

“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

Genesis 1:27

What's My Job?

One Plus One Equals One – Genesis 1 – God's Roles

When you first get a new job, one of the first questions you ask is, “What are my responsibilities?”

This is a fair question, and we need to know what our roles are in order to fulfill those roles. In other words, we want to know what is expected of us.

Now, before you take a look back at the previous study, understand that we want to see what is expected of us by God in marriage. As anyone can attest, expectations by each other are unending. God makes it easy on the husband and wife. He only expects one thing from each of them, but we'll get to that.

Betty Friedan was an advocate for the woman's movement and was the first president of the National Organization for Woman, and she considered the role of the full-time homemaker to be stifling. She faults the roles of marriage as the root of divorce when she says, “If divorce has increased by one thousand percent, don't blame the women's movement. Blame the obsolete sex roles on which our marriages were based.”

How does our world see the roles of a husband and wife?

How does the church see those same roles?

How would you, as a couple, explain the roles?

Look back at your answers to the questions. Are they the exact same? I doubt they are, and we wonder why there is confusion. The world, of course, is completely off base. The idea of the father figure continues to provide comedy, while the mother is the leader and head of the home.

The church then comes along to say that the husband is the head of the home and the wife is “second” in command. I have yet to understand where that comes from.

We get our idea of the roles from our parents, who picked their idea up from their parents, and so on. Everybody is looking at everybody else to figure out our responsibility, but nobody is looking at the Creator of the husband and wife. It makes sense that He would know what our roles are.

Here again, we take a look back at the beginning in Genesis.

God determined the roles of the husband and wife at the beginning, and there is only one role for each person. Can you imagine? The man and woman are told that they only have to worry about one responsibility, one role. Oh the relief and joy that comes.

God created Woman from a rib taken from man. Notice man's response, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." You may not hear this language in the latest romance, but the man breaks out into poetry when he lays eyes on the woman. In his words he conveys love, passion, oneness, affection, and romance. He expresses equality and unity. There is no sense of "second in command", but only love.

Paul says it this way, "Husbands, love your wives!"

Husband, what does it mean to love your wife?

Wife, when do you feel loved?

You may have noticed that your answers were not exactly the same. Peter reminds the men to live with their wives in an understanding way. This means we need to love our wives in a way that they feel loved. It is seeking to understand what reaches out to them. Moses' commentary on marriage in Genesis 2:24 further explains the need for the man to reach out. The man is leaving everything and coming after his woman.

Remember, this love is a love that seeks no return. There are no strings attached to this love. The man said, "Bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." There is a very real sense of protection and affection without return. There was no, "I'll love you as long as you do what I say or have sex or be quiet."

God tells husbands to love their wives. God gives no exceptions or qualifications. It does not matter if the wife cooks terribly, looks horrible, or always has a headache. No conditions, husbands, love your wives.

Why is this so hard to do sometimes?

It goes back to the previous lesson. Self. We are conditioned to think that if we pour into something then that something should pour back, but God does not include that in the role.

Now for the wives.

We can look at the same passage and see that God gave the wives one role. In Genesis 2:18, God says that he will make a helper suitable for man. Notice it is

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."

Genesis 2:24

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’”

Genesis 2:18

not a dog or TV remote. God created the woman from the rib of man, and this relationship is different from any other relationship on the face of the planet.

How would you explain what God meant by helper?

This is a role that is greatly misunderstood. The idea of being a helper has been cast in a bad light. Our world perceives it to mean second rate, lower, and weaker, but that cannot be farther from the truth. Look at man’s response to meeting the woman of his dreams (okay, so she was the only woman, but the matchmaker was God). His response is not a degrading response, but a grateful, excited, and welcoming response.

God, in his awesome wisdom, had the animals parade in front of the man. He named them and noticed that there was a girl and boy of each kind. That is, each kind except for him. God helped man to see his need. The man needed the helper.

Husbands, how do you, through love, express your need for your wife?

Men, face it, we need help.

Genesis 1:28 gives us the context of the help. God speaks to both the man and woman and says, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue it, and rule over it.” Did you catch all that? God said that this was a joint effort. There is no sense of woman multiplying and man ruling. God gave the command for them to do this together, as one.

1+1=1

Wife, how do you help your husband?

Husbands, (be honest, even if it means being a little emotional) how is your wife a help to you?

Just as it was with the husbands, so it is with the wives. There are no strings attached. A wife cannot say, “Forget him, he hasn’t showed me love so I don’t owe him anything!” God did not make that condition. He did not say, “If he loves you, then help him.”

Remember, these roles are not given by your spouse. They are given by God, and when the man and woman seek to fulfill these roles then their marriage becomes more fulfilling. They are doing things they way God intended.

"God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"

Genesis 1:28

I wish I could say this is an easy thing to master. I wish I could say that you can go to bed tonight and wake up fulfilling your roles. Unfortunately, there is Genesis 3.

God said:

- Husband, love your wives.
- Wives, help your husbands.

As we continue this study, we will see how these roles play out in a fallen world.

Either way, it is nice knowing there is only one responsibility for me.

Any more and I might get confused.

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?

