

C.S. Lewis

"The homemaker has the ultimate career. All other careers exist for one purpose only - and that is to support the ultimate career."

## Family values



### ***"Family" is a major framework for theological ideas in Scripture.***

- **God as "father"** - We are "children of God", Israel was God's son, as was Jesus.
- **We are "brothers & sisters"** - We are in God's family "in Christ" by the baptism of his Spirit.
- **Christ as "bridegroom"** - The church is his bride.
- **The household of God** - The church.
- **Family narratives** - The O.T. is the story of Abraham's physical family. The N.T. is a story of Christ's spiritual family.
- **Biological family** - The N.T. has "house rules" - about roles, functions, etc. in the biological family.
- **Genesis 1-2** - Marriage and family were the first institutions of human society.

"If we abandon marriage, we abandon the family."

Michael Enzi  
(Wyoming Senator)



### ***What are some key factors in a successful marriage?***

1. Individual emotional health & maturity
2. Love commitment
3. Shared realistic expectations (values, preferences, and roles)

## Biblical rules for gender roles?

### ***The ethics of marriage roles:***

***Are they ascribed  
on the basis of gender  
or achieved  
on the basis of ability?***

### ***Galatians 3:28***

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is **neither male nor female**; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

**There is no gender hierarchy in the Body of Christ.**

**But how does this apply to roles?**





*Mark 8:34-35*

“If anyone would come after me, **he must deny himself** and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.”

**There is no following Christ without self denial.**

**But how does this apply to roles?**



*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,

7 You **husbands likewise**, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

## Changes in marriage & family

Earlier	20th century
Married for social reasons	Married for personal fulfillment
Premarital sex as shameful	Cohabitation was accepted
Married earlier in life	Married later in life
Divorce was difficult	Divorce made easy
<b>Roles based on gender</b>	<b>Roles based on ability</b>
Birth rates increased	Birth rates declined

*The Enlightenment and the great revolutions (industrial, technological, communication, and SEXUAL) played a big part in this change.*

## Different views



### Egalitarian

Roles in the home and church are determined by ability, giftedness, and calling apart from gender.

Roles are grounded in nurture

the lens of modern culture



### Authoritarian

Men are designed to rule (as head) and women to follow (submit) in all areas of life.

Roles are grounded in nature

the lens of traditional culture

tension

## Different views



the lens of modern culture

### Egalitarian

Roles in the home and church are determined by ability, giftedness, and calling apart from gender.

Personal equality & dignity are respected

the lens of traditional culture

### Authoritarian

Men are designed to rule (as head) and women to follow (submit) in all areas of life.

Some roles are ascribed not achieved

### Complementarian

Men and Women have ascribed complementary and distinct roles in the home that affirm the dignity of each gender and person.

*Husbands Ephesians 5*

“21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. 22 **Wives**, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. 25 **Husbands**, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; 26 that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; 29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, 30 because we are members of His body. 31 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. 32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.”



“21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. 22 **Wives**, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands

**Paul focuses attention on the husband!**

<sup>21</sup> and be subject to one another **in the fear of Christ.** <sup>22</sup> **Wives, be subject** to your own husbands, as to the Lord. . . . <sup>25</sup> **Husbands, love** your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;

✓ **Be subject to one another** (put oneself under the authority of) . . . **in the fear of** (out of respect for) **Christ**.

“5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, **did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped.** 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant,”

**Both the husband and the wife are called to be subject to one another in serving Christ.**

- ✓ The wife (as a model of the church - vs.32) is to take the role of being receptive to her husband's ministry as her head.
- ✓ The husband (as a model of Christ - vs.32) is to take the initiative in sacrificially loving and edifying his wife so that she be fulfilled as a person bearing God's image.

**Both husband and wife have complementary (not hierarchical) roles. They are to use their unique gifts and abilities respecting these different roles.**

“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, 2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. 3 And let not your adornment be merely external - braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; 4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. 5 For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands. 6 Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear. 7 You **husbands likewise**, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

# Peter focuses attention on the wife!

“<sup>21</sup> For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, <sup>22</sup>*who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth;* <sup>23</sup> and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; <sup>24</sup> and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls. <sup>1</sup> **In the same way, you wives, . . . <sup>7</sup> You husbands likewise”**

- ✓ Understanding and accepting our identification with Christ as one who laid down his life.
- ✓ Until we take that step we will never find God's peace in our lives, no matter what role we have.



### *Implications:*

Both husband and wife are called to sacrifice as a part of their service and witness.

- ✓ The wife is to restrain her right to justice and outward adornment as she puts on a gentle spirit and respects her husband even when he has not earned it.
- ✓ The husband is to relate to his wife with gentleness, listening in order to understand and honor her.

The husband is to restrain his impulse to lead without listening and to use his headship as an excuse for selfish if not abusive exploitation or neglect of his wife.

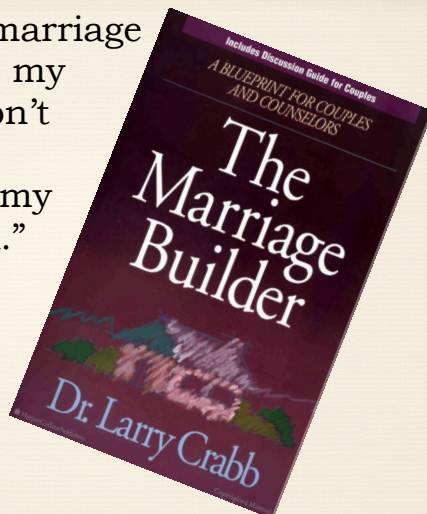
## **Ephesians 5**

A husband is called to self sacrifice  
in spiritual service  
of the undeveloped wife.

## **1 Peter 3**

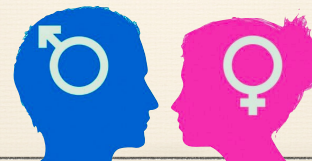
A wife is called to self sacrifice  
in spiritual service  
of the unrighteous husband.

"In a healthy marriage I MINISTER to my mate, and I don't MANIPULATE them to fulfill my selfish agenda."



## **Headship & Submission**

**are crosses to bear  
not badges to wear.**



### *Possible analogy*

The husband is like the **point guard** on a basketball team.



- He is first and foremost a member of a team.
- He need not be the most valuable player or even the most gifted leader on the team.
- He is assigned the role of initiating play.
- He may not be the only one who initiates play.
- The team is "his team" because he represents it and is responsible for its proper functioning.

### *Possible analogy*

The wife is like a key **scorer or rebounder** on a basketball team.

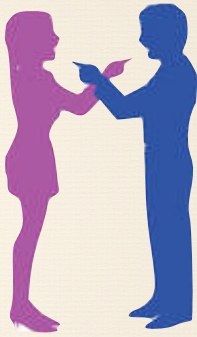


- She is first and foremost a member of a team.
- Her primary job is not to initiate play or lead the team but to execute play using her strengths.
- She may be the most valuable player and the "behind the scenes" leader.
- She gets great satisfaction and honor from her work in enabling the team to function successfully.



## Three common misperceptions.

- Defining power positionally, freedom politically, and happiness materially.
- Confusing authority (in one sphere) with superiority (in all spheres).
- Failing to see marriage as two individuals becoming one flesh.
- Applying role rules before or without applying ground rules (Rom.12).



## Romans 12

vs 14-21

### Ground rules for Christian living

vs 1a

1.  
Grace of God  
must be deeply  
sensed

vs 1b-2

2.  
Cross of Christ  
must be willingly  
carried



vs 3-5

3.  
Body of Christ  
must be rightly  
discerned

6.  
Response to the  
world must be  
graciously given

Worldly  
circumstances  
are not my hope

vs 9-13

5.  
Love for the  
brethren must be  
openly shown

God's people  
are not my hope

vs 6-8

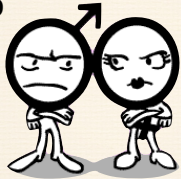
4.  
Gifts of the  
Spirit must be  
properly used

The use of my gifts  
is not my hope

## The most common abuses.

Insecure men who equate headship with superiority and leadership with privilege.

Rather than sanctifying, completing, and listening to women, they abuse and dishonor them.



Wounded women who equate role with worth and position with freedom /power.

Rather than helping men fulfill their difficult calling with respectful support, they seek their own fulfillment through independence.

When you take male objectivity (which depersonalizes), and female subjectivity (which personalizes)

and express them through an insecure, immature, and un-renewed soul

you get  
**GENDER WARS**

- abusive  
chauvinists versus  
defensive rebels

and submit them to the orchestration of the Holy Spirit and Jesus' example

you get the  
**Body of Christ**

- sacrificial saviors  
and receptive  
servants

## Conclusion

- There seems to be solid Biblical evidence for some ascribed gender roles in family, and ministry.
- The abuse of this teaching lies largely in its inappropriate application.
- When we keep our eyes on Jesus we tend to be more concerned about selfless service than power and position.
- Most women prefer to see men in leadership positions when they are strong, sensitive, and spiritual.

Jean Kerr  
(Author)



"The only thing worse than a man you can't control is a man you can."