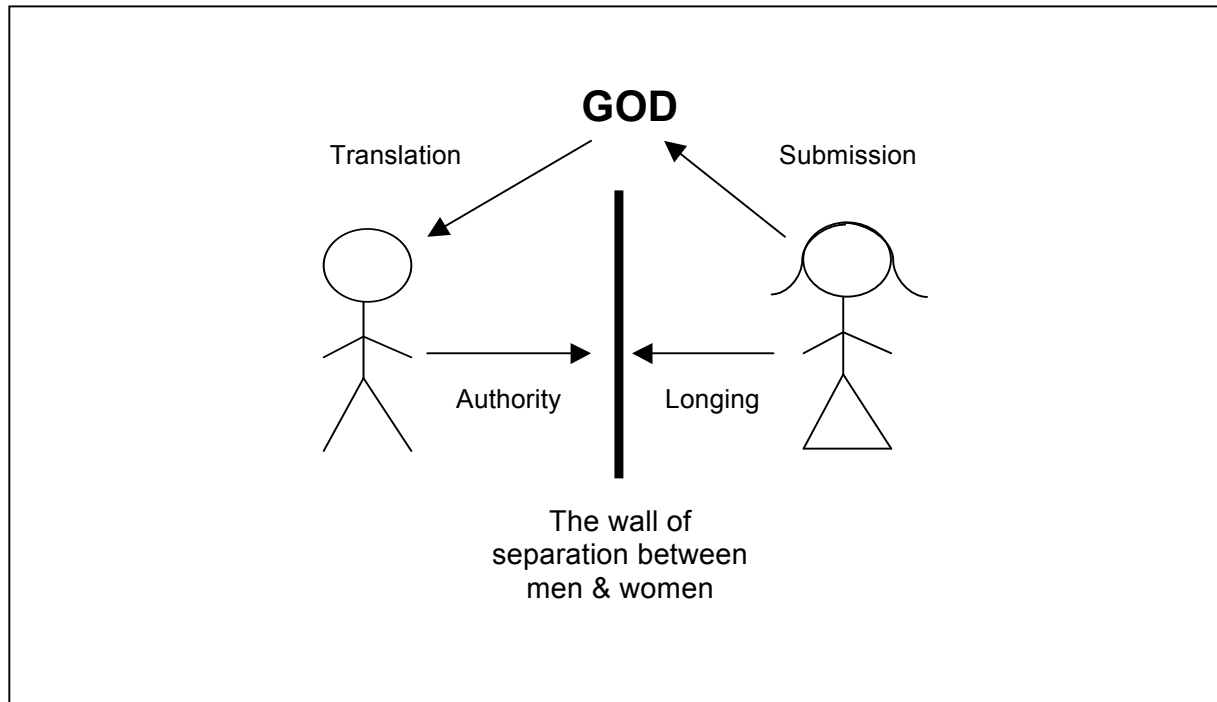




(March 17, 2014)

THE GARDEN OF EDEN - HOW IT AFFECTS US TODAY



Several years ago, my husband taught me something about Genesis 3:16 I had never noticed before. Once I understood this verse, I began to better comprehend the relationship that exists between men and women, especially as it relates to marriage. In the years since I shared the original document, God has provided a fresh revelation regarding the order of correction in the Garden. I pray this revelation will help us, as women and wives, to find our value in whom we are to Christ rather than who we are to our spouse.¹ For now, let us begin by looking at Genesis 3:16 in the context of what God said to the serpent, to Eve, and to Adam:

Genesis 3:14 - 19 (NKJV)

¹⁴So the **LORD God said to the serpent**: "Because you have done this, **You are cursed** more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. ¹⁵And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." ¹⁶**To the woman He said**: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you." ¹⁷Then **to Adam He said**, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and

¹ This document was originally created November 11, 2009. This version supersedes all previous documents.

have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. ¹⁸Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. ¹⁹In 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." (Bold and italics added for emphasis).

I always thought Genesis 3:16 was a part of "the curse." However, upon close examination, we discover when God spoke to Eve, He did not use the word "curse," nor did He use the word "curse" in relationship to Adam. What God cursed was the serpent and the ground! So, the question becomes, if this is not a part of the curse, how does it translate through the Cross? Does it still apply to women today? Since women still have pain in childbirth, is it not possible we still live under the consequences of what God spoke to Eve in the Garden? In understanding a reason why God may have spoken these words, we can understand women have not been redeemed from a curse in Genesis 3:16, because God did not pronounce a curse! Let us begin the journey.

After the fall, the connection God originally established between man and woman was broken. When the man and woman hid themselves *from* each other, they erected a **wall of separation between them**. What God had created to be one, was now disconnected. We can only imagine what went through the heart of God as He watched His children hiding from each other and even from Him! Though we know not what God was feeling or thinking, His words to Eve directly addressed that broken relationship!

Your desire shall be for your husband: The word "desire" means "*stretching out after; a longing.*"² In our illustration, the **arrow from the woman towards the man** depicts this **longing**. Once we acknowledge we *long* for our husbands, we can imagine two things: the longing is intense, and we desire to have that longing filled. Since the subject of our longing is our husband, we turn to him to meet our expectations. As a result, we tend to do two things:

1. We seek to communicate our longing in the form of needs to our husband.
2. We seek for our husband to validate our longing by meeting our needs.

In returning to our illustration, we see as the woman seeks to communicate her needs to her husband, they hit the wall that exists between them. Personal experience has taught me, when this happens, rejection sets in. As a woman longing for my husband, yet not receiving a response to my appeals, I don't feel valued. I don't feel accepted. I don't feel desired. Yet, because God said my desire would be for my husband, I continue to communicate my longings to my spouse, and they continue to bounce back at me as they hit the wall between us. Now, let's look at what's taking place on the other side of the wall.

² Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries, Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 2003, can be accessed via QuickVerse 2007, a division of Findex.com, Inc., Copyright 2003-2007.

And He shall rule over you: That word “rule” means just that.³ The husband shall govern the wife. Keep in mind, God is the One Who declared the husband will govern the wife. The **arrow from the man to the woman** depicts this God-given **authority**. At present, it appears men manifest this authority in one of two ways:

1. They aggressively take authority in the home and choose not to listen to the wife for fear they will be like Adam. In this scenario, most likely, the wife feels controlled.
2. Through passivity, they abdicate their authority, doing most anything to keep the peace, because they do not want to listen to or upset their wives! In this scenario, most likely, the wife is out of control and/or out of order!

Again returning to our illustration, we see as the man seeks to communicate his authority to the wife, it too hits the wall that exists between them. We now have the wife on one side seeking to communicate her longing to the husband; on the other side is the husband seeking to communicate his leadership to the wife. Her words are hitting the wall on her side; his words are hitting the wall on his side. The cycle goes on and on. Now, if Adam and Eve’s relationship was anything like many marriages today, in addition to representing the break in oneness between the husband and wife, that wall also represents a lot of unforgiveness and blame.

Adam, I need you to listen to me.

Shut up, Eve. You got us kicked out of the Garden!

Well, it’s not MY FAULT. The serpent deceived me. Besides, nothing happened until YOU bit from the fruit, so really, if anyone is to blame, YOU are!

I bit from that stupid fruit to get you to leave me alone! But, if you’d just listened to me in the first place, we wouldn’t have an issue anyway!

Granted, we may never know what was actually said by Adam and Eve, but if we’re honest with ourselves, we will admit similar conversations have played out in our own homes. The words may change a little, and the issues may be different from household to household, but it all boils down to the woman wanting the husband to listen to her, and the man wanting the woman to shut up, so she will quiet down!

Now, let us fast forward to the coming of Jesus. In His relationship with the Father, He taught us how to flip the negative to the positive on both sides of the wall, but for our purposes, we will stay focused on the wife’s side. So, what did Jesus teach us? He taught us how to willingly submit to the one we love. As we read the book of John, a theme emerges: Jesus did nothing in and of Himself, but followed the direction of the

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Father. Likewise, the wife is called to do nothing in and of herself, but to follow the direction of the husband.

Ephesians 5:22 - 24 (NKJV) ²²*Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.*

Now, let us return to our illustration for a moment. We have the wife attempting to communicate her longing to her husband in the form of her perceived needs. Yet, those needs are going unmet. If we go back to how the husband typically manifests his authority, we also see he is most likely unresponsive to his wife's needs for one of two reasons:

1. He does not desire to meet her needs because he does not *want* to be controlled by her.
2. He does not know *how* to meet her needs, because he does not understand her needs, as they are hitting the brick wall of confusion that exists between them!

Regardless of why her needs are not getting met, the wife now has two choices. She can continue to communicate her needs to the brick wall, or she can do as Ephesians says: she can submit unto her husband as unto the Lord.

What does this **submission** look like? Since we cannot submit to something we agree with, the wife determines in her heart that when disagreement exists between her and her husband, she is going to *choose* to follow her husband's leadership. Even though she does not agree, *providing the husband is not clearly leading them into sin*, she still adapts herself to his decision and supports her husband in executing that decision to the best of her ability (reference Acts 5:1-11).

AFTER she has submitted to the husband, as his God-ordained helper (Genesis 2:18), the wife now turns to the One Who created that longing in her and established the husband's authority over her--**God!** As she pours out her heart to Daddy God, she openly and honestly expresses her concerns to the Father, much like two children who stand before their earthly father seeking arbitration during a dispute. However, instead of seeking her own will, the wife asks the Lord to help bring her and her husband into agreement, even if it means she has to change.

In this place of submission, her ultimate desire becomes for the Father's will to be done. Since it is the Father's will to be executed, the wife now places her trust in the Father to lead the husband as he exercises authority in the home! By willingly obeying the Word of God, the wife has demonstrated her love *for* and her submission *to* the Lord! Since God is the One Who said the husband will rule

over the wife, until we have submitted to our husband, we cannot truly submit to God, thus we are rebelling against what He told us to do!

Now that the wife is submitted to the husband AND to the Lord, God can begin to **translate** what the wife is saying to the husband. If the husband is not in line with God's plan for the family, He will bring correction to the husband. If the husband is in line with God's plan for the family, He will bring correction to the wife. Whatever needs to be done, the Father will then help both His children come together in a way that they can reach agreement to implement what He has called them to do!

As the wife learns to first place her trust in the Lord to lead her husband and then to trust her husband to follow where the Lord leads, the husband and wife can learn how to walk in agreement, thus bringing down the wall of separation that exists between them. However, the wife must recognize anytime she and her husband are not hearing the same thing from the Lord, she may not be in a place of submission!

Okay, the question screaming out at us is, "Why does it mean the wife may not be submitted?" Three reasons come to mind. Let us look to Scripture to identify them. Our first answer is found in Ephesians:

Ephesians 5:22 - 24 (NKJV) 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,*** (bold added)

The **first reason** disagreement means the wife is not submitted begins with the fact the wife is called to submit unto the husband as unto the Lord. While many of us can quote verses 22 and 23, we fail to really grasp what verse 24 is saying to us. Simple translation: Just as Christ cannot change for the church, the husband cannot change for the wife. That does not mean he cannot change, but he cannot change to please the wife. He can only change to please God!

Therefore, as wives, anytime we are not submitted, God will expose that open door in our heart through our husband's choices! Does that mean our husband is always right? No! Absolutely not! It means God is always right, and He will allow things in our life that will help expose areas where we are not submitted to our husbands in an effort to restore the oneness we lost in the Garden of Eden.

However, in order to restore that oneness, all things must be done decently and in order. Thus, there can only be one head in the family. God ordained that role to the husband (Ephesians 5:23). The wife is called to respect (Ephesians 5:33) and to submit to her husband (Ephesians 5:22), which aligns with what God spoke to Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:16).

If we return to Genesis, we will find our **second reason**. In verses 9-13, when God asked what happened, He addressed Adam first, BUT in verses 14-19, when God brought correction, He corrected Eve BEFORE He corrected Adam. This concept can be an entire study by itself, but the most important thing for this discussion is God has an established order, and He follows that order! What we need to understand is God correcting us before He corrects His sons does not make us less than our husbands nor should it cause us to feel not valued. In essence, God IS valuing us by making sure our heart is right before Him, BEFORE He corrects His son; otherwise, our husband will be an idol in our heart, occupying a space belonging to the Lord, and Him only!

Now, let's turn to both the Old and New Testament for our **third reason**:

Genesis 3:13 (NKJV) ¹³*And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*

1 Timothy 2:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴*And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.*

The third reason disagreement means the wife is not submitted is because God put certain measures in place that help keep women from being deceived again! This is why we long for our husband. This is why our husband will rule over us. This is why we must walk in submission to our husbands. Submission protects us from the devil's deceit!! And, from personal experience, I can say every time I am not submitted to my husband in some area, challenge upon challenge comes my way until I figure out what door is open and, through repentance, slam it shut!

When we realize longing for and being ruled by our husbands are protective measures implemented by God to protect us from the deceitful ways of the devil, we realize how much the Creator of the Universe truly does love us!!!!!!

Father, I pray every soul that reads this writing will get the revelation of the deep and abiding love You demonstrated towards us when you placed this longing *in* us and this leadership *over* us to protect us from the schemes of the evil one! Oh, Father, I am just now getting the fullness of what this means, and my heart sings out to You. I thank You Father for what You have revealed and pray Your Word will set the captives free. In Jesus' name. Amen!