

February 1st, 2009 “The Last Year of the Life of Christ, Part 32”

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Luke 18:1-8

**1 Then [Jesus] spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,
2 saying: “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man.
3 Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’
4 And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man,
5 yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.’ ”
6 Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said.
7 And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?
8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”**

Thank you very much for coming to hear the message for today. Before we begin our next lesson, let us reiterate our reason for attending Church.

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

In our last two lessons, we have discussed the concept of submissiveness. I made the point that the Bible tells us to submit to one another in the fear of God, specifically in our marital relationships, because our submission to one another is our emulation of Jesus Christ. Jesus submitted to God as Jesus gave Himself on the Cross of Calvary, because of His knowledge that God loves Him, that He and God love us, and that God sent Him to demonstrate both His and God’s love for us by paying the penalty that we owe for the sins that we have committed. Thus, Christian submission is not that of a slave to a master or an inferior to a superior, but of two individuals that love one another, one of whom has been charged with leadership of a particular function in order to efficiently perform that function. God exercised leadership in devising the plan to save mankind, and God’s Son Jesus Christ submitted to God’s leadership in order to execute the plan effectively.

Submission and love between husband and wife is that which makes marriage a mutual proposition. Since God delegates leadership to the husband, the command to submit is given to the wife, as **Ephesians 5:22-24** tells us:

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

The Bible is clear that the wife is supposed to yield to her husband as her head, just as Christ is the head of the church. But Christ, as the head, is neither the slave master nor the disinterested, aloof, distant, arrogant king with no regard for his subjects. Christ is our King, but He loves us, His subjects, and has given Himself for us, even to the point of the death of the Cross. Following that idea, **Ephesians 5:25-28** teaches husbands:

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

27 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.

28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

The reason that a man should not ask a woman for her hand in marriage until he is able and ready to support her and take care of her needs, is because his support for her, to a woman, is the definition of love. In the normative case among married couples, husbands should take care of their wives and wives should take care of their children. And that is simply a statement that describes the plan of God.

It is intuitively obvious to any objective, intelligent observer that infants and children need intense care and supervision. Infants have absolutely no capacity to care for themselves, and toddlers do not have much more. Women are designed, both anatomically and emotionally, to take care of children, while men are not. Men lack the means to provide sustenance for infants, but anatomically, women have breasts to nourish infants. The frequency with which infants need nourishment dictate that a breastfeeding woman needs to be available to her infant almost constantly.

In the normative case, men communicate in an intellectually concrete, verbal fashion. Men generally require specific instructions to function properly. Infants and young children generally lack the ability to communicate intellectually, as their primary method of communication is by showing their emotions through crying and facial expressions. Women are equipped to decipher the emotional, non-verbal communication of infants and young children in a way that men are not. The recitation of these differences is not a slam on either men or women, but simply an obvious statement of design.

God designed the genders to perform different tasks within the family, and one of the tragedies of our times has been that, as a culture, we have endeavored to define our differences, which are designed to foster cooperation in marriage, as character flaws that lead us into competition rather than cooperation.

God designed the animal kingdom, as **Genesis 1:21, 25-26** records:

21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

25 And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

God created man to have dominion over the animals, but God soon found a deficiency in that which He had created. **Genesis 2:18** records:

18 And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”

It is interesting to me that God does not solve the man’s deficiency by modifying his anatomical or intellectual structure. If, for instance, man was too weak or too short to efficiently take dominion over the animals, God could easily have made man stronger or taller. If man had an intellectual deficiency that did not allow him to efficiently take dominion over the animals, God could easily have made man smarter. But, **Genesis 2:18**, does not say that man has a deficiency of any kind that will keep him from the adequate completion of his assigned task of dominating the animals.

God says specifically that man needs help with aloneness. Thus, man’s functional need is for a companion.

Now, God had already created plenty of candidates to provide man with companionship. **Genesis 2:19-20** records:

19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name.

20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

Thorough study has allowed God and Adam to come to the conclusion that none of the living creatures sharing space with Adam on the earth are suitable companions for him. So God decided that more creation was in order, as **Genesis 2:21-25** records:

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.

22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

23 And Adam said: “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Upon seeing that which God created for him, Adam felt the immediate pull to become one with her. Adam, not God, was the one that declared the woman to be bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Adam had been through the experience of naming all of the animals, and had evaluated enough creatures to know the characteristics of a suitable companion for him, and the woman was immanently suitable as a companion. And Paul makes it clear, in **1Corinthians**

11:8-9:**8 For man is not from woman, but woman from man.****9 Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.**

Look carefully at these two verses for a moment. Isn't it interesting that men are not created for women? Men are not created for functionality, rather than companionship. If we go back to **Genesis 2:18**, we see:

18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

The logic of this passage of Scripture dictates that men need a helper, that is, a companion, to help him to deal with his aloneness.

If men were created to be companions, men would have the capacity to deal with their aloneness on their own, making the creation of women unnecessary. God could simply have increased the population of men, who could have provided one another with companionship. Since God did not do that, but first turned Adam to the animals to look for companionship and then created a human being with different characteristics than Adam to provide him with companionship, it stands to reason that men do not just need another person for companionship, but men need another person with different characteristics than men have to provide him with companionship.

Women are created for men. God created women specifically to be companions for men. Thus, women have tools of companionship that men do not. And men need companionship, because, as God tells us, in **Genesis 2:18**, it is not good for a man to be alone. What's not good about a man being alone? God says that men, by design, need companionship, rather than isolation.

This analysis is designed to point out that men and women are different by design, and the difference is not just anatomical. Women are intellectually designed by God to be companions; to provide the foundation for relationships, while men are not. Women are intellectually designed to be comforting and pleasing to men, while men are intellectually designed to perform tasks. God created the worker first, but then announced that a worker needed a companion to establish a comforting, pleasant relationship in order to make the worker's situation good. A man that is alone is not in a good situation; a man needs the characteristics of a woman for companionship.

God tells women, in **Ephesians 5:22-24**:

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.**23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.****24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.**

"Wives, submit to your own husbands" really means, wives, you have a different role than your husbands; your role is companionship rather than competition, so do not compete with your own husbands. Competition is not companionship, so it is not your role. Your husband has enough competition as he functions in the world; he needs a wife for a comforting, pleasant relationship, not more competition. What happens when you compete with your husband? Since the husband is the head of the wife, the husband will do his best to win the competition and to

put the wife in a one-down position. Males tend to dominate women when women compete with them. But suppose the woman wins the competition. What is her prize? Well, she either gets another chance to compete tomorrow, or the man withdraws from the competition to find a woman to be his companion that will submit. In other words, women either eventually get beat down or divorced. So, even if women win the competition, they ultimately lose.

I've told this story before, but it's worth telling again. When I was in management with the telephone company, I was told the story of the first woman cable splicer. Now, because pulling telephone cable through a manhole is a physically challenging job, it had been reserved for men, but a certain woman decided that she wanted the job. The telephone company could not discriminate against her because she was a woman, so she was sent to pole climbing and cable splicing school, which she passed.

When she completed the school, she was promoted to cable splicer and sent to join a crew. The boss, who was an old timer, was sure that no woman could actually do the job of cable splicer, but he had to put her to work. So his solution was to make her a rotating flagman. Whenever a cable crew had to go into a manhole and pull cable, one of the crew members, known as the flagman, had to stand on the street over the manhole with a stop sign to control the traffic so that no one drove over the open manhole. So, rather than putting her on a crew, the boss rotated her through all of the crews a day at a time and made her the flagman.

After a couple of weeks of holding the flag, she went to see the boss. "I didn't go to pole climbing school and cable splicing school to be a flagman", she said, "I want to be a cable splicer like everyone else."

The boss thought about trying to argue with her, but he changed his mind. "Okay", he said, "you'll get your wish tomorrow. You'll be down in the manhole, pulling cable."

That night the woman went home and had a good dinner and went to bed early. She woke up early the next morning and worked out and had a good breakfast in order to be ready for her first day pulling cable. She reported to work, and was assigned to go into the manhole. She went out with the crew, and pulled cable. At the end of the day, she and the crew had done a good day's work.

At the end of the shift, she asked the in charge person to let her take the tally sheet to the boss, and he agreed to let her do so. She entered the boss' office, sat in front of his desk, and put the sheet on it. "See", she said, "the crew did a good job with me in the manhole."

"That's good", said the boss, "but understand that you don't just have to pull cable today; you have to pull cable everyday. See you tomorrow."

She found out that pulling cable everyday is a hard job. Within six months, she hurt her back and transferred out to a desk job in the test center. You see, when guys pull cable, they often compete with one another to see who can pull the most cable. The harder men work, the larger and stronger their muscles become, and they gain the strength to work harder. Women don't generally have the muscle characteristics of a man, and, in the normal case, they are not designed for the competition and the physical stress of this kind of physical work, and thus often get hurt trying to keep up.

My point is not that women can not function in the workplace. My point is that women are different than men, do not have the same characteristics as men, and are not designed to

compete with men. **Ephesians 5:22** says:

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

The purpose of this passage of Scripture is to instruct us to avoid competition within marriage. In **Genesis 2:18**:

18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

Marriage is about a woman helping a man, not competing with him. But not only are women instructed not to compete with their husbands; men are instructed not to compete with or try to dominate their wives, as **Ephesians 5:25-28** tells us:

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

27 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.

28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

Men may not be designed to facilitate companionship, but men do have the capacity to show love. The way that we show love for our wives is by voluntarily doing that which we know is the best for them, which is the definition of giving ourselves for them, as Christ gave Himself for the church. Now, husbands don't submit to their wives, but when the husband, as the head of the wife, makes decisions about the direction of the marriage, he recognizes that his wife is his relationship expert and her desires for their relationship are important.

Upon his election, President Obama quickly went about the task of forming his cabinet. Now the President is an extremely intelligent person, but he recognized that he does not have the intellectual capacity to lead every governmental function. He recognized that, in order to govern, he had to find people that agreed with his general philosophy of government but that had a greater knowledge of the specific functions of government to lead government departments in the implementation of his philosophy. In other words, Obama needed expert help.

A wife is her husband's expert help. That which a good wife desires is good for her husband as well, as she is her husband's companion, and if he does well, they do well. Sometimes the husband actually can't fulfill his wife's desires, as she may desire something outside of the will of God, but a husband should always take his wife's desires into account and do the best that he can to fulfill them. In so doing, the husband facilitates companionship and cuts down the chance that his wife will compete with him, because the more he cooperates with her, the less she finds competition necessary.

Listen to our text for today, **Luke 18:1-5**:

1 Then [Jesus] spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,

2 saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man.

3 Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.'

4 And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man,

5 yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she

weary me.’ ”

A judge that does not fear God or regard man has no personal interest in judging fairly. The judge’s interest is self-interest, and such a judge can generally be bought by the highest bidder. The widow in the story represents the poor people that had to come before the judge without a monetary bribe that could sway the judges’ decision in their favor. Since the woman didn’t have anything to give the judge, the judge could easily decide that he did not have anything to give the woman. But the judge granted the widow’s request for two reasons, first of all, because her request was just and reasonable, and second of all, she persisted in coming to court and making her argument although he did not immediately give her the justice that she desired. Jesus continues the parable, in **Luke 18:6-8**:

6 Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said.

7 And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?

8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”

Jesus uses hyperbole in this parable to make His point, which is that since even an unjust man in authority can be moved to act positively by a persistent argument for justice, certainly someone righteous, like God, will be moved to act positively by a persistent argument for justice. God may bear long with us, meaning that He may delay action because of His own plans, but He will eventually give us the outcome that we desire if we only persist in our just requests. The parable equates faith with persistence.

A husband, as the head of the wife, has authority equivalent to that that the judge has over the widow, so you can insert husband in the parable for judge and wife in the parable for widow. However, generally speaking, a husband does not have the attitude toward his wife that the unjust judge had toward the widow. The judge was calloused toward the widow, and the widow had nothing with which to positively influence the unjust judge except a just argument and persistence. Wives have much with which to positively influence their just husbands.

Husbands are born of women, grow up trying to impress their mothers and girlfriends, and then spend the rest of their lives trying to obtain acceptance and approval from their wives. If a wife gives her husband the respect that the widow gave the judge, gives her husband direct communication about that which she wants and shows her husband that she appreciates him, the husband will generally do just about anything his wife wishes.

If a widow can get justice from an unjust judge by simple persistence, how much more can a wife get from a husband by giving her husband the companionship which she was designed to give him by God? When a man looks at his wife, he does not see that which the judge sees when he looks at the widow. Rather, the man sees the most desirable woman in the world, the woman that he has chosen as his companion, and the one whose characteristics he esteems above all others in the world, because he has access to them. Listen to how a man describes his relationship with his wife, in **Song of Solomon 7:1-12**:

1 How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O prince’s daughter! The curves of your thighs are like jewels, The work of the hands of a skillful workman.

2 Your navel is a rounded goblet; It lacks no blended beverage. Your waist is a heap of wheat Set about with lilies.

3 Your two breasts are like two fawns, Twins of a gazelle.
4 Your neck is like an ivory tower, Your eyes like the pools in Heshbon By the gate of Bath Rabbim. Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon Which looks toward Damascus.
5 Your head crowns you like Mount Carmel, And the hair of your head is like purple; A king is held captive by your tresses.
6 How fair and how pleasant you are, O love, with your delights!
7 This stature of yours is like a palm tree, And your breasts like its clusters.
8 I said, "I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of its branches." Let now your breasts be like clusters of the vine, The fragrance of your breath like apples,
9 And the roof of your mouth like the best wine. The wine goes down smoothly for my beloved, Moving gently the lips of sleepers.
10 I am my beloved's, And his desire is toward me.
11 Come, my beloved, Let us go forth to the field; Let us lodge in the villages.
12 Let us get up early to the vineyards; Let us see if the vine has budded, Whether the grape blossoms are open, And the pomegranates are in bloom. There I will give you my love.

Jesus says, in **John 13:34-35**:

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.
35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

If Jesus meant this for any relationship, He meant it for the primary relationship that we have, that being, the relationship that we have with our spouses. I may give my life for the cause of Christ, but until I do so, I have to live my life for the love of my wife. **1 Timothy 3** tells me that to be the husband of my one wife and a good father to my children is my qualification for the ministry because if I cannot show love for my wife and leadership for my children, I cannot be the proper example for the church.

When Paul was young in the ministry, he said, in **1 Corinthians 7:29-31**:

29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none,
30 those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess,
31 and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away.

But, as Peter was old in the ministry and about to die, he said, in **2 Peter 3:8-9**:

8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.
9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

We do not know how much time we have before the Lord returns for His Church, but we do know that He instructs to be good spouses until He returns. The next generation may not come to adulthood before the Lord returns but the Lord tells me to be a good example of a husband and father for the next generation in case He decides to delay His coming to allow them

to mature. One of the great sins of the church of today is our lack of love for one another in the most intimate relationship that we have, that being of wives submitting to husbands and husbands loving wives. Let us not be to one another as was the unjust judge to the widow, and give to one another grudgingly or of necessity, but let us rather call upon the power of the Holy Spirit, which is given to us freely, and let us ask Him to give us the love for our spouses that Jesus Christ had for us, and let us give ourselves for our husbands and wives even as God gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

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