

Throughout history, Ephesians 5 has been both misused and misunderstood. Many have twisted these powerful words either to oppress or to rebel. Today, we invite you to give this passage a fresh hearing. When we understand God's original design for marriages, it has the power to heal what our culture has distorted and reshape how we see marriage.

THE FOUNDATION FOR MARRIAGE ROLES — v.21

Ephesians 5:21: *"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."*

Submission Is Not One-Sided, but Mutual

- Our willingness to yield flows from our deeper devotion to Jesus
- Like a yield sign, we pause to let the other go first when necessary

Marriage Reflects Equal Dignity with Distinct Roles

- The Trinity demonstrates equality of worth with distinction in roles
- Jesus, though equal with the Father, emptied himself as a servant

WIFE: A STRONG HELPER (Like God) — v.22-24; 33b

Ephesians 5:22-24: *"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. 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. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything."*

Ephesians 5:33b: *"...and the wife must respect her husband."*

She Is Strong In Her Support, Not Silent

- "Helper" (Genesis 2) most often refers to God's powerful support
- The church is empowered with gifts to serve God and mission
- Help isn't weakness—it's power rightly placed

She Offers Her Trust As a Voluntary Gift

- Trust reflects a freely given gift, not forced compliance
- "I trust God's design for our home, and I'm all in"
- When a husband leads like Christ, submission doesn't feel unsafe

She Is Respectful within Biblical Boundaries

- Respect is how trust sounds in a healthy home
- Submission is never unconditional—only in things that are godly
- A wife never submits to sinful, abusive, or harmful directives

HUSBAND: A LOVING SERVANT (Like God) — v.25-31

Ephesians 5:25-31: *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church — for we are members of his body. 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.'"*

He Exemplifies Servant-Leadership, Not Domination

- Jesus redefined leadership through foot-washing (John 13)
- Leadership is sacrificially serving, not selfishly ruling
- Love leads by giving, not grabbing

He Loves Her with Habits, Not Hype

- Meet her daily needs as attentively as you care for yourself
- Nourish her emotionally and spiritually
- Consistent choices, not just special events, define great love

He Seeks Unity, Not Unilateral Control

- Only overrule if her choice would be destructive to family or faith
- Keep listening and praying to aim for unity
- Overruling should be rare, and husbands then bear responsibility

A UNIFIED VISION TO REFLECT THE GOSPEL — v.32-33

Ephesians 5:32-33: *"This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."*

Both Spouses Get to Reflect Jesus in Unique Ways

- Marriage combines sacrificial leadership and sacrificial submission
- It makes visible the invisible reality of Christ and the church

Marriage: Timeless Principles, Flexible Expressions

- The Bible gives almost no details about concrete expressions of roles
- Create a home where both spouses are fully seen, contributing, loved

TO LEARN MORE: Text **WIFE, HUSBAND** or **SINGLE** to (951)425-4425

A biblical marriage doesn't begin with control, but with Christ. Let's not throw out the ideas in Ephesians 5:21-33 due to the misuse we've seen in our culture. Instead, let's redeem them by returning to Jesus as our model.

There's No Place Like Home: Marriage (Part 1) When we understand God's original design for marriages, it has the power to heal what our culture has distorted and reshape how we see marriage.