

**Harvest Christian Fellowship
Theology @ 9
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“Marriage”

Social Order / Divine Imprint

Genesis 2:18, “Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’”

Why is it not good for man to be alone?

The Triune structure is stamped upon the social order.

- a. God – Father, Son, Holy Spirit.
- b. Our World – Three realms – Physical laws, Spiritual laws, and Social laws.
- c. Government – God, king, and the people.
- d. Marriage – Christ, husband, wife.
- e. Family – Husband, wife, children.

Divine Mark on Marriage

- a. Relationship & intimacy
- b. Community & fellowship

Within the triune nature of God we have everything: intimacy, union, communion, fellowship, love, and community.

In Genesis 2:18 God pauses to make a divine statement about His nature, prior to creation there was no such thing as aloneness, therefore it was not good for Adam to be alone.

Adam and Eve were created to experience in marriage the perfect intimacy, union, communion, fellowship, love and community as found in the triune nature of God.

The Fall:

What happened?

Relationships were severed.

- a. God & man.
- b. Man & man.
- c. Man & creation

Depravity of man: Man in his fallen state redefines God’s social order. Marriage is no longer to be defined as between a man and a woman, but can be between a man and a man or women and a woman.

“If we go against God’s design we go against His nature, the result of the fall has everything to do with relationships” (Truth Project).

So why is it not good for the man to be alone? Aloneness contradicts the very nature of God.

“When God gives His law, when God prescribes what the family should look like, what the church should look like, ... what all of the structures of human life should look like, it

is based, not on some abstract law outside of God but reflects upon His own nature ... that for us to go against these laws is to ask God to deny Himself ... to deny his own nature” (R.C. Sproul).

A God of Order: Roles and Relationships

Ephesians 5:22-24, “Wives, **submit** to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the **head of the church**, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church **submits** to Christ, so also wives should **submit** to their husbands in everything.”

1st Corinthians 11:3, “But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.”

God	Christ	Christ	Husband
Christ	Church	Man	Wife

Has man twisted submission and authority and made them ugly?

The Fall and the Curse: The man shall rule over the woman, (male chauvinism) and the women’s desire is to rule over the man, (radical feminism). Gen 3:16.

“Submit” is not a negative word, but man in his fallen state has made it so and thus man contradicts the very nature of God. “Submission has nothing to do with the order of authority, but rather governs the operation of authority” (Wiersbe 50). This is because, “Scripture makes clear that there are no spiritual or moral distinctions among Christians, (Gal. 3:28). “Every believer in Jesus Christ has exactly the same salvation, the same standing before God, the same divine nature and resources, and the same promises and inheritance (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; James 1:1-9). Although there are no differences in intrinsic worth ... *God has made distinctions in matters of role and function*” (MacArthur 280).

The submission spoken of here in Ephesians 5:22-24 means to willingly relinquish one’s rights, to willingly submit, it is to be a voluntary response to God’s will like Christ submits to the Father’s will. “The wife is not commanded to obey her husband, as children are to obey their parents. A husband is not to treat his wife as a servant or as a child, but as an equal for whom God has given him care and responsibility for provision and protection, to be exercised **in love**. She is not his to order about, responding to his every wish and command” (MacArthur 281). We must remember that Paul is speaking here in Ephesians to believers. Again he is not suggesting that women are inferior to men, or that all women must be in subjection to all men in every situation.

Ephesians 5:25-30, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any

other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of His body.”

In this verse we can see that the bar has been set very high for the husband, from it we see that the husband’s love for his wife is to be **sacrificial, sanctifying, and satisfying.**

a. Verse 25, Sacrificial: “True Christian love ‘seeks not its own’ (1st Cor. 13:5) it is not selfish” (Wiersbe 51).

b. Verses 26, 27, Sanctifying: Husbands have set themselves apart to belong only to their wives. Also his love is to be a cleansing love for her as he leads his home as its spiritual leader through the teaching and living out the word of God.

c. Verses 28, 30, Satisfying: Love is the nourishment of the home, and in marriage the husband and the wife are one. “Therefore, whatever each does to the other, he does to himself or herself. It is a mutually satisfying experience ... *brought about by meeting each others needs*” (Wiersbe 51).

Ephesians 5:31-33: (ESV) “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you **love his wife** as himself, and let the wife see that she **respects her husband.**”

Paul closes with this final admonition, husbands love your wife and wives reverence / respect your husband. This is God’s design for marriage.

“Marriage was made in heaven, but so are thunder and lightning”

Clint Eastwood

“He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created” (Genesis 5:2). The words of Jesus from Matthew 19:4, “And He answered and said to them ‘Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female?’ ” 1st Peter 3:7, “The same goes for you husbands: Be good husbands to your wives. Honor them, delight in them. As women they lack some of your advantages” (The Message Bible).

“God’s ideal for marriage is that the man and the woman should experience mutual completion (Gen. 2:23) and share in his creative work of making new people” (Packer 229).

Men and women are different!

Therefore they need each other for mutual completion per God’s plan, but because of the fall there is a problem, the perfect communion, fellowship and community within the marriage relationship has been disrupted by sin. There is now friction between men and women, but rejoice because frictions can change the shape of things, God can use our conflicts to refine us and grow us for His glory and our good.

“Men and women can look at precisely the same situation and see life much differently ... they also hear differently. They may hear the same words but get much different messages” (Eggerichs 33). Example: Wife, “I have nothing to wear.” Translation, “I have

nothing new to wear.” Husband, “I have nothing to wear.” Translation, “All my clothes are dirty and need to be washed.”

Because men and women are different Paul makes Ephesians 5:33 gender specific. God commands husbands to love (agape) his wife and the wife is to respect (phobeomia) her husband. Note that there is no command for the wife to *agape*-love her husband. This is because God has designed women to love. “Her whole approach to nurture, her sensitivity, love and compassion are all part of her very nature” (Eggerich 36).

Because men and women are different the way she perceives a husband’s love is different. How then does a husband *agape* his wife remembering that *agape* is a verb, not an emotion or an idea but an action?

Closeness: spend time together, walk or jog together, date night, hugs, laugh together.

Openness: share your feeling, pray with her, discuss your concerns and ideas for the future, give her your full attention.

Understanding: communicate, listen and repeat back, remember men and women don’t always hear or see the same situation alike. Don’t try to fix her problems unless she asks for a solution, apologize and admit your wrong. Look for the underlying issue in your disagreements.

Peacemaker: meet her half way, resolve the unresolved issues between yourselves, and reassure her of your love, never nurse bitterness.

Loyalty: speak highly of her in front of others, no put downs, be involved in the things that are important to her, be her defender, don’t lust for other women and keep your commitments.

Esteem: be an encourager, make her feel first in importance, value her opinions.

“Wives respect your husbands.” Again remember men and women are different and a man desires respect that is why the Scripture says what it says. So how then does a wife reverence / respect her husband? Understand that the Greek word here is *phobeomai* for respect and it too is a verb, verbs are action orientated.

Appreciate: tell him verbally or in writing you value his work efforts. See yourself as his helpmate and talk with him, be an encourager. Express your faith in him as it relates to his work.

Acknowledge his protection: verbalize your admiration of him for protecting you and the family. Praise his commitment to provide for you. Never put down his job or how much he makes.

Leadership: praise his good decisions, be gracious if he makes bad decisions, disagree with him only in private and honor his authority in front of the children.

Insight and counsel: recognize his problem-solving approach as his male brand of empathy, sometimes let him “fix things” and applaud his solutions, be respectful when you differ with his ideas (you can be right but wrong at the top of your voice).

Realize that you both married a sinner and because of this you cannot fix your mate only God can do that. Man in his fallen nature twists God’s sovereign designs to meet his selfish desires. Agape and phobeomai are unconditional. God’s plan is not Smith Barney’s plan we don’t earn love or respect we give it. “Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant. Does not act unbecomingly; it does

not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails” (1st Cor. 13:4-8).

You are not called to fix your mate but to be faithful to God’s word and design for marriage and as you honor God He will change you more and more into the image of Christ. When this takes place don’t be surprised to see your marriage change as well.

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