

 **Managing  
GOD's Money**

Theme for May: The Family

*Despite persistent, vicious attacks on the traditional family by Governments and others in society, God's ordained roles for the family and family members apply today. Stand firm; don't let Governments' ill-conceived anti-traditional family policies deceive you. Always remember popular policies don't equate with morally acceptable policies. God's Word is the only authority for moral absolutes. This month, we will review God's Word to learn about the traditional family under these headings:*

- **May 1-7 - The Husband: Servant Leader**
- **May 8-14 - The Wife: Partner and helper**
- **May 15-21 - The Parent and Child: Relationship building**
- **May 22-31 - The Family Council: Essential teaching and learning medium**



Topic for the Week: The Wife: Partner and Helper

May 8-14

**The Word**



**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."

From the beginning God provided man with a wife as a helper — literally, someone "corresponding to" him, like a second self. God knew Adam was lonely, incomplete, so He made Eve from Adam's bones, so they could enjoy His perfect creation as one unit. In this flawless setting, man and woman were in harmony — they were complete. Then came deception, and from deception, "deflec-

tion speech" — nobody takes responsibility for his or her actions: Adam blames Eve (Genesis 3:12); Eve accuses the Serpent (Genesis 3:13) — a tactic that continues today.

Adam's sin changed the perfect marriage relationship forever. No longer would husband and wife coexist in unspoiled harmony, complimenting each other. The woman would want or have a longing for the man who would "rule over" her. This is what God told Eve in Genesis 3:16:

To the woman he said, " I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

In the earlier verse, Genesis 3:15, God showed Jesus' victory over sin through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, which would be the basis for triumphant living. By surrendering his life to Christ, daily a man can yield his innate tendency to rule over or dominate his wife, so God can teach him to love her with His love.

In Ephesians 5:21-27, Apostle

Paul describes the godly roles for husband and wife as follows:

<sup>21</sup> Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. <sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her <sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup> and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Often when we discuss verse 22, we overlook **verse 21 — submit to one another through awe, fear, or reverence of Christ**. So, we miss this verses' essence. As well, we overlook 1 Corinthians 11:8-12, which shows the interdependence of husbands and wives and, 1 Corinthians 7:4 which shows mutual serving.

Let's get back to Ephesians 5:22

where Paul refers specifically to the unselfishness a wife should extend to her husband. Note it's merely the same standard each believer in Christ ought to display to others. Listen to Jesus in John 15:10-14:

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.

To love his wife like Christ loves the church, a husband must also "submit"—willingly giving up his "rights"—to his wife, as Christ did on the cross for us. Although the husband is the servant leader, marriage is about mutual serving and sacrifice. Jesus describes the servant leader in Luke 22:25-27:

Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant. "For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.

Ignorance and feminism in the name of "progress," have invaded the church. Nowadays, it's not politically correct to say a wife should "submit" to or serve her husband as part of her God-ordained role. But that's what God's Word says.

Men who know their God-ordained role will understand how valuable their wives are in God's

eyes. Proverbs 18:22 presents this picture:

"He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD."

Men, did you get that?

To start the marriage, the man is to leave his parents and cleave to his wife. After, he must assume the spiritual leadership of the home, doing at least the following:

- Serving His wife
- Loving his wife in the same way as Christ loves the church
- Being considerate of all her needs
- Setting the tone of love, grace, forgiveness, gentleness, and unselfishness inside the marriage.

**Think about this:** when a husband sacrifices for his wife as Christ gave himself up for the church, will she not want to serve this loving, Christ-like person? By this behaviour, her husband shows spiritual maturity, and servant-leadership.

What is submission? *The Concise Oxford Dictionary, Ninth Edition* includes these, among other, definitions: *humility, meekness, obedience.*

Biblical submission has these components and more. First, let's look at what it isn't. It isn't accepting everything the husband says. It means simply, **the wife understands and accepts her biblical role, her husband's biblical role, and she allows the Holy Spirit to lead her.** It is walking in the Spirit independent of her husband's behaviour.

When a husband and wife are believers, they should search the Scriptures together to learn God's best for them.

Though a wife might feel challenged and wish to rebel when her believing-husband doesn't fulfill his God-given role properly, she must

resist the temptation to respond in the flesh. Rather she must pray continually and ask the Spirit to lead her every action.

Listen to Apostle Peter in 1 Peter. 3:1,

In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives.

Where only one is a believer the Scriptures are clear: in 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 the Apostle Paul writes:

To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.

Paul's basic messages to married believers in Jesus Christ are as follows:

- I. The instructions about the permanence of marriage are from the Lord, not from Paul (Matthew 19:5-6).
- II. Neither party is to divorce the other. If a wife separates from her husband, she is either to make up with him or remain

his wife; in other words, she is not to divorce him.

- III. If the unbelieving spouse wishes to leave the marriage, the believing spouse should let him or her go.
- IV. The believing spouse's holiness allows the unbelieving spouse to live in a holy environment. The believer, by his or her behaviour will show Christ's love to the unbeliever.

Neither the believer's behaviour, nor his "holy environment," "saves" the unbeliever. The unbeliever must confess with his or her mouth and believe in his or her heart that Jesus is Lord to be saved (Romans 10:9).

No matter how difficult the marriage, the godly wife or godly husband must seek guidance from the Lord and depend on Him alone to steer him or her through the troubling state of affairs. They shouldn't focus on emotional and fleshly issues resulting from worldly counsel that clouds judgment.

Where there is physical or emo-

## Memory Verse

### 1 Thessalonians 5:15-18

**Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**



tional abuse, the abused party should physically withdraw to safety, but not seek divorce.

## Application



### 1 Corinthians 11:8-12

**For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head. In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.**

God created men and women equally to desire a relationship with Him (Genesis 1:26-27). But men and women are different in many ways, that's why God defined our roles in the Bible.

Women are under strain these days because many men are not carrying out their responsibilities. Men abuse them emotionally, physically, and sexually. Sometimes they desert them and the children, leaving them with little or no financial help.

Ladies, Jesus is loving, kind, merciful, and will never leave you or abandon you, even though you may feel abandoned. Look away from your circumstances and pray to become like Jesus. You will be amazed at what you will see and hear (Psalm 23; Philippians 4:8-13).

This week, look at your relationships, with the Lord and with your husband, and then answer these questions in your journals:

- I. Have I submitted every area of my life to Christ?
- II. Have I given my husband to Christ?
- III. Am I submitting to my husband? If he is an unbeliever, he will not understand mutual, biblical submission, neither will he understand biblical servant leadership.
- IV. Am I praying for him daily?
- V. If he is an unbeliever, am I praying for His salvation daily?
- VI. Am I walking by faith, trusting God will direct my marriage?

If your husband has deserted you, remember God created marriage to be permanent; He specializes in what we consider impossible (Mark 9:22-23). Despite what many churches teach, don't give up on your marriage, but submit every area of your life to the Lord. Cling to Jesus and His teachings. Remain immersed in His Word day and night; look to Him and ask Him to direct your path.

Meanwhile, rejoice; give thanks as you learn from your daily walk with God. Many "pearls" and "God wow's" are available to you daily. To see them, take your eyes off your circumstances, your husband, and keep them riveted on Jesus. Just give your husband to the Lord, pray for him, and leave him there.

For the believer, divorce is never an alternative. Read God's Word carefully and note He created marriage to be permanent (Genesis 2:23-25; Matthew 19:4-6) and hates divorce (Malachi 2:13-16).

These days, even the church and Christian counselors will tell you to divorce your husband if he is in an adulterous relationship. But Jesus clearly specifies this is not His best for you.

