

# A Wife's Roles in Marriage

Wayne Erick Johnston

I. Introduction

II. The Wife's Roles

A. Ephesians 5.22, 33:        Respect

It has to do with your response to God,  
Not on your husband's worthiness

B. Ephesians 5.22-24:        Submit

How to submit  
(A Biblical Perspective on Submission)

C. 1 Peter 1.22:                Love

D. Genesis 2.18-25:            Be a Suitable Helper

E. Proverbs 31.12:              Do Him Good and not Harm

### III. How to Help Wives Live the Biblical Roles

#### A. Focus your counselee on God

Most participants in troubled marriages do not know how to selflessly serve, nor do they seek God's glory above all else.

Comparing oneself with God instead of one's spouse may lead to replacing animosity with the camaraderie of pursuing sanctification.

Leaving father and mother is sometimes the root issue.

It is vital for Christian husbands and wives to hear the truth of the Scriptures, to repent of sin and strive to obey the Word.

The joy of a vibrant growing bond with God through the Scriptures is a greater force than the most difficult hardships in marriage.

#### B. Gather data on words, tone, and motives.

#### C. Commitment

#### D. Work with each counselee at the present level of spiritual maturity

More mature: strongly challenge to obey Scripture and grow

Unruly: admonish, be patient

Weak: help, be patient

Unbeliever: do not counsel as if overcoming sin is possible

Unbeliever: this is precounseling (communicating the Gospel)

Unbeliever: in case of serious or potential lawbreaking sins, give practical direction

If both equal spiritually: expect most change and work from the husband

E. Know God's grace will be sufficient for the counselor and counselee

F. The biblical counselor is responsible for speaking the Scriptures accurately, not for the counselee's response.

#### IV. How to Counsel Wives Who are not Living the Biblical Roles

##### A. Change

1 John 5.3-5	Between Salvation and Heaven Our Task is to Overcome Sin
Galatians 5.16-17	The Christian Denies Self and Obeys God

##### B. Hope

2 Timothy 3.16-17	Live the Word
1 Corinthians 10.13	Never Tempted Beyond Ability
2 Corinthians 12.9-10	Sufficient Grace of God and Power of Christ
1 Peter 5.6-7	Cast Anxieties Upon Your Caring God
Proverbs 21.9	Do Not Be Contentious

##### C. Resources

#### V. To Wives and Counselors

\*Scripture describing how the wife is to love her husband:

The wife is to be subject to her husband's leadership at the level she is subject to God:

Ephesians 5.22-24 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.

The wife is to be a suitable helper for her husband:

Genesis 2.18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

Proverbs 31.11-12     The heart of her husband trusts in her,  
and he will have no lack of gain.  
She does him good, and not harm,  
all the days of her life.

Proverbs 14.1         The wisest of women builds her house,  
but folly with her own hands tears it down.

Proverbs 19.14       House and wealth are inherited from fathers,  
but a prudent wife is from the LORD.

1 Peter 3.1-2, 5-6 Likewise, 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. For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

Proverbs 31.25        Strength and dignity are her clothing,  
and she laughs at the time to come.

Proverbs 31.30        Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain,  
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

Proverbs 21.9         It is better to live in a corner of the housetop  
than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife.

A wife is to love her husband:

John 15.12-13 This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends.

\*The thoughts and actions of a wife striving to love her husband with Christ-like love:

I fear and honor the Lord in all parts of my life. This is helpful to my husband.

Because Jesus Christ loved me enough to die for my sins, I will love my husband with that kind of love.

As a wise woman, I will build up my house.

I respect and obey my husband, unless he tells me to sin against God.

My ministry to my husband will include encouraging him and helping him excel in his walk with God.

I will do right and not be frightened by any fear.

I will think of ways to support and help my husband to excel.

I am secure in God's promise to keep me safe for salvation on the final day.

I will serve and care for my husband in intimacy.

If we have the opportunity and ability, and under the leadership and direction of my husband, I will seek to develop businesses and investments to benefit our family.

I am a trustworthy wife, who resists every temptation to hurt or try to control my husband.

When we disagree on an important decision, I will trust God enough to be subject to my husband's final conclusion.

I will show our children and other people that I respect my husband.

When my husband seeks to help me grow in sanctification, I will appreciate it and make it easier for him to help me by openly disclosing my thoughts, sins, and struggles.

I will be a blessing to my husband by managing the household.

I will leave my mom and dad, emotionally and as authorities over me, and with my husband make an independent family that honors God.

I will do good to my husband in great times and difficult ones.

I will not be contentious by always trying to get my way, prove I'm right, win conflicts with coldness, or control conversation.

I work diligently first for God, then for my husband.

My home is a venue where I can serve and be a blessing to him.

I will work intently on being a suitable helper for my husband in his pursuits of obedience to God, success in his job, and effective ministry to our children.

I will not compromise my commitment to Christ when life is hard.

I thank God regularly for every kind blessing He has given me.

Because God loves me, I seek to love my man in the same way.

Love and care will be the theme of my life as a wife.

I will expend time and energy to be a blessing to my husband.

There will be great times alone together, when he is loved and cared for.

I will be a strong woman of faith when trials fill my life.

By God's grace, I will grow in righteousness to please God and be a blessing to my husband.

When I sin I will repent and confess my sins in prayer to God, then confess my sins to my husband and ask him to forgive me.

I am glad to support my husband and be a blessing to him.

My role of being a blessing to my husband will include wisdom and prudence.

On lonely, sad days I will believe God's promises of sufficient grace and will know that He is working all things for good.

This will enable me to still honor Him by loving, serving and giving.

There will be frequent times of talking and listening at the heart level.

There will be close times when I initiate physical love.

I will speak many words of love and appreciation.

I will speak words of strong faith and hope in God's Word.

# Wife

A Christian wife is to be subject to her husband. She should support his leadership and obey him, in the same way she obeys God. No man is perfect like God. The believing wife is to even obey a husband who is disobedient to the Word (except when he commands her to sin). A wife who is subject to her husband pleases God. Will you measure the day not by your level of pleasure, but by how well you obeyed God and your spouse?

The strength and obedience of the godly wife comes from her close walk with the Almighty God. Her faith is the core of her being. Her hope is set on the promises of God's Word. She is a woman who hungers and thirsts for righteousness.

God calls wives to be subject to their husbands. To do so is to be a servant. Love is regarding the other person as more important. It does not seek its own way. Love forgives. It does not take into account a wrong suffered. How can a woman love in this way? By choosing to obey His Word.

The wife who lives by God's Word is a suitable helper to her husband. What is his biggest need? To please God by growing in holiness. A strong wife can respectfully and effectively help her husband in this by communicating truth from the Scriptures. She thinks and speaks from a heart that fears God. The woman with the fearless confidence in the Almighty God is a tool in His hand to cause spiritual progress in her husband. This is a woman who lives by faith. Her inner person is precious to the Lord.

Secondarily, an excellent wife helps her husband by effectively teaching and training children and overseeing the household. The scope of responsibilities are only limited by what circumstances and her abilities allow. For some women, their domain includes choosing investments, managing a group of employees, business ventures, real estate holdings, and household planning (Proverbs 31:10-31). For others, God has ordained few areas to oversee so that the wife may excel at them. The woman honoring God in her marriage is a faithful servant of the Lord and a blessing to her man.

The godly wife fears the Lord. Strong in faith, her life reflects the Scriptures. This woman is precious in the sight of God. Her husband is stronger in his sanctification and more successful in his occupation due to the ministry of his wife.

She is trusted and appreciated. The faithful wife teaches and trains her children with wisdom according to the Word. She is a woman of character, honoring to the Lord.

If your desire is to be such a woman, this study and journal are made for you.

## What To Do

- 1) Review all the Scriptures in the Wife Study every day.
- 2) Memorize a verse from this list each week. Review all memorized verses daily.
- 3) Complete every section of the journal every day until, by God's grace and through His Word, you live these truths as the habit pattern of your life. Such a woman is honoring to God and a blessing to her husband.

# Wife Study

*Ephesians 5:22 –23*

*Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.*

*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."*

*How can I better support the leadership of my husband?*

- 1 Peter 3:5-6                      For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.
- 2 Corinthians 4:5                For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.
- Philippians 2:14                 Do all things without grumbling or disputing.

*How can I better be subject to him?*

- Mark 10:43-45                    But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.
- 1 Peter 2:16                      *Act* as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but *use it* as bondslaves of God.
- 1 Peter 3:1-2                     In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any *of them* are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.



## *The godly wife's life with God*

- Proverbs 31:30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain,  
*But* a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
- 1 Peter 3:3-4 Your adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.
- Proverbs 31:25 Strength and dignity are her clothing,  
And she smiles at the future.
- Matthew 5:6,8 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they shall be satisfied.  
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

## *How can I better love my husband?*

- Proverbs 31:10-12 An excellent wife, who can find?  
For her worth is far above jewels.  
The heart of her husband trusts in her,  
And he will have no lack of gain.  
She does him good and not evil  
All the days of her life.
- Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.
- Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-6 Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth.

*How can I be the most suitable helper for my husband?*

- Proverbs 31:26                      She opens her mouth in wisdom,  
And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
- Proverbs 31:28-29                  Her children rise up and bless her;  
Her husband *also*, and he praises her, *saying*:  
Many daughters have done nobly,  
But you excel them all.
- Hebrews 13:16                      And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such  
sacrifices God is pleased.
- 1 Peter 3:8-9                      To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and  
humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a  
blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit  
a blessing
- Proverbs 31:16-18                  She considers a field and buys it;  
From her earnings she plants a vineyard.  
She girds herself with strength  
And makes her arms strong.  
She senses that her gain is good;  
Her lamp does not go out at night.
- Proverbs 31:23                      Her husband is known in the gates,  
When he sits among the elders of the land.

# Wife Journal

Day:

Date:

*Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.  
Ephesians 5:22 –23*

How I either supported or opposed the leadership of my husband

How I subjected myself to my husband's authority or how I sought to rule over him

How I honored God today (time in Word, obedience, choosing righteousness over sin)

Specific things I did to love my husband (include Scripture, showing how your actions were love)

How I was the most suitable helper for my husband today

What Scriptures describe my motives today

Prayer:

If it was a time of being a doer of the Word, give thanks for God's help (1 Thes. 5.18, Heb. 4.15-16)

Or

If it was a time of not being a doer of the Word, confess sin and repent (Prov. 28.13)

>[livetheword.squarespace.com/Bible resources/journals](http://livetheword.squarespace.com/Bible/resources/journals) with Scripture