



Man and Woman's Role in Marriage - Deborah Ross

FACT: Fifty percent of all marriages end in divorce. As they stand before God and family to pledge their eternal love and commitment, newlyweds who comprise that fifty percent never imagine that they will end up in a bad marriage, or even worse, divorce court. So, why is it that half of all marriages, including Christian marriages, fail? Among the many reasons given for failed marriages are: financial problems, differing views on child-rearing, meddling in-laws, sexual problems, and growing apart.

To help you to understand your role in your marriage, let us go back to the basics as set forth in the Garden of Eden (from Genesis 2:15-25). As difficult as it may be for today's woman to admit, Adam was created first and Eve was created to be his "help mate." From the beginning of time, it is clear that God created the man to be the leader (under Himself) and the woman to be at his side. Woman's role was meant to be a suitable companion who gives relief, aid or assistance to her husband. This does not mean that she is inferior to her husband; but rather, it means that she prefers to be in a position of submission to her husband, who is in submission to God. She is confident in her ministry to her husband and toward her family.

Increasingly in today's society, there is a reversal of leadership roles in the home. This is due in large part to the lack of fathers in the household. The absence of their earthly fathers in their daily lives results in boys and girls growing up with a secret void in their hearts. Because they have not lived in a home with a strong marital structure, they in turn, enter into their own marriages with a

warped view of Biblical marital structure. Boys fail to become men and, therefore, allow their wives to lord over them with authority. This creates a vicious cycle of dysfunction that is passed from one generation to another.

Too often, women who were raised with a woman as head of the family are unaware of the peace that comes from living under her man's arm (next to his rib). This woman will often adopt a bossy demeanor, and rebel against being bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, refusing to accept the fact that God originally created them by taking them out of the man's side. The Lord created the woman to live in the safety and comfort of her God-given position as her husband's helper.

Many men, on the other hand, fail to "leave and cleave." These boys who now live in a man's body yearn to go back in time to live out a healthy childhood with a godly father and mother who would empower them to be strong and of good courage. It's no wonder that so many grown men live such wimpy or even over-bearing lives; they don't have an understanding of how to balance their masculine strength with godly humility as the leader of their home. God created the man to take dominion over the earth. He gave the man (Adam) a woman to be his partner in doing His will. Together, they were to fellowship with Him and have no thought of strife. The man was to be the one who led the woman into obedience. (The key word here is "lead," not force.)

God intended for the husband and his wife to be naked and



While this world may have twists and turns throughout our life's journey to family and marriage wholeness, God makes all things new, daily. Trust him today! Get back to the basics of the Garden of Eden by purging all worldly, and even religious, misconceptions about what your role is in marriage. Ask God to transform your mind so that you can begin to exemplify Christ-like behavior toward your spouse. As you obey God's word, by practicing His commands, be patient knowing that He is on your side and wants your marriage to be vibrant, abounding and healthy.

Marriage is a life-long commitment. It is only by the power of the Holy Spirit, our love walk, and our determination to be resolute in the keeping of our wedding vows, that we can expect to not only make it to the end, but finish victorious! The

Lord wants you and your spouse to live an abundant life surrounded by His mercy and grace.

So, no matter what type of dysfunction you may have come from or what type of baggage you or your spouse now need to unload, know that God has given you the ability to overcome and to produce a new generation of healthy seed. After all, He did say, "Be fruitful and multiply!"

In closing, meditate on this passage of scripture and ask the Lord how this pertains to your marriage:

Deuteronomy 30:19-20: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

unashamed before Himself and before each other. Being naked refers to a mind-set of living in truth, with nothing to hide and nothing to be ashamed of. As a man and his wife worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, their conscious is clear and their communication is pure. There is a beautiful rhythm of daily life as God intertwines two souls into one flesh; a supernatural welding that no man should ever divide.

When we sin against God by our refusal to align ourselves (our marriages) with His word, we become ashamed and, consequently, see ourselves as cursed and undeserving of being able to receive anything good from God. Because of our broken relationship with our heavenly Father through sin, our conscious' are seared and we lose all confidence in our faith. On the other hand, it is through the redemptive power of the blood of Jesus that we are made holy, and have no need to be ashamed. We are clothed in robes of righteousness that cover our nakedness. As children of the King, we can come boldly to the throne of grace, knowing that whatsoever we ask the Father (in Jesus name), He will do for us.

So you see, **marriage is intended to be a union of two souls who have divine confidence for facing the challenges of this world with one mind.** When men and women enter into marriage with a healthy perspective of their God-given role, the Lord allows them to grow closer as the years go by. On the other hand, those whose childhood lives have been broken through divorce, abuse or abandonment find it hard to crucify their flesh and give of themselves, one to the other, as God intends.

Even so, in spite of the unstable foundation of the many who lacked being born into a healthy, loving, God-fearing home made up of a normal relationship with their earthly father and mother, all things are still possible with God! He can take those who start out weak and cause them to finish strong, as they seek to understand His ways and, then, vow to surrender to His Lordship in their marriage. God wants every marriage to be made whole. He wants every marriage to live in the abundance of the Garden of Eden.

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