

# Grace Bible Church 2015 Biblical Counseling Conference

## Session #6

### The Role of the Wife

---

#### I. The Wife's \_\_\_\_\_: To be a "helper suitable" for her husband– Gen. 1:26-31; 2:18-25

##### A. What does this term mean?

⇒ **Helper Suitable** (NAS) = Lit. One who helps – but the term also communicate the idea of completing, complementing, corresponding to, fitted perfectly to, custom-made to meet needs

This term is used several times to describe God being my "help" or "helper"

**Psalm 22:19** "But You, O LORD, be not far off; O You my help, hasten to my assistance."

**Psalm 54:4** "Behold, God is my helper; The Lord is the sustainer of my soul."

**Psalm 94:17** "If the LORD had not been my help, My soul would soon have dwelt in the abode of silence."

Point: The term is a positive term, not a negative one – no one should view the purpose of a wife as being demeaning or making the wife inferior to her husband!

##### B. God designed the wife's role for a unique purpose

###### 1. She has a Unique Role of \_\_\_\_\_ – Gen 1:26-28; 2:18, 20, 24

**Genesis 2:18** "Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.'"

**Genesis 2:20** "... but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him."

###### 2. She has a Unique Role in the \_\_\_\_\_ – Gen. 1:28; 2:25

**Genesis 1:28** "God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth...'"

**Genesis 2:25** "And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed."

###### 3. She has a Unique Role in \_\_\_\_\_ – Gen. 1:28

God told Adam to *subdue* the earth – this was one of the first responsibilities God assigned to Adam, and it was Eve's role to help him in this process!

##### C. Practical Ways to Be Your Husband's Helper

Driscoll, Grace. *10 Practical Ways to Honor Your Hubby*. Retrieved February 9, 2012 from [www.pastormark.tv](http://www.pastormark.tv)

###### 1. \_\_\_\_\_ faithfully

When I pray for my husband, the Holy Spirit softens my heart and his, and I learn to trust God with my marriage.

###### 2. \_\_\_\_\_ personally

Time with Jesus and the Bible, studying and repenting are essential to honoring our husbands.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ **regularly**

As you encourage him, you'll begin to understand all the ways you can be thankful rather than grumbling.

Encouraging comments to add to your arsenal:

4. \_\_\_\_\_ **daily**

Don't just ask what he did during the day. Rather, ask how he is doing so you can find ways to serve him if he is stressed or celebrate with him if he is excited.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ **Intimately**

When you work on the friendship, the intimacy becomes more mutually enjoyable, so be willing to step up and pursue him.

6. \_\_\_\_\_ **frequently**

When a marriage is all work and no play, it feels like a business partnership instead of a loving partnership, so plan fun.

7. \_\_\_\_\_ **attentively**

Women love to talk, but it is important to learn to listen in order to get to know your husband better.

8. \_\_\_\_\_ **respectfully**

Make sure your tone isn't out of bitterness or unrighteous anger. His ability to lead will suffer if you are disrespectful.

**Michael Pearl** "No man has ever crawled out from under his wife's criticism to be a better man - no matter how justified her condemnation." *Created to Be His Helpmeet*, p. 30, Debi Pearl

9. \_\_\_\_\_ **privately**

When you see sin or error, do not try to belittle him publicly, but instead prayerfully approach him with your concerns in private.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ **loudly**

Back to having fun, don't allow life to get so serious that you don't ever laugh together

**II. The Wife's \_\_\_\_\_: To be " \_\_\_\_\_" to her husband – Eph. 5:22-24**

**A. Develop a \_\_\_\_\_ view of submission – start with the truth, the real thing, an accurate picture!**

**1. Submission is present in the \_\_\_\_\_ – Gen. 1 (cf. John 1:1-3)**

- Every use of the term 'God' in Gen. 1 is in the plural form – i.e. in reference to the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son [clarified in John 1:1-3], and God the Holy Spirit)
- The Father is the functional authority and the Son and the Spirit are submissive to the will of the Father – Example: Jesus said, "I came to do the will of Him Who sent me" (John 6:38)
- Point: The Trinity models submission! Therefore...

**2. Submission is \_\_\_\_\_ because its \_\_\_\_\_ is in the nature and character of God!**

Submission existed \_\_\_\_\_ the curse of sin!

**3. Submission is God’s divine plan for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.**

- Submission = put in subjection, be under the authority of; take a subordinate place (position)
- Submission is a military term to voluntarily (an act of the will) “arrange yourself in rank under.”

**4. Submission is a way of life for \_\_\_\_\_ believer, not just the wife – Eph. 5:22**

**Ephesians 5:21** “And be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.”

**5. Submission \_\_\_\_\_ a lot about a person’s \_\_\_\_\_ toward God**

**Ephesians 5:22** “Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.”

**B. Recognize that submission is often \_\_\_\_\_ and therefore \_\_\_\_\_**

Submission Wrongly Described	Submission Biblically Clarified
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The wife is <u>inferior</u> to her husband.</li> </ul>	The wife is a <i>fellow heir of the grace of life</i> (I Pet. 3:7) Marriage is a ‘ <i>one flesh</i> ’ relationship (Gen. 2:24)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The husband is <u>never wrong (perfect)</u>.</li> </ul>	God is the only <i>perfect</i> authority (I Pet. 2:13-23)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The wife cannot <u>think</u> and should never speak.</li> </ul>	She is commanded to ‘ <i>speak the truth</i> ’ (Eph. 4:15) Part of her role as a fitting helper (Gen. 2:18) applies to biblical <i>communication</i>

**C. Focus on the \_\_\_\_\_ of submission: The Life of Christ - 1 Peter 2:21-3:2**

**1 Peter 2:21 – 3:2** <sup>21</sup> “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: <sup>22</sup> ‘Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth’; <sup>23</sup> who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; <sup>24</sup> who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. <sup>3:1</sup> Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, <sup>2</sup> when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.”

- The context of v. 13-20 is being *submissive*, even to imperfect authority
- So each wife has a choice to make: To be like Christ who modeled submission and obeyed His Father, or to be like Satan who rebelled and disobeyed!

**III. The Wife’s \_\_\_\_\_: To show “\_\_\_\_\_” for her husband - Eph 5:33**

**Ephesians 5:33** “.... and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.”

**A. What does it mean to *respect* your husband?**

**Respect** = to value, regard, notice, honor, prefer, esteem, praise, love, admire exceedingly.

**B. What are some practical ways to show respect?**

**1. Develop a godly \_\_\_\_\_ toward your husband – Prov. 23:7**

The way you think about him will affect your behavior toward him

**Proverbs 23:7** “For as he thinks within himself, so he is.” [respect begins in the heart (inner man)]  
**Luke 6:45** “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”

You can/should be a joyful person in spite of your emotions (learn to be principle oriented, not feeling oriented)

“You can control your future reactions considerably by changing the way you think *before* you are pressed into a response. The way you think every day determines the way you feel, and it will determine how you will react in stressful situations. Researchers have determined that the average person thinks over 40,000 thoughts each day. The heart is filled with thoughts and it is out of that reservoir of thoughts that the mouth speaks words of praise or bitterness. When the pressure is on, and the dam of reservation breaks loose, you cannot control what you say, because you will speak from the abundance of your heart - from the 40,000 thoughts you had *that day*, and all the days before. If you, as a wife, are going to change the way you have been speaking, it is not a matter of willpower; it is a matter of thought power. You will be “transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2), not by the strength of your will to hold your tongue. God tells you *how* to think about your role as a wife and help meet. If you believe him, you will think differently.” *Created to Be His Help Meet*, Debi Pearl, pp.100-101

## 2. Practice godly \_\_\_\_\_ – Col. 4:6

**Colossians 4:6** “Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”

a. Use words and tones that **edify him** (build him up when he fails and commend him when he succeeds)

**Ephesians 4:29** “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.”

**Proverbs 12:18** “Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

“Do you *criticize* or negatively compare him to other men? He might act like it doesn’t bother him, but being respected is one of the things a man values most, especially from his wife. Criticism comes from the sin of pridefulness. You are the most important person in your husband’s life, and when you speak disrespectfully to him, your words cut and worm their way into his heart. They bury themselves there, slowly eroding his ability to cherish you as you really want. Even when you’re joking, it’s risky business.” *The God Empowered Wife*, Karen Haught, p. 104

b. Ask **questions** instead of making accusations or bottom-line statements

A question pricks the conscience; an accusation hardens the heart!

c. Express **gratitude** frequently (even in difficult circumstances) – **1 Thes. 5:18**

**1 Thes. 5:18** “In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”

“Joy begins with thankfulness. Quite often our attitudes hang in the balance; by making a conscious choice, we can tip our souls into dark moods of complaining, or into thankfulness and praise. It is amazing how much your mouth controls your soul. You can smile with your mouth and say, ‘Thank you, God; thank you, husband; thank you, children,’ and your spirit is directed into gratitude with joy following. Thankfulness is *how* you think; joy is the *abundance* it produces. Practice makes perfect. Practice having a merry and thankful heart. I have known people who, though they did not have a natural knack for music, started piano lessons and practiced every day. After two or three years, their fingers moved across the keys easily and their music sounded sweeter and more fluid every time I heard them. If you ask them, ‘How do you know to hit all those notes?’ They answer, ‘Practice. I’ve practiced so much, I don’t think about it. It just happens.’ Life is like that. Most people have practiced hitting the notes of bitterness, sourness, hurt feelings, and frustration so long that their soul finds the discordant notes easily, almost without thought. But, you don’t have to keep on practicing discord; you can practice joy and thanksgiving just as easily, and certainly with more pleasure.” *Created to Be His Help Meet*, Debi Pearl, p.37

- d. Avoid gossiping or being critical of your husband in public or privately to others who are not part of the problem or the solution!

**Proverbs 20:19** “He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, Therefore do not associate with a gossip.”

3. **Choose to believe the best about him – 1 Cor. 13:7** ‘...believes all things’  
Learn to love your husband the way God loves you

**1 John 4:11** “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

4. Don't try to change him (you don't have the ability or the authority) – **Matt. 7:1-5**
- He sins, but you sin too. He's not perfect, but neither you. If you think he needs to change, then live in 1 Peter 3:1-6 and be an example of what change looks like!
  - When you think your husband is wrong, ask the question: *How does God want to use my husband's imperfections to help me grow to be more like Christ?*
  - Ask yourself the question: *What 'logs' do I need to get out of my own eyes first?(Mt. 7:1-5)*

“In the many letters I receive from women who describe the many offenses of their husbands, 90% of the offences are nothing more than the wife's imaginative response to something that could easily have been overlooked. The difference between a good marriage and a lousy one is not found in good husbands and good wives versus bad husbands and bad wives, for all marriages are made up of two sinners with lots of faults. *A good marriage is good because one or both of them have learned to overlook the other's faults, to love the other as he or she is and to not attempt to change the other or bring him or her to repentance.* A bad marriage is not one that contains more faults between the two of them; it is a marriage where one or both of them gets worked up over issues that good marriage partners let slide and cover up with love and forgiveness. When a woman gets it in her mind that she must change her husband before she will allow him to relax in the security of her honor and respect, she will never see so much as the bottom side of a good marriage...” *Created to be His Help Meet*, Debi Pearl, pp.128-129

### C. What are some key concepts to remember?

1. **God has a plan and God's plan works – Genesis 1:31** ‘very good’

The farther you get away from doing it God's way, the less likely you are to succeed. His way is ‘very good’, but the way of the transgressor is HARD (Prov. 13:15)

2. **Remember, you made a vow before God – Ecc. 5:5**

**Ecclesiastes 5:5** “It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.”

### Getting Serious with God by Reverencing Your Husband

Make a list for each day of the week

Taken from *Created to be His Help Meet*, Debi Pearl, p.123

**Monday:** Write three new things that you will add to your life that will cause you to become more precious to your husband.

**Tuesday:** List three things that you can do that will be a help to him.

**Wednesday:** Write down three things you can do that will be an encouragement to him.

**Thursday:** Jot down three things about your appearance that you can change, which he is sure to like.

**Friday:** List three things that you can do to your house that will please him.

**Saturday:** Write three things you can do (for example, intimate time together) that will make him feel like he is THE MAN.

**Sunday:** Plan three ways you can respond to him in front of others that will show a heart of respect and honor toward him.

#### IV. The Wife's Potential: to be a godly "influence" on her husband – 1 Peter 3:1-6

The wife cannot change her husband, but she can be tool in God's hand to help model that change

##### A. Focus on being a Good Example! – 1 Peter 3:1-6

**1 Peter 3:1–4** “<sup>3</sup> Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,<sup>2</sup> when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.<sup>3</sup> Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—<sup>4</sup> rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”

Even if your husband is an unbeliever, or living in rebellion to God, he 'may be won' (not absolutely guaranteed; but if it's going to happen, it's going to happen this way) by the example of the wife!

##### B. Focus on being a Proverbs 31 kind of woman (they are hard to find!)

**Proverbs 31:10** “An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels.”

**Proverbs 31:28–29** “Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: ‘Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all.’”

##### C. Work Hard to Avoid Some of the Biggest Pitfalls

###### 1. Don't Settle into Self-Pity

**Philippians 4:19** “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus”

**Hebrews 13:5** “I will never leave you or forsake you.”

###### 2. Don't Try to Be Your Husband's Holy Spirit

You're not the Holy Spirit; you're not the Redeemer; you're only a tool in the hands of the Redeemer!

**Proverbs 31:26** “She opens her mouth with wisdom.”

**Proverbs 29:20** “Do you see a man (woman) hasty in his (her) words, there is more hope for a fool than for him (her).”

- Ladies can sometimes be guilty of telling their husbands so much that when God's Holy Spirit is truly trying to speak to him, he thinks it is just you one more time giving your hundredth opinion.
- Don't tell him how to drive, where to park, how to bathe the kids, etc.
- In decision making, say to your husband, “I am praying for you as you make this decision regarding our family. I know God will show you. You are a good leader and whatever you decide, I will follow you happily.”

###### 3. Don't Settle into Pride

Be willing to admit when you're wrong – and move toward your husband versus pouting, being sullen or pulling away. When you're wrong just be wrong!

**James 4:6** “God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

**Proverbs 14:1** “A wise woman builds her house, but the foolish tears it down with her own hands.”

“Do you contradict your husband? That’s why he’s quit talking to you. Contradicting reveals the sins of pride and self-righteousness—and lack of grace. Do you correct your husband? Correction comes from the sins of pride and fear of criticism from others.

When my husband tells stories, it drives me crazy the way he makes up details he doesn’t remember. I used to be all over him like a laser beam, zapping him inaccuracies. Boom! “No, it wasn’t 2:30 on Wednesday in my car. It was Thursday and 8:00 in yours.” “No, (dummy) it wasn’t your brother who gave that to you, it was my Dad.”

If he said something that reflected poorly on me, I’d try to defend myself, and we’d end up tensely discussing who was right or wrong. I usually won the battle, but lost my pride. His listeners not only remembered what he has said—which normally they wouldn’t—they also suspected I was guilty. Most of all, they wondered if I was always so quarrelsome.

Now, I try not to say anything to call attention to his mistakes and when it is something critical of me, I just smile as he had paid me a compliment. It confuses his listeners, and the comment loses its impact. If what he said was really hurtful, I’ll say something to him about it privately, later. Otherwise, I try to forgive him for being human, and drop it.” *The God Empowered Wife*, Karen Haught, p. 103-104

### Don’t Make Him Wish He was Single

- **Proverbs 19:13** “A nagging wife is like a leaky faucet” *The Message*  
“An obstinate, argumentative woman is literally like a leak so unrelenting that one has to run from it or go mad.” *John MacArthur*
- **Proverbs 19:1b** “A quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping”
- **Proverbs 21:9** “Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife” (also Prov. 25:24)
- **Proverbs 21:19** “Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and ill-tempered wife”
- **Proverbs 27:15-16** “A quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping on a rainy day; restraining her is like restraining the wind or grasping oil with the hand.

Quarrelsomeness isn’t always as obvious as you may think. See if you recognize yourself in these examples:

He: “Looks like it’s going to rain today.”  
She: “No, I don’t think so.”

He: “I like the chunky peanut butter.”  
She: “It’s not as good. Get the creamy kind.”

He: “Let’s take the baby to the park.”  
She: “No, it’s too hot and she needs her nap.”

He: “I’m going to go get the car cleaned.”  
She: “You better wait until tomorrow. It might rain.”

He: “Don’t forget, my sister is coming today.”  
She: “I wish you hadn’t invited her. She drives me crazy.”

He: “The trash came early today.”  
She: “You should have put it out last night.”

He: “What a rough day. I’m exhausted.”  
She: “Don’t leave your clothes on the floor.”

### Don’t Take On the Martyr Complex

“No one around here sees all I have to do and no one ever helps me.”

**Matthew 25:40** “To the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.”

## **Conclusion –**

It's not what you know; it's what you do with what you know – James 1:22-25 'doers of the Word'  
Recommended Resources:

Creative Counterpart, Linda Dillow

An Excellent Wife, Martha Peace

Helper By Design, Elyse Fitzpatrick

God-Empowered Wife, Karen Kaught

Created to Be His Help Meet, Debi Pearl