

Marriage on the Rock 08

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Date: 08 January 2017

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Marriage on the Rock. Here's Marv Wiseman.

Recalling the Formula The formula for obtaining and maintaining a Marriage on the Rock is as basic as can be imagined, and it comes with the ultimate authority to further undergird its simplicity.

This formula consists of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ in the famous Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 7, wherein Jesus said, Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts upon them may be compared to a wise man who built his house upon the rock.

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house, and yet it did not fall. For it had been founded upon the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act upon them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand.

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house, and it fell. And great was its fall. Whether it is a single life one is living, or as a husband and wife, the foundation remains the same.

[1 : 25] And we all understand that in the building of any edifice, whether a house or a giant skyscraper, the foundation is critical. No superstructure can endure without an adequate foundation.

Even so, no life as a single person or as a married couple can thrive and endure relationally or spiritually, without an underpinning.

Jesus called it being built upon a rock. The text makes it clear that the words he has spoken constitute that rock. He is the only sure foundation for building a life or a marriage.

What else can an individual or a couple build their life upon? All that's left is what Christ called the foundation of sand. Can we imagine a more precarious or unstable foundation upon which to build a life or a marriage?

Ignoring this key principle of building on the rock helps to explain the failure of so many relationships, particularly that of marriage.

[2 : 31] It is a life built upon Christ through a salvation experience. And if that life is then joined in marriage, their mate must also have their life built upon that same rock, Christ Jesus, before they can even have the potential for a marriage on the rock.

And with both possessing Christ as their personal and individual foundation, they are well within the grasp of a marriage on the rock. And that, we may assure you, is the only basis for making the marriage relationship all that God intended it to be, and all that the married couple longs for it to be.

Whether single or married, the truly pertinent question should be answered by all of us. Since we only have one life, what is it built upon? Our foundation is of one of two materials, either a solid rock or sinking sand.

If the life you are living is far off the mark of what you know it should be and what you want it to be, check the foundation. What is it?

Obedience vs. Disobedience We have noted that the life that is blessed and the marriage that is blessed must of necessity be built upon the only solid foundation, namely, the person and words of Christ as earlier quoted from Matthew 7.

[4 : 06] And one more consideration needs to be added to that. The Bible makes it crystal clear that all who are not in Christ, that is, having believed upon Him as their foundation and personal salvation, is actually living their life in a sphere of disobedience to God Himself.

Are we saying that simply not having trusted Christ as one Savior means we are living in disobedience to God? That is precisely what we are saying. More importantly, that's what God is saying, and quite clearly.

The inspired apostle states this emphatically in Ephesians 2 when he declares all outside of Christ to be children of disobedience. Well, to whom are these disobedient?

Well, they are disobedient to the only one who really matters, God Himself. That is, they are presently living in the sphere of disobedience because they are disobedient by not having embraced the person of Christ, who gave Himself for them.

The apostle John seconds this in 1 John 3 when he declares, He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself. He that believes not God has made him a liar, because he believes not the record that God gave of his Son.

[5 : 25] It is not nice to make God out to be a liar, and doing so constitutes gross disobedience. Can any serious-minded person calling God a liar and being in a state of disobedience to God expect the blessing of God?

Most certainly not. Yet, we are not to receive Christ as our Savior so we can have a good marriage or even a happy life. We are to do so because it's the right thing to do.

It's the only proper response one can have to what God has done for us through Jesus Christ. And when we do this, we move from unbelief to belief, from darkness to light, from death to life, and from disobedience to obedience.

This new life in Christ then positions us to realize all that God provides through the finished work of Christ. And yes, this surely includes him being that ever-critical foundation upon which one's individual life is built, and, if married, upon their marriage.

Anything less is unstable, shifting sand. And to be in position to benefit from the spiritual provisions Christ has included in our personal package of redemption, and apply them in our individual life as well as in our marriage, one must be in Christ.

[6 : 56] And to be in Christ means to possess His life imputed to us on the basis of His gift of grace. It's called justification by faith. And apart from this, nothing else really matters, for time or eternity.

Is this your position? If it is, you are wonderfully positioned. Made to be Male and Female Part 1 We are going to proceed with this current series of Marriage on the Rock, under the assumption that you, the listeners, which we hope to be both husband and wife, are, as explained on the previous two segments, believers in Christ who have been spiritually regenerated by Him.

And if you have not, you are more than welcome and encouraged to continue listening. But you should be aware that you are not positioned to gain the maximum benefit from the materials and principles forthcoming.

This is because they will be spiritually based, and only those possessing the spiritual life provided by Christ Himself can take full advantage of these concepts. And here is the first concept or premise under which we operate in our goal of possessing a Marriage on the Rock.

And by the way, it is hoped our title is clearly understood, Marriage on the Rock, because we all know the meaning of Marriage on the Rocks, the plural, a picture of a ship foundering upon the rocks along the shore and in danger of breaking up.

[8 : 34] That's a clear picture of a marriage in trouble, a marriage that's on the rocks. But the singular is our goal. The Marriage on the Rock means the rock is Jesus Christ and His Word, and the marriage built upon that rock is wonderfully safe and secure.

It may have storms of adversity and be battered about by severe difficulties, but it will survive because the rock, Jesus Christ, is their foundation.

So having clarified that, here is the first concept we wish to explain, and it's found in Matthew 19, where Jesus quoted from the Genesis creation account when He asked His hearers this question, Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female?

Why do you suppose Jesus quoted that? Well, for all the millenniums humanity has existed, the answer appears to have been rather obvious. Procreation seems to have been the divine rationale for creating male and female.

We do not reproduce ourselves from two males or two females. As early as our birds and bees lessons, we are all well aware that both male and female sexual interaction are required to reproduce, and neither is able to contribute what the other does.

[9 : 57] It not only works this way for humans, but applies to other biological life forms as well. The limitations placed upon male and female so that they need each other to reproduce, we would suggest was very deliberate on the part of the Creator.

The coupling of male and female was included in the pronouncement God made calling this arrangement very good. And while it is true, procreation is not the only purpose of there being male and female, but it is also obvious that without it, the interaction of male and female, there is no procreation.

Of course, for those who reject the authority of the Bible, they simply impose their personal preferences upon that which was predesignated by God. And it's the current study, of course, in absurdity, such as is presently controversial with same-sex marriage.

Made to be male and female, part 2. The question Jesus asked His audience in Matthew 19 seems simple enough, and it was.

The question posed was in reference to Genesis 2. Have you not read that He which made them in the beginning made them male and female? Why do you suppose God did that?

[11 : 24] Why didn't He make two males, or two females? Again, the Genesis text records God's expectation and design included the ability to procreate or to reproduce themselves in offspring.

And not only was this male-female arrangement established for humans, it also includes all biological life forms. The male of each species contains certain physiological properties that complement the different physiological properties of the female.

Thus, to reproduce after their own kind, both male and female would be required for this to happen. Nothing has changed. The copulation of male with female of any and all species results in offspring, which, when reaching sufficient maturity, repeat the process between male and female, producing yet another generation.

And in due time, a sizable population is produced all through the same process. This is the biblical and obvious way of understanding how we in this present generation were produced.

And while this process of reproduction is incredibly complex, it also contains an element of straightforward simplicity. Male and female are complementary to each other in a way that male to male or female to female are not.

[12 : 49] For those who reject the creation account given in Genesis and opting for the evolutionary model instead, it leaves them seeing males with males and females with females fully acceptable.

And logically, why not? If an original singular life form could eventually morph into a human from which other humans would eventually arise, then whether they would be male or female is inconsequential to them.

Granted, there would be no procreation of the next generation with males cohabiting with males or females with females, but to them, so what? All that matters is the individuals pair off with the mate of their choice, whether same-sex or opposite-sex.

Logically, there is no good reason why there should not be multiple groupings of same-sexes or mixed-sexes or for limiting the arrangement to only a pair of whatever.

Because with no creator and no divine intentions, no divine goal or plan, indeed, why not? Evolutionists would simply have to view such arrangements as having reached a higher rung of development on the evolutionary ladder.

[14 : 13] We should not be surprised that same-sex marriage to them appears completely logical and, of course, very compassionate on the part of those who legitimize it. But we will not dignify this absurdity by discussing it further because a so-called marriage on the grains of sand is a poor substitute for a marriage on the rock.

Divinely Programmed Sexual Identity Part 1 With the onset of radical feminism of the 1960s, it soon became popular to insist there were no actual differences between femininity and masculinity.

While they had to admit differences that were physical, as in genitalia, etc., yet they insisted all other differences between males and females were in reality due exclusively to cultural conditioning.

Boys were boys, said they, only because they were treated as boys, that is, they were given boy toys to play with. Likewise, girls were given dolls and encouraged in activities traditionally associated with femininity.

This sought to break down or even eliminate perceived differences between the sexes, which were only, after all, perceptions or misperceptions of gender identity.

[15 : 40] In other words, boys and girls were programmed by the culture to be boyish and girlish, but in reality, those differences did not actually exist.

Boys and girls were, according to them, only fulfilling the expectations of the culture which programmed them environmentally to be what the culture deemed appropriate.

And many in academia endorsed the concept, but the general public remained unconvinced. Solid scientific research with no axe to grind eventually gave the lie to the whole concept of gender identity being the result of cultural or environmental programming.

There really are actual and inherent distinctions between males and females, and the differences go far beyond the obvious genitalia.

Masculinity and femininity have differences that are deeply inherent in both. The brains are actually wired differently. There is an unquestionable way of male thinking and perception that differs from the female way of thinking and perceiving.

[16 : 54] Of course, there is some crossover, but in the main, the differences are significant and undeniable. Eventually, it comes down to what one gender seems to lack, the other possesses, and vice versa.

So what might be called a weakness in one was found to be a strength in the other. What seemed to be absent in one appeared present in the other. It was almost as if one was designed to complete the other.

We should not be surprised. Such is precisely what Genesis indicates that God intended all along. This is why it is not good for man to be alone.

He needs what he is missing to make him complete. He needs a her and she needs a him. And combined, they complete each other and together they make little hers and hims.

And the males produce quality qualities the female may be attracted to because she doesn't have them, while she possesses qualities he is attracted to because he doesn't have them.

[18 : 03] It's a physical, psychological, emotional, chemistry thing and it's just the way the creator intended it to be. divinely programmed sexual identity part two.

The considerable differences existing between males and females is intentional as the creation account in Genesis seems to assert. They are not random nor an accident of biology as the evolutionists would portray.

In their differences, both physically and emotionally, they are designed by God to complement each other and each is designed to provide what the other lacks.

In addition, those differences also serve as the basis for attracting one another. Males sense something in the female he doesn't have and vice versa.

This attraction of each to the differences in the other is not coincidental. In effect, the differences arouse an interest in the opposite sex like the honeybee attracted to pollen.

[19 : 13] The desire to possess that object of attraction is powerful and predictable. It's the whole divinely programmed dynamic of boy meets girl, boy loves girl, girl loves boy, they marry, and little boys and girls are produced.

While it all sounds routine and something most adults have experienced, it remains an incredibly complex dynamic, originated by the creator for all his creation.

We humans suspect that no other species enjoys this process like we do. Is there anything more grand or more fulfilling than being in love, loving and being loved, and building a family with the object of your love?

Nothing we know love. And to the best of our knowledge, nothing else provided by the Almighty can compare with it. This male-female togetherness called matrimony appears to be the first institution ordained by God and specifically provided for the first man and woman.

Despite fallen man's attempts to alter that original provision by adding multiple partners in the perversions of polygamy or same-sex marriage, his feeble attempts to improve upon God's original plan are a colossal failure.

[20 : 38] But now we inject a troublesome issue. Sometimes all is not well in the dreamland of marriage. The ecstasy is gone.

The marriage intended to be on the rock isn't. And while there may be multiple reasons for the disharmony that has arisen, and usually are, it is sometimes due to this very thing we are considering, namely those built-in differences of masculinity and femininity.

What each partner once viewed as attractive in their differences, they may now come to view those as an ongoing irritation, or worse, downright intolerable.

What do we mean? We refer to those clearly different ways that men think from the ways women think. There is a male and a female mindset, you know.

They simply have a different apparatus for thinking and evaluating. And a failure to appreciate these distinctions often places them on a collision course, and then, all is not well in dreamland.

[21 : 44] This scene needs changing. Let's explore this further. Upcoming. What's Wrong With My Mate?

Make no mistake about it, there is definitely a guy way of thinking and a girl way of thinking about almost everything. This is because God equipped the male with the masculine spirit and the female with the feminine spirit.

And what is more, he did it on purpose. This was so each would bring to the marriage something they had that their mate lacked. And when these diverse spirits came together, a completion occurred, making the two different parts into one whole entity, called a marriage.

Ideally, each partner is intrigued, understanding, patient, and appreciative of those differences possessed by their mate. And that's as it should be.

It's a healthy attitude that will add depth and richness to their relationship, making it better and better as the years go by. It's a marriage on the rock.

[22 : 55] However, if on the part of either mate or both, the flesh, which we warned about in the very first CD of Marriage on the Rock, gets in the way, the appreciation for your mate's differences can quickly morph into aggravation.

Boiled down, it comes to this. Why doesn't my mate see things as I do? How can she possibly think like that? Or, what's wrong with her anyway?

Anyone who is thinking at all should be able to see the logic in this. Or, are all men like this? How can he be so blind? The seeds of dissatisfaction have been sown.

The differences we once thought were so charming and intriguing have grown into, well, a real pain. So, what remedy would you propose? Too many think.

The remedy is, my mate needs to think like I think, and when they start seeing things as I do, then they will be right like me, and everything will be fine. So, my job is to convert them from their way of thinking to my way of thinking, and peace and harmony will prevail, my mate will see the error of their way, and my clearly preferable way of seeing things will save the day.

[24 : 18] Oh, boy. And what if your mate isn't at all cooperative with your little conversion project? He or she may not take kindly to your attempted makeover, and instead of a cave-in and a cooperative spirit, they may engage in a vigorous pushback, not coming along quietly.

Those seeds of dissatisfaction begin to sprout into full flower. Clearly, the makeover specialist, whichever one it might be, has grown weary with what they once thought to be interesting differences in their mate, to actually becoming an obstacle toward what they want the marriage to be.

And it's all a predictable path we see the flesh take that derails so many marriages, and if not derailed, the relationship just sits on a side track going nowhere, and no one is having any fun.

Life is surely too short to spend it this way. We need to get on the main track and start making positive progress. The marriage on the rock is needed in its upcoming.

Marriage is mainly spiritual. Because God has created masculinity to think and operate in a certain way, and because he has created femininity to think and operate in a certain but different way, the first thing each sex has to do is recognize the legitimacy of the other simply because God made them that way.

[25 : 54] And God made them that way because that was the way he wanted them. Don't fight it, and don't even settle for merely accepting it. Instead, affirm it.

After all, God's plan, being God's plan, is not even subject to being improved upon. It's already all that needs to be, simply because of the one who originated it.

Consequently, thanksgiving and appreciation for your mate's opposite sexuality and emotional psychological makeup should be your continuing response.

This attitude in itself will greatly aid the couple to enjoy an ongoing harmony in their marriage. Of course, as mentioned earlier, if either the husband or wife infuses their legitimate gender with the illegitimate negativity and nastiness of the flesh, their gender, whether male or female, can get ugly.

And this usually results in resentment on the part of their mate, sometimes causing the flesh to arise in their attitude and actions. And this is the basis for all conflict in a marriage.

[27 : 07] We say, all conflict. Not some, but all. So you see again why we insist marriage is mainly spiritual. And this scenario demonstrates it time and time again.

Functioning from the flesh is a spiritual problem, and its only solution is also spiritual. You may benefit at this point from reviewing the content of Volume 1 of Marriage on the Rock in which we explain the concepts of flesh and spirit.

Also, by functioning in the spirit as opposed to the flesh, can the Christian couple avoid all the pitfalls and potential conflicts that can arise in a marriage.

This spiritual principle is merely a gracious provision of God for every couple married as believers, and it's a critical part of the redemptive package Christ paid for in his death upon the cross.

It was Christ dying for our sin as our substitute that is presented to us in the gospel. And our embracing of that truth results not only in our personal salvation, but also in our being made a new creation in Christ.

[28 : 17] And this provides the basis or dynamic for our behavior in attitude and action toward God and our fellow man, and especially toward our marriage partner.

Here is where the potential for a marriage on the rock originates. It contains the potential and the God-given capability for a godly attitude and actions toward our mate that are reflective of the spirit of God as opposed to the flesh of our fallen personhood.

All of this merely returns us to our original declaration that marriage is mainly spiritual. This understanding will enable you to rejoice in your mate being different from you in their thinking and perceptions.

Differences in decision-making We are considering the vital distinctions God built into the male and female in their original creation.

The differences were deliberately constructed, not only in their physical anatomy, but in their thinking, emotional, and psychological capacities as well. And while these differences were no doubt affected by the fall, as were other aspects of our being, they largely remain intact so that, no doubt about it, men are men and women are women.

[29 : 43] Under normal circumstances, both are grateful that they are, and both relate to each other in their marriage relationship with these legitimate distinctions in mind.

If conflict arises, as it usually does in all relationships, very often it's based on their not agreeing on some particular issue. And if you look closely, you will likely see that most men would see a certain issue in one way, while most women would see it in another.

There are, of course, exceptions, but in the main, this is the usual scenario. So which one is right? Therein often lies the error in the thinking of both.

It's erroneous because, unless there is some moral aspect involved that is black and white, neither is right or wrong, just different. Different because men tend to think one way and women another.

And there's nothing wrong in that. So each must resist referring to their position as the right one, and their mates as the wrong one. So then, how the two arrive at one decision is very critical, and can provide an acid test for the quality of their marriage.

[31 : 01] Very often, the partner with a stronger personality, or the most vocal, or who can be manipulative, gets their way. And this is not good, because it often leaves the other with feelings of resentment.

After all, who wants to feel they were manipulated, or talked down, or verbally overwhelmed by their articulative partner? This also sets the scene for a winner and a loser.

And who wants to be the loser? And is there some perverse satisfaction in being able to inwardly gloat over getting your own way? Because if there is, the flesh is reigning supreme.

An ugly reality for sure. But with each mate remembering the other's different opinion is just as legitimate as theirs, then the need to come together out of mutual respect and make their best case for the position they hold is valid.

Open-mindedness is critical, because an open mind can be persuaded and changed, while a closed one can't. Both need an open mind to the male or female mind of their mate and honestly respect it, even if they don't necessarily agree with it.

[32 : 20] If attitudes are right and the spirit rather than the flesh is operative, one of the two can be persuaded without feeling resentment toward their partner having persuaded them.

Rather, they will sense that the best decision is being made, and there is no loser, but both are winners. Marriage can be misery or ecstasy.

Having briefly touched on the issue of masculinity and femininity, and their God-given legitimate differences, this may be the right time to talk of their respective roles in the marriage.

These are as much ordained by God as are the differences in gender. Scripture makes it clear as to who is to be what. But, like every other provision God has made, man has devised a way to corrupt or distort it.

Often he calls it an improvement. And it is no different for marriage. The corruption extends all the way from a strict male-dominated marriage, where the wife has virtually no say in anything, as is found in some Muslim marriages and even some so-called Christian marriages, to that of whichever mate talks the loudest and longest.

[33 : 43] Neither is a marriage on the rock, neither finds both mates happy, but one or both invariably miserable, and neither is honoring to the God who ordained marriage.

In fact, God ordained this incredible arrangement of matrimony so that both could enjoy the blissfulness every union of Christians has the potential to realize.

And if it isn't being realized, it isn't God's fault. It has to be due to one or both partners not fulfilling their God-given role for their marriage, and it's almost always both.

This is because, while the disharmony may begin with just one mate not fulfilling their role, in their failure, they impact their mate in a negative way that leads them to react by their not fulfilling their role.

Life is entirely too short, and God's provision for marriage is too wonderful to spend it in such a wretched kind of misery as this. And yes, misery is the very apt word, considering it's the opposite of ecstasy, which was that intended by the Almighty.

[35 : 00] So, how to move from misery to ecstasy is what we're after. It's common for those in misery to believe ecstasy is unattainable and out of the question, but it isn't.

In fact, God even intended ecstasy to be the norm, not an exception. But please be reminded that this is all conditional upon both mates having committed themselves to those critical prerequisites for pursuing a marriage on the rock, expressed in Volume 1 of this series.

Please review it if you need a reminder. We reiterate the claim that the kind of marriage God intends, and has already provided the basis for, is well within the reach of any husband and wife who are joined to Christ by faith in Him.

The only obstacle that may prevent them from having that marriage is the flesh, on the part of one or both of those mates. This is why we insist that the essence of marriage is spiritual, and only a spiritual solution will suffice for any marriage that is not what it should be and could be.

Before going any further, please discuss this together. It's supercritical. In Subjection to One Another, Part 1 The previous segment spoke of the God-ordained roles that are specified for the husband and wife in the Christian marriage.

[36 : 34] Actually, they are wise for non-Christians as well, but it isn't easy for unsaved people to see the value in what the Bible sets forth. Most non-Christians are convinced they have better ideas, and there are also Christians, or at least professing Christians, who also think they have better ideas as to how a marriage should be conducted.

And whether Christian or non-Christian, throwing over the directives God has provided, there is no way a marriage can reach its potential for great joy and satisfaction.

So let's now begin with a detailed investigation of what those divine directives are. And there is no more definitive place we can consult than the essential description given of marriage in Ephesians chapter 5.

You'll find it helpful, if you have a Bible nearby, to consult the text for yourself. This is from the New American Standard Bible, but any translation will be just fine and the differences will be negligible.

Our first look is at chapter 5 and verse 21. The Apostle Paul, inspired by God to pen these words, lays down understandable terms. Some of these same thoughts are also in Colossians 3.

[37 : 53] And, by the way, if you hear something you do not agree with that goes against modern-day ideas, please resist the temptation to be turned off and stop the series.

You may have that reaction, but if you will just give the content a full hearing and get the rest of the story, you may well reverse your first opinion.

So, here we go. Chapter 5, verse 21. The text says, We are to be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. What precisely does it mean to be subject to one another?

Paul is telling the entire congregation of the church at Ephesus that they are to be subject to one another in that assembly. Remember now, this is not a directive for the world at large, but he is addressing only those who are Christians, because this describes a standard of behavior that is beyond non-Christians, but certainly not beyond true believers, and is, in fact, required of them.

To be subject to one another means to treat each other with deference and kindness. We are to have a high regard for other persons, their needs, and their opinions, whether or not we actually agree with them.

[39 : 15] It means we owe each other our kindness and consideration. He goes on to say, This is based on our fear of Christ, or out of respect for Christ, when we claim him to be our head.

Our love and respect for Christ is such that we fear we will disappoint him if we do less than what he says. If we give Christ the proper place in our life, we will be subject to one another.

Pushing, shoving, and demanding will not be among us if we are subject one to another as we ought to be. In Subjection to One Another Part 2 Our consideration of the respective roles God has given to husband and wife continues in Ephesians 5.

And here we read that all believers are to be subject to one another. This means we treat others with respect, kindness, and consideration. It reminds us also of Philipians chapter 2, which urges the believers to look not merely on their own best interests, but also for the interest and welfare of others.

It's nothing more than manifesting the kind of attitude Christ himself had for others. Then, in Ephesians 5, a practical example of what he means is given when he uses the wife as illustrative of this subjection one to another.

[40 : 48] He says in verse 22, Wives, be subject to your own husbands as to the Lord. And then the very next verse tells why she is to do this. It's because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is also the head of the church.

While this is very straightforward that wives are to be in subjection to their husbands, it is often overlooked that we are all to be subject one to another.

Yet, if it's the wife who is to be in subjection to her husband, how can the husband be in subjection to his wife? But we have seen in verse 21 that all are to be subject to one another.

Clearly, the intent and larger picture is in the mutuality of it. They are all supposed to be subject to each other, including wives to husbands and husbands to wives.

She is to be subject to her husband because of his God-given role of headship. He is to be subject to his wife by loving her as Christ loved the church. He is definitely being subject to his wife when he loves her sacrificially, as Christ loved the church.

[42 : 01] There is no way he can do that without subjecting himself to her and her needs. Thus, husbands and wives are to engage in a mutual kind of subjection to each other, in addition to their subjecting themselves to others in the church.

When this kind of attitude is expressed in marriages and in the congregation, proper respect for Jesus Christ is shown in a most dramatic way.

And in Christian marriages and congregations, this is intended to be the norm. In doing this, we can scarcely imagine the profound and positive impact this behavior would have upon a chaotic and hurting world.

And it would all be due to nothing more than Christians simply being and doing what we are supposed to be and do. If the marriages in a church are what they should be, the church will be what it should be.

And such is God's intended dynamic for reaching the world around us. This all points to the presence of a servant's heart, because that's part of a submissive spirit.

[43 : 10] We become servants one of another. Again, reflecting Christ who came not to be served, but to serve. Husbands and wives are to do likewise and influence the church to follow.

It is the stuff that makes a marriage on the rock. And it will put the church on the rock also. Why is the male the head?

This is a very pertinent question, especially for today with the big push toward egalitarianism in marriage. Moderns ask the question, who says the husband is to be the head of the marriage?

What makes him so special? And doesn't that relegate the wife to an inferior status? Absolutely not. And if the marriage is conducted by the Ephesians 5 principle God has set forth, she will never feel inferior to her husband, nor will he regard her as such.

The origin of male headship apparently stems from the order of primogenitor. Adam, having been created first, assumes headship back in Genesis 3.

[44 : 24] The roles could have been reversed and Eve could have been created first, but that's not the way it was. Headship involves leadership. And why this matters so much is because marriage establishes an agenda for the union, including goals and methodology, and these all involve decision-making.

Who ultimately in the marriage makes these decisions? Ideally, which is what we will strive for in our Marriage on the Rock series, both make the decision.

Remember what marriage is about more than anything else, is togetherness. When agreement is in place regarding decisions to be made, all is well and harmony prevails.

But that agreement is not always realized because both husband and wife may have very strong positions about a given issue. And each person's position is held sincerely and firmly.

So what to do? What to do? If it's a situation that doesn't require an immediate decision, then delay making the decision, because time can be a wonderful mind-changer for the husband or the wife.

[45 : 37] As they pray about the issue and respect each other's positions, even though they may not agree with it, God may be pleased to lay something on the heart of one that wasn't there before, and they may in fact come over to the position of their mate, and their togetherness is maintained.

And that's a beautiful thing. This is, of course, the ideal. However, there are situations that arise which may require a time-sensitive decision.

For instance, hubby comes home from work and tells his wife he has been offered a new position with a substantial raise and benefits. They will have to relocate three states away.

The problem is, he has to give his boss an answer on Monday morning, and if he doesn't take it, the job will go to someone else. He is excited at the new challenge and opportunity.

In fact, it's the kind of thing he has been working for for the last five years. He can think of a dozen reasons why he should jump at the chance, but she has a dozen reasons why he should not.

[46 : 42] She is thinking like a woman, a wife, and a mother. He is thinking like a man, a husband, and a father. And these can be very different.

What to do, what to do. Is this where the biblical principle of headship comes into play? Indeed it is. So, let's continue and pursue this dilemma upcoming.

Why the Husband is the Head, Part 2 It is deeply saddening to realize that so many marriages, sometimes even involving Christians, have such an unhappy union.

Saddening, especially when one realizes God has provided everything they need for a euphoric relationship. Most marriages that are in this sad position engage in verbal combat on a daily basis.

Their marriage is one huge ongoing power struggle. Neither are close to happy. Neither dream their marriage would be like this. Their kids are upset over the constant bickering and threats going back and forth.

[47 : 54] Why in the world anyone would settle for this marriage when they could have a marriage on a rock? We will never know. Isn't life too short for this kind of pain? Is there any way out?

Any way we can change this? Of course there is, if you will simply remember those critical two commitments we spoke of in Volume 1 on Marriage on a Rock. Remember?

A serious recommitment to your mate like you made when you were married, and a serious recommitment to God, His Word, and the principles therein. The biblical position of the husband's headship is, to many today, particularly feminists, simply anathema.

They see male headship only as controlling, dominating, and even as a form of bullying. And there can be no doubt about it, this is how some marriages are conducted.

We hasten to add that such an arrangement is a far cry from the biblical concept of headship. The husband is not a boss. He does not go around barking orders at which the wife trembles to obey.

[49 : 07] Yet through the centuries, there have been groups, yes, even some church groups, that teach not merely male headship, but absolute supremacy and dominance over the wife.

No doubt they derive this idea from the way the church is to be subservient to Christ, and after all, the husband is the stand-in for Christ in the marriage, as the wife is the stand-in for the church.

And we concur with that. But we cannot interpret this concept of headship without including the role of the husband to be the sacrificial lover of the wife, as Christ was of the church.

The entire picture must be considered here in Ephesians 5. After all, Christ is not the boss, the dominator, and certainly not a bully to the church.

He is the loving, self-giving head who willingly surrendered his own best interests to meet the needs of his beloved. Thus, our motive for obeying him is to be born out of a deep love and appreciation for what he has done for us.

[50 : 13] This is the picture of biblical headship that Christ wants for all married believers. Is this your arrangement? Would your mate agree or disagree? Can you discuss this concept without fear of anger, accusations, or retaliation of some kind from your mate?

This is really important stuff. Hanging in the balance may be a marriage on the rock, or perhaps the marriage itself. Are you up to this? Both of you.

I hope so. The payoff is enormous. Why the husband is the head, part 3.

Here is the husband and wife facing a very difficult decision, as expressed on a previous segment of Marriage on the Rock. They are poles apart on what they think should be done.

A decision must be reached over this weekend. Can it be done so that both will feel good about the decision? Maybe. Maybe not. But we do have some important things to consider.

[51 : 19] First of all, both should pray together and also pray separately, that God might clear the way and make the decision obvious. Sometimes, decisions have a way of being made for us.

And children must be considered as well, because the decision that is made will impact every member of the family. We would also recommend a simple exercise that can greatly aid in the final decision.

And here it is. Husband and wife plan a time when they will not be distracted. Take paper and pen. And by the way, this is absolutely essential.

Critically important. It has to be written down. Just talking about it is not sufficient. These things must be put down on paper. And then draw a vertical line down the middle of the page.

In the left-hand column, the husband can list all of the reasons why he thinks he should take the position, accept the promotion, and move.

[52 : 26] In the right-hand column, the wife can do the same thing as to why she thinks he should not take the promotion, and move the family. Naturally, he will tend to fill the left column, and she will fill the right.

As you list these items in both columns, you calmly, that is, calmly, make your case for each item. My guess is that both sides may fill up rather quickly, so there's always more paper.

As each partner makes their best case, it is entirely possible that one may be won over by the other.

Because there is something about seeing things in writing, putting them on paper, that can have a clarifying effect on the mind.

This may well be one of the most important things you do in making tough decisions when there is honest disagreement. And if either husband or wife wins their mate over to their position, then you both win.

[53 : 34] There is that togetherness that is so essential for a marriage on the rock. And there is certainly no cause for secretly gloating because one won out over the other.

But if after all of the discussion, you still have reached no agreement, then fast forward the scene to Sunday evening. Both lists have been thoroughly discussed.

Crunch time is 9 a.m. Monday morning. Who makes the final decision? The husband. It's his call, and this is the reason God established headship in the marriage.

Every institution, including marriage, must have a head. The husband is that head. But what about the what-ifs? That too, upcoming. The What Ifs Part 1 Suppose a wife is prepared for her husband to make the final call in an important decision.

In fact, even urges him to do so. But what if he is a notorious procrastinator, just can't seem to bring himself to a decision?

[54 : 50] What then? Well, in the case of a time crunch, he will have to get over that pronto. His boss will not be satisfied with his inability to make a decision come Monday morning.

In decision-type venues where the husband in his headship just can't get off the dime, he can utilize his executive headship authority to, you guessed it, delegate.

Delegate. Delegate the decision to whom? To none other than his wife, the very person with whom he may be in disagreement.

But doesn't that mean she is usurping his authority as head if she makes the call? No. No. She is not usurping his authority if he willingly delegates her to make the decision.

He is merely transferring authority to her, and he remains in charge of the overall decision, although she makes it. But then, isn't she likely to decide on what she thinks is right rather than what he thought?

[55 : 58] Yes, of course she is. And he has given her permission to do so. But if she is a woman of integrity and not merely a manipulator, she will think very soberly about her decision.

Very soberly. This also means, of course, the husband has absolutely no basis for complaint or criticism over the decision she has made.

And his good-faith delegation to her for making the decision must not contain the condition, Honey, I'll ask you to make the call.

But you'd better make the call I want, or I'll overrule you. That's cheap game-playing. Double talk. Here's what if.

Number two. What if the husband, when exercising his role as head in the past, has made bad decisions that turned out poorly? And what husbands haven't?

[57 : 02] God doesn't remove his mantle of headship from the husband because of bad past decisions. We all learn from bad past decisions, and some of us are slower learners than others.

The slowest learners sometimes turn out to be the best learners. They more readily recall the pain and consequences of bad decisions. They reflect upon the difficulty their bad call had, not only upon them, but upon their mate and others impacted by it.

The art of making good decisions is often learned by making bad decisions. Someone has said, Failure is the back door to success.

The husband remains the head because God says so, and the job isn't his because he always makes the right decisions. It's his because that's the position in which God has placed him.

The husband is the head. What ifs, part two.

[58 : 09] We are considering the making of important decisions and how they are arrived at when husband and wife are in disagreement. The headship God has placed in the husband is supposed to prevail.

Yet there are concerns we are calling the what ifs that come into play that may make the wife question whether the husband should have the authority to make that decision.

What if number three goes like this. What if the wife is formally better educated and clearly the smarter of the two, and is even acknowledged by the husband to be of superior intellect?

Then should she not be the one to make the decision? No, she should not. She should not because her education and intellectual prowess, while a definite asset, is not the criteria for family decision-making.

The responsibility of headship remains vested in the husband because that's the way God established it. Lots of men have married a woman who intellectually was superior to them.

[59 : 18] Yours truly married two different women over a period of fifty-four years, and both of them outstripped me in different areas of wisdom and intellect. Yet, neither challenged the male headship with which God endowed me.

Lots of men have married women who are smarter than they, but they do not forfeit their role of headship in the marriage, nor does the intellectually advanced wife somehow become entitled to displace the husband in the role of headship.

It is what it is, because this is the way God established it. If circumstances were to arise where the original plan were to be overridden or displaced, God would have been very capable of revealing them, but he has not.

Happy the husband and wife who understand and concur with the divine order and provision of male headship. When male headship is exercised as God intended, that is, with the male loving his wife sacrificially as he should, his wife will not be resentful nor feel put down by her husband.

To the contrary, she will derive a sense of relaxation and security from the knowledge that the man who loves her sacrificially is in charge of their union.

[60 : 38] The husband, solemnly aware of his God-given position and responsibility, will give prayerful and due diligence to the carrying out of his headship responsibilities, never seeking to lord it over his wife that she is to be in subjection to him.

If her subjection has to be demanded by him, something is drastically wrong with him and how he conducts his headship responsibilities, or with her and a spirit that is rebellious and resentful to the order God has established.

In both cases, the root problem lies in the spiritual realm. One more reason why we persist in saying, the essence of the marriage relationship is more than anything else, spiritual at its very base.

Please, don't lose sight of that. It's critical. The Biblical Meaning of a Wife's Subjection, Part 1 It is with considerable amusement and amazement that radical feminists criticize the Apostle Paul and accuse him of being a woman-hater.

However in the world they could possibly make such an unfounded accusation is beyond us. We can only surmise their charge has far more to do with wanting to support their point rather than having actually looked at the Scriptures, which if they had, they would have certainly had problems with their position of Paul being a woman-hater.

[62 : 23] Especially is this true when considering, even briefly, his statement in Ephesians 5, which I call Paul's Bombshell. And precisely, what was that bombshell?

It was the previously unheard of, unthought-of, unimaginable command to Christian men that they loved their wife in the same way that Jesus Christ loved the church.

And how was it that Christ loved the church? He gave himself for the church. He willingly sacrificed himself for the church because it was in the best interest of the church that he do so.

That, and nothing less than that, is how we who are husbands are to love, care for, and cherish our wife. Could any husband who does that possibly be guilty of being a woman-hater?

And as the Ephesian text explains, it is this kind of love from the husband that the wife is to respond to with her willing submission to his God-given authority of headship.

[63 : 34] How could a wife possibly resent or rebel against her husband who loves her in this sacrificial manner? How could she submit to his authority as her God-given head with a begrudging attitude?

In the role of male headship, God has designed the man to be the initiator and the woman to be the responder. And while it is true that many women do not respond to their husbands in the way the husband would like, he should stop and honestly ask himself whether her undesirable response might not be due to his undesirable initiations.

As the head of the union, it is the husband who is to take the lead by initiating the proper attitude and actions that will prompt her to respond with the right attitude and action on her part.

Our treatment of each other creates a predictable response from the other. So, why does the husband have to have the responsibility of initiating? Because that's part of what headship and leadership does.

It is part of the husband's job description. Headship involves more than simply being in charge. It involves additional responsibility, thoughtfulness, planning and provision.

[64 : 54] And any husband who thinks headship merely means giving orders is far off the mark of true headship. That will not evoke a positive response from a grateful wife, but it will evoke resentment from an underserved wife.

And that's a far cry from loving one's wife as Christ loved the church. The Biblical Meaning of a Wife's Subjection Part 2 The concept certainly doesn't sound very edifying or desirable, but in consideration of the world's history, it's probably very accurate.

We're speaking of the term the battle of the sexes. It's male against female, them against us. Who's going to wear the pants?

Who makes the calls in a marriage? No doubt culture has much to do with this, and we all know of cultures in our present day where women are in an unquestionably inferior status.

And in that given culture, it is often accepted without question. Where, how, and why did this male and female tension begin? How did males gain the ascendancy over females?

[66 : 10] Even here in the USA, women were denied the opportunity to vote, along with a host of other limitations, solely because of their gender. And it really wasn't all that long ago.

We need to know the basis for this power struggle, that it is as old as man himself, or we should say as old as man and woman themselves. There was no power struggle until there was competition for the power, and that never occurred till Eve came on the scene.

Apparently, Adam had no competition for authority from many of the animals, but once this new creature called woman arrived on the scene, let the struggle begin.

And began it did. The record reveals it here in Genesis 3, so let's look at the text. God tells Eve that she will, in pain, bring forth children.

Yet, your desire shall be for your husband. Many interpret this to mean that despite the fact that a pregnancy will result in significant pain as she gives birth, nonetheless, she will still have a desire for her husband physically and emotionally.

[67 : 23] She still wants her husband, even though in desiring him, pregnancy and pain are the guaranteed consequences. Well, we can't deny the truth of this, at least in part.

But that doesn't explain what the context states as a kind of overall consequence found in verse 16, at the end with, and he, that is the husband, shall rule over you.

This makes it sound almost like a conclusion, the upshot of which is, and he shall rule over you. One almost gets the impression that this is a bottom-line reality, set in stone and continuing in perpetuity, even to this very day.

So, while we do not deny the reality of the first interpretation mentioned about the physical and sexual desire the woman has for the man, even though she knows it will involve pain and childbirth, we are persuaded that something even simpler and more fundamental is actually involved.

And it is with this interpretation that the oft-called battle of the sexes has originated and continues to be perpetuated around the world to this present day.

[68 : 32] In upcoming segments, we will explain the dynamics involved and we believe the struggle of males with females will become one of great clarity. We also will lead you, I trust, to see the utterly new paradigm for marriage provided for in biblical Christianity and in a marriage on the rock.

Thank you. The Biblical Meaning of a Wife's Subjection Part 3 Our brief consideration of Genesis 3 continues, and please don't allow the brevity of it to cloud its importance.

We cannot overemphasize this, because only in understanding what happened in Genesis 3 can you make any sense of the way the world is today. In fact, apart from appropriating this content of Genesis 3, not much of anything makes sense, but once you grasp the implications of it, a lot of things begin to fall into place.

Here is where the so-called battle of the sexes originated. You are aware, aren't you, that this conflict between male and female is alive and well?

The world, of course, doesn't know what to make of it or how to handle it, because the world is either ignorant of Genesis 3 or accords it little, if any, authority, usually assigning it to nothing but mere mythology.

[69 : 59] Let's look at the text. God tells Eve that she will, in pain, bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband. These statements, or curses, if you will, were given by God as a result of their disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit.

God earlier warned them if they ate, they would die. When they partook, they each became something different than God had created them. After all, Adam and Eve were part of what God earlier described as very good, but now God can no longer say that about them because they had taken upon themselves, by their disobedience, a new kind of disposition, a contamination, if you will, a kind of moral and spiritual infection called sin that would not only qualify them for physical illness, but ultimately physical death and spiritual death.

In addition, one of several differences produced in the psyche or personhood of Adam and Eve was an extreme self-centeredness.

Each became self-seeking and self-serving in a way they had not experienced before. Each had become all about me.

The only question was which of the two would prevail? Which would be able to pursue their agenda as opposed to the others? The power struggle became an ingrained ongoing reality.

[71 : 38] This means, in her self-centeredness, Eve would seek to dominate and control her husband, while Adam, in his self-centeredness, was seeking the same control over Eve.

Her desire to control her husband would not succeed because he was destined to rule over her. This ruling or dominance is quite literal in various parts of the world, even to the extent of virtual enslavement of women in some cultures.

This is so important we dare not treat it superficially, but additional consideration must be given it. Far-reaching implications continue to be realized today, all from what began so long ago.

We will pursue this. You've been listening to Marriage on the Rock. A preview of Volume 9 Upcoming on Marriage on the Rock By no manner of means have we concluded this very strategic explanation of the age-old conflict between the sexes.

While it is obvious that some working arrangements between them have been arrived at, even as marriage and all cultures proves, yet the undeniable struggle continues between them.

[73 : 09] At times and in some cultures the inequality between the sexes is minimal, while in certain others it is even downright appalling. Apart from the biblical mandate for marriage as set forth in the New Testament, the roles of masculinity and femininity are left almost exclusively to cultural demands.

For the Christian marriage, a whole new paradigm is put in place in the New Testament that radically updates that which existed during Old Testament times.

It is here that femininity is accorded an elevation heretofore unknown. Yet, despite her elevation, woman is charged with the responsibility of being in subjection to her husband rather than seeking to dominate him as her old Adamic nature would require.

How this is to be carried out by the husband and the wife in a manner that enables both to achieve their highest ends will be pursued on Volume 9 of Marriage on the Rock upcoming.

Really valuable insights await those who join us. We sincerely hope you will be among them. This is Pastor Marv Wiseman thanking you so very much for being with us.