The Role of the Wife!

Last week we looked at the role of the husband. Anyone want to guess what we will look at today? Yes, the role of the wife…smart crowd! Guys, check out this verse:

Proverbs 18:22, “He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.”

Can I get an Amen? Ok, let me tell you this story:

A couple was preparing to take a beach vacation in California...

The wife had something come up at work the day of their departure. The couple pondered what to do before deciding that the husband should go ahead and take the flight to their destination and the wife would follow the next day.

The husband had a nice flight, consuming four bags of peanuts while watching a black and white comedy film he remembered from his childhood. He landed in a cheery mood and once he reached his hotel, he decided to send his wife a quick email.

Whistling a light ditty, he slipped his computer out of his bag and opened his email. In his cheerful bliss, the man accidentally misspelled his wife's email address, and his note was directed instead to an elderly preacher's wife whose husband had passed away just the day before.

When the grieving widow checked her email the next day, she took one look at the monitor, let out a piercing scream, and fell to the floor in a dead faint.

At the sound, her family rushed into the room and saw this note on the screen:

Hey honey, just got checked in. Everything's ready for your arrival tomorrow. See you soon. Love, Your charming husband.

P.S. It's blazing hot here, so make sure you bring some summer clothes.

Today we are going to look at 5 elements of the role of the wife. So, let’s jump in.

1. The Foundation: Her Creation!

Genesis 2:18-22, “The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

19 Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21 So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed the place with flesh. 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man."

So, what do we learn from this passage? Man was made from dirt!

Women were made from man's rib. This explains why men love to eat ribs, I think. This is right, isn't it?

Read the next verse:

Genesis 2:23, "The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

Last week we saw how man is to love his wife just like he loves himself. Do we see the connection here? Eve came from Adam's own flesh and when we are married Scripture tells us that we are then made one flesh.

It has been said that God made women from the rib to show how man and women are to walk side by side. Do we see the importance here?

We are one unit! The family is one unit! Ask anyone who has gone through a divorce, and they will tell you it is like being torn apart.

The family is God's design!

2. Submission!

Ephesians 5:22-24, "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 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. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything."

Submission, that evil word. Or so we are told by our culture, but what is Biblical submission? The Christian website, Got Questions, says this:

"The key to understanding biblical submission is two other words: authority and role. For Christians, biblical submission starts with arranging one's life under the will and direction of God. We surrender to God's choices and defer to His will. Submission to God is a just, rational response when we recognize, in humble gratitude, His supreme authority, goodness, and love. God created us in His image, and that alone establishes His authority over us. We submit to God willingly, in faith that He knows what's best for us. We submit in gratitude, knowing He has rescued us from hell and forgiven our sin. We submit in confidence, knowing He has planned a unique mission for each of us before time began."

"Biblical submission is about humbly, gratefully fulfilling our God-ordained roles within a hierarchy of authority as part of the awesome privilege of glorifying God in the world."

Wives are to submit to their own husbands, not to all men. Then notice this, read the previous verse:

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

Submission is a quality, a positive quality, not a club of power. Submission is voluntary, respectful yielding to the husbands leading and reflects the relationship between Jesus and His church.

3. Love & Respect!

1 Peter 3:1-6 (WE), "Wives, respect and obey your husbands in the same way. Then the husbands who do not obey the word of God will want to know God. They will want to know God because their wives live good lives, even though they say nothing about God.

2 They will see that you live holy lives and respect your husbands. 3 You should not be fine on the outside only. Some women make their hair nice. They wear gold things. They have fine clothes. 4 But you must be fine in your heart. Have a heart that is gentle and quiet. That will not wear out. And God thinks it is worth very much.

5 There were holy women long ago who trusted in God. They made themselves nice in this way. They obeyed their husbands. 6 Sarah obeyed Abraham. She called him her master. You are her children if you do what is right and are not afraid of trouble."

Ladies, two keys here, the first is that our hearts should be the lovely part, the pure part. Not just outer beauty has value. The true beauty is the inner heart, focus on that! That's true for all of us isn't it, but women are more beautiful than men so that is what Peter illustrates here.

We all, men and women, should strive to have as beautiful hearts inside as beautiful as women are on the outside!

The second thing to notice here is the one key word for women to remember, respect. Here is the key: men are to love their wives unconditionally with absolutely no reservations.

Women, you are to respect your husbands unconditionally with absolutely no reservations.

Love & respect is the wheel that makes our marriages work. Every time there is a problem in the relationship you can see how one or both sides of the love & respect cycle has stopped.

Don't let your cycle stop! Men, if you aren't feeling respect don't stop loving. Ladies, if you aren't feeling loved don't stop respecting. If either of you stop it makes things worse.

4. The place of intimacy!

1 Corinthians 7:2-5, "But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband. 3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. 5 Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

Most of you have no problem with this part of marriage, or at least that is what we are led to believe. But one of the leading factors in divorce is the lack of intimacy. So, what is going on here?

For Christians, the ones raised in Christian homes and in the church you have been told that sex is bad all in an effort to cause kids to refrain from sex before marriage. So, we are telling people that something that is a terrible sin one day is perfectly fine the next and we don't expect there to be issues?

The problem here is we misrepresent sex in order to try to get conformity to a lifestyle of purity without building a proper base to desire purity. And that is the building block of Christian intimacy.

Let's start over, sex is beautiful, created by God to be enjoyed by both and for the propagation of the species. And when practiced as God designed it continues to be beautiful. But whenever it is practiced outside of God's design it becomes death to our souls.

Notice several key phrases for this passage in 1 Corinthians:

1. Fulfill the marital duty.
2. Does not have authority over their own body.
3. Do not deprive the other.

Marriage should seek to fulfill, not deprive. Intimacy should not be the source of frustration, but living in a fallen world we have taken what God has meant for good and twisted it into self-fulfillment rather than self-sacrifice.

When intimacy has been based on self-satisfaction and the relationship is strained, we build unhealthy patterns. One such pattern is pulling away from your spouse for fear of being hurt or rejected. When this pattern becomes reinforced in the relationship you may have to go back and start from step one, or should I say, first base.

Simply kissing may have become a victim of strained intimacy. Can you and your spouse kiss for 10 seconds and remain comfortable? You may have to go back to getting comfortable with kissing and holding hands.

The attitude Paul is encouraging is selflessness in the area of intimacy. Can your spouse describe your part of intimacy as selfless or selfish?

One last observation here. If you are single you are wondering about now how this applies to you. Well, let's go back to our passage and see what Paul says:

1 Corinthians 7:7, "I wish that all of you were as I am. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that."

Paul was single and he had the gift of singleness, and it is a gift. If you find yourself single, do you consider it a gift or a curse? Paul says it's a gift.

Paul considered his singleness a gift because it allowed him to be completely focused on his relationship with Jesus and the work God had given him. If you are single, what has God given you to do that can't be accomplished by the married people around you?

Now, every woman can stive for the following characteristics in her life.

5. The virtuous wife!

Proverbs 31:10, "A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies."

Married or single, ladies, if you have noble character your worth is far more than rubies. You don't need a husband to cultivate a noble character. Then the man who finds you knows your worth.

So, what does that character look like? The Proverbs 31 woman is that woman of noble character. So let's continue reading:

Proverbs 31:11-31, "Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. 12 She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. 13 She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. 14 She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar.

15 She gets up while it is still night; she provides food for her family and portions for her female servants. 16 She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. 17 She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks.

18 She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. 19 In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. 20 She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. 21 When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet.

22 She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. 23 Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. 24 She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. 25 She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.

26 She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. 27 She watches over the affairs of her

household and does not eat the bread of idleness. 28 Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:

29 “Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.” 30 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. 31 Honor her for all that her hands have done and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.”

Will you be this woman?