

Man—Woman’s Superior

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.”

Ephesians 5:22-24

The title will make most a tad queasy. What makes one superior in our society? Is it not that the person in question is more qualified, more knowledgeable or more gifted? Yet do we really consider our bosses to be better than us? Do we not understand it is not a matter of one’s quality but one’s function? Are the elders better than the rest of the church because they oversee the congregation—thus our superior? More importantly, does God choose leaders because they are inherently more devote, more holy or more qualified than all others? While Paul had many strengths, he admits that God worked through his weaknesses rather than his strengths (2 Corinthians 12:1-10). Think of Abraham, Moses and David. They had to wait well past their prime before God called them—in essence he worked through their weaknesses to bring about his purpose.

In the consequences of the Fall, both are given a function to fulfill in the family. How is Adam better than Eve in this arrangement? If anything, God is holding Adam (man) responsible for what happens to the family because of his failure to lead. Satan (the serpent) takes advantage of two of Eve’s strengths—her trusting nature and her willingness to take risks. Headship here does not suppose man is superior to woman. Instead, God holds irresponsible man responsible for what happens to Eve. Look at the story carefully—Adam is quite happy to see if Eve croaks before he takes a bite of the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3). Clearly nothing about the story puts male-kind in a good light. After all, can anyone imagine a man risking his life to give birth to a baby? Even in the context of Ephesians, we see this again for nowhere in scripture does God ever have to command woman to love her husband, but he does **command** man to love his wife.

Adam
Failed to protect and lead
WORK!

Eve
Trusting / Risk-taker
Labor in Childbearing

Despite trends to turn Christ’s church into more of a business, it is more family than anything else. Christ is our head. The church is his—he has the final say. We have been assembled to do his bidding, acknowledge his worthiness and call each other accountable to his words. It has become popular to believe that giftedness implies status and roles. *“For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But **God chose** what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; **God chose** what is weak in the world to shame the strong; **God chose** what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God”* (1 Corinthians 1:26-29, emphasis mine). What did God choose? Throughout scripture, he chooses losers, weaklings and broken slaves to do his work. Let us learn to be fools for Christ’s sake (1 Corinthians 3:18; 4:10).

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