

***The Biblical Role of Men and Women in Marriage  
Ephesians 5:21-33***

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**Some problems**

- In a sinful and therefore broken world we see very few marriages that model the biblical pattern for men and women in marriage.
- We equate equality with sameness.
- We override biblical teaching with our preconceived ideas of the nature of marriage.
- As counselors we are tempted to despair that the biblical model can be achieved.

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**The structure of marriage follows the structure of Christ and the church. 5:23-24**

- The church then is further related to a human body.
  - Christ is the head of the church
  - The church is the body of Christ.
  - This is crucial in understanding that what we are talking about here is a living organism rather than an organization.

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The standard Jesus sets as the head of the body, the Church. 5:25-30

- Placed his affection (love) on the church
- Did what was necessary to establish the church.
- His top priority is to build up the church
  - Exclusive devotion
  - Application of the Word resulting in cleansing of sin.
  - Bringing the body to the potential for which it was created.

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The standard Jesus sets as the head of the body, the Church. 5:25-30

- His actions toward the body are governed by two factors:
  - Cherish
  - Nourish

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Conclusions

- A man and a woman in marriage are as intricately connected as a human body. 5:31
- This is a profound interconnectedness in which whatever affects one part affects the whole. (I cannot damage the person I am married to without damaging myself.)
- Submission to the unique position that each holds is the key to the working of the whole. 5:21

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### The roles

- The role of the husband is to provide the leadership, submitting to the example of the Lord Jesus Christ's relationship with the church, that gives the wife every opportunity to thrive. This happens when love (*agape*) is consistently applied.
- The role of the wife is to receive the nurture that leads her and the marriage to thrive. This happens when respect for the husband's role is consistently applied.

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### The roles

- What we have described is a marriage in which both the man and the woman are followers of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Even in a marriage where one spouse is not a believer, the believing husband can love his wife as Christ loved the church and the believing wife can treat her husband with respect.

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### The Beauty of a Biblical Marriage

- A man and a woman functioning in marriage as instructed by God will be a living parable of the relationship of Christ and the church. 5:32

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