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CLASS NAME: Prep for Marriage – Grow A Pair | Lesson 8: The Crown, The Head and The Neck – Gender Roles
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The Crown, The Head and The Neck

Defining Gender Roles through the Crown

One of the biggest confusions in marriage are gender roles. Questions such as, “**What is my role?**”, “**Who handles this?**” and “**Who is in charge of that?**” has baffled couples for years. There is a heavenly hierarchy that determines the gender roles of servanthood to the King of kings that is replicated in marriage. But did you know gender roles and household chores are two very different things? One determines the order from God for a husband and wife and the other determines the order of the house as determined by the husband and wife. They are not the same but for some reason we often confuse them...but with good reason!

Galatians 3:28-29 New International Version (NIV)

²⁸There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, **nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** ²⁹If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Equal Differences

Males and Females have an equal value to the Lord. Meaning, he loves both genders, abundantly, yet the same with different purposes. God also created unique characteristics in both genders that are separate from the individual assignments given to each of us upon birth. Our gender differences: created by God enables us to be uniquely suited to complete our roles here on earth. The order in which we were created makes it clear that there is a defined **Heavenly Hierarchy** on earth and both genders are not to break the chain of command, especially in marriage.

Heavenly Hierarchy

1 Corinthians 11:3 New International Version (NIV)

³But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man,^[a] and the head of Christ is God.

The Crown

Defining Gender Roles through the Crown

According to scripture, God has given specific roles to Men and Women. However, above all things He is the King of the Kings and Lord of Lords. He assigned roles and He also assigned gender. All things are created according to His riches and glory and His purpose will prevail.

Deuteronomy 10:17 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹⁷For the LORD your God *is* God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, **who shows no partiality** nor takes a bribe.

"Many Christian marriages are functioning through dysfunction because of the misunderstanding and misinterpretations of headship in marriage. Our culture is more interested in who has the final word in marriage, who is the real boss, rather than finding a blueprint to coordinate and navigate relationships in the institution of marriage. If husbands and wives are going to appreciate the love God has for them in their marriage, they need to understand God's structure for marriage and the implications of headship and submission. Couples must understand through careful study of the Word of God and not through their cultural, theological, and sociological presuppositions."

The Love Factor in Marriage: Daniel J. Vassell Sr.

The Head

Although males and females are equal in relationship to Christ, the Scriptures gives specific roles to each in marriage. **The husband is to assume leadership in the home** ([1 Corinthians 11:3](#); [Ephesians 5:23](#)). This leadership should not be dictatorial, condescending, or patronizing to the wife, but should be in accordance with the example of Christ leading the church. "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" ([Ephesians 5:25-26](#)). Christ loved the church (His people) with compassion, mercy, forgiveness, respect, and selflessness. In this same way husbands are to love their wives. **Got Questions**

The Head

The difference between Leadership and control

Leadership or Headship in marriage is not superiority or domination but a role of protection and love. To submit to headship, a husband is to create an environment in which his wife is loved and protected. It in turn becomes a distinct honor for the wife to yield in submission to her

husband. This feeling of validation brings a deeper sense of intimacy within marriage where trust flourishes. As scripture makes it clear that Women will desire their husbands.

Genesis 3:16 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁶To the woman he said,

“I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;
with painful labor you will give birth to children.

**Your desire will be for your husband,
and he will rule over you.”**

What does it mean that each woman’s desire will be for her husband? At face value it appears that women will desire to please their husbands every need and in some ways that is true; if you think about the scripture in this context, it doesn’t sound bad for a wife to have intimate desires for her husbands. In fact, shouldn’t they?! However, in the NLT translation of the bible to desire your husband means:

Genesis 3:16 New Living Translation

¹⁶Then he said to the woman,

“I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy,
and in pain you will give birth.

**And you will desire to control your husband,
but he will rule over you.^[a]”**

There is where the fight begins! Women will seek to control their husbands but because of *the fall in the Garden of Eden* the generational curse given to women is that they will desire to control their husbands but no matter what their desires are to rule in marriage, the husband will rule over the wife. We initially were placed on earth as equals, but

sin disrupted that equality on earth that God created. However, the equality of how both men and women are viewed by God in Heaven is still unchanged.

Powerful, isn't it? When you really open the words of the Bible to seek its true explanation of conflict in marriage you find the real answer. As the husband it is his responsibility to feed his wife the word of God. It is also his role to bathe her in the spirit and uplift her in love and in true **into-me-see!** Keep in mind, as your individual marriages mature it is up to both the husband and wife to fight against sinful tendency of the flesh to disrupt the Heavenly hierarchy in the home. It is easy to lean into anger or to fight about rules and standards within the household.

When **chore wars** happen, we lose sight of the real responsibilities for both husbands and wives in marriage. When we begin to understand that submission in marriage is yielding to your mate while recognizing their individual gifts, talents and strengths of the husband and the wife is when the real power is established in marriage! When you begin to work as a team is when anything you call out to accomplish comes to fruition. Whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven!

Matthew 16:19

New International Version

¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be^a bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be^b loosed in heaven."

It is up to both the husband and wife to determine the specific task or chores within the home according to their specific marital personalities.

However, it depends on the husband to recognize that headship is leadership, which means to guide, uplift and prevent invasion of the adversary. Husbands gain direct words from God in order to stand guard pre-emptively against Satan's attacks of his family and to

direct the path of his family. Mishandling your leadership and not valuing your wife as an equal heir to grace of life, ensures the husbands your prayers will not be answered. Failing to have direction from his Helpmate (Wife) given as a gift from God, blurs the vision of the Husband leaving his headship ineffective.

1 Peter 3:7 New King James Version (NKJV)

A Word to Husbands

7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as **being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.**

The current society at hand, drives to uplift the Amorite spirit in man. Causing men to have an iron fist of control rather than leadership. This weakens the **Heavenly Hierarchy** of husband's household. Turning headship into control, narcissism and abuse.

Joshua 25:15 "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord".

The Amorite Spirit

*The name **Amorite** means, "**mountain people, renowned**". Since the mountains refer to tall and impressive land masses that dominate valleys, we can infer that the Amorite spirit is a spirit of self-exaltation. The word for Amorite in Hebrew comes from another Hebrew word, amar, which means, "to utter, to say"; this implies that the Amorite spirits are spirits who want their name uttered. *They are fame-seekers that like to dominate and rule over others. They tend to establish an imposing and seemingly immovable presence.*"*

The Spirit of the Amorite, Apostles Corner

The Amorite spirit within marriage has one singular thought-one singular task at hand, **“What about ME”?** However, the role in marriage is to move as one body, one spirit, one-flesh; and continually asks the question what is best for us? The goal is to move from Me to We.

The Neck

Understanding Submission in Marriage

To truly understand submission in marriage. We must first understand the fall of man and woman in the Garden of Eden. Understanding the root of the issue helps us to get to the fruit of issue.

Genesis 3:1-23 New International Version (NIV)

The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

²The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

⁴“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. ⁵“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ **But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”**

¹⁰ He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

¹¹ And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

¹² The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

¹³ **Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”**

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed are you above all livestock

and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly

and you will eat dust

all the days of your life.

¹⁵ And I will put enmity

between you and the woman,

and between your offspring^(a) and hers;

he will crush^(b) your head,

and you will strike his heel.”

¹⁶ **To the woman he said,**

“I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;

with painful labor you will give birth to children.

Your desire will be for your husband,

and he will rule over you.”

17 To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’

“Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat food from it
all the days of your life.

18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

19 By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return.”

20 Adam ^(a) **named his wife Eve,** ^(a) **because she would become the mother of all the living.**

21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. **22** And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” **23** So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.

The Neck

Modern Day Usurper of Authority

Ephesians 5:22-24 New King James Version (NKJV)

Marriage—Christ and the Church

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. **23** For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. **24** Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in everything.

During the early years of working within the Marriage Ministry we discovered almost instantaneously the struggle of stating the word “*submission*” to future wives of the engaged couples we have mentored. It was as though a level of authority was stripped from these individuals every time submission was discussed when identifying gender roles within marriage. It has caused us as well as other ministry leaders to defend the word of God as well as the true meaning and definition of submission. We began to ask ourselves; where did this apprehension originate from?

Due to previous hurts, Women who have been privy to previous offenses in relationships (physical abuse, control, wrath, narcissism) began setting groundwork to prevent previous offenses from taking over their marriage commitment. Not realizing all along that fear became their motivator. Fear and anxiety have no place in the covenant of marriage. Yet, many women create the atmosphere of fear, becoming accomplices to our own marital demise. Yet, we understand why...

The Breadwinner vs. The Homemaker:

Especially since man-made rules and gender biases began. Let’s face it women have long held the gender bias from the 1950’s as a happy doting wife that lives to serve with no mind of her own.

Let’s not forget the stereotypical white pearls perfectly placed about her neck, in heels, with a drink in hand waiting for her husband with dinner sitting on the table as she anxiously waits for his return from a long hard day of work. This was an unrealistic cookie cutter mold that most women found too difficult to fit into. In fact, many are attempting to break out of this gender mold to this very day! The truth is women have fought so hard not to be subservient that they have even rejected Godly submission as a casualty of war. Many believing that it is not fair to have multiple roles within the

household with the expectation that women must be able to balance it all. Think of how society views women as the caregiver for her children, as the caretaker of her parents yet she is also expected to enter the workforce and stay polite, not ask for much and simply calm demure with a servant's attitude in the workplace.

However, men, have been tasked with one role and that is to be the **breadwinner**. According to this standard there is no need for men to be involved in the emotional development of children, to contribute to household chores or have an obligation to anything outside of bringing home 'the bacon' so to speak. The fact is there is some truth to these gender biases, but it isn't completely factual. There is a heavenly hierarchy that determines the gender roles of servanthood to the King of kings that is replicated in the home. But did you know gender roles and household chores are two very different things? However, wives have become angry with the balancing act.

Deep down grievous feelings are stirred in the emotions of women and some women want to pay back their spouses as well as other men that have or appear to have taken control of them without their consent. But that is not love. We understand that this is the hard part. To potentially forgive and love someone that has hurt you or abused you. That is not what we are saying and that is definitely not what the word of God is saying either!

To be clear, God does not want you to stay in an abusive relationship for the sake of submission. That is not of God. This is the trick of the enemy. No, he wants you to marry the right man in the first place! A man that is an initiator of love that will protect you. One that you can trust and admire. One that will lead you on the path to a better understanding and relationship with the

Lord. When some women choose to marry an individual that is not a man after God's own heart then they unfortunately suffer under this twisted belief of submission. Allowing anger and contempt to set in. Remember, contempt is rooted in fear. But where love resides fear cannot reside also. The Bible states it best in 1 John 4:18-19:

1 John 4:18-19 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹⁸There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹We love ^{1a}Him because He first loved us.

Stiff Neck

Proverbs 29:1 New King James Version (NKJV)

Happy Is He Who Keeps the Law

29 *He who is often rebuked, and **hardens his neck,** Will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*

Afraid of losing yourself in Marriage?

If your sole purpose is exaltation, not to blend or lose yourself within the marriage then you are negating one-flesh within the marriage. Most importantly, as women you are dismissing your own value and conforming to worldly standards.

Women are a gift given to man sent from God. A helpmate created to bring out unique differences, to provide guidance and to help undergird the order of the house. This in turn brings out the best in both the husband and the wife. **As the neck in the relationship, you are suitable for the task at hand.** The head and the neck must coexist and neither one can endure without the other. ***The head sends the message from the brain submitting to the neck it is open to turn.*** As the neck in the relationship you have a responsibility to lean in or lean out for both you and your spouse. You are an enhancement that helps your spouse discern how to put God's will into practice.

However, if you move out of order then you are undermining the will of God and circumventing your husbands' authority.

Defining Gender Roles

gen·der role

noun

plural noun: **gender roles**

1. the role or behavior learned by a person as appropriate to their gender, determined by the prevailing cultural norms.

"the emphasis on maintaining traditional gender roles"

Gender Biases

Feminine Stereotypes	Masculine Stereotypes
Not aggressive	Insensitive
Dependent	Non-Emotional
Easily Influenced	Men Do not Cry
Indecisive	Logical
Talkative	Cruel
Gentle	Blunt
Emotional	Aggressive
Passive	Breadwinner

Chore Wars

Regarding the division of responsibilities in the home, the Bible instructs husbands to provide for their families. This means he works and makes enough money to sufficiently provide all the necessities of life for his wife and children. To fail to do so has definite spiritual consequences. "If anyone

does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” ([1 Timothy 5:8](#)). So, a man who makes no effort to provide for his family cannot rightly call himself a Christian. This does not mean that the wife cannot assist in supporting the family—[Proverbs 31](#) demonstrates that a godly wife may surely do so—but providing for the family is not primarily her responsibility; it is her husband’s. While a husband should help with the children and with household chores (thereby fulfilling his duty to love his wife), [Proverbs 31](#) also makes it clear that the home is to be the woman’s primary area of influence and responsibility. Even if she must stay up late and rise up early, her family is well cared for. This is not an easy lifestyle for many women—especially in affluent Western nations. However, far too many women are stressed out and stretched to the breaking point. To prevent such stress, both husband and wife should prayerfully reorder their priorities and follow the Bible’s instructions on their roles.

Conflicts regarding the division of labor in a marriage are bound to occur, but if both partners are submitted to Christ, these conflicts will be minimal. If a couple finds arguments over this issue are frequent and vehement, or if arguments seem to characterize the marriage, the problem is a spiritual one. In such an instance, the partners should recommit themselves to prayer and submission to Christ first, then to one another in an attitude of love and respect.

Choose Teamwork in Marriage!

Egalitarian marriage meaning

It is the same as an equal partnership. Both parties contribute the same and their [opinions have the same weight](#) in a decision making process. There are

still roles to play, but it is no longer confined to the traditional gender roles, but a choice.

It is not about gender roles, but the voting power in the decision-making process. Even if the family is still structured traditionally with the male breadwinner and female homemaker, but all major decisions are discussed together, with each opinion as important as the other, then it still falls under the egalitarian marriage definition.

A lot of modern proponents of such marriage is [talking about gender roles too much](#), it can be a part of it, but it's not a requirement. You can have a reversed dynamic with a woman breadwinner and a house-band, but if all decisions are still done as a couple with opinions equally respected, then it is still an egalitarian marriage. Most of these modern proponents forget that "traditional gender roles" is also a form of equally sharing responsibilities.