



Marriage Series Lesson 5 - Gender Roles

October 4, 2015

I. Starter Questions

- What are the first things you think about when you hear “gender roles” concerning marriage?
- Have “Gender Roles” become a taboo or even “bigoted” subject in today’s “politically correct” world of “unisex”?

II. Scripture Verses:

Ephesians 5:21-31 — Marriage in the Light of the Sacred Marriage of Christ and the Church

21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 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. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body. 31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” 32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

- Paul is building application from what he says down in verse 21
- He applies it first to the wife, and it is for every wife, regardless of abilities, education, knowledge, or maturity. The submission is not for the husband to command, but is commanded by God. By this, when wives submit to their husbands, they are doing more than submitting to him, but also honoring and obeying God.
- Within verse 23, we see that there is actually great burden on the husband as to how he relates to his wife. The husband is to act as Christ acts towards His Church. Christ delivers His people from dangers of sin, provides for His people, protects, preserves, and loves His people.

Definition of Submissive:

- **Inclined or ready to submit or yield to the authority of another; unresistingly or humbly obedient, submissive servants**
- **Marked by or indicating submission or an instance of yielding to the authority of another**

Colossians 3:18-24 — Instructions for Christian Households

18 Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. 20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged... 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Acts 18:26 — Knowing the Spirit of the Lord

24 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. 25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 He began to

Speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

Specific Gender Roles are Defined in the Bible

Deuteronomy 22:5

"A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.

Titus 2:1-5

But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.

Romans 1:26-27

For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

Galatians 3:26-28 — Equality in Christ

26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus

- In Christ's eyes as believers, we are all spiritually equal

III. Men/Women Small Splits for Group Questions:

1. Do "gender roles" within your marriage have meaning? Is it driven by biblical references or by your cultural past?
2. What does it mean to be equal in the eyes of one another, yet have unique roles within the family?
3. Discuss whether the "gender roles" described in scripture were influenced by the cultural aspects during the Old Testament and early New Testament times? Was it a strong influence or would have scripture been written exactly the same as if it was written in today's culture?
4. Why does the word "submissive" have such a negative connotation in Today's secular world?
5. In Ephesians 5:24, are there limits to the application of "submit to their husbands in everything"? Does the comment "in everything" apply to things of a spiritual matter or does it include regular items in life?
6. How do you show your love for one another through your unique gender role within marriage?
7. Husbands: what would it practically look like to love your wife as Christ loves His Church? Wives: what would it practically look like to submit to your husband's leadership?

IV. Direct Application to Be a "Christian Couple With Genders" in Today's World:

1. We need to be receptive to God's word and not overly influenced by today's "overly PC" world where it is a unisex society with no gender
2. Wives: How can you pray for God's wisdom and strength in submitting to your husband?
3. Husbands: How can you pray for God's wisdom and strength in leading your wife/family