

### I. Introduction

A. Years ago, my wife and I were arguing over something inconsequential

1. I know that because that's the only kind of thing we argue about!

a. I made a point with solid reasoning and sound logic... as usual  
(*"What do you get if you win this argument, besides a very unhappy wife?"*)

b. She was right, as usual; I didn't learn from the experience, as usual

c. Before long, we were arguing over something else inconsequential

2. Have you ever been in argument it seems like déjà vu all over again?

a. Families tend to have same argument over-n-over... like on tape

b. Someone left their dirty dishes on table & didn't take them to sink

1) You thought you'd finished the dishes, but there they are

2) You say something, they say something, the tone changes

c. Before long it's not about dishes; it's about the Garden of Eden

B. We covered this in small group (*should be forced to go group, if want to*)

1. When sin entered into the world, there were dire consequences

a. Major consequence was death... that's pretty serious (**Gen 3:19b**)

b. Dust to which he'd return would fight Adam in life (**Gen 3:17-18**)

c. Eve had her own consequences that made life a pain (**Gen 3:16**)

2. World was broken by sin, and we still suffer from that brokenness

a. Don't blame Adam and Eve for that; we have all been complicit

1) We repeat the fateful choice in Eden with some forbidden fruit

2) Like Adam/Eve; we all fail to cover our nakedness before God

b. Curse for Eve was not just labor (*only first pain in being a mother*)

c. She'd would long for the same relationship with Adam from Eden

1) There'd been a disruption in the force of "*bone of my bone...*"

2) Adam got the weeds; Eve got a power struggle in her marriage

d. Our continuing marriage issues are the residue of that first sin

3. Lynn asked, "*What do you win...*" I don't win; the old snake does!

C. We continue our series God @ Home; we'll look today at Ephesians 5

## II. The Head of the House

- A. In **Eph 4-6**, Paul fleshes out what it means to live our calling (**4:1**)
1. He starts, interesting enough, with calling us to unity (**4:2-3**)
    - a. If we'd live that constantly and consistently, we could stop there
    - b. Paul doesn't stop; he explains what it means to live worthy of call
      - 1) He starts with generalities; put off the old and put on the new
      - 2) He's specific: don't lie, get mad, steal, be profane or get drunk
  2. In that same context, we will speak to husbands, wives, parents, kids
    - a. This isn't unique to Paul; ancients often articulated *household code*
    - b. Aristotle's household code sounds familiar (Ian Paul summarizes)
      - 1) Men are to rule over women because of the nature of things
      - 2) Men rule over women is like that parent/child or master/slave
      - 3) Man's rule over women is the result of his basic superiority
    - c. Many Christians see Paul singing from same sheet of music here
  3. One of my favorite shows is *The Crown*, story of Queen Elizabeth II
    - a. One of the story arcs in the first season was her wedding to Phillip
      - 1) She struggled with her wedding vows, "*Love, honor and obey*"
      - 2) How could she vow to "obey" Prince Phillip and be a queen?
      - 3) Recurring bit, "*But your my wife!*" "*And also your queen*"
    - b. Paul tells wives to submit to husbands; he never tells them to obey
    - c. Children & slaves obey; wives choose to submit (*so do husbands*)
  4. His household code for husband and wife assumes equality **Gal 2:28**
- B. Paul's household code begins with our text (**Read: Ephesians 5:21-24**)
1. Paul begins with "*submit to one another out of reverence for Christ*"
    - a. We'll see this whole text is based on idea of mutual submission
    - b. It's also controlled by the idea that we submit first to Christ
  2. Many of us (men) want to go straight to "*husband is head of wife*"
    - a. We'll get there, but understand first—the only boss here is Christ
    - b. The brother I mentioned last week was all over idea of being head
    - c. He was trying to be the head/boss without first submitting to Christ

C. At the risk of getting a bit tedious, let's look at grammar (*not grandma*)

1. **First**, we have to keep submission within its grammatical context
  - a. Main command in this section is “*be filled with Spirit*” (**Eph 5:18**)
  - b. What follows is a series of participles that modify the command (*Participle is verb used as modifier, like “smoking jacket” or “smoking hot”*)
    - 1) Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns & spiritual songs
    - 2) Singing and making music from your heart to the Lord
    - 3) Giving thanks to God the Father for everything
    - 4) Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ
  - c. All of those things modify what it means to be filled with the Spirit
    - 1) “*Submitting to one*” sounds a lot like “*speaking to one another*”
      - a) But then, we all know that it's easier to sing than to submit to others
      - b) We like Sinatra (“*My Way*”) better than Bill Withers (“*Lean on Me*”)
    - 2) Submission is what happens when we are filled with the Spirit
    - 3) We are ALL supposed to submit to each other, not just wives
2. **Second**, command to wives to submit flows from mutual submission
  - a. The verb “*submit*” does appear in **5:21**, “*submit to one another*”
  - b. It doesn't appear at all in **5:22**; it is implied from use in **5:21**
    - 1) So a literal translation of what Paul says in **Ephesians 5:21-22**  
*being subject to one another out of reverence for Christ—  
wives to their own husbands as to the Lord*
    - 2) Submitting must be seen in context of mutual submission

D. So HOW is the husband head of the wife? *Just Christ is head of church*

1. But isn't Christ the boss? Yes, but that's NOT the force of “*head*”
  - a. What does “*head*” mean in **Col 1:17-18**? *Holds body together*
  - b. That exactly what “*head*” means later in Colossians (**2:19**)
  - c. That is basically what Paul has in mind in **Ephesians 4:15-16**
2. Christ is the church's boss, but he is also the source (“*headwater*”)
  - a. The husband being “*head*” is not the same as “*head honcho*”
  - b. Ladies, it's also not same as “*head has a neck that turns it...*”
3. Marriage must be less competition and more “*the two become one*”

### III. Conclusion

- A. I was taught that being head meant that I was responsible for decisions
  - 1. Sure, we would discuss everything and make all decisions together
    - a. But in the case of an impasse, then I was responsible for deciding
    - b. That's what I thought being head meant— a recipe for selfishness
      - 1) That sounds like, “OK, we'll compromise and do what I want”
      - 2) T-shirt at Goodwill, “Let's save time and assume I'm right”
  - 2. There is nothing in the Bible about husbands making final decision
    - a. The only text I'm aware of decision-making is mutual decision
    - b. Here, the husband CANNOT decide without wife (**1 Cor 7:5**)
  - 3. I think this is the model for all marital decisions—joint agreement
- B. William Harley (*Love Busters*) call this “*enthusiastic joint agreement*”
  - 1. Lynn and I have always operated this way; Harley gave us a term *Never do anything without an enthusiastic joint agreement with spouse*
    - a. Every decision is to be made jointly between husband and wife
    - b. This requires total honesty and transparency (nothing hidden)
    - c. It requires I not see spouse as way/impediment to get my way
  - 2. Here's how it works; every decision is discussed by the spouses
    - a. No decision is “Yes” until both parties agree enthusiastically
    - b. But what if you can't agree? You've already agreed—it's no
      - 1) If one party give in, then it must be an enthusiastic “Yes”
      - 2) If it doesn't work, can't say, “It's your fault.” Joint agreement
      - 3) Once the decision is agreed upon, then it is owned by both
    - c. There's no boss, but a team; there's no manipulation, but teamwork
  - 3. Do still we have power struggles? Of course, we're still people!
    - a. Power-struggle doesn't come mistaken notion that's I'm the boss
    - b. I can't selfishly demand to get my way and then blame it on God
- C. The power-struggles between husband and wife are a result of the fall
  - 1. That's what Jesus died to fix; we don't have to wait for end for new
  - 2. The more I give control to Jesus, the more my life can become new