

## Biblical Manhood and Womanhood — Part 2

### Finding My Place

**August 21, 2016**

Do you ever have a week where a Bible verse keeps going through your mind? For the last two weeks one verse keeps coming to my thoughts. It is James 3:2.

**We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check. James 3:2 (NIV)**

Two weeks ago we began our hot topic series. We looked at the different ways men and women are to live out their gender roles in relationship to one another. Unfortunately, the way I described some things was unclear. I left too much room for misunderstanding. In addition, when I listened to my own sermon, I noticed I sounded harsh and mean-spirited. That is not the tone I wanted to convey. I am sorry for creating misunderstanding in the way I said things. I apologize for sounding harsh in my tone. I want to ask your forgiveness. I also want to ask for your prayers and patience as we finish the topic of biblical manhood and womanhood this morning. This topic is very ripe for misunderstanding. Let's pray.

**Jesus, I ask that as we study biblical masculinity and femininity, you would guard my mouth so I teach your word in a way that is helpful, true and gentle. I also ask you would break up the hardness of our hearts. There is something deep inside us that resists your words on this issue. We want to please you as we live out our roles as men and women of God. Amen.**

I have a three-fold goal this morning. My first goal is to recap what we learned two weeks ago. I want to bring everyone in the room up to speed and to clear up misunderstandings. Second, I want to briefly cover two more

misunderstood Bible passages on manhood and womanhood. Third, I will devote the rest of our time answering some of the great questions you asked about applying this to everyday life.

## **1. What is biblical manhood and womanhood?**

Two weeks ago we learned the Bible says men and women are equal in value, personhood and worth but God gave men and women different roles in life. A man's role is not superior, and a woman's role is not inferior. They are just different. It is similar to the pilot and a co-pilot. Both are needed to fly an airplane. They are equal in ability. One is in charge. They just have different roles.

The idea of different roles in life for men and women is not a product of sinful culture but is rooted in the creation story and the first three chapters of Genesis.

### **Genesis 1 — Male headship was introduced.**

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27 (ESV)

Notice God called the human race mankind, not people-kind or womankind. God gave Adam headship over both genders in the human race. This is why in Romans 5 Adam is seen as the head of fallen humanity of both genders, even though Eve was the one that sinned first. This is why Jesus is seen as the head of redeemed humanity over both genders. Male headship was introduced here in Genesis 1. Genesis 5:1-2 reinforced it but it is explained and developed in Genesis 2.

Some of you misunderstood the purpose of man's representative leadership. This doesn't mean Adam was better than Eve or men are better than

women. They just have different roles where both are essential. Adam, as the leader, was responsible to care for Eve and cultivate the garden. He was responsible to protect her and sacrifice for her. Male headship in the Bible does not mean men have a green light to exercise pride, arrogance or brutality over women. It means men have a responsibility to provide, care, protect and serve, in particular this applies to the husband and wife relationship. It also applies in the church and to some degree in everyday life.

The last time we talked on this subject some of you disagreed that male representative headship that has a responsibility to care for and protect women is not something that should apply in some form or fashion to everyday life. The best way I can illustrate this is the sinking of the Titanic. The ship had 2,224 people on board. In the lifeboats were only 712 — most of whom were women and children. Why were the women and children saved? Most of the men on the ship knew by instinct that their job was to care for and protect the women and children even if it wasn't their wives or in the church.

Jesus embodies what godly male headship looks like.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her... Ephesians 5:25 (ESV)

### **Genesis 2 — Gender roles are described.**

In Genesis 2 we learned that Eve, who represents the female gender, was originally created in response to Adam's need. That phrase was misunderstood. That does not mean women are some kind of slave to male whims like we see in an Islamic terrorist. Adam's need was for a helpmate. Adam named all the animals on the planet and there was not a proper helpmate fit for him.

The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Genesis 2:20–22 (ESV)

The female gender was created to be the perfect helpmate for Adam, who represented the male gender. Eve was created from Adam's side, so she is of equal worth, but she was also created for Adam's side to be his closest companion, helper and teammate. Eve brought to the equation the help Adam desperately needed.

Notice that Eve was not created to rule over Adam but was created to be a fitting helpmate for Adam. She was created as a co-pilot. There is nothing inferior about this. It is just a different role. Both the pilot and the co-pilot are needed to fly the plane. This portion of the creation story casts a long shadow through the rest of the Bible and it shapes the way God intended men and women to function together for all of life. Adam was given leadership over the first couple. He was responsible for the first family. Eve is equal in value, substance and worth but her gender was created to be Adam's essential helpmate. These roles are most apparent in marriage.

### **Genesis 3 - Sin twisted gender roles.**

While the first man and the first woman were living in harmony as pilot and co-pilot, in Genesis 3, Satan entered the picture. Instead of going to Adam — who was the head in the first family and charged with protecting his wife and the garden — Satan undermined Adam's leadership and went to Eve. Satan didn't just tempt Eve to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but she was

tempted to cast aside her husband's leadership in her life. Eve led the way to sin. Adam, the first man, followed her into sin. While Eve's choice was a deliberate act of rebellion against God's command to eat of the forbidden tree and a deliberate choice to not follow her husband's leadership, Adam's choice to eat of the tree was also a sin of passivity. He didn't stop his wife. He didn't protect his wife. He abdicated leadership and followed her into sin. Both Adam and Eve sinned by eating from the tree of good and evil. Eve sinned by coming out from her husband's leadership and eating from the tree while Adam sinned by not exercising his leadership to protect his wife. Then he followed her into sin and ate from the tree.

As a result Adam and Eve both sinned. Sin cursed their relationship and all subsequent relationships between men and women for eternity. Here is a snapshot of part of the consequences for their sin described in Genesis 3.

Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you. Genesis 3:16 (ESV)

The word *desire* in Hebrew literally means a desire for her husband's position of leadership. Sin gives women a desire to undermine a man that is in a proper position of male leadership over her. She has the desire to act like Eve and rebel against the leadership over her. This means sin gives a wife the desire to rebel against her husband.

Sin also gives men the desire to be harsh toward women. This word "rule" in the Hebrew is used for a hammer pounding a nail. It is harsh leadership. If sin doesn't influence a man to provide harsh leadership, sin influences him to be absent in leadership. Instead of men being like Christ and sacrificing themselves

in loving leadership, they are either bullies and thugs or completely absent from the picture and providing no leadership and no love at all.

Sin did not create different gender-based roles. They were part of the creation order in Genesis 1 and 2 before sin entered the world. Sin distorted our desire to play our roles and breeds rebellion against our God-given roles based on our genders.

### **Where do our gender roles apply?**

The first domain our gender roles show up is the family.

#### **The Family**

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. 1 Peter 3:1–2 (ESV)

For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, 1 Peter 3:5 (ESV)

In the home, a godly wife lives her faith by not trying to undermine her husband, which is the desire sin gives her, but by striving to be a helpmate under his leadership. A wife lives out her faith and brings glory to God by delighting in her role as her husband's helper. She puts herself in a position to support her husband's leadership. This doesn't mean she fails to counsel him to change his mind if she disagrees. This doesn't mean she can't feel differently on a subject and tell him why. Sometimes being honest about why you feel differently is the most loving thing to do. The key is her attitude is one of submission and support. At the end of the day, she will follow the pilot's orders because she is a co-pilot.

What if a husband is not a godly man? What if he doesn't understand his role is to be a loving leader over his wife? Peter said a wife is to function as a

helpmate anyway. When a wife honors her husband and strives to support her husband because she is his best friend, his greatest advocate and greatest cheerleader, a husband will find his wife's support extremely attractive. That is what his heart longs for.

The most effective way for a woman to witness to her husband to lead him to Christ or mature him in Christ is to pursue being the loving helpmate her husband needs and that God created her to be. The best way to draw your husband to Christ is to delight in your role as his helpmate.

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. 1 Peter 3:7 (ESV)

Husbands, we live our role by honoring our wives. In any way you can give her honor, do it. In addition, we live with them in an understanding way. That literally means we study our wives to learn how to love and honor them. Men, learn how to love your wife. She is not another guy. Learn how to honor your wife. As men, our job is to love, honor and support our wives.

### **The Church**

Men's and women's roles are not just for the home family but we are to live them out in God's family, the church. The church is to display to the world what it looks like for men and women to live together in Christ-honoring community as we live out our God-given gender roles.

I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control. 1 Timothy 2:12–15 (ESV)

This is one of Paul's toughest verses. It appears very degrading toward women. I applaud those of you that did extra research in the last two weeks on these verses. Some of you ran across books that said Paul told this to Timothy because the women in Ephesus were not educated. Once they were educated, they could teach and have authority over a man. I have a few cautions on that line of reasoning.

First, nobody knows the educational level of the women in a city 2,000 years ago. Hard data doesn't exist. That is someone's guess. Using that guess to completely dismiss these verses that are inspired by God and have guided the church for the last 2,000 years is shaky ground. Second, a friend called this past week. He is a brilliant man who was just earned his PhD. on 1 Timothy. I asked him about this passage. He told me that Ephesus was a highly-educated city. Women in the city were highly-esteemed. The best historical research says it is unlikely they were ignorant and unlearned. Third, did you notice why Paul said a woman is not to teach or have authority over a man? He based his rationale for that claim in the creation story of Genesis and the gender roles given to men and women in creation. Women are not to teach or have authority over the men in the church because God didn't create a woman to be in authority over a man. She was created to be a helpmate to man in the creation story. Paul said that in the church men and women should strive to function in their original creation roles before sin entered the world, just like they do in the home.



The top leaders in the church are to be men that model sacrificial godly leadership like Jesus as they care for those under them, just like Christ cares for us.

This is the reason we don't have women pastors and elders. As church leadership we are discussing the appropriateness of women on our Leadership Board because of the authority with which our Leadership Board functions and the words of this passage. That is a summary and clarification of last week's message. Now let's build off it and look at some tough passages.

### **What are some misunderstood passages on gender roles?**

#### **1 Corinthians 11 — Should women wear a head covering?**

But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, since it is the same as if her head were shaven. 1 Corinthians 11:3–5 (ESV)

That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. 1 Corinthians 11:10 (ESV)

Pastor Jordan and I talked about these verses. We decided to order red and black head coverings for the Spirit Lake ladies and purple and gold head coverings for the Spencer ladies. We just need your sizes after the service. (OK, that is a joke.)

These are some difficult verses. Using what we learned about gender roles in Genesis 1, 2 and 3 and a little historical research, we can decode part of this mystery. In this culture a woman's hair was considered part of her beauty. When a woman married, she wore a head-covering, especially around other men in public. Since her hair was part of her beauty, covering her beauty was a way of

saving her beauty for her husband. It was also a way of letting other men know she was under a husband's leadership.

In Corinth, which was a progressive city, women were tired of wearing head coverings. Ladies were displaying their hair, which men found to be a distraction. It was the modern equivalent of dressing provocatively. Paul told ladies in church to dress modestly and to wear their head coverings because it was the sign they were under a husband's authority. Paul said there was an order in the universe that needed to be displayed in life. God is over Christ. Christ is over man. Man is over women, in particular a husband is over his wife. He ties back to Genesis to explain why it is appropriate for a woman to publicly show she is under her husband's authority. God designed men and women to display the headship and submission relationship of Genesis in public life.

The permanent principle is that a wife should demonstrate she is under her husband's authority while in public. In their culture, the best way to do that was with a head covering. That is not the best way to do it in our culture. If all the CrossWinds Spirit Lake women wore red and black hoodies, everyone would think we are preparing for winter, not trying to show you are under a husband's authority. The modern day symbols that a woman is under her husband's authority are the wedding ring she wears and the taking of a husband's last name in place of her maiden name. Of course, she also changes her Facebook status to married.

This is simply saying women are to dress modestly and to let others know they are married and operating under their husbands' authority by wearing the appropriate cultural sign that lets people know they are married.

### **Galatians 3:28 — Did Jesus eliminate gender roles?**

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:27–28 (ESV)

This is a verse used by many people to say gender roles were eliminated by Christ. Look a little closer at the verse. This verse is not eliminating gender roles. It says salvation by Jesus is offered to everyone no matter your role in life. You can be a Jew or Gentile and saved by Jesus. After you are saved you don't stop being Jewish or a Gentile. You can be slave or free and saved by Jesus. If you become a Christian as a slave, you are still a slave. Your current role in life is not eliminated. Men and women come to Christ but becoming a Christian doesn't eliminate your gender or the role God calls you to play in your gender.

### **Questions and Answers**

#### **What can women do in the church?**

In short, almost anything. They can't be in an authoritative or teaching position over men but can lead children. A woman can lead other women. A woman can study theology. A woman can be highly-educated and even write books on theology. A woman can share the gospel and disciple others. The only positions we don't see women are the public teaching of men, as it says in 1 Timothy 2, and the elders which are in charge of the church.

Women can lead ministries of mercy such as deaconesses.

This doesn't mean women are not gifted in any of these areas. It is not a question of gifting. It is a question of God-given roles in Genesis.

The Bible is filled with women actively involved in the life of the church. In Romans 16 Paul mentioned 29 individuals he commended. Eight or nine of them are women: Phoebe, Prisca, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Paul commended women for their role in the church. Jesus also had a high regard for women. There were many women disciples.

Acts 16 tells us the story of Lydia, a wealthy woman, who opened up her house to begin the church in Philippi. Acts 18 tells the story of a husband and wife couple, Priscilla and Aquilla, who pulled aside a great teacher named Apollos and privately explained the gospel more fully to him. Apparently, Priscilla was quite a gifted lady. In public she didn't put herself in authority over Apollos. In private she explained to him the gospel more fully. Women can be advisors, supporters and encouragers of the male leadership in the church. Smart male leaders will actively listen to gifted women in the church to help them. A good pilot always listens to the co-pilot. Women gifted in teaching and administration should exercise those gifts under the authority of the top male leaders.

As staff and elders, we are discussing what this looks like as we operate. Let me give you one example. Arloa TenKlay facilitates CW Kids on Sunday morning, which starts this fall. Pastor Stephen is the pastoral authority over her. Pastor Stephen introduced her on Sunday morning a few weeks ago. She operates under his authority, not independent of his authority. Arloa is very gifted but she and Stephen work together to be an extension of his leadership, not

independent from his leadership. Pastor Stephen, being the loving leader, is committed to helping Arloa succeed with CW Kids.

**Are you saying women can't have a job or work outside the home?**

No! While gender-based roles are very clear in our home family and in the church family, when it comes to applying them to general society, it gets very messy because we live in a fallen world.

It is good for a woman to study. It is good for a woman to get an education and use her gifts for Christ's glory and the good of society. In the church we are very blessed by highly-educated and gifted women. I thank God for their education and gifting.

While it is good to be educated, there are a variety of reasons a woman may work outside the home.

Some women have a job outside the home because their husbands are sick and their employment is a form of being their husbands' helpmate. Other women work outside the home because their income is needed to help the family make ends meet. They are being their husbands' helpmate for family finances. Other women work outside the home because they are single mothers. The men in their lives weren't loving leader. They were was either abusive or absent. Now the single mom works outside the home to provide for her children. Other women work outside the home not because they have to but they are extremely gifted and they want to. These are all good reasons to work outside the home. The doctor that operated on my daughter's spine at Mayo clinic to correct her scoliosis was an extremely gifted brilliant woman. I am thankful she uses her gifts.

The rub comes when a woman is married and has children. As Genesis tells us, God intended a woman to be a husband's helpmate and nothing else on the planet can take a wife's place for her husband and her children. The role of a wife and mother is crucial and should not be devalued. Society subtly tells a woman that if you want to do something important with your life you need a career outside the home because the role of wife and mother in the home isn't important. The Bible says being a wife and mother is incredibly important. Value the role of wife and mother.

I also want to recognize that different women have different capacities. There are some very gifted women that can balance the three plates of a professional career, being a wife and a mother. The idealized wife in Proverbs 31 was an incredible wife, an attentive mother and was involved in business outside the home. The reality is most women struggle to balance all three and do them well. They find juggling careers, loving their husbands and their children to be too many plates to spin. This may not be true for every woman. It may not be true for all of a woman's life. It is something with which every family needs to wrestle.

I received some secondhand feedback from two women last week. Both pursued a professional career and were very good at what they did. They look back on their lives and realize they were far too absent from their children's lives. While they thought they balanced all three plates, they realized they were neglecting their family.

There is no easy answer to this question of working outside the home and how much to work outside the home. There are many variables in the equation.

The best way to answer this question is to simply ask, “Is my job taking me away from my important role as a wife and mother?” if it is, then ask the second question. “What can I do to make sure my husband and children are not neglected?” If you can, make a change.

Incidentally, just as a wife has the core role of being a wife and mother, a man also has a core role of being a husband and father. He also needs to make sure his work hasn’t become something that pulls him away from those important obligations in his life.

**Should I break fellowship with a church that ordains women or has a woman pastor?**

My short answer is, “No”. Always try to work together with other Christians as much as we can. I recognize there will be limits to what we can do together but we should try to work together.

My experience is that holding a traditional biblical view on gender-based roles, like we talked about this morning, is usually viewed by more progressive churches as a position of ignorance. If you have these kinds of discussions with a church that ordains women, I don’t want you to feel you haven’t thought about this issue. We follow Paul’s words on these issues because they are permanent and he roots them in the creation order. We are not oppressive of women. The men of CrossWinds are not to be heavy-handed leaders or absent leaders but sacrificial leaders like Jesus. That is what our Bible teaches us.

**If my core role is to be a wife and mother, what if I can’t have children?**

This is a great question. I know some top-notch wives struggling to have a family. In an ideal world becoming a wife means becoming a mother. We live in a

fallen world where not all women can conceive. This is usually a source of tears and emptiness that leaves a woman feeling inadequate.

Let me say that while a woman's core role is to be a wife and mother, her identity doesn't come from marriage and mothering, it comes from Jesus. Jesus loves you so much. He died to make you the most blessed being in all creation. That is your identity, not the children God has not given you.

The other way to look at this particular trial is that God's calling on your life may be something different than having your own children. A good friend of mine is a children's pastor. He is one of the most creative, gifted and fun pastors on the planet. He loves kids. He devoted his life to sharing the gospel with kids. After a few years of marriage, he and his wife discovered they can't have children. One day, in their sadness, they were presented with the chance to adopt an unwanted baby boy.

Today, their adopted son is growing up in a great home and hearing about Jesus. God used their infertility to rescue their son's life. Their family is a picture of the gospel. They took a young boy destined for a dark future and even though he didn't deserve it they adopted him as their own. They shower him with blessings, love and the good news of Jesus. That is not just their son's story. That is our story. We were destined for a dark future. God adopted us and is showering us with love and favor we don't deserve. If you are a couple struggling with infertility, maybe God is calling your family to be a living picture of the gospel message for the world to see by adopting the unwanted and unloved, just God did for us through Jesus.



## Conclusion

When you go home, tomorrow morning you will see someone staring back at you in the mirror. It will be a man or a woman. Our sexuality was given to us by God to give us different roles to play. While men and women are equal in value, personhood and worth. Men, we are called to be the sacrificial leaders in our marriages, churches and lives. Men are not to be bullies, thugs or absent leaders but sacrificial loving leaders like Jesus. Ladies, your gender was created to be an essential helpmate to your husband in marriage and an essential helpmate in the church.

God created a pilot and a co-pilot. Let's embrace our roles and fly the plane together. Let's pray.

Father, I ask that your Word was clear. I pray for those who are offended by what I said. Forgive me if I said things without proper gentleness and love. Father, we want to admit that part of us is offended by your Word because of the sin living in us that rebels against our roles. As men, we want to confess selfishness and the tendency to be about our business and neglect loving our wives, caring for our children and taking leadership in our church. I know some women this morning want to confess a natural indwelling anger to the sense that you would place any limitations on what they can do or who they become. This morning I ask you would help them to see the incredible importance of who you created them to be as helpmates in this world.



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America. He enjoys reading, writing, time with his family and wrestling with his sons. His favorite topics are preaching and ancient rhetoric. Feel free to contact him at [www.Christ2RCulture.com](http://www.Christ2RCulture.com) ([www.c2rc.com](http://www.c2rc.com))

© You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided (1) you credit the author, (2) modifications are clearly marked, (3) you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, (4) you include the web address ([www.Christ2RCulture.com](http://www.Christ2RCulture.com)) on the copied resource.



