



Role of the Wife – March 21, 2019
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Verses Covered

Genesis 2:18, 21 – 25

Ephesians 5:21 – 24

Proverbs 17:1

Proverbs 19:13

Proverbs 21:9 & 19

Proverbs 25:24

1 Peter 3:1

Proverbs 31

Malachi 2:14 - 16

We're going to look at the role of a wife today. Now we've looked at our role and obviously there's going to be some juxtaposition there. But I want us to look at her role so we understand. So go to Genesis 2:18 and 21 to 25. Now this is how the beginning starts for her.

¹⁸Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."

Now I love the Bible because it's got a simplicity to it.

²¹So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. ²²The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. ²³The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴Therefore, man shall leave his father and his mother, and hold fast to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵And the man and his wife were both naked and not ashamed.

Now, real clear here when you look at this, the essence is she is your help meet. She is there to help you in God's call on your life. Now what are the two things God told Adam to do? We really only have two things He tells them to do. What are they? Name the animals and replenish the earth, have children. But the other thing was plow the ground. He was an agrarian guy. Her job was to help him in that. Now I have men in my office that will say, "You know I made a decision

and my wife questions it and I don't know why she's challenging me on it." If he's supposed to name the animals, she has to help him name those. The only way to do that, she's got to verbalize her idea. The only way to help him know, "I don't think we ought to plant over here. I think we ought to plant here. I don't think we ought to plant this. We've got to plant this." The only way she can help him in doing that is she has to verbalize what she feels. So your wife has a responsibility. This is a nightmare. I get it. We'll see that in a minute. Your wife has a responsibility to tell you what she thinks. Now when I say that to a lot of guys in my office, they're like, "Great." And when I say it in front of her, you can see her going, "That's exactly right." So your wife has that responsibility. It's her role. If you remove that role from her, she can't live out her calling. You are not the despot. You're not the king. You're not the ruler. Even though, in a minute, you have awesome power.

Now go to Ephesians 5. Let me show you part of the balance. And this is where your wife is going to struggle some. But look at Ephesians 5. Now, again, we're going to start in 21. In 21 it says,

²¹submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

That's the only place the word submit appears in the entire text. It's understood in all the verses, but it appears there. You have a mutual submission, and we talked about this, that the mutual submission is: she submits to you, but you make the decision, you have the final say, but your decision is based on what's best for Christ or her inside the marriage and your walk with Christ. But you put yourself below her in that decision process. Now, here's what it says to her.

²²Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, His body and as Himself, it's Savior. ²⁴As the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

So this details an absolute submission of the wife. Now she has to speak to you so you have to <recording cut out> speaking to you and yet she has to live in an absolute submission. You say, "Why do you say absolute?" Because of the reference of Christ in the church. We don't get to look at Jesus and say what we want. We can even speak to Jesus, but when He says to do something, we're locked in. And Ephesians says she is as locked in to you as we are to Jesus. Now that is an incredibly strong statement. So there's this sense in which there's an absolute submission, but I want you to notice the way the Bible phrases it. It's an absolute submission on her part, not an absolute control on your part. You're to lead by giving yourself up for her. She's to submit absolutely to what you say and do and yet she has to tell you what she feels. It's an odd balance, but it's a unique balance, and it's a perfect picture of Christ in the church. So she has this demand that she lives in an absolute submission, being able to tell you what she feels with your control in her life, putting her above you and putting Christ above both of you. Now that's the balance. But she has this responsibility. I would say to a lady, if she's going to marry, I would read her this and say, "Honey, you need to understand what you're putting yourself into." It's difficult. And this is why women struggle.

Now I want to look at a few verses. I want you to go to Proverbs. Now she is going to struggle. OK. She's going to struggle in this. These verses are not meant for humor, although they are in,

some of them are in my dissertation. But they're not meant for humor. They are meant for a point. Now look in Proverbs 17:1. We're going to walk through a few of these. But it's interesting how many there are.

¹Better is a dry morsel with quiet than a house full of feasting with strife.

And look at 19:13

¹³A foolish is a ruin to his father, a wife's quarreling is a continual dripping of rain.

I wouldn't go home and read these to my wife, by the way. But we'll look through them anyway. Proverbs 21:9

⁹It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than in a house shared with a quarrelsome woman.

Proverbs 21:19

¹⁹It is better to live in a desert land than with a quarrelsome and fretful woman.

And then Proverbs 25:24.

²⁴It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than a house shared with a quarrelsome wife.

So you have this constant wife who will struggle with who you are and what you say. Now The reason she struggles, and there are generally a couple reasons. Sometimes you really can be married to a woman who has the personality of control. Sometimes you've got to deal with that. But even if you don't, the reason all those are there and the reason the Bible, remember it said to us, don't be bitter against your wife, make sure you love your wife correctly, your prayers will be hindered, the reason those things are said to us is because we're going to struggle with her struggle. But the reason she struggles is she knows she lives here, her life is in your hands. Now you've got to be fair and think for her. That's a little scary. And so I think that's why the Bible says you don't get mad at her when she struggles. You don't hate her when she wrestles with your decisions. When she may even disagree because she's stuck in your life. Whatever happens to you, if I go out tomorrow and I have an affair and I damage my life, her name is dragged in the mud with mine. If I do something right and I'm honored, her name is honored with mine. So she's caught in you. So when she struggles, the reason she's quarrelsome and the reason she's going, "I'm not sure we ought to do that." She's scared. And I'm telling you, it's harder today than it was in the fifties. One of the things they teach you when you make an argument in rhetoric, is to look at, particularly if you're preaching to a congregation, what are the warrants inside your congregation. Now a warrant is an argument or a position someone holds. For example, in the fifties, the warrant of all women was, it was a good thing to be in submission to a man. In the fifties coming out of the war, virtually every woman thought that. It's not the belief system today. The belief system today is, it's a horrible thing to be in submission to a man. So you have a whole lot more difficulties. So what happens in Proverbs in a day when it was good idea to be in submission to a man, is going to be doubled up in your home because she doesn't think it's a good idea to be in

submission. That's not the warrant inside our wives lives today. And so they're going to struggle even deeper with what you face. And because they're scared, part of the struggle is, they're trying to control your decision because they're scared of your decision. And it's a difficult thing for them. This is why if you look at 1 Peter 3, it says to them, and this is part of the <recording cut out>. Sometimes, and this is always hard. I mean I had a, the women that marry guys that are lost, that's their problem. Sometimes, though, a woman will marry a guy, they're both lost, the wife will get saved, her husband's not, and she begins this spiritual struggle. Listen to 1 Peter 3:1

¹Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

Now, so he says basically the same thing he says here. Even if you're married to a lost person, you don't try to argue him with your mouth into your position. You let your life alter him. But, again, why is she doing that? Because she's found Christ and she wants him to find Christ. So I'm telling you, I know we struggle. I make a decision; my wife doesn't agree. We talked about it and she doesn't like it. She struggles with it and I tend to go, "What's wrong with you?" But we've got to think from her viewpoint. She's caught under our direction. And so we need to honor, and I know this is hard, I mean I'm married, man, it's 42 years. I get that. But you've got to honor her struggle. And this is particularly true if her dad was real successful and you're not, her dad built a great company and made a lot of money, and you built a little company and you don't make a lot of money. You make enough to live, but you don't make as much as her daddy did, this is really going to be an additional struggle for her because she's going to compare you to her dad. So you've got a lot of issues. So I think that's why the Bible talks about us not being embittered and patient with our wives. I think you need to look at this, it's not because she hates me and doesn't trust me, she's scared. And honestly if roles were reversed, I'd be scared. I don't want to trust my life to somebody else. She has to and her submission, even though she's supposed to tell you, her submission is absolute.

Now why do you pay attention to what she says? Because there's nobody after the day she puts that ring on and takes your name, nobody that wants you to be more successful than her. Nobody's going to love you more. And I'm telling you, if she's going to be your helpmeet, would God give you somebody that would hurt you with her advice? No, He would not. He would put somebody in your life whose advice is going to benefit you and bless you. So you listen to what she says. And the more you listen and the more you actually can adopt what she says, the less she fears. If she thinks you hear her, even if you disagree with her, if she thinks you hear her, she's not going to struggle as much. But when she doesn't think you hear her, and you're not as successful as dad and she thinks it's not wise to submit to a man, she's struggling. So you're going to be patient with her and love her because that's part of the struggle she faces.

Now I want you to look at her role and her need. Now we're going to look first at her role. I want you to go to Proverbs 31. We're not going to read the whole thing, but I do think it gives great insight. And I don't think this is a bad thing to go home and share with your wife. We're going to talk about her need being connected to you. And this is one good place to start it. I would go home and share some of what we walked through today. Look at Proverbs 31:10.

¹⁰An excellent wife, who can find?

Although the guy who wrote that, I don't know why he's asking that question.

she is far more precious than jewels. ¹¹The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. ¹²She does him good and not harm all the days of her life.

Her first responsibility is to bless her husband. Now I would share that. I'm telling you, I think you need to let your wife know she impacts your life. I had a young preacher, I don't know what it is with young preachers today, but they all want to be spiritual and act spiritual. And so I have a ton of young guys that are going to say to me, "You know, I want my wife to be my deepest critic." Listen, that's the dumbest thing in the world. I agree with Jimmy Draper. He came here, he's Wes' granddad. If you don't know the name Jimmy Draper, he's kind of Southern Baptist royalty. He's been a pastor at First Euleless. Was Associate Pastor at First Dallas. He's been everything you can be in the convention. And he spoke one time to our Legacy Adults and he was talking about the fact that being a pastor, his wife, he said, "I don't want my wife to be my critic. As a pastor, I have enough critics. I've got enough people that know better than I do how to run the church. I don't need another critic. I need a cheerleader." I think that's what you need to tell your wife. I had a preacher, his wife, and if you're married to a wife, let me give you a good clue here, if you're married to a wife who folds the towel a certain way because it won't fit in the cabinet if you don't fold it a certain way, you're married to a Melancholy, detailed and retentive person. Those people, by nature, are more critical than other people. And so this one preacher was married to this lady and he said, every time I said something, she critiqued every sermon. And finally he pulled her aside, and he said it lovingly, gentlemen, but he pulled her aside and he said, "Look, your words, other than Jesus' are the most powerful in my life. And you can make me better or you can make me worse by what you say." And, boy, it kind of caught her the way he said it. So I think you need to tell your wife, "Look. You're my helpmeet. I expect you to tell me what you think. But I need your mouth to bless me, not curse me." So I think that's the first thing you share.

Now, secondly, I want you to look at a couple verses. Proverbs 31:20 and 28. Now I want you to look at the balance because this is critical. It's a balance that you want to have your wife focus on. Look in verse 20.

²⁰She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy.

And then look at 28.

²⁸Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, he praises her.

I want you to notice a balance here. You've got 28 which says she's obviously impacted her family. Then you have 20 which indicates she's reached to the poor. She's reached outside the family. You want to help your wife balance between both, you're going to lead her in this. If your wife only focuses on the family, those kids are leaving at some point. And when they leave, if this has only been her focus, she'll struggle immensely. But if you've allowed her to balance from family to outside ministry, which is probably going to mean, gentlemen, you're going to have to

find some ministry that you and your wife do together. But you're going to have to get her balanced outside the family. You want a balance here so that when your kids leave, she's not destroyed. Because I'm telling you, kids are going to leave and when they marry, if your wife, for example, is real close to your daughter and she gets married and she doesn't call as much, it's painful. And that's a difficulty we all face. So you need to help your wife balance between the two.

Now look at verse 25.

²⁵Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the future to come.

You're going to encourage your wife's character. We want her to have the character of Christ in her life. And you want her to trust God for the future. Now, again, that's hard, right. Because she's in submission to you. You're in submission to Christ. And she's not sure all the time you're walking here. And women struggle here. Man, they want to nest. They want to make sure everything's OK. How's retirement looking? Are we going to be alright? You're going to hear all those questions. You want to help your wife understand she's got to trust God for the future. Proverbs 31:26 talks about wisdom and kindness. You want her to have a balance. Again, you want to use her wisdom. She wants to be kind in that. And in verse 30, it talks about really spirituality. Look at what it says.

³⁰Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

My generation grew up overweight. Your generation doesn't do that. You work-out well. Your wife works-out well. You eat better. But one of the things you want to help your wife with is she needs to be in the Bible as much as she's in spin class. And I've got a lot of women that work out four or five days a week and they haven't opened a Bible for a month. So you want your wife to understand, "Baby I love the way you look." But you want to compliment her character as much as you compliment her beauty. It's like with your children. We'll talk about this next time we meet in parenting. You don't want to brag on your kid's giftedness. You want to brag on their character. One of the ways you help your wife, is you brag on her spirituality. Nothing wrong with saying, "Baby you look good." But at some point, her looks are going to leave. Spirituality should deepen. And so you need to help her walk through this. And I don't think it would be a bad thing to walk through some of this, talk with her through it, particularly with what we're going to look at right now real quickly. And that is she has, we're going to use an acronym. She has certain needs. And part of these needs are based on this and you're going to help her walk through this. But I want you to remember an acronym, OK. I stole this from Eggerichs this is no big deal. You're going to remember the acronym C.O.U.P.L.E. Because this is what she needs in your life.

Close

If you go back to Genesis 2:24, we looked at that, it says the man shall leave his home and cleave to his wife. One of the things she wants from you is she wants to be close to you. Now, that's different than our idea of closeness. I pistol shoot and so I reload my bullets. I've got my reloading equipment in the garage. So years ago when I was first doing this, my wife comes in one day and I'm thinking, "Hey, I need to spend time with my wife." So I looked at her and I said, "Hey, baby, listen I'm going to reload for a little while, why don't you come out here in the garage and talk to

me while I'm reloading." I'm thinking, "What a great offer to my wife." What was her response? "Nah." When I share that a lot of times with men they go, "Yeah, what's wrong with her?" I share with women and they go, "I want your full attention." Women want eyeball to eyeball. And I'm telling you, it's not my bag, it's not most men's bag. If it is a guy's bag, he's not on the deer lease with me. I can tell you that right now. But that is how they operate. So you've got to figure out how to be close to them and it is difficult. This is why I think when men disciple, if you take people to disciple what we're going through, you need a couple of guys. If you've just got one guy, this is hard to focus on with one guy. You've got two or three guys; you can have a little conversation. Women are probably better one on one because they enjoy that. So she wants to be close to you.

Open

The second thing is, she wants you to be open with her. Now that's easy when you're dating, right. Why? Because when you're dating somebody, you're trying to get to know her. And generally, and so you're talking about the big things in life. Here's the problem with life. There are only a handful of big things. Where you're going to live. Who you're going to marry. What are you going to do for life. How many kids you're going to have. I mean there really are only a handful of big things. So after you marry, we have a tendency to shut down. Number one, we've got our wife. Number two, there's not all that much to talk about. She still wants you to be open with her. And we kind of struggle with that. So the second thing is, that's her need. That's why I shared with you; you need to take her out once a week. This is not that hard. But you can combine these two if you take her out once a week on a date. You open up what you learned from the scripture that week. And I would even think of a couple of questions to ask her. But if you do that, she will be eating out of your hand. They don't really require all that much time. They just need to know there's an intent on your heart for these two things. And I think you can take her out and share scripture with her. I think it works.

Understanding

Third thing she needs understanding, not fixing. Let me show you the greatest video ever made. That is a wife right there!! She's got a nail sticking out of her head!! She doesn't want you to fix it!! That is one of the top five hardest things in marriage. She just wants you to understand her. Which, for us, is hard. I go to the deer lease, Ed looks at me and goes, "That's wrong." I'm fine. But you cannot do that with your wife. She wants to be understood. You see the nail, just don't hug her.

Peacemaking

She wants to hear the words, "I am sorry." Now here's the key, in the way she feels it. This is my hardest thing in my marriage. I can say I'm sorry, Peg does not always feel what I'm saying. She wants to feel that you really are sorry. And this is hard for her. This is why there was a guy, he was at a marriage counselor with his wife, and finally he looked at the counselor and he said, "Look, my problem is my wife just gets historical." And he said, "You mean hysterical." And he said, "No, historical. She brings up everything I've ever done wrong. She has an incredible memory." And part of it is because she doesn't feel you've really owned up to your failure. So you've got to learn, she craves to be at peace with you and she has got to hear that in a way that she feels it.

Loyalty

She wants loyalty. I want you to look at something. Look at Malachi 2:14 & 16. Now listen to what he writes.

¹⁴But you say, “Why does he not?” Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth,

Which is exactly what happened. If you married under the word, the Lord is a witness. Now here it is.

to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.
¹⁵Did he not make them one with a portion of the Spirit in their union? What was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit. Let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth.

This is what she craves. She craves to know that you're loyal to her. It's why you get that question you cannot answer. If I die, are you going to remarry? There is no correct answer to that questions. Although I did tell my wife, and I think I told the church, that when Peg dies, I'm marrying Condeleezza Rice because she has a membership at Augusta. So somebody asked me, “What does she get out of it?” I said, “I don't really care.” Your wife wants to know that you're in there. It's interesting, the Greek in 1 Timothy when he talks about deacons and overseers, it says that you're to be a man of one woman. She wants loyalty. I don't know if your wife's made you watch the movie, *The Notebook*. Anybody seen that? That is the worst movie ever made. It's this movie about this torrid, physical, sexual relationship with this guy and his wife. They get older and she develops dementia and Alzheimer's. So he's got this book he's written down about all the stuff they used to do. And so he goes in and he reads the book to her. And for about 30 seconds, she realized who he is and they dance a little bit. And then after 30 seconds, she pushes him away and forgets. And so he's constantly reading this book to her and he gets her back for 30 seconds. It's the most depressing movie I've ever watched. Really stupid. Really dumb. But it was interesting when they evaluated the movie, the largest group that loved the movie were junior high girls. Because they said they wanted a man that would love them all the way to the end. She needs to know that. She needs to feel that. This is why, gentlemen, you can't do porn. And it's why, if you do porn, for you it's like no big deal, I did that, I reacted to it physically, it's nothing baby. She doesn't see that because she sees that as complete disloyalty. So you've got to stay away from the pornography sections for no other reason because you're going to live out Malachi 2:14. If you are involved in pornography, you are faithless to the wife of your youth no matter what you think about what you're doing. She craves that loyalty.

Esteem

And finally, she craves esteem. She wants to feel valued. It's interesting. You have this Greek word, *Agape*, which really means to value. She needs to feel that she is valuable in your life. Now however you do that, whether you leave her notes, whether you leave her appreciation, whatever you do, however you do that, she needs to feel that. So your wife has a deep responsibility. She's in absolute submission to you. Your name is now her name. What happens to you, happens to her. She's got to speak to you what she's going through. She's going to struggle in that. But I'm

telling you, I think if you do this well, if you C.O.U.P.L.E. with her, her struggle will lessen because it's easier to trust a man that she feels loves her.

Marriage is hard, all kidding aside. Men and women are two different creatures. It's difficult. And the reason I did two on you and one on the wife is because you're the head of the home and you're responsible for the home. Your wife has enormous duties and I would take her out and share those with her. I think you can share it in a way that's applicable to her. You can share them in a way that lets her know you need her wisdom and her kindness and her character and her blessing. You need them. Let me tell you. If you can share that in a way that she knows you need her, her esteem is off the charts.