

Lesson 10:
God's Design for Marriage

The relationship between the husband and wife is to be modeled after the relationship between Christ and the Church, His Bride.

- I. Ephesians 5:22-33 We must begin our study by defining the terms according to God's Word.
- A. “Submit” (*hupotasso*): A military term, meaning to “line up under.” v.24 “...wives should submit to their husbands in everything.” John Wesley: “in everything that is not contrary to any command of God.”¹
- B. What submission IS and what it is NOT:
- It is NOT domination. Biblical submission is something we do willingly. As soon as it is coerced or demanded, it becomes domination.
 - It is NOT weak or passive. It is taking responsibility for our own actions and decisions.
 - It is NEVER accepting abuse. In fact, the wife has a moral obligation to remove herself and her children from an abusive environment.

¹ John Wesley, *Commentary on Ephesians 5*. John Wesley's Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible. <http://bible.crosswalk.com/Commentaries/WesleysExplanatoryNotes/wes.cgi?book=eph&chapter=005>>. 1765.

- Biblical submission IS strength under God’s control.
- It IS Holy Spirit led and empowered respect for the husband’s authority and leadership in the home, based on his God-given position, not his performance.
- Submission IS seeking to do those things that build up and encourage our husband, allowing him to view himself as loved, respected and significant. Proverbs 14:1

C. Head (*kephale*): There is a heated debate over the meaning of this term: is it “authority” or is it “source”?

1. Christ is BOTH the authority (Matt. 28:18) and the source (provider) of the Church (2 Peter 1:3).
2. Based on the analogy of Christ and the Church in Ephesians 5, the husband is responsible as the provider and protector of his wife, just as Christ is for the Church.

The husband’s authority and the wife’s submission are equally valuable and essential functions within God’s design for marriage...

For the Benefit of the Wife
 For the Protection of the Children
 For the Preservation of the Family

II. What is the meaning and relevance of the “anointing”?

A. “Christ” means “Anointed One.”

1. The anointing is God’s power (through Holy Spirit) to accomplish God’s purposes (Isa.61:1). John Wesley describes it as “capacitating gifts and commissioning authority.”²
2. All believers are anointed (I John 2:20), but only for the works “which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph.2:10).
3. Christ is anointed as head (authority and source) over the Church (Eph.5:23). In the same way, the husband is anointed as head over his wife, through whom Christ’s direction, protection and provision come.

B. The anointing flows from HEAD down.

1. Exodus 29:7 Aaron was consecrated as priest. “Take the anointing oil and anoint him by pouring it on his HEAD.”
2. Psalms 133:1-2 “(Unity) is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron’s beard, down upon the collar of his robes.”

² John Wesley, *Commentary on Isaiah 61*. John Wesley’s Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible. <<http://bible.crosswalk.com/Commentaries/WesleysExplanatoryNotes/wes.cgi?book=isa&chapter=061>>.1754

3. In the same way, God's anointing pours through the husband as the head, onto the wife and children.

C. Bondage (slavery to sin) is destroyed by the anointing.

1. Isaiah 10:27 (KJV) "The yoke (of the enemy) shall be destroyed because of the anointing."
 - NIV: "The yoke will be broken because you have grown so 'FAT' (Hebrew: "Shemen" - oil for anointing). We are to grow FAT with the ANOINTING!
 - "Yoke of the enemy" (Satan) = slavery to sin. What kind? Rebellion, addictions, self-deception, bitterness, pride.
2. Get under husband's anointing of headship, through submission. Even an unbeliever is anointed to serve God as head over family, just as secular government officials are "God's servants." Rom.13:4

III. We can easily see the connection between a wife's refusal to submit to her husband's "headship," and rebellion against authority, which we studied last week. Romans 13:1-2; James 4:7; I Sam.15:23

- A. When wives rebel against their husband's "headship," they reject God's spiritual covering (umbrella) of protection against the demonic realm, and will teach their children to do the same.

- B. The wife is not anointed as head of the family. If you are trying to lead by controlling your husband, life will be very hard.

Note to Single Women/Moms: God has not abandoned you! Embrace the truth of God's Word concerning marriage, repent of any past rebellion against authority. Come under all God-ordained authority, and Christ Himself will be your "head;" your Provider, Protector and the Lover of Your Soul (Isaiah 54:5, "Your Maker is your Husband, the Lord Almighty is His Name").

IV. THE ONE WITH THE AUTHORITY IS THE ONE WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY.

- A. Based on the model of Christ and the Church, the husband stands as Christ's representative in the family, and is held accountable before God for the condition of the family (I Timothy 3:5).
- B. If the wife rebels against her husband's authority it may be because the husband is not submitting to her needs. (The wife is to submit to her husband's LEAD, while the husband is to submit to his wife's NEED.)³ He is to treat her with gentleness and respect (I Peter 3:7). Otherwise, his prayers will be hindered!
- C. The Marriage Roles Based on Ephesians 5:22-33 (next page)

³ Author unknown

The Marriage Roles Based on Ephesians 5:22-33

1. How does Christ relate to the Church?
 - a. Head of the Church, authority and source (*kephale*) (v.23)
 - b. Servant-Leader: laid down His life (v.25)
 - c. Spiritual Leader: committed to her spiritual growth (vv.26-27)
 - d. Provider and Protector: “feeds and cares for” (vv.28-29)

2. Therefore, what is the role of the husband?
 - a. Head of the wife: authority and source
 - b. Servant Leader: lay down his life for her
 - c. Spiritual leader: committed to her spiritual growth
 - d. Provider and Protector: “feeds and cares for” his wife

3. How does the Church relate to Christ?
 - a. Looks to Him as her “first love” (v. 23; *Rev.2:4*)
 - b. Submits to His authority and follows Him (v.24)
 - c. Receives His provision and protection (v.29) –
a picture of grace (*Eph.2:8-9*)
 - d. Trusts in the Lord as her Savior (v.23; *Prov. 3:5-6*)

4. Therefore, how is the wife to relate to her husband?
 - a. She is to look to husband as her “first love”
 - b. She is to submit to his authority and leadership
 - c. She receives his provision and protection
 - d. She trusts in the Lord as her Savior!

Defining the Terms

Amplified Bible, Ephesians 5:33:

“Let the wife see that she respects and reverences her husband, that she notices him, prefers him, venerates and esteems him, and that she defers to him, praises him, and loves and admires him exceedingly.”⁴

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

Respects: “to consider deserving of high regard: esteem; to refrain from interfering with.”⁵

Prefers: “to promote; to like better; to give priority.”⁶

Venerate: “to regard with reverential respect or with admiring deference.”⁷

Esteem - “to set a high value on; regard; respect, admire, revere.”⁸

Defer: “to submit or yield to the opinion or wishes of another.”⁹

Praise: “to express a favorable judgment of: commend.”¹⁰

Loves: “to feel a lover’s passion, devotion, or tenderness for.”¹¹

Admire: “to regard with high esteem.”¹²

This Week’s Memorization Verse: Proverbs 14:1

*“The wise woman builds her house,
but with her own hand the foolish one tears hers down.”*

⁴ *Amplified Bible, New Testament* © 1987. LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

⁵ Merriam-Webster Dictionary © 2004

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² *ibid.*

“God’s Design for Marriage”

Small Group Discussion Questions

Note to Discussion Leaders: It is helpful to begin by asking the women if there was some point in the lesson that they identified with, or that was new to them, before turning to the following discussion questions.

- 1) How has your childhood influenced your view of marriage? How has your mother’s relationship with your father set a pattern in your own marriage?

- 2) Picture the anointing flowing from Christ, onto your husband’s position of authority. Have you “lined up under” your husband, so that the anointing power of the Holy Spirit is flowing in your life, and onto your children? If not, what will you specifically do to change that?

- 3) Have you excused yourself from submission because your husband is not a believer, or, if he is a believer, is not walking in obedience to God’s word? Besides changing your behavior, you will need to ask his forgiveness. How will you begin?