to authority)

- today, we'll finish our series on the Wife Role by studying the 3rd and 4th biblical concepts for the role of the wife:

III. The Wife's PERSPECTIVE: To show “respect” for her husband - Eph 5:33

❖ ***Ephesians 5:33 . . . and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.***

- by perspective, we're talking her attitude, her state of mind, what she is thinking (or should be thinking) about her husband
- remember the example, it's possible to tell your child to do something, and he or she will do it, but not with the right heart attitude

Example: You tell your child to sit down – he sits down (on the outside) but he's standing up on the inside because of his attitude and the way he perceives you as a parent

- it can be the same with a wife: She's sitting down on the outside, but standing up on the inside

A. What does it mean to *respect* your husband?

Respect = to value, regard, notice, honor, prefer, esteem, praise, love, admire exceedingly.

- This not just something done on the *outside*, but rather is a focus on the inner man > the heart and mind of the wife that RESULTS in the honor, praise, esteem, etc.
- The reason some women do NOT '*respect*' their husband is because their heart is not right
- And since “*the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart*” (Matt. 1:18) . . . what comes out of the mouth would be anything but respect for her husband!

B. What are some practical ways to show respect?

1. Develop a godly attitude toward your husband – Prov. 23:7

- this starts with thinking biblically – allowing the truth of God's Word to be a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path”

Point: You have to have a biblical view of your husband (think the way God thinks – based on what God has said in His Word!) if you are going to respect him!

- the way you think about him will affect your attitude & behavior toward him

❖ **Proverbs 23:7** *For as he thinks within himself, so he is.* [respect begins in the heart (inner man)]

- sometimes this may involve you being a joyful person in spite of your emotions

Q: *Why can't we trust our emotions?*

A: *They are cursed by sin* – you can't trust your emotion OR your own thinking/rationale

* **You have to learn to be truth (principles) oriented, not feeling oriented!**

2. Practice godly communication – Col. 4:6

❖ **Colossians 4:6** *Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.*

- Many times, respect is violated with the tongue (and of course that is connected to the heart – so the tongue reveals the true condition of the heart)

- the fact that about 90% of divorces occur because of COMMUNICATION issues . . . it's important that we give serious attention to that subject

Q: *What are some ways to practice good communication – what are some 'how to's'?*

a. **Avoid using sinful/selfish speech (practice being humble and gracious)**

- Consider the DANGERS and the WARNINGS regarding pride and selfishness

❖ **Proverbs 11:2** *When pride comes, then comes dishonor, But with the humble is wisdom.*

❖ **Proverbs 16:18** *Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling.*

❖ **Proverbs 29:23** *A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor.*

❖ **Proverbs 28:25** *An arrogant man stirs up strife, but he who trusts in the LORD will prosper.*

- Jesus was NOT like that in any way – so why should we allow it

b. **Use words and tones that edify him (build him up when he fails and commend him when he succeeds) – Eph. 4:29; Rom. 13:7**

❖ **Romans 13:7** . . . 'give honor to whom honor is due'

Edify = to build up (not to tear down)

- ladies, remember the words to song: "Oh be careful little tongue what you say . . ."

c. **Ask questions instead of making accusations or bottom-line statements**

- It has been said: *Questions convict the conscience, accusations harden the heart!*

- God asked Adam, Abraham, and Job some very important questions to make them think about their situation – He could have made pointed statements, but He chose to ask a question!

d. **Express gratitude frequently (even in difficult circumstances) – 1 Thes. 5:18**

❖ **1 Thes. 5:18** *In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

- ladies, how often do you thank your husband for what he does

- it's easy to FUSS at him, but what about your gratitude?

e. **Avoid gossiping or being critical of your husband in public or privately to others who are not part of the problem or the solution!**

❖ **Proverbs 20:19** *He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, Therefore do not associate with a gossip.*

3. Choose to believe the best about him – 1 Cor. 13:7 '*...believes all things*'

- if you don't learn to love someone, you'll never get to the place of showing that person respect
- learn to love your husband the way God love you (1 John 4:11)

4. Don't try to **change** him (you don't have the ability or the authority) – Matt. 7:1-5

[READ Matt. 7:1-5

Q: *How do you respond when someone confronts you about your sin VS. someone coming to you, admitting their sin, then talking to you about yours?*

Q: *Which is easier? To which are you most likely to respond correctly?*

* Remember: *There are no vacancies in the Trinity!*

- You're not the Holy Spirit; you're not the Redeemer, only a tool in the hands of the Redeemer!
- He sins, but you sin to; you're not perfect, but neither is he – if you think he needs to change, then live in 1 Peter 3:1-6 and be an example of what change looks like!
- When you think your husband is wrong, ask the question:

Q: *How does God want to use my husband's imperfections to help me grow to be more like Christ?*

- Ask yourself the question, *What 'logs' do I need to get out of my own eyes first?*

NOTE: Ask your husband for HIS answers to that question?

C. What are the potential **results** of if a wife does not respect her husband?

- Resentment, bitterness, tension, destruction of love, discouragement, depression, hindering God's work through you
- ultimately God is not glorified and your testimony (salt/light) is hurt!

D. What are some key concepts to remember?

1. God has a **plan** and God's plan **works** – Genesis 1:31 '*very good*'

- the farther you get away from doing it God's way, the less likely you are to succeed
- His way is 'very good', but the way of the transgressor is HARD (Prov. 13:15)

2. Remember, you made a **vow** before God, so keep it! – Ecc. 5:5

❖ ***Ecclesiastes 5:5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.***

NOTE: It might be good to get your video/DVD of your wedding and watch it occasionally to remind you about what you PROMISED you would do!

3. **Deny** yourself, take up your **cross** daily, and **follow** Christ – Luke 9:23

- that's not easy for any of us (due to the curse of sin)
- but that is the TRUE PATH of discipleship and 'following Christ'

IV. The Wife's **POTENTIAL**: To be a godly "**influence**" on her husband – 1 Peter 3:1-6

[READ 1 Peter 3:1-6]

- a wife cannot change her husband, but she can be tool in God's hand to help model that change

A. Focus on being a **good example**! – 1 Peter 3:1-6

- even if your husband is an unbeliever (or living in rebellion to God), he '*may be won*' (not absolutely guaranteed; but if it's going to happen, it's going to happen this way) by the EXAMPLE of the wife!
- don't underestimate the power/impact of BEING a GODLY EXAMPLE!
- ❖ Cf. 1 Timothy 4:12 . . . *show yourself an example of those who believe.*

- the admonition to *'show yourself an example'* has application to EVERYBODY – it applies to a wife as well (toward her husband, children, fellow church members)
- > she should be seeking to *THINK* like Christ and to *ACT* like Christ in every area of her life

Example: A Proverbs 31 kind of woman (they are hard to find!)

- ❖ ***Proverbs 31:10 An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels.***
- ❖ ***Proverbs 31:28 Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying:***

- you might be thinking: I CAN NEVER BE LIKE THAT
- to some degree, you're right, but remember this principle:

*** You'll never 'arrive' but you ought to always STRIVE!**

- > and don't quit, just because you fail – admit your faults, seek forgiveness, and keep growing

B. Remember the Judgment Seat of Christ – 2 Cor. 5:10

- a wife should want to give a good account at the Judgment Seat of Christ,
- but she should also want to help her husband give a good account as well!
- ❖ ***2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.***

Q: What would Jesus say to you right now about your role as a wife?

Q: Are you helping your husband to give a good account when he stands before Jesus?

Conclusion:

- *Purpose, Position, Perspective, and Potential* – 4 P's in a pod to help a wife bring glory to God in her marriage relationship!

1. It's not what you know, it's what you do with what you know – James 1:22-25 *'doers of the Word'*

- The Holy Spirit of God wants to take the Holy Word of God and conform us to the image of the Holy Son of God!

2. Recommended Resources:

Creative Counterpart, Linda Dillow

An Excellent Wife, Martha Peace

Helper By Design, Elyse Fitzpatrick