

# HUSBANDS, WIVES, AND CHILDREN



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„Submitting to one another in the fear of God. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so [let] the wives [be] to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord [does] the church. For we are members

of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife [see] that she respects [her] husband.” “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the

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first commandment with promise: 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.' And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 5:21-33, 6:1-4)

This is a very serious topic and for some controversial. However, this simple belief is of great importance if we are to have quality relationships in our marriages, with our children, in our churches and in society as a whole, which means we must understand the role and relationship of men, women, and children.

Society today lies exposed to the aggressive feministic movement and attitudes that try to distort the role of women, that is to equate the role of women with that of men giving them equal privileges and in doing so denying the apparent differences. However, there also exists a problem with violent male domination that likewise distorts the picture of the father-heart of God. Another problem we see is children growing more and more unruly, rebellious, bitter and discouraged because society and the church do not have a correct and complete understanding of the importance of good and healthy families, nor do they have a right view on the role of men, women and children.

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This is all the result of a wrong perceptive and misunderstanding of the role of God's order of righteousness. As a result, many marriages are captive to problems. On the one hand there are women who attempt to overpower men and men who wish to force women to submit to them. Then there are the children who file police accusations against their parents, or threaten to do so, when their parents try to raise them properly.

Regardless of where we stand we need to repent and begin living according to biblical standards. It is my hope and desire that we all have healthy marriages and godly children who will help to build a healthy church.

#### ► 1. MEN

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her." (Ephesians 5:25)

The picture of men and their role today is completely distorted. Today's man is either completely passive or very domineering. In the church we perceive a certain phenomenon; there are more women interested in ministry than men. In some churches there are more women in positions of leadership than men. In some families men put on aprons and cook; they raise the children while their wives care for their careers. There are not many brave men anymore; the knights of before with a sword in one hand and a rose in the other. Clearly we can see that today's mediocre men are found far from God's original plan and purpose for them; which is why it is best to look at what the Bible says about this. Bible teaching is completely the opposite of today's scientific and humanistic view of modern men; it even runs against the grain of theological liberal perceptions of man in the context of post-modern

theology. The Bible offers a simple and honest point-of-view in hope and faith for all of those who wish to receive this truth, obey it and live according to biblical principles.

The apostle Paul clearly told us what the role of man is. He has the role of the spiritual leader of his wife, not the reverse. He is not spiritually passive, rather active; he is called the “head” of his wife who submits to him. “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is the head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.” (Ephesians 5:22-23)

Confusion and disorder arise first of all, when women assume that Paul was a chauvinist, saying that this verse is degrading to them; that is reducing their value. Some preachers go to the extreme, accentuating that the interpretation of these verses are distorted and written only for the context of that time. This is why it is very important to know that roles and positions do not give value to a man or woman, because our worth and value is defined in Christ Jesus, not in roles and positions. Therefore, we are talking about our differences, not our worth, because both roles have great collective importance in Christ. Nevertheless, there is a difference between men and women, they are not equal.

While it is not meant to be offensive, the truth is that women are to submit to their husbands, not the other way around. Of course, I am not implying the other extreme we see today of men arrogantly forcing their domination of women. I consider it needful to emphasize that men need to understand and accept that they “above” their wives, in that they are responsible as the spiritual leader and head of the family.

When Eve fell in the garden Adam was responsible for the spiritual fall of his wife, because when they

ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil God first called for Adam, not for Eve. Therefore, he was spiritually responsible. “Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?” (Genesis 3:9) Eve fell in the trap while Adam, passively observing, forsook his position of leadership. Although they were both wrong, he was responsible; because like many of today’s men in the church, he was spiritually passive.

Men, the time has come to become active, spiritual leaders of your wives, not leaving it to them to spiritually lead; it is time for you to lead them to the Lord, not the reverse, and to become more active in the church and with your children.

Today, unfortunately, instead of men being leaders, they want to continue in marriage with someone who is like their mother; someone who will feed them and care for their physical needs. Someone who will go to the store for them, raise their kids, make a living, take care of the finances, lead the family, and anything else that needs doing while they take a nice rest after dinner, polish the car, and play football; spending as little time as possible with their children. It is no wonder, then, that society has come to what it is today. Men have become lazy, selfish and passive while extremely domineering. Fewer men want to serve the Lord; this is clear when we see the rate at which women will serve in the local church as opposed to men, 90:10. Men simply

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do not have the desire to do anything. Many do not even know how to love their wives – what's more is they are hard hearted.

Men, the time is come to rouse ourselves from sleep and become men as God intended. It is time to take on our responsibilities, otherwise Satan will destroy us and our families, if possible through our passivity and consequently through a domineering wife. Actually, it is shocking just how many men and their families are destroyed because of their passivity. What's more is how many men have left the ministry and the Lord because of their wives who do not want to submit to them, in fact they have separated them from God and from the church because they want their husbands for themselves.

It is interesting how Satan bypassed authority, working first through the wife and not through Adam. He raised doubt in her considering all boundaries and whispered to her what many women want to hear today – you will be free and finally equal with God. Yet, speaking about men, Adam sinned by failing in much of his responsibility by first abandoning the command of the Lord and therefore abandoning his position as a spiritual leader while obeying his wife.

What followed was a battle that is still being waged between man and woman; there is hostility; the

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man wants to aggressively dominate and the woman has a desire to control man. “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.” (Genesis 3:15) This really sounds serious and after the consequences that each one had to bear, Adam nevertheless knew that God was giving them a second chance and the woman was called Eve, which literally means “She who lives” (Genesis 3:20). He wasn't looking down on her, rather he was approaching her in love; they were together again.

Therefore, men are not equal to women; this does not mean they have more worth than a woman because worth comes from the Lord; they simply have different roles. We see this with authority as well; our level of authority does not define us as a person and is not an opportunity for building our personal ego. It is a responsibility to facilitate others. Being a member of a church does not mean that we are equal to the pastor and elders, in terms of role and responsibility.

Men, you are leaders and on you is a grave responsibility. This is why Paul did not mention Eve as much as Adam in his letter to the Romans, when he wrote about how sin entered the world. Although Eve sinned first, the term Paul used here was “man”: through which the consequences of sin came to be, because he was passive and ignored God's command (Romans 5).

Women, men are responsible for spiritual leadership and you follow his lead, not the reverse. You are called the “help-meet”, not him. Today it is absurd to see how men completely change when they marry. They change themselves in order to please their frustrated wives or help them in their career pursuits. Yet it is important to know that the

man was not created to be the helper of the wife, just the opposite.

If a woman will not submit to man and if she is harsh to him then it is best to avoid her altogether because she is not submitted to the Lord.

Therefore, you cannot throw out God's principles and enter into a relationship based on emotions. Men, the role of the leader falls on you; to be spiritually strong and spiritual leaders of your home. Do not be the passive one dominated and lead by your wife.

On the other hand, do not be harsh, because Paul says, "Love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her." Men are often selfish, full of vanity and sometimes care little for their wives.

Men, be careful, if you are the head of your wife that means that you must sacrifice yourself and make time for her. Apart of our role is to care for them and love them; which means sometimes we have to lay our plans aside in order to do that.

It is unbelievable how in marriage we begin to see just how selfish we can be. This is why we cannot allow militant domination to grow in us, rather spiritual leadership in love and understanding. This is what Adam did; in this is the essence of Christian redemption that does not only define the creation of man but also his renewal in order to teach the wife about submission and the man about godly leadership.

## ► 2. WOMEN

"In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have

authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control." (1 Timothy 2:9-15)

As soon as Christians read these verses they say that this was meant only for the time of Paul. Theologians say that Paul wrote this because the women were not educated in that time and so false prophets could easily lead them astray. However we choose to read or interpret these verses, this is still the Word of God and one thing is for certain: "Adam was formed first, then Eve."

With God equality and confusion do not exist, rather order of righteousness. You cannot find in the structure of family, society, or the church where all are equal in the context of position and superiority; which, again, does not mean that there are those with lesser value in the eyes of God. Gifts, promises and blessing are promised to all regardless of sex, but still we cannot conclude that women and men are the same.

Confusion arises when women think that someone considers her of lesser value and that she must fight for her right of equality. It is the same way

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in the church; the fact that the congregation must listen to their pastors and elders does not mean they are of lesser value or are restricted in their giftings and callings.

Women, you are not spiritual leaders in your families, your husband is. You do not have to fight for equal rights because in doing so you will have chaos and disorder in your family and in the end a passive husband who gives up on his role as an active spiritual leader.

Although Paul did not mean that the wife was not allowed to teach in the church, he did explain that the “the wife does not have authority over her husband”. A woman ought to take care of how she presents herself when she is conversing with her husband at church, or any man. At times a woman’s spirit and attitude expects men to have an manner of quiet attention and obedience at any cost, for otherwise she may begin to cry, manipulate, or use cutting words. Women can be of great potential for their husbands or become a great destroyer; they alone must decide which they will be. Where are discretion, graceful clothing, and works of love; where has motherhood gone? Many women mock at these things, especially post-modern ministers.

★ **When Eve fell in the garden Adam was responsible for the spiritual fall of his wife, because when they ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil God first called for Adam, not for Eve.**

Allegedly, not long ago, one such woman minister left her husband and children because she was told that they were hindering her call. Today she is a popular speaker, welcomed in many churches who are not bothered by her divorce and remarriage because it seems that anymore anything can be attributed to the “leadership” of the Holy Spirit.

I am sometimes surprised by women’s reaction to children; they look on children as a nuisance and source of frustration. Interaction with their husbands consists of ordering them about with shrillness and manipulation. They often feel they must dress according to the latest trends, even when provocative styles are in fashion. In speaking with them there is no longer a sense of humility, rather it is more common to hear sharp words. Single men ought to be careful and flee such women (regardless of whether these women prophesy or speak in tongues).

Women, simply be women and mothers. Do not look on this role as a burden to bear; you do not have to be G.I. Jane and harsh, with manager-like hairstyles and power-suits, speaking with a husky voice. God did not make you that way. You do not have to prove to men that you are smarter than they, you do not have to humiliate your husband in order to feel a sense of worth (in fact, you ought to accept your husband). Let your carriage before your husbands be as that before the Lord – this is pleasing to God and makes you more feminine. A successful management career, a short mini-skirt, and an expensive car do not make a woman, rather motherhood.

Let us ask ourselves, what has become of us, in our churches? More and more women are becoming pastors, apostles, and prophets while men are working in Children’s Church. I am not

against men working with children and I do not want this message to restrict God's call, but it seems as if we have switched roles in order to feel "equal" or theologically sound. This is a collapse of family and church, regardless of how modern it appears.

Women, I urge you that if you have a mistaken view of your fathers, who were bad examples being violent, immature, domineering or passive men, not do that for which God did not create or predestine you for, rather do all you can, in God's might, to become what God intended you to be. Help your husbands to be filled with his God-given potential of quality spiritual leadership.

### ► 3. CHILDREN

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.' And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:1-4)

The trend today is either to not listen to your parents or to quietly ignore them. Christianity cannot just be passed down, as we witness at a much smaller rate children growing up in church serving the Lord with passion. Parents are too busy to spend time reading and praying with their children, some even find that children are a bother to their ministry for the Lord.

Today's children have a legal right to report their parents to the police for something as simple as preventing them from going out with their friends. Perhaps it is hard to believe, but a humanistic perspective on raising children has crept into

the church. Children are no longer raised with discipline. When it comes to child-rearing, do we read the Bible or academic books that are written by people who do not know God?

Children, you are not above your parents, your parents are above you because this is righteous, and every other system that says otherwise is unrighteous. Films that show children who are smarter than their parents are founded in humanism. "Obey your parents" means to obey without grumbling and complaining, even when we there are things you do not want to do. Yet, here it is important to bring some balance, as Paul mentioned the difference between obedience and respect.

All under-aged children should bear in mind that they must listen to their parents; they must obey and submit to their parents because their parents are given to them by God as their authority. However, children become adults, move on, and become independent; when this happens, we as parents must be careful how we treat our children because raising children when they are three is quite a bit different than when they are twenty three. When children grow older their submission should turn into respect, and respect does not mean submission in all things. This is where many adults become confused when their parents are not saved; yet we do not have to be confused and submit to our parents in all things

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if they are asking us to live unrighteous. We are, however, obliged to always show them respect they deserve.

Parents, do not forget that your children will one day grow up and find a life partner. When this happens they will no longer be in a position of submission to you, rather in a position of respect. This is a great difference. Children, when you grow up you do not have to submit to your parents in all things, but when they grow elderly do not neglect them, throw them aside, or behave unseemly toward them because it will not “be well with you” on the earth and eventually, according to the Word, “your days will be shortened” regardless of how many vitamins you take.

Fathers, the Word gives us a warning. Children need a father’s heart, they need a father’s authority, and they need a father’s discipline and the Lord’s reminder. We cannot leave the job of raising our children to the mothers. Beware of the bitterness that comes when we do not warn them as we ought, when we do not raise them with discipline, but rather hastily react in fury and rejection with derogatory remarks such as “You are worthless”, “What kind of child are you anyway”. When a child

grows up in this type of circumstance he will become discouraged and it will be difficult to lift his spirits later on. “Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.” (Colossians 3:21)

Do not copy the bad examples of your own father, rather be a father according to the heart of God, so that when your children grow older they will be people of hope, courage, acceptance, and most of all submissive people who recognize and have a father’s heart.

Regardless of the order of righteousness, do not forget that we also submit to one another out of respect for Christ. Our submission shows that we love and serve Him. (Ephesians 5:21)

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