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# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

*Ephesians 5:21-25*  
*Lesson #20*  
*The Husband's Posture*  
*02/26/2023*

1

**“FAMILY” is a major framework for theological relationships 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.

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“The family is the nucleus of civilization.”

Will Durant  
(historian)

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“If we abandon marriage, we abandon the family.”

Michael Enzi  
(Wyoming Senator)

**Foundation for a successful marriage:**

1. Individual emotional health & maturity
2. **AGAPE** (sacrificial love) commitment
3. **Shared realistic expectations** - principles, priorities, and **posture**

**Roles**

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**Before we explore this topic we must understand three issues.**

1. Peace through the **Word of the Cross** - the sense of security and significance that every believer has “in Christ”.
2. The Path through the **Way of the Cross** - the life modeled by Jesus and his Apostles.
3. God’s **link of gender with social posture.**
  - This was one of the shocking **distinctives** of the Christian faith in the ancient world.
  - It is a **stumbling block** to the Gospel message in the modern world.

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## Submissive POSTURE is applied especially to certain relationships.

1 Peter 5:5 (GROWTH)

“You younger men, likewise, **be subject to your elders;**”

Romans 13:1 (GOVERNMENT)

“Every person is to be in **subjection to the governing authorities.**”

1 Peter 3:1 (GENDER)

“you **wives**, be **submissive** to your own husbands,”

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*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;** . . . 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.”

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## Why is this issue so controversial to the modern mind?

1. The WAY OF THE CROSS is **not** the way of our culture.

- **Competition** - Roles in a just society should be achieved, not ascribed by gender, race, religion, etc.
- **Pragmatism** - Efficiency in getting the job done.
- **Freedom** - Self worth is linked with “freedom to compete” for social position, power, and reward.
- **Rights** - Individuals are to be responsible and free to determine their own roles and positions in life.

2. It **assumes** that our present cultural values are the most enlightened and the standard for all others.

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## Different views



the lens of modern culture

### Egalitarian

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



the lens of traditional culture

### Authoritarian

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



Personal equality & dignity are respected

Some roles are ascribed not achieved

### Complementarian

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

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## Some important distinctions

**A ROLE** has to do with the proper use of a person’s gifts or abilities in a healthy community.

**A RULE** has to do with the codified boundaries for certain behavior.

**A POSTURE** is gender sensitive and has to do with the way a person sees themselves and is seen by others in relationships.

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- Each of us is called to be subject to Christ and to the Body of Christ (one another).

Orchestra Conductor



**Our Posture is ascribed on the basis of Gender**

**Our Roles are achieved on the basis of Gifts?**

**Our Rules are tutorial as a part of our Growth?**

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## Ephesians 5

“18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; 21 **being subject to one another in the fear of Christ.**”

- The (Greek) word translated “**be filled**” is the only imperative in this passage.
- It is followed by four infinitives -
  1. “speaking”, 2. “singing”,
  3. “giving thanks”, and 4. “**being subject**”.

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**Subjection / Submission to one another is a basic Christian doctrine and is a POSTURE more than a RULE.**

- It is the sign of a **spirit filled life** - along with gratitude, joyful singing, edifying speech etc.
- It is something that cannot and should not be **forced** on another. It is a sign of the Spirit, not a law to be followed.
- It is something that is applicable to **every Christian** and especially in certain areas - leaders, teachers, elders, marriage, family, etc.

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## Possible analogy

The husband's **POSTURE / ROLE** 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 for others.
- 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.

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## 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.” (Col.3:11)

**We all bear the Image of God.**

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

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



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## Colossians 3

“11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, **but Christ is all, and in all.**”

18 **Wives, be subject** to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19 **Husbands, love** your wives, and do not be embittered against them.”

**Our oneness in Christ does not apply to distinction in social posture.**



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## 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. . . . 25 **Husbands, love** your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;”

**As a disciple of Christ I must decide - am I going to walk the Way of the Cross or the way of this world.**

## Philippians 2

“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,”

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## Implications:

- Both the husband and the wife are called to be **subject** to one another in serving Christ.
- Both husband and wife have **complementary** (not hierarchical) **postures**. Gender defines by nature and providence our posture in marriage.
- Husband and the wife are called to be **self sacrificing** in their relationship as they picture the Gospel.
  - ✓ The wife (as a model of the church - vs.32) is to support and submit to her husband as a sign of her bond to Christ in bearing God's Image.
  - ✓ The husband (as a model of Christ - vs.32) is to initiate sacrificial love and edify his wife so that she be fulfilled as a person bearing God's image.

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## Implications:

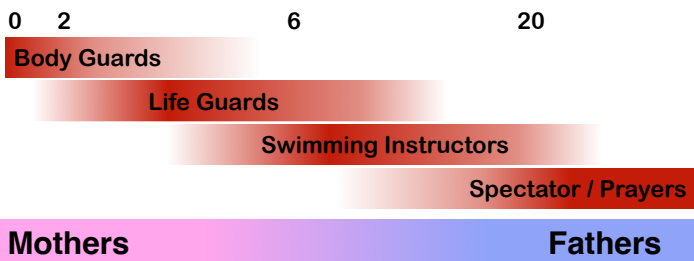
**The husband**, like the wife, is called to sacrifice as a part of his service and witness.

- ✓ The husband's sacrifice is in many ways **greater** than that of the wife in that he bears responsibility for the family by laying aside his life. He, not the wife, is commanded, like Christ, to love (**AGAPE**).
- ✓ The husband is to **serve his wife** with sensitive listening in order to understand and honor her.
- ✓ There is no place for the husband to **claim a favored position OVER** his wife, with special privileges, and benefits.
- ✓ The husband **needs his wife** to support him in this heavy calling by being receptive and supportive.

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## Parents and Parenting

- Fathers & mothers have **distinct postures** at various stages of childhood development.



- Fathers play a **key role** in shaping security, trust, confidence, etc. through the family.

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## Fathers and Healthy Families

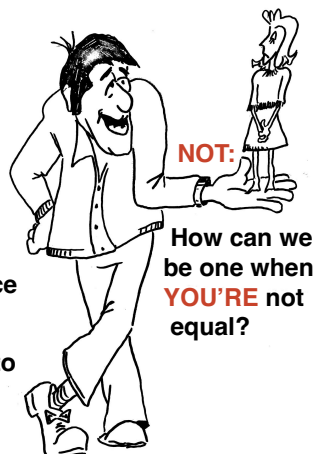
- 1 in 4 American children live in families headed by unwed mothers.
- America has the highest rate of children living in fatherless households of any nation in the world. (over 3 times the world average)
  - The fatherless are:*
    - 40% more likely to repeat a class.
    - 70% more likely to drop out of school.
    - 50% more likely to divorce.
  - The fatherless make up:*
    - 90% of all homeless and runaways.
    - 63% of teen suicides.
    - 85% of children with behavioral disorders.
    - 85% of youth in prison.

Source: America First Policy Institute

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## A word to husbands

1. Don't equate headship with **privilege or superiority**.
2. View your marriage as a drama and a witness - **modeling Christ and the church**.
3. Expect to share some of Christ's **suffering**.
4. Find your ultimate significance **in your relationship with Christ**.
5. If you want to help your wife to be a supportive and submissive helpmate - **model what it means to be a sensitive, strong, self sacrificing, servant to her soul**.



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“The only thing worse than a man you can't control is **a man you can.**”

Jean Kerr  
(Author - Playwright)



23

“Denominations that have historically ordained women to the highest positions of leadership have experienced an exodus of men, not only from leadership but also from the church.”

Lyle Shaller  
(church consultant)



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When you take  
*male objectivity (which depersonalizes),*  
and *female subjectivity (which personalizes)*  
and express them through  
**an insecure, immature,  
and unrenewed soul**  
you get

## GENDER WARS

- *abusive chauvinists*  
versus *defensive rebels*

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When you take  
*male objectivity (which depersonalizes),*  
and *female subjectivity (which personalizes)*  
and submit them to the  
**orchestration of the Holy Spirit**  
and **Jesus' example**  
you get

## Body of Christ

- *sacrificial servers*  
and *sacrificial supporters*

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## Conclusion

- There seems to be solid Biblical **evidence** for some ascribed gender postures in family, and ministry.
- The **abuse** of this teaching lies largely in its inappropriate application (as a rule).
- When we **keep our eyes on Jesus** we tend to be more concerned about selfless service than power and position.
- Women and men **prefer** to see men in leadership positions when they take a strong, sensitive, and selfless **POSTURE**.

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## A Berean's look at ...

Next lesson  
1 Pet.3:1-6

The wife's  
posture

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