

How do you view the "church?"

- A special place
- Where we go at special times
- "To meet the Lord"
- To do special things
- After we have dressed in special clothes
- And picked up that special book
- It is everywhere
- We are always in it
- If we are in it, we are in the Lord, vice versa
- Most things done together also done individually
- Opportunity to meet with other saints
- To share understanding of a book we study all the time

We meet on James M Harvell Rd next to the public library in Navarre.
Call for directions and more information (850) 939-8109

Navarre church of Christ
8490 James M Harvell Rd
Navarre, FL 32566

Place Stamp Here

Assembly Schedule Sunday

Bible Class for all ages ___ 9:00 AM
Morning Worship Service ___ 10:00 AM
Evening Worship Service ___ 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Class for all ages ___ 7:00 PM

VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

This entire publication and previous issues are available online at navarrechurchofchrist.net along with some more useful information

For a free Bible correspondence course by mail, call us.

NAVARRE MESSENGER



"Male and Female Created He Them" II

Continued from last issue:

The Problem Exacerbated

Furthermore, the curse upon Adam would further exacerbate the friction that existed between him and his wife. The difficulty of toiling out a living would cause physical and psychological stress that would ultimately be carried over into the marriage. The time necessary to produce a product from the cursed earth would force the husband to spend much more time away from home. As a result, his wife might very well feel like she was being neglected. In

addition, the jealousy many husbands feel concerning their hard-earned paychecks, even though marriage is to be a joint effort, has served to intensify the battle of the sexes down through the ages. In many marriages today, the husband has his money and the wife has her money and "never the twain shall meet." Obviously, then, the negative effects of the husband trying to make ends meet in a world that resists him on every hand are very much with us today.

The Battle Has Turned Into a Full-Fledged War

The history of man and woman, as well as our own experiences, demonstrate the real problems created by the consequences of our first parents' sins. The unity God intended for His creation was destroyed by those sins. As a result, the woman would desire to usurp man's rule, and the man, if he was to rule, would do so with great difficulty. Add to these consequences our own sins, and the battle between the sexes has

actually grown into a full-fledged war. The family, the very fabric of our society, is being destroyed today. Divorce is rampant. The so-called "traditional family structure" is being redefined to include unmarried couples and homosexual liaisons (they call each other "housemates" and "significant others").

In addition, the feminist goal, which is nothing short of social, political, and cultural revolution, has had a dramatic impact in our day. Whether we like to admit it or not, feminism has converted our culture to the feminist mind-set. In fact, the feminization of America is in full-swing. As a so-called "Biblical feminist" has noted: "Feminism since the early 1960s has begun to color interpersonal relations, the language we speak, family life, the educational system, child-rearing practices, politics, business, the mass media, religion, law, the judicial system, the cultural value system, and intellectual life" (quoted in Mary Pride, *The Way Home*, page 12).

Paradise Lost

As originally created, the male and female were to complete each other as they enabled one another to fulfill the God-ordained purpose of procreating and subduing the earth. Neither was to seek the other's position, but as half of a whole they were to complement each other. When sin entered into the world, their distinctive roles were blurred and their harmonious relationship distorted. Instead of working together in unity, they began to compete with each other. Instead of reflecting the glory of God, they began to mirror the corruption of sin. Their original "oneness" was replaced by a power struggle that

has continued in society ever since. This struggle, although it does not always manifest itself overtly, does, nevertheless, lie just below the surface in even the best of marriages.

Unfortunately, many men, even Christians, "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13), have engaged in the practice of "lording it over" their wives. While on the other hand, many women, even Christians, have become "silly women laden with sins" (II Timothy 3:6) and have not willingly submitted to the headship of their husbands. It is sad but true that many Christians, both male and female, instead of "prov[ing] what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:1), are actually being guided by current secular values. Of course, we, of all people, ought to know that the answer to this problem is not to be found in current secular thought or even in so-called traditional thinking. Instead, the answer is to be found in God's Word, the Bible. It is in this book that we will find the answer to our problem.

Paradise Restored

A part of the "good news" of the gospel of Jesus Christ is that what was lost in the Garden of Eden can be restored in Christ. As faithful followers of the humble Galilean, the husband and wife can once again become the unit God intended them to be from the very beginning: the husband, the loving leader who "nourishes and cherishes" his wife as if she were his own body (Ephesians 5:28,29) and the wife, the suitable helper who willingly submits to her husband's guidance, "as to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22). Such a relationship must be character-

ized by selflessness, yet it is only in Christ that one learns to crucify Self. It is only in Christ that one exchanges the egotistical "I am" of sinful pride for the loving guidance of the Great I Am. It is only in Christ that two people will live in the estate of matrimony as God truly intended. Does this mean that people who are not Christians are not married? No, of course not. Does it mean that a Christian cannot marry a non-Christian? Again, no. Well, then, what does it mean? What it means is that without the restoration that comes in Christ, marriage will never be, nor can it ever be, what the Lord created it to be; namely, a relationship of unity that supersedes every other earthly relationship and in a very wonderful way reflects the unity that exists between Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:22-33). This Bible truth is a part of that light that illuminates a lost and dying world (Matthew 5:14). And it is this truth that functions as some of the salt that preserves our decaying society (Matthew 5:13). If Christians are not living this truth out in their lives on a regular basis, then they are no good to themselves or anyone else.

In Titus 2:2, the Word of God informs us that the younger women are to be taught to be "keepers at home" (KJV) or "homemakers" (NKJV). As we have already learned, the Bible does not prohibit the wife from working outside the home, but it does teach that the home is to be her primary concern. It is unfortunate that the idea of homemaker is being much maligned in our present day society. It is tragic that young women and men are being taught that a female cannot really be happy as a homemaker. It is

sad that young girls are being told they cannot be fulfilled unless they have a career that takes them away from their homemaking and child-rearing responsibilities. What is even more tragic is that many Christians have begun to incorporate these secular values into their own life-styles.

Churches of Christ cannot be negligent in their responsibility to edify themselves concerning this important subject. We must realize that young Christians will not be taught their God-ordained roles, and the duties associated with them, by a secular system inundated by humanism. Churches owe it to their young people to pass on to them the richness of the husband and wife relationship as taught in God's Word. Furthermore, as husbands and wives, we have the responsibility to live out our God-ordained roles before our children. But this is not enough! These roles must be reinforced by Bible classes that teach the duties and responsibilities, as well as the benefits, of the husband and wife relationship. In truth, we have not done a very good job with this subject, and it has definitely begun to show. The divorce rate among Christians, although much lower than that reflected in the world, is still much higher than anyone would have predicted just thirty years ago. Are we going to wait until the divorce rate among us begins to match the world's before we do something about it? If not, then we had better get busy and lovingly teach on this extremely critical subject before we find ourselves overshadowed by the horror of darkness that is engulfing our society. Fellow Christians, we must let our lights shine.

The Wife And The Home

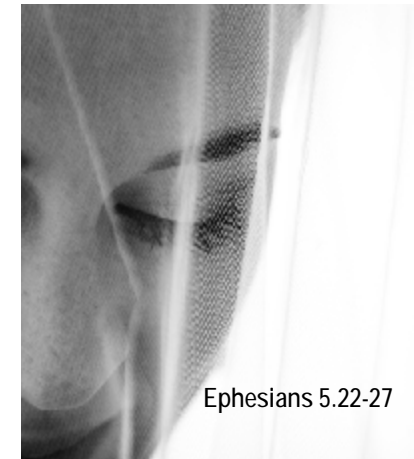
The place where God put the wife is the husband's home (notice that I did not say house). The home is a unique kingdom all its own in the midst of a hostile world. It's a stronghold amid life's storms and stresses, a refuge, even a sanctuary! The home is unique in that it is not built on the shifting sands of public life or cultural changes. The home is an institution (relationship might be a better word) that has special meaning and value because it has been especially ordained by God. It's a place where peace, quietness, joy, love, purity, discipline, respect, obedience, and happiness is to dwell. It is the wife's calling and her pleasure to build up for her husband a "world within the world," and do her life's work there. How happy and blessed is the woman who realizes just how great and rich a task and position God has given her! In this special relationship, the wife occupies a position of permanence, not novelty; constancy, not flux or change; peace, not antagonism or adversariness. In this relationship there are actual deeds, not just empty words; gentle persuasion, not arrogant commands; and, of course, love, not lust. All these are inspired and sustained by her love for her husband—this is the wife's kingdom. "A virtuous woman [an excellent wife] is the crown of her husband" (Proverbs 12:4).

Conclusion

The traditional family, as defined by secular society, has assumed the husband to be the superior ruler and the wife to be the inferior servant. This is far to the right of what God has ordained in His Word. On the other hand, the feminist movement has swung

the pendulum far to the left in denying the family structure and roles God has given. Let us, therefore, as Christians, strive for that golden mean set forth in God's Word and let us "not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of [our] mind[s], that [we] may prove [to a lost and dying world] what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2). ~

Alan Turner



Ephesians 5.22-27

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.