



2025 Weekly Devotions

Week of: September 1st -7th

Sermon: August 31st



September 1

Proverbs 31:10-19

When we consider biblical manhood and womanhood, it should not feel like a taboo subject that must be avoided. We never have to apologize for our convictions, based on the Bible, that God created both men and women in His image with dignity and equality; yet, with intentional differences in assignments, abilities, bodies, and purpose. Doug Wilson said, “When we come to our duties gladly, it helps us to discipline our emotions. When we come to our duties with the knowledge that God has formed them for us and has assigned all marital duties appropriately, we can rejoice in His goodness.” I want you to pause today and consider the fact that a good God designed us the way He did which means we should be content and thrilled with His beautiful plan.

What I am trying to communicate today is that if we reject, rebel against, or have a poor attitude about headship and submission, it is because our own hearts are not right before the Lord. It is a perfect plan when executed the way God designed it. We should relish His model as we embrace our roles with excitement and anticipation of the precious favor of God poured out on our lives and families as we live in step with His wise and perfect will.

Husbands are to love and lead their families as Jesus does the church. A man must learn to imitate Christ in character and conduct. A man is to nourish and cherish his wife and love her sacrificially. He must tend the garden of his family with extraordinary care, or his home will be full of weeds. But this week we will be focusing more on the characteristics of biblical womanhood which will include some duties and definitions from God’s Word. One thing I want to share with you before moving forward is the belief that a man is responsible for his own duties and, for those of us who are married, also responsible for seeing to it that the wife has all she needs to effectively and biblically fulfill her duties. We also must be very careful how we define “woman’s” work. There are plenty of things that a woman is typically thought to be responsible for in a home that a man can do as well. We must allow the Bible to determine this rather than the culture.

This may be a strange statement to you, but I think it is accurate to say that the Bible does not teach the woman’s place is in the home; it requires that the home be her priority, but she is not at all limited to the home. She is certainly to be industrious and productive in the home (Titus 2:3-5 and Prov. 31), but it is likely that her endeavors will take her outside of the home as well as she operates as a Proverbs 31 kind of a girl.

I often said that my wife, who has been both a stay-at-home mom and a teacher outside of the home, had the short end of the stick. I could never have done all that she did so masterfully and effectively through the years. Her patience and faithfulness to her calling has blessed our family tremendously. Many nights she went to bed tired not because she was doing anything wrong. On the contrary, her fatigue was because she was doing her duty right. Being a woman is hard and often tiring but is an absolute treasure to those who are blessed by knowing her.

September 2

Genesis 3:16

Last week, Pastor Aaron mentioned in his sermon that part of God's punishment on Adam was that the ground would be cursed causing his efforts to produce food from the land to be terribly hard, tiring, and painful as he battled weeds, pestilence, poor weather, etc. (Gen. 3:17-19). The point that he was making was that God's discipline was directed precisely at the point of Adam's responsibilities as a man. He was the one who was to provide for his family. In our day we might say, "He was the one responsible for putting bread on the table." Now, this would only be accomplished by the toilsome sweat of his brow. I mention this today because it is equally important that we take a moment to consider the discipline that was doled out on Eve. It will help us understand her God-given duties as a woman. Remember, God disciplined them in the area of His assigned duties.

In Genesis 3:16 it says, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you." Notice that it is the woman who is given the ability and duty to give birth to children. I suppose we can assume that before the fall childbirth was not intended to be painful but that it was still a characteristic of womanhood. As such, we are able to say that only women can have babies regardless of the absolute insanity espoused by some today.

The aspect of the woman's punishment that we will zoom in on today is that her "desire" shall be contrary to her husband. What does this mean? It is rather simple if you rely on the full counsel of God's Word to establish your worldview. The only way that this makes any sense is in light of the concept of male headship. It is because of sin that a woman would rebel against God's design. Dear ones, do you see that if it were not for sin, a woman would have no problem fulfilling her God-given role as a helpmate and being content and joyful as she did.

When the Bible says that her desire will be contrary to her husband, it is talking about the tendency to rebel against God's will for her. From the moment of the original sin, there would be within a woman's heart a desire to be the head of her own life; to assume the position of her husband. This should be understood as sin against God's perfect design for manhood, womanhood, and the family. That which was once joyful, pleasant, and productive for Adam would now be laborious, hard work. For the woman, that which was once a sweet pleasure filled with understanding and joy derived from a complementary life with her husband, would now be replaced with an attitude of independence, competition, jealousy, and rejection of the idea of submission.

My goal for today is simply to help us be aware that much can be learned about God's original design from the manner in which he punished each guilty party in the Garden of Eden. We must understand today that feminism is nothing more than the rejection of God's design for womanhood which is completely predicted in the 16th verse of Genesis 3. I find that quite amazing in and of itself.

September 3

Ephesians 5:25-33

When I consider the transforming love of our Lord Jesus, I am forever grateful that His love changes me. His love draws me as it satisfies me and creates in me a desire to know Him, to trust Him, to follow Him, and to love Him deeply in return with all that I am and all that I have; imperfectly of course. Then I consider the fact that the Bible in Ephesians tells me to love my wife like Jesus loves me (Ephesians 5:25-33). This means that my love for my wife should have a transforming effect for good on her.

I can only imagine the immense pressure that women feel in our society today to “keep themselves up.” The sad truth is that it is not wrong for her to want to be attractive or lovely, but that she has to try to do this alone. The problem lies in the failure of our society to recognize the role that a good father or husband plays in this effort. I think it is valid to say that the Bible teaches the male figure in a woman’s life has some level of responsibility for her loveliness. I think it would be helpful for you to read Ephesians 5:25-27 at this point.

It appears to me that our love for our wives or daughters in the case of single women and those still at home, should have an obvious effect on her. Christ’s love for us certainly had a great effect on us. He found us ungodly and sinful and still He died for us (Rom. 5:6-8). He found us one way and transformed us into something different and better. I love what Doug Wilson said on this subject. He wrote, “So when a man takes a woman into his home, all who know them should expect to see her flourish and grow in loveliness in the years to come.” As a man loves his wife like Jesus loves His bride, he should expect to see her grow more like Christ and thus more lovely as time passes.

We all know that it is God alone who causes the growth and godly transformation, but we also know that God uses His appointed means to get the job done. In this case, it is the Christlike love of a godly man that aids her in her own sanctification. It will flow from his self-sacrificial and sanctifying love for her. I know that no husband in his own strength is sufficient for such a high and heavy calling, yet we know that the Holy Spirit will give him the power and strength to live and love his wife or daughter in this way. Men, you must take responsibility for your role in her “beauty.”

Please know that as I have written this point to ponder today, I am speaking for the most part about internal beauty that will show itself externally in precious qualities of a gentle, quiet, and Christlike spirit (1 Pet. 3:4). True beauty does not begin and end with the heart. It actually begins in the heart and shows itself in external adornment. Remember that a physically beautiful woman who has a bad heart is as incompatible as putting a gold ring in a pig’s snout (Prov. 11:22). This would be the equivalent of putting lipstick on a pig. Remember that today gentlemen, we want to pause and reflect on how our love for the woman in our lives should be an efficacious love which simply means we should love in such a way that she becomes more like Jesus and thus more precious and beautiful because of it.

September 4

1 Corinthians 11:8-9

I am certain that the passage that I have chosen for today is one that is often neglected because it is despised as it is interpreted from a purely secular and feminist viewpoint. Paul wrote, “For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.” This passage can be so easily misinterpreted and misapplied and can therefore make a woman feel less valuable and necessary than a man. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

You see, men and women are oriented to each other differently. This passage teaches that a woman was created for the man and not the other way around. This does not mean that he doesn’t need her or that he doesn’t have certain responsibilities to her. None of us could be born if it weren’t for women. So much of what we are to *do* as men and women is based on *what we are* as men and women. A man’s fundamental direction in his life should be his calling and vocation under God. Most often he cannot do this alone, so he needs help. A man is called to do his job while a woman is called to help him do the job. Wilson said, “He is oriented to the task, and she is oriented to him.”

Before anyone gets hot under the collar, please try to see this from a biblical worldview and an eternal perspective. Johanna and I like to think of our marriage as a missionary marriage. God has called us, one unit, as a family to accomplish his will together. For us that meant raising 4 children together. For me it meant going to work everyday to make sure they had everything they needed, and to lead them to know and love the Lord. Johanna understood her role in accomplishing God’s will for our family just as I understood my role. We were always working together for a common goal. We knew that we were better and more effective together and enjoyed our specific assignments for such an amazing calling.

I could never have achieved much of what we have enjoyed together in this life if she wasn’t right beside me. I think I can correctly say that she was never treated like a slave or unimportant in this God sized adventure. The beauty of God’s design for marriage and relationships is that they are not allowed to be guided solely by masculine expectations and orientations. Likewise, they are not allowed to be governed purely by feminine expectations either. Our expectations are meant to be shaped and directed by God’s will and design for biblical manhood and womanhood. Anything less will cause grave damage to marriage.

Men and women do well to understand their respective roles and the peace and joy that comes with living and operating in those roles. Men are to love their wives as Christ loves the church. This love is not going to be based on mere emotions and sentiment, but on willful actions that transform. Biblical love always transforms for the good. This will allow a wife to cultivate a gentle and quiet spirit which is precious to Christ. She will become increasingly more “beautiful” which will continue to be attractive and alluring to her husband. This love will grow to be more mature than the initial experiences of love that drew two people together. God’s plan is absolutely amazing and praiseworthy.

September 5

Ephesians 5:22

I have always thoroughly enjoyed the way Dr. John Piper writes and preaches. He has a way with words and a deep and abiding love for the Trinity that overflows in beautiful exaltation of Christ and the gospel. He loves the Word of God and lives to promote it as truth and as beauty. Today, I want to borrow some thoughts from him that have shaped my thinking through the years on the subject of biblical womanhood. Before I do that, I want to share some of the inspiration that I have gained from his writing not only on this subject but all of the Bible.

It is one thing for me to tell you “The Bible says so” and expect that to provoke obedience in you, and another thing for me to help you see the good reason why. We like to utilize the discipline of exegesis which is simply working hard to find the God-intended truth in a passage and communicating that to you. My point is that there is ample proof in the Bible to commend the vision of biblical manhood and womanhood to you. I want to do more than simply tell you this is what the Bible says. I would love for each of you to see the perfect and precious beauty of God’s teaching on this subject so that you will find it beautiful and satisfying in your own heart and mind.

It is far easier to live with biblical truth when you can see the value and the joy in doing so. I hope that you will embrace biblical teaching on womanhood because the Bible says so but also because you love it too. If not, trying to obey is going to feel like drudgery rather than delight. I want your heart to rejoice in this teaching and embrace it personally because you see its beauty too. I hope you will come to see this is not only right but really, really good. As Piper says, “I want you to see that this teaching is not only valid but valuable, not only accurate but admirable.” Oh to be able to see God’s great design for men and women before the fall in the Garden of Eden.

For me personally, my heart embraces, accepts, and completely agrees with God’s design as I cherish the complementary nature of our existence. Do your best to separate God’s perfect will for womanhood from the distortions we see in our society today. A good place to start is with the matter of submission. I firmly agree with Piper that submission is more of a disposition than a behavior. A woman’s submission to her husband’s headship is going to look somewhat different based on the quality of his leadership.

The idea here is that her desire is to submit to his leadership, and she willingly will when he does not lead her to oppose the very will of God. Another way of saying this would be that her heart is *inclined* to follow his leadership and to support him in it. It is her heart’s desire to do so. The husband however does not replace Christ as the woman’s supreme authority. She is not required to submit to his leadership when it leads her to sin. She should not steal, be involved in pornography, or such things. Even when she has to stand with Christ against him, she can still do it with a sweet disposition that is willing to follow Him were he not causing her to sin if she supported him. As is often the case, it is a matter of the heart.

September 6

Ephesians 5:21-22

I can't tell you how many times through the years that I have sat in my office doing marriage counseling and watched women cringe and nearly shutdown at the mention of the word *submission*. It is understood by many to be a nasty word that is purely about male dominance and forced superiority. Tons of poor male examples have certainly not helped the situation. To be honest, if I thought submission meant I had to listen to and follow the pathetic leadership of some of the men I've met, I would be resistant too. Fortunately, the Bible provides us with enough information that we should be able to rightly understand and apply the principles of submission in a Christ-honoring and joyful way.

First, I want to note that an often overlooked verse in Ephesians 5 is verse 21. Folks tend to jump straight to verse 22 where it says, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord." I see men swell up a little across the chest when I read this one and cast a glance of power and authority at their wives. Where we should be starting is in verse 21 where it says, "Submitting to one another out of reverence for the Lord." Let's start there today.

It is important to understand that the imperative given in that verse is meant to characterize "Spirit-filled" living. If you read the verses that precede this one you will find a string of teachings provided by Paul. This verb in the text is in what is known as the middle voice. This means that the submission is a willful act on behalf of the one submitting. They are choosing to do this to themselves. One submits him or herself to another by choice. This should be characteristic of Christian living in general. Think of a passage like Philippians 2:3-4 where we are admonished to think of others more than ourselves.

It is equally important that we see submission as an outflow of reverence for Christ. It is our respectful worship of Christ that encourages us to obey what He commands us. I think the teaching that we should be submissive "one to another," fits nicely in the overall conduct of life as a believer in regard to husbands and wives, parents and children, and masters and slaves which will all be addressed by Paul in the 6th chapter of Ephesians. Now, don't take this too far so that when we get to verse 22 of Ephesians 5, we don't view this verse as merely unidirectional submission.

It becomes clear that once he has established an attitude of submission to one another, he begins to zero in on specific areas of submission including that of a wife to her own husband. This is going to be in direct agreement with the creative order of Genesis 1 and 2 and the specific assignments given by God to the man and woman. By the way, it is important here to note that the teaching in this passage is that a wife submits to her own husband. This is not submission to every man simply because he is male. We will pick up here tomorrow but for today I will end with this thought. A wife is to submit to her husband as unto the Lord. This likely means that she is to do this like she is encouraged to do every other work - "as unto the Lord." May He be glorified as we put on display the beauty and wisdom of His perfect plan for men and women as complimentary beings fulfilling His will.

September 7

1 Corinthians 14:33b-36

Today I decided to bite off an issue that I am sure is misunderstood, hotly debated, and vehemently despised by many. The passage for us to ponder today says, “The women should keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak...If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home” (1 Cor. 14:34-35). Wow! That seems pretty harsh and even a bit confusing when you go back to 1 Cor. 11:2-16 and see that Paul gives instructions concerning the times when a woman prays or prophesies. So, we could ask ourselves, “Which is it?”

I must confess that I deal with this issue with a presupposition. This simply means that I interpret this text from the standpoint of biblical inerrancy and non-contradiction. I do not believe that the Bible contradicts itself and therefore I do not believe that God would allow Paul to pen verses that would do so. I come at this difficult passage believing that it too is God inspired and maintains His love for men, women, and the church. My presupposition does not allow me to interpret this text in such a way that God is mean, that women are demeaned or inferior to men in equality, value, or as image bearers. There must be an interpretation that maintains God’s goodness and a woman’s precious value considering biblical manhood and womanhood.

We must not interpret a text forgetting the rest of the counsel of God’s Word where men are told to love their wives as Jesus loves the church or that when a man finds a good, godly wife he has found favor with God. There are too many verses in the Bible that would prevent us from all of a sudden believing God is allowing Paul to treat women as inferior or childlike.

Context is the key, and we must never forget the heart of God. Role distinctions between men and women are for our good, not for our enslavement. This section in chapter 14 is about weighing or interpreting the aforementioned prophecies (vv. 26-33a). Women can speak as established in chapter 11. Paul refers to the created order of Genesis 2:20-24 back in 1 Corinthians 11:8. I believe this harkens back to God’s design and the roles that men and women play in His design. It helps to interpret chapter 14 properly when we are thinking of created order, headship, and submission. This is also what much of the passage in chapter 11 is addressing. It too is related to headship, submission, and created order.

In other words, when a prophecy has been introduced to the church, it is the men who are to work out the validity and application of it first. This is about someone speaking what is a proposed truth, a prophecy, and then others explaining it to the church. This teaching moment is to be done by men. This does not mean that a woman can never speak in the church but that she has no part in the preaching or teaching ministry of the church – except at home where a wise husband will listen to the insightful thoughts of his wife.

In chapter 11 where we are told that a woman may speak or prophesy, that should be understood in an informal setting. She is not standing in the pulpit as you might envision preaching a sermon. It fits more appropriately to see her speaking something that she believes to be true and necessary in an informal way. She is still able to introduce her thoughts on issues and her insight and wisdom on matters related to the life of the church. I know this is insufficient on such a big topic, but I trust it will help with your interpretation. Always remember that God’s ways are good and His love for both men and women is infinitely wise.