Marriage & the Bible (Part 5)
"How to Correct It: The Wives Role"
Ephesians 5:22-24
Pastor John Miller

Introduction – How can we have a happy and healthy marriage in this confused, corrupt, and ever changing culture we live in?

*** The answer: Marriage by The Book - The Bible!**

*** I want to look at the Bible's teaching on the roles for the husbands and wives.**

*** First - today we look first at the <u>wives role</u>!**

1. **<u>Love</u> - your husbands.**
2. **<u>Submit</u> – to your husbands.**
3. **<u>Respect</u> – your husbands**

I. Love - Your Husband.

<u>Titus 2:4</u> – *"The older women, teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands."*

1. Wives, after your love for God, your husband comes next.

2. It's Agape love! So, "fruit of the Spirit"!
   1. Remember, Ephesians 5:18, "be filled"!

3. What is it like? – I Corinthians 13.

II. Submit to Your Husband. (vv22-24)

* The submission of a wife to her husband is not in vogue today!
  * See (v21) - "It's mutual".

* I want to mention three relevant truths we learn from the bible:

1. <u>The Dignity</u> - Of womanhood, childhood, and servanthood (see the balance).

2. <u>The Equality</u> – Before God of all human beings; because each is made in God's image.

3. The Unity – Of all Christians, as fellow members of God's family.

* But, how do we reconcile these truths with submission?

* Answer: We misunderstand the concept of submission!

A. Let's look at what submission is not!
   1. Submission is not another word for inferiority.
      a. It does not mean the wife is inferior to the husband.
         i. Remember, we are all called to submit (v21).
         ii. Jesus – Submission to the Father!
             I Corinthians 11:3 – In the God-head!
         iii. So, not just for women!
   2. Submission does not mean slavish obedience to a dictator.
      a. Paul did not say "obey" your husband.
         Illustration: vv6:1,5)
   3. Submission does not mean the husband makes every decision.
      Illustration: Albert Einstein and his wife on their golden anniversary…"after 50 years…"
   4. Submission does not mean the wife must obey ungodly counsel or commands.
      a. Acts 5:29 – *"We must obey God"*

B. What does Submission mean? (v22)
   1. The word "submit" means literally, "to arrange under".
      a. It's to voluntarily put yourself in the place of helping, by arranging yourself under.
      b. It's for the sake of "order" and "function".
      c. It's the wife's responsibility to function as her husband's helper (Genesis 2).
   2. How is a wife to submit to her husband?
      a. Answer – (v22) "As unto the Lord".
         i. Colossians 3:18 – *"Wives, submit yourself unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord."*
      b. It's what I call "The Mission of Submission".
      c. It's done out of a love for, and obedience to the Lord.
         i. The more "spiritual" you are, the more submissive you become! (See I Peter 3:1-6)
         ii. Spirit-filled – Ephesians 5:18.
      d. It won't always be easy to submit to your husband, but you do it "as unto the Lord".
         i. It takes "faith" and the "filling of the Holy Spirit".

Illustration: Dennis Rainey – "Lonely Husbands, Lonely Wives"
His wife, Barbara, in Chapter 15 - "How to Love your Husband":

When Dennis and I have a decision to make, usually we do it by unanimous agreement. Generally, even if we begin talking about a decision from opposite perspectives, we typically work through the process of sharing our thoughts, come to an agreement, and make the decision as one. It is rare that we continue to disagree, but it has happened.

When our oldest daughter, Ashley, was four and a half, we found ourselves facing our first schooling decision. Ashley's birthday is in late August, meaning she would be the youngest child in her class.

I had enrolled her in an excellent preschool program to help prepare her for kindergarten. The director of the nursery school, as well as Ashely's teacher, said she had done beautifully in preschool and would do just as well in kindergarten the next year. I agreed.

Back home I reported all these facts to Dennis. I laid it all out carefully and, I thought, convincingly, but to my surprise, he didn't agree. I couldn't believe that he wasn't buying my persuasive logic. He simply said, "I think we should hold her out for a year".

I pursued with my arguments: "She makes friends easily. The teachers all think she should be in school next year. Why can't you agree with me?"

Dennis couldn't really give me a reason. He just felt that Ashley shouldn't go to school – even kindergarten – as a young five-year old.

I backed off and waited a couple of weeks, prayed about it, and tried again. I presented all my facts, trying to beef up every point to make my position more convincing, but Dennis didn't budge.

We went on like this for several weeks, and I realized I wasn't making any progress. I was becoming more entrenched in my position, and he was likewise immovable in his. In a word, we had reached an impasse.

I decided I had to do something, so I prayed and said, "Okay Lord, You know that I'm right and he's wrong. And I pray that You will change his mind…but Lord, if I'm wrong and he's right, I want You to change my attitude. I'm willing to do whatever You want me to do, but You know I think he's wrong.

What changed was my attitude and perspective. In the days that followed, God gave me peace. And as my stance softened, I began to see Ashley more objectively, as a little girl who needed another year to be a child without the pressures of school. It turned out that starting Ashley in kindergarten as a young six-year-old was one of the smartest things we ever did for her. We discovered several years later that Ashley is dyslexic (an inherited difficulty with reading) and the extra year at home gave her a much better chance to deal with learning to read.

I'm glad the Lord broke our impasse by reminding me that I need to have the right attitude. I needed to trust God with Dennis' decision and submit my will to His.

Is God Big Enough?

To wives who may find themselves in situations with their husbands similar to the one we had over Ashely's schooling, I have three questions:

1. Have you clearly – and as unemotionally as possible – communicated the facts to your husband (perhaps putting your thoughts in writing)? Have you both really taken the time to hear each other on the issue?
2. Are you believing God in your circumstances, or are you allowing the circumstances to overwhelm you?
3. Is God big enough to take care of your husband without your help?
   That's often the hard part – wanting to be too much of a helpmate, especially when you "know" your husband is wrong and you are right. But it's good to ask yourself when you can't agree, "Is God big enough to take care of my husband without my help in this situation? "Will I follow Jesus' example and entrust myself to the Father?

Good Question?

C. <u>Why should a wife submit to her husband</u>?
   1. It's what the Bible teaches! (God's Word)
   2. It's pleasing to God. (Colossians 3:18)
   3. It's good for your marriage and children.
      <u>Book "Marriage and the Public Good" – The Well-Being of Children</u>

      The evidence linking the health of marriage to the welfare of children is clear. During the last two decades, a large body of social scientific research has emerged indicating that children do best when reared by their mothers and fathers in a married, intact family. A recent report by Child Trends, a nonpartisan research organization, summarized the new scholarly consensus on marriage this way: "Research clearly demonstrates that family structure matters for children, and the family structure that helps children the most is a family headed by two biological parents in a low-conflict marriage." Other recent reviews of the literature on marriage and the well-being of children, conducted by the Brookings Institution, the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, the Center for Law and Social Policy, and the Institute for American Values, have all come to similar conclusions.
   4. Because the husband is the head of the wife. (v23)
      a. "Wives, your submission enables your husband's leadership."
   5. "For": The husband is the head of the wife for <u>two reasons</u>!
      1. <u>Creation</u>- (I Corinthians 11:3-12) & (I Timothy 2:13)
         a. So, it's not <u>culturally</u> limited!
         b. It's not "chauvinism", but "creationism".

         * (Note: The importance of creation not evolution!)

2. Redemption (v23) - "As Christ is the head of the church, and is the Savior of the Body".
    a. An attack on marriage is an attack on God.
    b. "Headship" is "Savior-ship"; it speaks of care and responsibility, protection, and provision.

D. Paul's Summary on Submission (v24)
* Note – "Therefore"
1. As the church is subject to Christ
Illustration: The witness to your children.
2. So, likewise – Let the wives be also to their own husbands.
    a. So, it's to be "continuous" – It's in the present tense!
    b. Also, it's to be "comprehensive" – "In everything".
    * Everything? Not sinful things!

II. Respect your husband (v33b)

* What does it mean to "reverence" or "respect" your husband?
* Find the things he's doing right, and thank him!

The Amplified Bible – "*That she notices him, regards him, honors him, prefers him, venerates, and esteems him, that she defers to him, praises him, and loves and admires him exceedingly*".

* Note: I think it's a summary of "submission".

A. No conditions! Saved or unsaved – ex…

B. The Dangers – T.V., movies, magazines, friends.

C. "You might say!"
1. I believe it's the right thing to do, but I just can't do it!
Illustration: Man with the withered hand
2. If I do, he won't change! (It's not your job!)
3. I won't be happy!