

WOMEN, PART 2 – Lessons from the Garden of Eden

*Equal worth – different roles and functions; head and helper are God-level roles;
Satan enters the household; the curses and consequences of sin in the Garden*

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Good day once again dear friends. “Women”. That’s the topic and this is part 2. I hope you’ve heard part 1 first. If you want the transcripts to this, or other sermons, let me know by email and I will send them to you by email.

Jesus is our model and example, so last time we started this series by focusing on how JESUS treated women, and we saw the profound love, respect, validating and accepting manner in which Jesus interacted with the women of His day, with honor and dignity, when that certainly was not the custom then. Jesus still walks the earth today – in His people – and if we’re letting Jesus live fully in us, we will treat women the way He did. It’s that simple. I hope you have all listened to Part 1 first, carefully.

Jesus talked to women when most rabbis would not. He touched them, healed them, called them “Daughters of Abraham”, *elevated* them in the community at that time. He used women as illustrations of faith and persistence and godly generosity. He also chose several *women* to be the *first* to be aware of His resurrection. He chose a woman – Mary Magdalene - who no doubt had a reputation for being really odd, perhaps even evil since she had had 7 demons, to be the first to actually meet Him as the resurrected Christ and to proclaim the good news that He was alive again! He spoke against the easy *divorces* of His day. Jesus warned men not to *lust* after women, but to learn to rein in their thoughts and think of them respectfully and with honor. They were part of His entourage at times, and many of them supported Him financially.

There was **something about Jesus that He attracted a lot of women** disciples (Luke 8:1-3; Matt. 27:55). Here’s my point men: *Jesus made women feel honored, included, special, validated – and so they felt comfortable around this Holy man*, the Son of God. They never felt an ulterior motive, or an evil thought on His part about them.

If we men are *not* treating women the way Jesus did, if we don’t think of them the way Jesus did, if we don’t talk to them the way Jesus did, then perhaps He isn’t working in *that* area of our lives yet – as He needs to be. Now if Jesus is in you women, as a corollary, you also would be treating men the way Jesus would want you to – especially your husband, your sons, those you live with. And where we aren’t – and I include myself – we need to repent.

We also discussed this concept of being single – and whether or not it is better to be married or single. We looked at how Paul called “being single” a “**gift**” and he honored those who were able to remain single. He actually said he preferred being single. Of course what is best for one, is not for another, and Paul acknowledged that. But Paul’s inspired comments seem to fly in the face of what many actually believe, and even preach.

We focused on “singles” for a time to help dispel the *wrong* notion some have that being single equates to being incomplete, or something wrong with you. We’ll look at more verses today, especially in Genesis 2 on that subject and understand what it says there in *context*.

Men ARE different from women – but we are told by God to understand one another. 1 Pet 3:7 says if we don't realize women are co-heirs of God's grace, of the promises we have – and if we don't dwell with our wives with understanding and honor, our prayers can be hindered. The last thing I want is "hindered prayer"! If you feel your prayers are being "hindered" –perhaps God is telling you, through this series, you need to honor your wife more, women in general more, need to evaluate if you see them as a spiritual equal or not.

*HONORING has to do with the way the person we're honoring feels. If your wife feels honored by her husband, he's probably OK. Regardless of what the husband says, if she *doesn't* feel honored, then something is obviously missing. To *honor* means to make her feel special, from *her* point of view of what would be special -- like a person worthy of honor. It means *not* doing the things that make her feel *not* honored. Some wives don't like to be teased by their husbands in public. Some wish their husbands would open the car doors for them – for others that's a non-issue. It's not the same for everyone. But we husbands have to find out what makes our wives feel loved, and feel honored – and do those things. And stop doing the things that make them feel cheap, or dishonored. It's that simple. It's for you to figure out based on what kind of wife you have. We men are to understand our *one* wife. We don't have to understand all women.*

So as far as eternal destiny goes, Peter and the entire Bible say that women have equal opportunities to men. If we don't honor women, believe they are co-heirs – our prayers will be hindered! Being equal in our destiny does not negate the fact that God put the husband to be the head of the union – very clearly stated in Ephesians 5. Just

Now let's move on by turning please to Genesis 1. We cannot understand the purpose of men and women – and what God intended from the beginning – unless we go to the beginning. I hope today we'll discover some exciting new tidbits in a very, very old story that will help us understand the right concept about women. I hope you'll look at this old story with fresh start.

Let's pick up with the creation story at the end of the fifth day. Up until the 6th day, God just proclaimed a creative act and did it. He'd say "Let the waters come together" and they did. "Let the earth bring forth grass..." – and it did.

Genesis 1:23-31

23 "So the evening and the morning were the **fifth** day.

24 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind"; and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. **And God saw that it was good.**

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man **in Our image**, according to Our likeness; let **them** have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Let's pause here a second: **For the first time in creation, God PRE-announces what He is going to do. It almost sounds like a drum roll – some fanfare.** Up until here, He made a command and it was done. For the grand finale of the physical creation, He announces that He is going to share *His* image with a created being. No other physical creation so far has

shared in God's image or likeness. And up til now – no pre-announcement, no fanfare. Had you noticed that before?

When it says “Let Us make MAN...”, the word there is “aadaam” or “adam”. *Most of the time, “adam” is translated “humankind, mankind, people, man, the man, persons” as you can quickly verify in any good lexicon – and sometimes it means the name of the first human male. It comes from the root of the word meaning “ground”. Mankind is of the dust of the earth, we are dust and will return to dust. So the announcement of mankind being in His image includes male and female. It is not saying that only the male is in God's image.*

“Image” has to do with what God is like. “Likeness” has to do with what God looks like. Both male and female share in God's image and likeness. In the resurrection, I'm convinced we will see both aspects of God – His “maleness”, or male qualities if you will, and His “femaleness”, if I can put it that way. Or better: when we spend time with Father, I'll bet those who are female today will walk away thinking “wow, he really is so much like us”—and when we men spend time with Father, we'll come back thinking how “manlike” He is. The same God who created the female-like tiny, cute butterflies and gorgeous sunsets, also made the craggy Rockies and alpine peaks; the same God who made a lovely fawn, also designed the bull elk. We men and women – between us – reflect what God is like, to some small degree. We'll never fully know and understand God until we are in His spirit family, but we see major glimpses now.

Genesis 1: 27 “So God created man [humankind] in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Another comment: Genesis 1 speaks of the equal destiny of man and woman. Genesis 2 speaks of their different *roles*. But here, we need to notice that they are both in His image, and God blessed them *both*, and told them *both to work together*, as a team, in having dominion, managing, governing, and ruling the earth. **In verse 28**, God is making *mankind royalty over the earth*. That was the original plan: that mankind was to rule the earth in a godly fashion – man and woman *together* -- as a loving team, using each other's strengths and assets to accomplish God's will.

I'm confident of this because Adam and Eve were a picture of Christ and the church. Christ is the head of the body, Christ is the King of Kings. But don't forget we are *co-heirs with Christ* (**Romans 8:17**), and we will reign *with Christ* (**Rev. 20:6; 2 Tim. 2:12**). That was the original intent, and Adam and Eve were to *picture* that fulfillment by Christ and the church.

We are to sit *with Him on His throne* remember (Revelation 3:21). Other places say we will have our own thrones, as we fulfill finally what Adam and Eve were *supposed* to do – rule the earth in a godly way! Together. Lovingly. As one. Yes, with one as the head – but what head would be so stupid as not to listen to input from the rest of the body!

This harkens back to Peter's comment in 1 Pet 3:7 of being “heirs together” of the grace of life. He was thinking probably of **Genesis 1:27-28**, that man and woman were to work together, heirs together.

God's potential for mankind is here revealed: God is saying, "Obey me, stay close to me – and I'll share with both of you my image and allow you to be leaders, managers and even rule the entire creation." We know Adam and Eve failed, as we *all* would have on our own frankly and we all have failed and have had to repent and be forgiven – just as they will, I'm sure, also repent and still be in the family of God.

At the end of Luke 3, where the genealogy of Jesus is given through Mary (Matthew's genealogy is through Joseph), it ends by saying **in Luke 3:38**, ".....son of Seth, *the son of Adam, **the son of God.***" The words "the son" are not in the original, though implied, and either way, Adam was "of God". I say this, to caution so many who seem to slam Adam and Eve – as if they, or you or I or anyone else, could have done any better. We couldn't have without God's spirit. And even *with* God's spirit, how well do we all do, day by day?

Gen. 1:29 "And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so. 31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it **was VERY good**. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

After the first 5 days of creation, God considered what He had made as "good". **After the 6th day, and that's after the woman was created as the final physical creation of God's creation – God was especially thrilled and considered what they had made as "VERY GOOD"**. (I say "they had made" because Scripture puts God in the plural here in verse 26 "Let *us* make man in our image).

So ladies, you are considered part of a day that God calls "**very good**". ***Women, that means your creation is also considered "very good" by your Creator. Man and woman were – at this point – sinless, good people. God says so. Verse 31 is clear about that: "God saw everything (including mankind!) that He had made, and indeed it was very good."***

Ladies and girls, I hope you do accept that God designed you – everything about you: your talents, your looks, your complete DNA, who your parents were, the color of your hair, and yes – *God* made you female because *God* wanted specifically *you* to be walking the earth right now. *you*, the *female* you. I personally believe each one of us were thought of, thought about, and planned by our Great God millennia before we were ever born. **Psalms 139:16** seems to be very clear about that.

I want to reiterate once more: the word "adam" usually is translated "man, mankind, the man". The first time "Adam" is clearly used as the name of humankind is Genesis 5:2, or maybe verse 3. Prior to that, whenever you read in the English translations, the name "Adam" – it could also be translated "the man" (as in Genesis 2:15-18, 19-20). "*Adam* named the animals", could as easily be translated "*the man* named the animals", in other words. Moses may have meant "the man" instead of calling him by the NAME "Adam".

NOW ARE YOU READY FOR THIS? Even Eve was considered 'ADAM' – read it for yourself in Genesis 5:1-2. Read it in as many translations as you can find. Where you read "Adam", that's the Hebrew word. Where you read "man", the Hebrew is "adam". So here it is:

Gen 5:1-2 KJV “This is the book of the generations of **Adam**. In the day that God created **man** [Hebrew: adam], in the likeness of God made he him; ² Male and female created he them; and blessed them, *and called **THEIR name Adam***, in the day when they were created.” ASV says the same.

Other translations basically say of verse 2, “and called them man”, or “called them human”. But the word, the name, ‘adam’ *can and does* refer also to the woman.

In the same way that the church is *the body of Christ*, and we are called “Christian” – Eve was as much “adam” as Adam was.

So Adam and Eve were to rule the earth together, with Adam being the head, having headship. But that didn’t preclude Eve from giving ideas, suggestions, and having questions. Any head – *your* literal head – HAS to take input from the rest of the body or it will endanger the body!

If your hand touches a hot stove, it instantly sends a message to the brain to say “this is too hot” – the brain *instantly* listens, accepts and responds and removes the hand –even automatically, in fact. In the same way, we men would be foolish not to accept input from our wives. If we demand that we are the ones in charge and she is to remain silent at all times, having no input – that is a sick head, and a malfunctioning body.

Even Jesus as head, wants our input. It’s called *prayer*. He wants to know our concerns and worries and thoughts and wishes – every single day. But there are men – and even women – I know who feel a woman is never to try to persuade the head. **I’ll address that in more detail in a few minutes. On the other hand, I probably see more cases of the woman wearing the pants than the other way around!**

Genesis 2 – I went into detail in all of this in the first message I gave about “The Mystery of Christ and the Church” so I won’t re-do all the same material. Please be sure to study that 3 part series if you haven’t. *This sermon will make much more sense if you do.*

In Genesis 2, God creates man from the dust *outside* the garden, then invites him into the garden (**Gen. 2:7, 15**) to show that we must be invited into God’s presence. It’s by invitation, and it’s special. God created man *first, and alone* – without the woman at first – to convey being first, to convey headship. The New Testament confirms man was created first in **1 Tim. 2:13** “**For Adam** was formed first, then Eve.”

Ephesians 5:23 says “**the husband is the head of the wife, AS Christ is the head of the church.**”, and as the church *submits* to Christ, the wife is to submit to her *own* husband.

Wives are not required to submit to all men. Just to their husband. Let’s be sure we’re reading that correctly. Some Bible-thumping men feel they have a right to be over all women, but that’s not in scripture. However scripture does indicate that generally women are not to usurp authority over men, either (**1 Tim. 2:12**) – though that concept will get a lot of exposure and even testing in my final message – tape 3, and probably in a way that won’t make some chauvinistic men too happy.

One more thing: **submitting is something the wife is to do herself**, to her husband -- *not* something the *husband is to make his wife do*. “Wives, submit to your own husbands” – **it says in Ephesians**

5:22. So if any men like to say “You’re supposed to submit to me” ... that statement is true, but *saying* so to your wife is not what Eph 5:22 is saying. She is to submit *herself*. In the same way, we men are to *love* our wives as Christ does. It’s something *we* are to do, not something our wives can *make* us do.

NOW something I’m learning more and more as I get older: **If I want my wife to be more submissive, rather than tell her to be more submissive, the most effective thing I can do is to do the part God gave me to do.** The more *loving* I become to her, the more submissive she becomes to me, and that makes me feel more loving, and that makes her be more submissive... it’s a living *law*.

Just do *your* part – and do it completely, and well – and God will start to work on the other to do her part, or his part. It might take some time, but it will happen.

Let’s keep your markers in Genesis 2 and also at 1 Corinthians 11.

“HEADSHIP”. Let’s talk about that. Many chafe against “headship” since many men have often abused their greater strength, their role as leader – and have abused women, raped, pillaged, beaten up, intimidated, and all that kind of evil. GODLY headship is defined as “being like Christ is to His church”, and that is why I started part 1 with *what was Christ like!? Christ emptied Himself, gave of Himself for His wife, serves her, loves her, honors her – while leading! That’s our example, men.*

Gen 2:15-17

15 “Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. 16 And the LORD God **commanded the man**, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Eve has not been created yet at this point. The commands about the two trees is given to Adam, so he could teach his wife what God had said, and in so doing, lead his wife. By telling only Adam, leadership is almost required of Adam so that the message gets passed on correctly.

V 17 – “in the day you eat thereof you shall surely die”. When we sin, we are spiritually dead, as good as dead right then and there, unless and until we accept the redemptive act of God. That’s how I take that verse. Some feel it means that since a day with God is as a thousand years, and they both died within that “day” of a thousand years, they did die “in the day [the thousand years] that they ate thereof.” I don’t like that explanation, because I think God wants us to think spiritually here, not physically.

Gen 2:18-20 Now for the first time, something “not good” is apparent.

18 And the LORD God said, “It is **not good** that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” 19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

Why did God parade the animals in front of Adam? I think to make his loneliness – his aloneness – very clear to him. He could not interact with the animals, could not talk to them, he was a different kind of being. As he saw the male and female of each species, his own loneliness must have begun to well up and ache inside of him.

Now remember, singles today are not in the same category as Adam was in the garden. There are 5 billion other people on the earth today. Many singles *do* have others they interact with, though they haven't married. Many singles are *not* lonely. And many marrieds *are* lonely! So its talking about Adam having no other of his kind to interact with. Plus God's purpose was to populate the earth and Adam needed a mate to do that.

Why was Adam created first, and alone? Please be turning to 1 Corinthians 11.

To show headship by being first, and to show he needed help! But the *help* he needed wasn't just to have a "go-fer" that he could bark orders to – but he needed help in ruling the earth. He needed help to come up *with ideas* of what to name the animals. He needed help in ideas of how to remember what he had called each one. He needed someone to help him – *and together* – they would learn that two working in harmony together could be better than one by himself or herself.

ADAM'S aloneness pointed more to his inadequacy, his lack – not to Eve's insufficiency. She wasn't even created yet, for that matter. Adam needed some help with all the work God was giving him, he couldn't do it all by himself, couldn't probably remember all the names; Someone who could reason, talk, understand -- an equal, to complement him. Eve was created to meet that need.

1 Cor 11:8-12 NKJV 8 “For man is not from woman, but woman from man. 9 **Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.** 10 For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. 11 *Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord.* 12 For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.”

1 Cor 11:8-12 NLT

8 “For the first man didn't come from woman, but the first woman came from man. 9 *And man was not made for woman's benefit, but woman was made for man.* 10 So a woman should wear a covering on her head as a sign of authority because the angels are watching. 11 *But in relationships among the Lord's people, women are not independent of men, and men are not independent of women.* 12 For although the first woman came from man, all men have been born from women ever since, and everything comes from God.”

Some feminists really fight against those words “the woman was made for the man” – because they fail to realize that man is to be a loving head and woman is to be a wonderful *helper* and then Paul adds in *verse 11* – “*but hey, you're not independent of each other. You need to be considering each other!*” And verse 12 evens things out: the first woman came out of a man, and every man since then has come out of women!

We're to be a *team*, working *together*!

SATAN is the one who injects competition and resentment later into this team - as we shall see. **In your home, with your husband/wife relationship – are you listening to Satan, or God?** (long pause) Which is it? If you're in constant “put-down” mode, you're listening to Satan. I was like that at times. I've come to repent of that and come to see that God gave me Carole to cherish, to

hold dear, to protect – never to scream at, to put down, to belittle. And if you ladies scream at or belittle your men, that's maybe even worse. It's certainly no better. When we do that, we're listening to Satan, not God.

“HELPER” IS NOT A PUT-DOWN or A SUBSERVIENT GO-FER

HELPER, Gen 2:18 (Heb: ezer) : this is not a put-down to women. The *same word* is used for GOD being OUR helper in times of need! (repeat)

Did you realize that? Is it putting God down to say He is *our* helper? But God inspired His own word to say that (**Ps. 33:20; 70:5**) . And that also *elevates* this word “helper” to its rightful meaning. It's a God-plane relationship, not a go-fer for the man. What follows are several more examples of the same word, “help, helper” – referring to *God's* penchant for helping His people.

Ps 115:11 “You who fear the LORD, trust **in the LORD; He is their help** and their shield.”

Ps 121:2 “My **help** cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.”

Hos 13:9 “O Israel, you are destroyed, But ***your help is from Me.***”

WOMAN (THE CHURCH) FROM ADAM'S (Christ's) SIDE

So God puts Adam into a deep slumber – symbolic I believe of the death of Christ, through which the church was made possible, and Eve is taken from Adam's body, just as the church is composed of people who are seen by God as being part of HIS body. All of this is really a prophecy, a picture, of Christ and the church. *I also personally believe Adam could tell something was taken out of him, as surely as Jesus could ask Thomas after Jesus' resurrection, to put his hand in the hole (John 20:25-29) in Jesus' side! Remember the N.T. church was possible only after Jesus' side was ripped open by the Roman soldier's spear (John 19:34). It left a hole that God may choose to let be a scar, even a literal hole forever, to remind us that our husband gave of Himself totally for us, that we may be forgiven, protected, and be able to marry Him, to be at-one with Him. Obviously it was very visible after the resurrection to Thomas. Even a hole still! Remember also it says in Revelation 1 that “they shall see him whom they pierced” (Rev. 1:7; John 19:37).*

The “rib” was actually a chunk out of Adam's side, not just a rib bone. Check the Hebrew out and see how that word is used elsewhere and you'll see it means “the side”. I believe, since this was a type of Christ, that Adam could see something had been taken from his side to form the beautiful maiden in front of him. No wonder he exclaimed that he got it, he knew where she had come from! Eve I'm sure – was physically stunning. She was after all hand-built, hand-fashioned by God. The word in the Hebrew is “God *built* a woman” – and she was part of what is called “VERY good” when God gets done with her. You've heard of “body by Fisher”. This was “body by God”. *By the way, men and women today have equal number of ribs.* I say this, because there are some ignorant religionists who claim man has 1 less rib.

God wakes Adam up. What a way to wake up! I imagine God may have teased Adam: “**Adam, there is one more part of creation you haven't named yet.** How did you miss THIS one, Adam?” – as He then motions for Eve to present herself for the first time to Adam! Adam's first words are

recorded and I believe the NLT does a great job here and we see Adam sees this new creature as his equal, his partner – not his competitor. But boy, oh boy – what a way to wake up!

Gen 2:22-25 NLT

22 Then the LORD God made (BUILT) a woman from the rib and brought her to Adam.

23 "At last!" Adam exclaimed. "She is part of my own flesh and bone! **She will be called 'woman,'** because she was taken out of a man." 24 This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one."

Interesting that the first name he gives her, is not Eve, but “Woman”. After all, *he* was red “ground” – adam,—and so it made sense to call her from what she had come from, “of man” – ISHSHA. It is not until after they sin, that Adam calls her Eve. Have you noticed that before? And there’s a reason for that.

Verse 25 Now, although Adam and his wife were both naked, neither of them felt any shame."

Naked and no shame. Why should there be? I hope any women about to be married, or who have been married, understand this is the way it should be between a man and his wife.

The “one flesh” has more to do than just coming together in sex. It has to do with total harmony and unity of purpose. Working together. It’s *not* just a matter of submitting to *each other*, I think, -- thought that’s important too -- as it is *submitting to GOD’S purpose* for us! (repeat)

Man is called by God to loving headship and leadership – for God. The wife is called by God to HELP accomplish those goals in that relationship, for God. Both, working to fulfill God’s will.

Now we come to Satan’s involvement in man/woman relationships and he’s never quit being involved since. We are the generation of God’s people who must recognize Satan’s footprints in our own households and boot him out! Let’s get back to the loving relationship a man and a woman, if they’re submitting to God’s will, would have for each other.

SATAN IN THE CAMP

Genesis 3:1-7 “Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

Note several things: Satan is classified as not of the God-kind, but of the beast kind. What a putdown! He’s an animal! This serpent went to the one under authority – and talks to her. Adam *was with* her (verse 6) and wasn’t fooled, and does nothing! *Eve makes the strategic error – lesson for all of us – of allowing herself to reason with someone questioning what God has told us clearly.*

Whenever we reason with Satan, he’s more clever than we are and we’re likely to lose! When Satan tries it 4,000 years later with the 2nd Adam, Jesus – Jesus never reasoned or discussed. He simply kept coming back with ‘the Word says --- and scat, Satan!’

Eve started that way – v 3 – “God has said...” – but didn’t rebuff the lie of verse 4 with God’s word and didn’t tell him to scoot! Eve was *fooled* by Satan’s craftiness (**1 Corinthians 11:3**). Adam was NOT fooled (**1 Tim 2:13-14**) so he had the greater sin. God is more lenient

when we sin in ignorance or through deception - - as Eve, than when we sin knowing better, as in Adam's case. This should be a dire warning to us to be more careful about sin when we know better. You may wish to ask for my 2-3 part series on repentance, where I really go into sins done with knowledge vs. sins of ignorance.

John 9:40-41 After Jesus had healed a blind man:

40 Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?"

41 *Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains."* Ouch!

WE think of EVE as sinning first as she takes the first bite (v.6), but God sees Adam as the first sinner and it is recorded that way for us.

Romans 5:12 "Therefore, just as *through one man sin entered the world*, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned..."

And again – 1 Tim 2:13 says Adam was not deceived, and it was the woman who was deceived.

Ladies, but don't be hard on Adam. *How many times has your husband said, "Let's not do this" – or asked you to do something, and have you always obeyed, or have you resisted and refused?*

You are to be submissive to your husband "in the Lord" – as long as your husband is not making you sin or do something against God's word – wives are to be submissive. But men – let them give their input, even *passionately*, without accusing them automatically of being rebellious! The head needs input! It reminds me of the movie about Greek Wedding: "The husband is the head. The wife is the neck. And the neck can turn the head." Ha! Yes, the neck can! Especially if done right!

My question is: even if Adam had stepped in, is there any guarantee that Eve would have followed? We hope so. But Adam did not step in, and so *he* sinned first, as he was not fooled.

Now notice what happens:

Genesis 3:7 – now for the first time they realize they are naked. Somehow, Satan injects thoughts of shame, perhaps laughs at them, whatever. Have you thought of this: perhaps, as in the case of Moses being in the presence of God on Mt Sinai and how he came back with a bright body from being in God's presence, perhaps there was a brilliance imparted to Adam and Eve while they were with God, sharing His glory! If you're unfamiliar with the account of Moses and his brilliantly shining face after being with God, you may wish to pause the tape for a minute and **read Exodus 34:29-35**.

2 Cor 3:13, 18 13: "unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. (.jump to v 18) 18 But we all, with unveiled face, *beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, [WE]are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*"

This is worth a whole sermon by itself There's a ton of exciting material in that passage, which I'll save for another message.

So when Adam and Eve sinned, perhaps – just speculation – it was like the light of GOD was suddenly turned off! They would instantly know something happened, and they'd even

see each other “in different light” if you will! They were now in *darkness* and they realized they had *really* goofed up! Without the aura, the brilliance – now just plain naked bodies, without the clothing of God’s light! *There’s so much in God’s word about “coming to the light, being in the light”, or being “the light of the world”, and on and on, to ignore this possibility!*

I can’t prove this, but I’ve often wondered why and how they suddenly are ashamed of their naked bodies. I think this concept of having God’s light previously, may bear into the explanation. When we are changed to spirit, we shall be as bright as the sun in its glory! (**Dan 12:3**) On your own, study these verses – “in light of” what I’ve just speculated about: **Matthew 5:14; 6:23; Matt 17:1-2; Luke 11:34-36; John 3:19-21; John 8:12-13**. I’ll speak on spiritual light from a different angle some time, but enough of that for now.

But – we know, Adam and Eve *now* see themselves, bare, naked, and ashamed.

Let’s analyze how this happened;

Adam was with Eve when all this happened (verse 6), and since God had given *him* the instructions, HE wasn’t deceived. His sin was in not *leading*, and letting Eve usurp his authority over him and letting her take the lead. He forsook his responsibility! Satan’s conversation with Eve had the effect of inviting her to *take charge*, to assume responsibility for what happened to the two of them. Satan is urging *her* to decide! She became confused, deceived – and sinned in ignorance. Adam, on the other hand sinned with his eyes wide open!

It says the “Eyes of **both** of them were opened” – but only after Adam goes along with this rebellion. Notice that when God appears on the scene - - **God doesn’t call out to both of them, but just to Adam**. Have you noticed that before? God isn’t calling out because He doesn’t know where Adam is, but wanted Adam to realize he was hiding! God **summons Adam only – because ADAM bore responsibility** for the sin, and as head of the house, the entire house would be either blessed or cursed with what Adam does. That rule continues today! Wives, understand there is a heavy, heavy responsibility on your husband, and a lot of us husbands *feel* it, and *know* it.

Adam shifts the blame to “the woman”. He still isn’t calling her “Eve”. (Gen 3:12) Eve does a *little* better and hangs her head in shame and simply says “the serpent deceived me”.

God then curses the serpent. **Secondly** he talks to Eve. In her childbirth she will have the hope of a Savior, but the curse was that now it will be very painful to give birth. **3rdly:** and the Hebrew is argued over as to what it really means – but there certainly are overtones that the relationship with her *man* is also going to change. Some say it means she will want him to be there for her, in a loving relationship, but that he’ll end up abusing that role of leadership, and will become her ruler, rather than her loving leader.

Remember Jesus said, in **Matt 20:24-28**, that the *pagans* love to lord it over their subjects, and it *shall not be so* among you, but you who wish to be great, become a great servant. Lead by example, lead by service – but do lead – without “lording” it over others, without being a “control freak” to everyone! Let’s read:

Matthew 20:24-28 “And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers. 25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over

them, and those who are great **exercise authority** over them. 26 **Yet it shall not be so among you;** but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. 27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave -- 28 just as the Son of Man **did not come to be served**, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Men, OK, we gotta take a hard look at this and be honest with ourselves. Do we enjoy "exercising our authority" in our homes? Now some wives, some women, in some homes wear the pants and they love to exercise authority over the man! I see that frequently! But in other "Christian-based" homes, it's not uncommon to see the man loving to exercise his authority. "*It shall not be so among you – but be the servant!*"

Men, do we look for our wives to serve us – or are we, like we are supposed to be, like Christ, looking for ways to serve our wife? Christ said clearly, "***I did NOT come to BE served, but TO serve***", and He *emptied* Himself and took on the role of a servant for us, His wife. Are we men, when we're with our wife, there to serve *her*, or there for her to serve *us*?

Now don't get me wrong! The wife indeed was made for the man, but here Jesus is explaining that a *godly* man will be like Christ, looking always for ways to serve others, including His wife, as surely as Jesus did. So in a godly marriage, sure – the wife helps out every way she can. But the man is not taking advantage of her either.

Again, let's look at Jesus' example. After His resurrection, the women who came to the tomb found his grave clothes lying neatly, and the face napkin folded neatly by itself (**John 20:6-7**). **Jesus was neat, considerate.** If He were a married man, He would not leave the sink filthy for the wife to clean up the whiskers after He shaved. He would not leave his pants on the floor, but would hang them up. He would help clear off the table after dinner. What else does it mean that He was willing to wash feet at the final dinner? After the resurrection, we find Jesus cooking fish over a warm fire He had prepared for His discouraged and wet/cold disciples (**John 21:1-12**, especially 11-12). ***Jesus was the Husband here; the disciples were the church – the wife of the risen Christ. But who was serving whom here? What an example!***

Jesus will HONOR His wife, giving her praise – many verses say so, like **Romans 2:6-7; 1 Cor. 4:5**. Remember "Well done, good and faithful servant..." Do we honor our wives, if we belch at the dinner table, or pass gas in her presence? I know a lot of men who do! I've quit. Now the rest of you men – quit doing dishonorable things in front of your wife. **1 Pet 3:7** – HONOR her, as A CO-HEIR, treat her like the queen she is, and in time, you will be treated royally too. We're told the husband of the Proverbs 31 wife "HONORS HER AND PRAISES HER" – **Proverbs 31:28-29** "Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all". That's much better, isn't it, than the classic put-downs and hurtful teasings we can dish out to our darling, our sweetheart!

So back to Adam and Eve. It's interesting that the 2 areas God addresses most: the man will have to work his buns off to make a living, and most wives come to resent that. They see the JOB as the mistress, the thing taking him away from her. That was part of the curse. The other thing was a contest of wills, who would lead, who would be in charge. Competition, vying for being the one to call the shots. The story of marriage after marriage – instead of honoring the wife, and helping the husband and supporting him.

Others still, say the Hebrew isn't that bad, but – keep in mind – this is all part of a curse on Eve, so I tend to take it to mean the negative, when taken in that context.

The curse is not the headship of the man, for that is why the man was created first in the first place. The curse would be in the way he'd end up trying to be a dominating man, rather than a lovingly leading man. The curse would be in the *kind* of leadership – called rulership by Jesus – rather than the servant leadership Jesus taught and showed us by example.

Now let me SAY THIS: in preparing this study over the past several weeks and even months, I've prayed and prayed and prayed over my own conduct and attitude as a husband. My conclusion: I've had to repent. You've gotta realize, I've had a lot to repent of. We've been married 29 years, and there have been great moments, and many horrible moments. I've had my share in causing the horrible. But with God's spirit – what I love about God's spirit -- we can *change*. We can become what God wants us to become, if we just repent and surrender to God's grace. If we humble ourselves and say, "Lord, not my way, not my will anymore. I want to be just like you... will you come *live* in me and be the kind of husband I need to be?"

You know what? My wife told me – out of the blue, on her own this very morning, that she is witnessing an amazing transformation in her husband and really likes it a lot. I was speechless. It moved me to tears. We've had a great last few weeks and we're totally enjoying each other – even with the stress of my work, even with the crazy ups and downs of her menopause, somehow it *still* has been awesome lately. **That's because I didn't want to give this sermon until I could start EXPERIENCING this sermon.** I'm bearing my soul to all of you, but if a clod like me can win his wife's heart all over again, God in you *can* do it in your lives too. *The bonus: I feel I'm witnessing a transformation in her too. And I sure like that too.*

God *in* us can show us all what He wants for husbands and wives. A loving, caring, honoring husband – like Jesus was to the women around Him and the way He is to the church – and a helping, submissive, helpful and joyful wife, who is every inch her husband's equal but in a different role.

Coming under Christ does not remove headship – but restores the *right kind* of relationship. Husband in a loving headship and the wife in a loving *helping* role, and the man *letting* her be a help, not just a "go-fer" – as in "you go-fer this and go-fer that"! Life's about *relationships*.

Now let's look at Adam's curse: it wasn't having to work, but in pain and toil he'd have to really work to make the ground produce what it could – and that the very ground he worked would eventually claim him as well, as he would someday turn into dust from which he had come. God does not curse the ground because *both* of them had sinned – but addresses only Adam on that issue. Adam —his sin – was what cursed the ground. For Adam had come from the ground. Eve had come from His side. *Sin* had caused *relationships* to be screwed up badly!

Now notice the wording of **Genesis 3:17. God does not curse Adam at first because of eating of the wrong, forbidden tree!** NO! It goes deeper! He curses Adam first of all for not leading! The sequence is very telling here. He curses Adam for "listening to his wife" – instead of showing her where she was being deceived by Satan!

Genesis 3:17 "Then to Adam He [GOD] said, "*Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it'....*"

Let me hasten to add: It's smart, wise and good to listen to your wife -- usually. It's only wrong to listen to her when you know she is wrong, when you know she is deceived, and when you know you need to lead in a different direction! We men should listen, then make a headship decision based on all the data.

Another example of a calamity that ensued when a man listened to his wife was when Abraham listened to Sarah and accepted her suggestion to have a baby through Hagar! What a *mess* that was! Now turn to **Genesis 21.**

But then later, when Sarah wanted to kick Hagar out, Abraham *that* time didn't want to listen to his wife, and probably muttered, "Look what a mess we got into when I listened to you last time." But notice what *God* says to Abraham – and I read this because there *are* men out there who will never ask their wife for ... help, or *advice*. Who will never *heed* her advice. And there are women who feel they should never *give* advice (not many women like that, but there are some!).

Genes 21:9-13 “And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing. 10 Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac." 11 And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son. 12 ***But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called. 13 Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed."***

Of course JESUS listens to His wife, and solicits His wife's comments, does He not? We call it "prayer!" And if our prayers never made a difference anyway, why would we bother? But we know prayer – our input to our husband, if you will – does make a difference!

AND BY THE WAY: be praying for your spouse! Pray for your husband! Pray for your wife! Ask God to help us all be the kind of husbands and wives and men/women we need to be!

And Jesus wants His church – His wife – to be training to make decisions! Remember **1 Corinthians 6:1-6** says we will judge the world, judge angels, and so we need to learn those things now. PAUL SAYS the church – the wife – should be learning to make decisions now, so we *can* judge properly later. So obviously my wife makes many decisions. My wife balances our checkbook and lets me know how things are. But I make the final decisions. I am the head of the household – but don't want to be a dictatorial tyrant, either. I don't want to be a control freak, though I often have been!

ONE MORE THING about the curse on Adam: He tells only Adam that he will die – but Eve died too. Why? Because when the head of the house screws up – the whole family is cursed! How well I know that one! There are so many examples of that in the Bible. So men, we have a very *profound* responsibility to uphold in protecting our entire *family* by our actions – or *cursing* our entire family by our actions.

Genesis 3:19-21 “ In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”

20 And [THEN] Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.
21 Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.”

I think verses 20-21 give us a hint of God's grace, God's love. I believe verse 21 is the first sacrifice, and God is showing them *there is a way of forgiveness through the shed blood of an innocent life shed in your behalf* and I'm sure God at that point taught them that one of their offspring would be the Messiah and would shed His blood for all humanity! After all, Abel knew about that.

And probably from that animal sacrifice, he made a covering (a garment) for them, to symbolize He could forgive their sins. I'm sure God explained at this point about the Savior and that there was still a possibility of life, even in this awful, awful mess they had caused!

It is at *this* point, after the curse, that Adam renames his companion. Instead of calling her just “woman” – he now calls her EVE, meaning “*life*”. She had not been called Eve by Adam until this point! Moses – the biographer, if you will, calls her Eve earlier on – but Adam does not until after the curse. There may be more here than just the fact she was the mother of all the living. It may also be that Adam had been taught by God that life is still possible through a Savior, who would be one of their descendants. By calling her Eve, Adam may have been showing some faith here. Just speculating. I think we're too hard on Adam and Eve. Remember, they did teach Abel some good things too. But they also “raised Cain”! So it was another example of good and evil. *But would we have done any better?* **I'm looking forward to meeting Adam and Eve, and I intend to show them the utmost respect when I do.**

So Genesis 1 teaches the equality of man and woman – that they are to reign over the creation together. Genesis 1 teaches we are co-heirs, with an equal future. That our worth is the same, whether man or woman. **That there is no correlation spiritually between what we're worth and what our roles are. They are two different things.** Before God, man and woman are equal, but in different *functions*.

Genesis 2 teaches the loving headship of man, created first, and the helping role of the wife, and that together they could accomplish as *one*, what God had intended. Genesis 2 teaches being a leader does not make you worth more. In fact, as a leader, to be a great leader, you need help. And that being a help is a GOD-level relationship, for God Himself is called “*our* help”.

We could go on and on but must move on. In our next sermon, **MESSAGE #3**, we will primarily focus on how the commands to love and submit are for all Christians, married or not, male or female. I hope both men and women will find it encouraging and thought provoking.

Then in the final message in the series, #4, we will talk about women's roles in the church and in Israel's history:

- The laws God gave Israel – were they biased against women? We'll see.
- Female *leaders* of the Bible and how God used them and even placed them there.
- Are women TODAY allowed to be leaders in a church setting in any capacity? What does scripture say? Again, I hope what I present from God's word will make you think.
- female prophets in the past – and coming in the future. What will that mean?
- We'll also discuss some **controversial verses** about **women keeping silent** in the churches. I don't know where that is kept literally anywhere – for the churches are not just the building, but the assembly of worshipers. Are they literally never to say a word?

And what about the verse that says “I forbid women to teach a man”. What was that about?
How was that practiced? What does it mean today?

I hope – whether or not you’re a male or female – these first 2 messages have moved you to want to become the kind of man or woman God called you to be! I hope – whether or not you agree with what the Bible says – that in faith you’ll accept your role to either lead – or help. And if you’re called to lead, lead with humility and service and by example. If you’re called to help, do it with gusto – being a helper like God, in time of need and in humility.

God bless you all, and I promise you: if you practice what God says – you and your marriage, and your relationship with the opposite sex, will improve over time.

Until next time – have a happy, blessed life in God’s will. *Philip W. Shields*
