Was Male Headship and Female Submission Created by God?

Pastor Kelly Sensenig

When man rejects Biblical authority (Tim. 3:16) and wrongly interprets the Bible (2 Tim. 2:15) he arrives at inaccurate conclusions regarding Biblical texts. Therefore, the careful exegete (interpreter) of Scripture must correctly interpret what God says about male headship (authority and leadership) and female submission and not allow societal norms, human reason, personal experience, and individual situations to enter into his interpretation of the Bible, as he seeks to discover God's mind concerning the sexes and the unisex philosophy.

Truth matters and is worthy striving for today (2 Cor. 13:8) in the midst of the sea of feministic interpretive confusion which emphasizes inaccessible data and complicated contextual problems, so much so, that they put others in despair and cause them to lack confidence in understanding Scripture. I'm tired of reading the hermeneutical oddities that are devised to reinterpret and corrupt (2 Cor. 4:2) the apparently plain meanings of Biblical texts to support feministic interpretations. The bottom line is this. Controversy is necessary where truth matters and serious error is spreading. We must take heart that the battle for truth is being fought. We must also get in the battle (2 Tim. 4:7).

The creation account does establish male headship and female submission to headship. This is seen in both the Old Testament and New Testament. Before getting into the role of male leadership in the family unit I want to give some arguments to show that male leadership existed before the Genesis Fall. Why? It's because feministic interpreters of the Bible make the claim that male leadership only began as a result of the Genesis Fall and that it was not God's original design for the marriage relationship. They make the further assumption that the desire and practice of male headship is part of the corruption that came into the world because of sin. Male dominance and leadership (headship) was actually a penalty inflicted upon the human race because of sin and the Genesis curse and through the redemptive work of Christ this penalty can be lifted and

women can be liberated to the place of leadership roles in the home, church, and government.

The feminist's attempts to prove this from the Bible are futile for they are not based upon proper hermeneutics and the final authority of Scripture. They attempt to erase the normal understanding of Scripture for their own private interpretations (2 Pet. 1:20). We must allow the Bible to speak for itself today and never come to the text of Scripture with our own preconceived view and then force the Scriptures to fit our view. The burden of proof always rests on the one who claims that a certain part of the Bible does not mean what is says. We must let the Bible speak for itself. Many times people do not do exegesis (critical interpretation and explanation of the Bible). They simply enumerate possible views of a passage and then choose the one that best fits their position. Such is the case with the feminist interpreters of the Bible. They are first feminists and then use the Scripture to legitimize their beliefs.

The foundations of the family are being undermined today through feminist interpretations of Scripture and only a Bible-believing, Bible-discerning, and Bible-taught believers will take a stand against the errors being propagated today concerning male authority and God's order for female submission. The Bible sets forth a clear case concerning male headship (authority and leadership) and female submission to male authority. The case is set forth that this design was created by God and is commended by God.

Only a feminist with an axe to grind can miss the clear intention of God's revelation concerning male headship and female submission in the marriage relationship, home, and church setting. Feminist interpreters of the Bible claim that male headship only developed as a result of the Genesis Fall and curse. They make the outlandish claim that God never intended man to be the leading figure or authority in the marriage, home, or church setting. The Fall resulted in man becoming an authority figure over his wife but this was something that God never intended for man. However, these claims are blatantly false for Scripture teaches that God actually created man to be the leader and authority figure in the family institution. The Bible and creation's story teaches that God created male headship and female submission to be part of the initial creative order. God gave roles to

men and women before the Genesis Fall. They were not the result of the Fall. These roles were distorted because of the Fall but they did not originate as the result of sin entering the world.

In this study, we want to go back to Genesis and verify that headship (male authority) and female submission to authority was established by God at the time of creation. This was God's design for marriage. It was not the result of the Genesis Fall. The roles in marriage were part of God's original creative order. This is what we will see in the following arguments. So let's state our aim very clearly.

There are thirteen Biblical arguments that prove male headship and female submission was created by God and existed before the Genesis Fall.

1. The argument from creation's order.

Genesis 2:7
"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

Genesis 2:18
"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."

These verses clearly reveal that Adam was first created and then Eve. Why didn't God create both Adam and Eve simultaneously out of the same dust? Why was there an order or sequence in the creation account? The most natural explanation and reason is that God wanted to bring Adam onto the scene as the head, not only of the human race but of the family unit, and signify that he was the leader and the one who would bear the responsibility of headship. This was a divine creative order. Paul sees this as very important for he bases his argument for different roles in the assembly life of the New Testament Church on the fact that Adam was created prior to Eve.

1 Timothy 2:12-13
"But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve."

Adam was first formed and then Eve to draw a conclusion about male leadership in the church. Just as Adam was created first and was expected to be the head or leader of Eve, so the man within the context of local church life is to be the expected leader and have the authoritative place of teaching over the church. When a woman takes on this position she is forgetting the order of creation and the purpose behind the order – male headship, leadership, and authority.

Something else can be noted from this priority of creation. Just as a Hebrew firstborn son was to exercise authority over the family in the absence of the father by virtue of his priority of birth (Gen. 43:33; Deut. 21:15-17; Ps. 89:27; 105:36; Col. 1:15), so the man was to exercise authority over the woman by virtue of his priority of creation. This is the understanding the original Jewish readers of the text would have had when reading the Genesis creation account. The "firstborn" in a human family has the special right and responsibility of leadership in the family. This practice undoubtedly grew out of the order that God established in the creation account. It was recognized that God created order for a purpose. It was to establish the principle of leadership and authority.

2. The argument from creation's responsibility.

It is very clear that it was Adam who was given the responsibility to name the animals (Gen. 2:19-20). When Adam determined the designated names of the animals it was a direct sign or expression of his rule (dominion) over them (Gen. 1:26, 28; 2:19-20). Adam was given this responsibility to name the animals for he was to be the privileged leader over planet earth. So the fact that Adam was given this responsibility indicates his right to rule and be a leader.

Adam was also given the responsibility to name his wife (Gen. 2:23). When Adam says, "she shall be called Woman" he was also indicating his authority over the person that God gave to him. The original Jewish readers would understand that the person who gives names over created things is always the person who has authority over those things. Such was the case with God in His creative acts throughout the first chapter of Genesis (Gen. 1:5, 8, 10). The same is now true with Adam's responsibility in naming the animals and now the woman (Gen. 2:23). As God's sovereignty over creation is

indicated in that He names His creative acts, so Adam has authority over the woman in that he was given the privilege to name her. The woman did not have authority to determine her own designation or title.

The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament says,
"By giving someone a name, one establishes a relation of dominion and possession toward him."

Again, the Jewish readers and those of today all know that parents demonstrate their authority over their children by naming them (Gen. 4:25-26; 5:3, 29; 16:15; 19:37-38; 21:3). When Adam gives to his wife the name "Woman" this indicates the authority that Adam had over the woman and the leadership function that Eve did not share with her husband.

We should underscore the fact that in Genesis chapter two Adam is giving the broad category name ("woman") that would be given to women generally and is still given to women today. This name ("woman") contains the word "man" since she came forth from the man and was to be ruled by the man. Think of this. The fact that women are called women stems from the creation account and Adam's leadership over the original woman by creation.

Renald Showers states:
"When Adam designated her to be woman he used the word for man but feminized that word by adding a feminine ending."

Adam recognized that she was a form of himself, equal in nature and being, and part of man's own existence. He did not view Eve as a lesser being than himself. Eve was Adam's equal possessing the same image as man (the image of God) and yet Adam's partner was also to be the one he would rule over. The word man in her designation not only indicated the origin of her existence but also the purpose for her existence – to submit to the man and be his helper. So the designation of her name ("woman") has much significance in light of our present discussion. We should also note that Adam did not give the personal name to his wife ("Eve") until Genesis 3:20. It would not be until later that Adam would give a personal name "Eve" to his bride, which designates the character of an individual woman.

3. The argument from creation's headship.

1 Corinthians 11:3 declares:
"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."

In this verse Paul was referring to creation's order and how God established male headship (authority) over the woman. Paul verifies that this was the design God created for marriage from the very beginning. He verifies this when using the expressions of man being created in God's image ("the image of God") in a way woman was not and how the woman originated from the man ("the woman of the man") and how the woman was created for the man's existence ("the woman is for the man") - vv. 7-9.

One concept that is viciously attacked by the feminist movement of today is the meaning of the word "head" (kephale) as it appears in the Bible. The feminist interpreters of Scripture attempt to assign a different meaning to the word "head" than the Scriptures do. It's falsely reasoned that the metaphor ("head") connotes that man was only the source or origin of the woman's existence but not her leader and authoritative figure. It's interesting that Wayne Grudem did extensive research of the word "head." His findings consisted of 2,336 references where the term head was found. The sources where the word was found included the Scriptures, classical writings, and early first century A.D. Greek literature, and every source indicated that the word "head" never carried the meaning of "source" or "origin" in Bible times. Instead, it carried the meaning of leader and ruler. The linguistic studies simply do not prove that the word "head" means source or origin.

The linguistic analysis supports the meaning of "head" as leader or ruler, as well as the Biblical context, where this term occurs. For instance, Ephesians 1:22 says, "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." The word "head" is clearly a metaphor that occurs in a context dealing with Christ's authority "over all things." Colossians 2:10, "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." This clearly implies that Christ is the only leader and authority figure

(head) over all other authority in the universe. In the context where "the church is subject unto Christ" (Eph. 5:24) Christ is said to "the head of the church" (Eph. 5:23) which indicates that the word head once again implies authority.

Other verses could be mentioned but these give us a clear understanding of the Bible's use of the word "head." The metaphor for "head" always means leader and authority. It does not mean "exalted originator and completer" as some suggest. All the Greek lexicons that specialize in the New Testament period list the meaning of the term head to mean "ruler, leader, or authority over." The evidence is indisputable. It is true that through the head we are nourished because we take in food through the mouth. This would speak of nourishment and growth (Eph. 4:15; Col. 2:19). But this does not change the primary meaning of the metaphor, which points to authority. It is only a secondary application and means that the One in authority (Christ) also lovingly supplies our spiritual needs as any good leader would do (Eph. 5:23-24, 28).

Ray Stedman summarizes the meaning of the word head in this way: "Now when head is used metaphorically, figuratively, as it is here, it refers to priority in function. That is what the head of our body does; it runs the body; it is in charge; it is the direction setter of the body. Used metaphorically, therefore, the word head means primarily leadership, and thus it is used in this passage."

The word "head" refers to the ruling and sovereign part of the body. The head coordinates the rest of the human body and without the head there would be no more direction and leadership for the body. Thus, the very illustration that Jesus uses of a human head points to leadership and authority. Only a feminist with an axe to grind can miss the natural meaning and intended understanding of this term. Many want to substitute the word "source" for the word "head" and give it a different meaning. However, if one would substitute the word source for the word head in verse three the text would fail to make sense. Furthermore, it would create unorthodox teaching since the source of Christ is not the Father. Christ did not come into existence through the Father's life but eternally existed with the Father in eternity past (Col. 1:15-17).

It would be a serious theological blunder to make the Father the source of Christ's existence, as the woman was the source of man's existence. However, it would be theologically correct to say that the Father was the functional head of Christ and that Christ was submissive to the Father's will. This is what Paul is saying and teaching by this passage. The head of Jesus Christ (God the Son) is the Father (God the Father) and Jesus as the Son makes Himself willingly submissive to his functional head – the Father. Therefore, just as Christ is submissive to His head (God the Father) and to His authority and leadership over Him, so the wife is to be submissive to her head (the husband) and to his leadership and authority over her. This truth is not cultural or chauvinistic but is the design and pattern that God has established from creation regarding man and woman. Headship goes back to creation. This brings us to our next argument.

4. The argument from creation's Trinity.

1 Corinthians 11:3 once again reads:
"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."

The Bible teaches that the Trinity (Three Persons in the Godhead) were actively involved in creation (Gen. 1:26 – "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"). Therefore, it's reasonable to conclude that the same relationship that existed in the Godhead is similar to the relationship that God designed to exist in the marriage relationship. The Bible teaches that the creative equality and differences that existed between Adam and Eve reflect the same equality, unity, and differences of the Godhead. In the above verse Christ is seen to be submissive to God (God the Father) even though both equally share the same nature and existence as the true God (Heb. 1:3).

Although the three Persons of the Godhead are equal in their personal existence and nature (John 5:18; 10:30-33; Acts 5:3-4), the Father is the functional head over the Son and the Spirit, and the Son and the Spirit are in functional submission to the Father's rule (John 4:34; 5:26-27, 30, 36, 43; 6:38; 7:16; 8:28-29, 42; 9:4; 12:49-50; 14:24; Matt. 26:39; 42-44; John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:13). Paul likens the marriage relationship to this same Trinity relationship within the

Godhead, which consists of headship and functional submission. The man is to be the head of the woman and the woman is to be submissive in her role. Even though there is personal equality of marriage partners in that both are patterned after God's image and both have spiritual acceptance before God, there must still exist the functional submission to authority by the wife.

The same is true within the Godhead. There is equality in existence and personhood and yet submission. So the very Godhead that was active in creating man and woman whispers the truth about headship and submission. The Trinity patterned the marriage relationship after its own existence. Man was created in God's image (male and female), not as identical and interchangeable halves (Gen. 1:26-27), and these two halves represent the Godhead. Elisabeth Elliot noticed this when she said: "These two people together represent the image of God – one of them in a special way the initiator, the other the responder."

5. The argument from creation's source.

Genesis 2:21-23
"And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 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."

The Bible teaches that Eve was created from Adam and that Adam was her source or origin. This is significant for in the New Testament teaching about male authority and leadership Paul clearly points out that the man has authority over the woman since the man is the source of origin of the woman's existence. 1 Corinthians 11:8 says, "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man." Paul uses this verse as one line of supporting evidence to prove male authority and leadership over the woman (1 Cor, 11:3). We do know that the man was the actual source or origin of the woman's existence and this in itself adds even further proof for the functional order of male authority over women and female submission to man's authority. Think of it this way. Just as parents are to exercise

authority over their children by virtue of being the human source of their children (Prov. 23:22-25; Eph. 6:1), so the man is the exercise authority over the woman by virtue of his being the human source of the woman.

6. The argument from creation's representation.

It's very apparent from the Genesis narrative that Adam was created to be the representative leader of the human race. It was Adam who was responsible for representing the human race – not Eve. It was actually Eve who sinned first (Gen. 3:6). Since Eve sinned first we might expect the New Testament to tell us that we inherit a sinful nature because of Eve's sin or that we are accounted guilty because of Eve's sin. But this is not the case. The opposite is true (Romans 5:12). The Bible does not say that "in Eve all die" but rather "For as in Adam all die" (1 Cor. 15:22).

It is unmistakable that Adam had a leadership role in that he was to represent the entire human race. This was a leadership role that Eve did not have. Adam and Eve together did not represent the human race. Adam alone represented the human race because he had a specific leadership role that God gave to him. This was a role that Eve did not share.

7. The argument from creation's name.

Genesis 1:26-27
"And God said, Let us make man (adam) in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man (adam) in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

This naming occurred prior to the Genesis Fall. When God purposed and planned to create humanity He said, "Let us make man in our image." After the creation took place the Bible reveals that "God created man in his own image." God repeatedly used the word "man" (Hebrew - adam) and not woman when speaking about humanity. This is important to underscore. God was using a name to represent

all of humanity (human beings in general) but the name He chose was the word “man” (Gen. 2:22-23, 25; 3:8-9, 12, 20).

The word man is not a gender-neutral term in the eyes of the Hebrew reader. They understood the word “man” to mean just one thing – man. The use of the name and gender which has male overtones or nuances is significant. God used the male name because He was establishing the principle of male leadership in society. It is significant that God did not call the human race “Woman.” Nor did he give the human race a name such as “humanity” which would have no male overtones and no connotation of connection with the man being distinct from the woman.

Raymond C. Ortlund rightly concludes:
“God’s naming of the race ‘man’ whispers male headship.”

Moses will bring this out into the open in chapter two as we see the man being created first, naming the animals, being given a woman as a helper, and then naming the woman.

God calls all of humanity, both male and female, by the designated title of “man” because within the functional realm of society man was to be the one who exercises authority, leadership, and headship. Since the word “man” does mean “man” (male gender) many today reject the use of this word and substitute other generic terms. Several gender-neutral Bible’s have changed the word “man” to humankind (NRSV), people (NLV), human beings (NIV Inclusive Language Edition). Today modern usage and acceptable grammar replaces the word “man” with the words “him or her” in yet another attempt to take away from male leadership and authority. The world continues to accept these terms without realizing the underlying attempts to override God’s clear plan for authority that He has invested in men within a society.

Genesis 5:1-2
“This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man (adam), in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.”

This chapter is reporting the event that occurred prior to the Fall. Once again we see the clear male overtones of this verse. In the first four chapters of Genesis the word “man” (adam) is used thirteen times and refers to a male even in the cases when the entire human race is implied – both male and female. This is because society was to function on the principle of male authority, leadership, and headship. God chose to use the male terminology when pointing to the human race to remind all of humanity of man’s key role in authority and leading.

8. The argument from creation’s accountability.

Genesis 3:9 states:
“And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?”

God spoke to Adam first after the Fall. This is a very important and noticeable point. In the Hebrew text the expression “Adam” (the man) and the pronouns “him” and “thou” are all singular. God came to Adam and not to Eve. This tells us that Adam was the responsible leader and head of the woman. If the man were not the spiritual leader of the home, then God would have not come to the husband first (Genesis 3:9). Adam must give the first account to God for the moral life of the family in the Garden of Eden.

Even though Eve had sinned first, God first summoned Adam to give account for what has happened in his family. Adam was the one primarily accountable to God for the conduct of his family. This whole episode is similar to what occurred even before the Fall. God gave commands to Adam (Gen. 2:15-17) which would indicate that he had a primary responsibility that belonged to him alone.

It’s very interesting that Satan in the form of the serpent came to Eve and not to Adam. This is because Satan wanted to create the Feminist Movement at the very offset of history. Feminism actually began in the Garden when Eve, who we could call the first feminist, listened to Satan’s lies, stepped out from under Adam’s authority, and acted independently of Adam’s leadership. This ultimately resulted in the entire human race being plunged into sin.

Bypassing the leadership of the man, the serpent went after the woman, who was by design the follower. It must be understood that Eve sinned not only in disobeying God's specific command but also in acting independently of her husband by failing to consult him about the serpent's temptation. Adam sinned not only by disobeying God's command but also by giving in to Eve's usurped leadership role. Adam failed to exercise his God-given authority. In the end both the man and the woman twisted God's plan for their relationship, reversing their roles. As a result, marriage has never been the same in beauty and harmony, as it was in the initial days of creation.

The original marital relationship was so pure and perfect that Adam's headship over Eve was a manifestation of his consuming love for her, and her submission to him was a manifestation of her consuming love for him. No selfishness or self-will marred their relationship and roles. Each lived for the other in perfect fulfillment of their created purpose and under God's perfect provision and care. However, when Eve sinned and then caused Adam to sin the perfect harmony was broken.

In any event, God came to Adam because He was the responsible leader and authority of the home. God's appearance to Adam assumes his leadership role. The same is true today. When the home becomes disorderly God comes to the man and asks the man to be accountable for his wife and family. Adam, where are thou? Men, where are we today in relationship to seeing our wife and family live for God and do His will for their lives? Are we in the place of leadership ready to give spiritual guidance and direction to them? Let us get on with directing our families in the right way and raising our families for God. Adam, where art thou? This tells us that man is to be the leader and authority of the marriage and home life. He is to take responsibility for the actions of his wife and children (Joshua 24:15 – "as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD").

9. The argument from creation's purpose.

Genesis 2:18
"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."

And the LORD God said! This is all that matters! The conclusions of modern-day feminists don't matter. The conclusions of humanists, psychologists, and family experts of today mean nothing. God's view and statements on marriage and the family is the final word! Since God created human as male and female (Matt. 19:4) He alone, as the sovereign Lord, has the right to determine their roles.

The Bible says that God made Adam a "help meet" (a helper corresponding to him). This means that Eve was unlike the animal kingdom. She was like Adam in that she could assist him in the daily routine of living. The lions, tigers, and bears would not suit Adam. A chimpanzee would not do. The animal world did not correspond to Adam's likeness and needs. It had to be a helper suitable to his own creative kind. Eve was Adam's creative counterpart.

This means that Eve was equal to Adam in the sense that she corresponded to Adam's human likeness and image, which we know was God's image. She was created as a valuable human life that was full of dignity and worth before God. However, the fact that she was created as Adam's helper sheds more light on male leadership and authority. Eve was created like Adam in His nature and design but unlike Adam in her position of authority and leadership. She was a helper and not a leader. She was a follower and not the authority figure.

As the helper God wanted Eve to assist Adam, her head and leader, to help accomplish God's will and plan for his life. The context of the entire Genesis record is clearly defining the helper (woman) as the submissive follower and assistant to the leader (man). Immediately after Eve's creation the woman knew about Adam's headship in that she was brought to the man to be his helper and the one who follow his leading and direction. The headship was clearly established and when Eve was brought to Adam and there was no doubt in her mind that he was in charge!

The purpose for a woman's existence is tied to the benefit of the man (1 Cor. 11:9 - "Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man"). The fact that the woman was created for the benefit of the man implies male leadership or rule over the woman. In addition, we have already seen that the man is the actual source or

origin of the woman's existence (Gen. 2:20-23) and this in itself adds even further proof for the functional order of male authority over women and female submission to man's authority (1 Cor. 11:8 – "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman for the man"). Paul uses these arguments to support the headship of the man over the woman and brings the arguments back to creation – the way it was in the beginning!

The creation factors cannot be overlooked. God created functional authority and submission before the Genesis Fall. The roles of marriage were not ordained by God as a result of the Fall and they were not a divine penalty or curse for the entrance of human sin into the world. Rather, these roles were created by God from the very beginning.

Of course, radical feminists react to the statement that a woman is the man's helper by arguing that God is also man's helper and He is greater in authority and power than man (Ps. 33:20; 70:5; 115:9). With this type of reasoning they attempt to make woman a helper that is equal in position to man and even greater in authority to the man. Spencer boldly concludes that "God created woman to be 'in front of' or 'visible' to Adam, which would symbolize equality (if not superiority!) in all respects. Even more, one can argue that the female is the helper who rules over the one she helps!" (Beyond the Curse, 25).

This conclusion is both sadness and madness! It is a clear distortion of the Scriptures meaning and intent in the contextual setting of Genesis. Now a helper may have more authority, equal authority, or lesser authority. For example, a police officer may ask me to give a description of a bank robber in order to help him catch the bandit. In this case the officer would have more authority over me while I was helping him. I can help my neighbor move and while helping him possess equal authority with him. I can also help my son with his homework and I would possess authority over my son since he is my child.

So one can see that the context is very important in determining whether or not the helper has authority. The context and flow of the creation account in Genesis signifies that Eve was created as Adam's

helper because Adam has authority over Eve by creative rights. Furthermore, Eve was created to function as Adam's helper in every area or facet of living. She is designed for the man's existence and is to help the man to fulfill his God-ordained purpose and responsibilities by supporting and encouraging him in his efforts. When a woman rebels against this purpose for her existence, she hinders the man from fulfilling his God-ordained purpose and humiliates him before the rest of the world. In short, bossy domineering women not only forfeit their creative purpose and femininity, they also strip a man of his manhood, which is to lead the family unit.

Paul obviously had creation's purpose in mind when he wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:7 that man "is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man." In other words, the man reflects God's image and glory (greatness and dignity) in a special sense because he was created to be a ruler like God. Man reflects God's glory in the sense that he was created to rule and lead the wife and be like God by possessing a rulership and leadership capacity.

When a man fulfills this purpose he becomes a reflection of God's glory. However, the woman in the marriage relationship actually reflects a man's glory (his greatness and dignity as God's representative leader), but not his image, when she follows his leadership. A woman is the glory of the man for she was created from the man and her creative design and purpose (submission) focuses on the man's glory. When a woman submits to her male head God gets the glory! When the marriage is functioning, as it should, then God is ultimately glorified for His design for marriage is being brought to fruition.

Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr., professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, explains succinctly the paradox of these two accounts – Adam's equal counterpart and helper: "Was Eve Adam's equal? Yes and no. She was his spiritual equal and . . . 'suitable for him.' But she was not his equal in that she was his 'helper.' God did not create man and woman in an undifferentiated way, and their mere maleness and femaleness identify their respective roles. A man, just by virtue of his manhood, is called to lead for God. A woman, just by virtue of her womanhood, is called to help for God" (Male-Female Equality and

Male Headship, Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, 102).

Eve's creative role to help Adam is a clear expression of God's mind concerning her submissive role to Adam and Adam's leadership position and role over her. Only a feminist with an axe to grind will find a loophole in God's intended meaning.

10. The argument from creation's conflict.

When we talk about creation's conflict we are referring to the Genesis Fall that brought conflict to creation's original design and purpose for marriage and the family unit. The curse of Genesis brought a distortion of the roles, not an introduction of new roles, into the marriage relationship. Adam's sin began a curse that would affect the most basic elements of human life and society. Today we still feel the affects of the curse. In fact, the feminist movement has filtered into the world because of Eve's sin and the resulting curse. There would be pain in death, pain in childbirth, pain in hard work, and pain in the marriage relationship. The effects of the curse include these:

- Death (Gen. 2:17): God warned Adam, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The pain of death and dying would now become part of the human race.

- Pain in childbearing (3:16): The wonderful reality and joy of having a child would be somewhat overshadowed by the anguish of childbirth. God would produce pain on Eve's particular area of responsibility in bearing children.

- Strenuous work (3:17–19): Man was cursed with hard work, trouble, and frustration in trying to make a decent living and providing for his family. God would produce pain on Adam's particular area of responsibility in earning a living.

- Strife in marriage (3:16): As a consequence of Eve's disobedience and her failure to consult Adam about the serpent's temptation, God told her, "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." This aspect of the curse is of interest in our study

because it predicts marital strife or division brought on by a husband's oppressive rule over his wife and a wife's desire to dominate and lead in the marriage relationship. This means that pain and conflict would come into the relationship between Adam and Eve.

The Hebrew word translated "rule" means "to reign." In the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) the word means "to elevate to an official position." The implication is that a different type of man's rule would come about because of the curse. There would be a new outward form and carnal display of authoritarian rule over the woman. It would be a display of harsh and selfish rule over the woman, one that had not existed prior to the Fall.

You will remember that both Adam and Eve fulfilled their God-given roles in perfect harmony, love, purity, and sinlessness before the Fall. But now the roles would become polluted or distorted and the male would try to dictate an unloving authoritative rule over the woman and bring her into oppression. This is a terrible tragedy on the man's part. A woman in the marriage relationship is to be treated with dignity for she is created in the image of God like the man. She is as valuable to God as the man. Her life is precious to God just like the man's life.

Because of this she is never to be treated harshly but treated with dignity and loving compassion. Anything less than loving leadership is a distortion of the original creative design and is an impulse that comes from the Genesis curse. In short, men who treat wives like second-class people, or their slaves, are not expressing true Biblical manhood. Instead, they are acting like renegade men who are following the distortion of marriage life resulting from the Genesis curse.

In response to the harsh actions and attitudes of the man toward the wife, the woman would rise up and try to dominate the position of male leadership and authority. The word "desire" in the expression "thy desire shall be to thy husband" (Gen, 3:16) cannot be a sexual desire since Adam and Eve already possessed this desire before the Fall. God had told them to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28). Furthermore, sexual desire is not evil but a positive point of the marital relationship.

The Hebrew word translated “desire” (“to urge,” or “to seek control over”) is the identical Hebrew word that is used in the next chapter. Genesis 4:7, “If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.” In Genesis 4:7 God warns Cain that sin desired to control him and sin is pictured as a wild animal outside Cain’s door waiting to pounce upon him. Nevertheless, God told Cain that he must in return master sin. Sin wanted to master Cain, but God commanded Cain to master sin.

So God used this word “desire” in the sense to rule or dominate. Apparently the “desire” of Gen. 3:16 has the same meaning and significance as Genesis 4:7 for this is the only other place Moses uses the word and it’s in close proximity to the previous use of the word. Based on linguistic and parallel themes between this verse and Genesis 3:16, we must understand the word “desire” to mean a polluted or impure desire of the woman, a desire to overrule the man and seek authority in the marriage relationship. The woman would now possess an aggressive desire against her husband, one that would bring her into conflict with him.

The curse on Eve was that woman’s desire would be to usurp man’s headship, yet he would resist that desire and subdue it through brutish means. Hence, we have the battle of the sexes beginning as a result of the Genesis Curse. Sin has wrecked everything and only regeneration and a return to Spirit-directed roles can begin to reverse the Genesis curse. Some women are following the distortion that the curse brought upon marriage because they aggressively desire to overtake the man’s role and run the family. In short, they are wearing the pants in the household! This is a very common scene even in Christian households of today. As a wife, you need to allow yourself to return to Biblical womanhood and allow your man to express Biblical manhood in the family unit.

One man said, “My wife is an angel.” “You are lucky,” the other man said, “My wife is still living!” Someone else said, “Pray one hour before going to war, two hours before going to sea, three hours before getting married.” Well, the truth is out. Marriage is difficult in some ways because of sin and the Genesis curse. The rooster and the hen of the household need to make a lot of adjustments and seek

to pattern their home according to God's Word and be filled with the Spirit of God. What was lost in Genesis can only gradually be regained as Christian men and women surrender to God's plan and Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-25).

One writer sums it up this way:
"With the Fall and its curse came the distortion of woman's proper submissiveness and of man's proper authority. That is where the battle of the sexes began, where women's liberation movements and male chauvinism were born. Women have a sinful inclination to usurp man's authority and men have a sinful inclination to put women under their feet. The divine decree that man would rule over woman in this way was part of God's curse on humanity. The old natures of both men and women is self-preoccupied and self-serving—characteristics that can only destroy rather than support harmonious relationships. Only a manifestation of grace in Christ through the filling of the Holy Spirit can restore the created order and harmony of proper submission in a relationship corrupted by sin."

Throughout history there has been a hideous distortion of the relationship that a man has with his wife. In most cultures of the ancient world, women were treated little more than servants (slaves), and this same practice is still reflected in many parts of the world today. There is an extreme male ruthlessness in our society today and also a feministic drive to be the leader and authority figure in the home. These plagues upon modern-day society stem from the curse.

The modern-day perversion of roles and the responsibilities that God intends for husbands and wives has resulted from the Genesis curse and can be labeled as creation's conflict. This is why we have great conflict in marriages today and why so many are ending in divorce. It's because the curse has promised marital conflict of the two sexes and without the effects of the curse being lessened through regeneration and the ministry of the Holy Spirit marriages are doomed to fail.

Two little teardrops were floating down the river of life. One teardrop said to the other, "Who are you?" The other said, "I'm a teardrop from a girl who loved a man and lost him. But who are you?" "Well, I am a teardrop of the girl who got him."

What we need to remember from this point is that the curse represents the distortion of previous roles - not the introduction of new roles. The very fact that martial roles were distorted by the curse is more evidence that these roles existed before the Fall and were part of God's intended purpose and design for the marriage unit.

11. The argument from creation's restoration.

The New Testament provides us with a reversal and undoing of the Genesis curse in relationship to the marriage. The New Testament Scriptures reveal that through the Spirit's inworking ministry, within the hearts of regenerate believers, that the wife's aggressive impulses against her husband and the husband's harsh rule over his wife can be reversed. Colossians 3:18-19, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them." Ephesians 5:22, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." As we have already seen the context of these arguments do not go back to the Fall but to the creation account (Eph. 5:31; Gen. 2:24).

So in the New Testament God is calling His people back to the beauty of the original creative relationship that existed between Adam and Eve prior to the curse, or before sin marred the perfect marriage relationship and harmony of roles. This restoration fact in the New Testament (getting back to the way it was in creation) adds further evidence that Eve was subject to Adam as her creative head and Adam loved his wife without exhibiting harsh and bitter resentment against her. The creation pattern of headship and submission is the very pattern that God commands husbands and wives to follow.

Everything in the New Testament is taking man back to the original creation or the way life existed in Eden before the Fall. The new birth speaks of being "created originally" (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15 – Greek word "ktisis"), according to God's design, as it was in the days of Eden. Furthermore, the desire of the marriage relationship is to be one of harmony existing between the marriage roles, which reflects the days in Eden, prior to the Genesis Fall. God wants things to go back to the way He designed them to be in the original creation. Such

will be the case when the Millennium is restored to planet earth and harmony exists between the animal kingdom (Isaiah 11:6).

In a very real sense, God wants our marriage relationship to move back to the way it was in Eden, prior to the Fall. God wants us to live in loving harmony, where the man takes on the role of leadership and authority, and where the woman follows the man's leadership with submission, allowing herself to be a helper to him, instead of a hindrance. How much is your marriage like Eden? What improvements and attitudes can you make in your marriage relationship today that would reflect God's design? Is there a need for masculine leadership? Men, God has created us to be a godly leader. Is there a need for you as a wife to back off and allow the man to express his Biblical manhood in the area of leadership? Are you as a woman trying to usurp authority over your husband's leadership role? Is your marriage more like Eden or more like Hollywood?

12. The argument from creation's mystery.

Ephesians 5:22-24
"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

Ephesians 5:32 then adds:
"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

Although Adam and Eve did not know it, their creative relationship represented the future relationship that would exist between Christ and the Church (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18). This is called a "mystery" (sacred secret) because it is truth that was withheld during the era of Old Testament revelation but truth that is now revealed in New Testament times. Adam and Eve's relationship was created to represent this specific New Testament relationship between Christ and His Church (the mystery) and this is what all marriages are supposed to represent.

This is a Spirit-inspired mystery that cannot be shuffled around and rearranged according our own whims and personal preferences. In the Old Testament relationship Adam represented Christ and Eve represented the Church. Of course, it must be understood that the relationship between Christ and the Church is not culturally bound. It is the same for all generations and is not reversible. The same is true about marriage for which the type was derived. Since this non-cultural relationship between Christ and the Church is patterned after the initial marriage relationship in Genesis then it's also true that the marriage roles of headship and submission are not culturally bound. There is the clear message of the New Testament texts.

In the New Testament relationship Christ has the headship role over the Church. This reflects the same way it was in the original creation. Adam was head of the wife. The man possessed a leadership role the wife did not have just as Christ possesses the headship and leadership role over the Church (1 Cor. 11:3). The typological parallel is easily to see. The original marriage design in Genesis was one of male authority and female submission to man's authority, even as the marriage between Christ and the Church is one of headship and submission.

This New Testament fulfillment of an Old Testament type cannot be overlooked unless one is wearing feministic bifocals. So the mystery of Christ's relationship between the Church was hidden in Adam's relationship with Eve. Both portrayed headship and submission, even as the Church is submissive to Christ, and this was God's design from the original creative order (Eph. 5:31). God made functional headship and submission when he created Adam and Eve and this is why the same relationship exists between Christ and the Church.

13. The argument from creation's beginning.

Matthew 19:3-8 records these words:
"The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no

more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

Some may view this as a moot or weak argument but Jesus gives to us a final, revealing, simple, and concluding argument to ponder in light of this present discussion. When confronted about the whole matter of divorce Jesus took people back to Genesis. He took them back to the beginning and the way God designed marriage to be from its initial inception. God never wanted divorce as part of the marriage and society. Whatever man ordains or approves does not override what God has ordained at the beginning. The same would be true about female dominance over male authority. The point Jesus impresses upon our hearts is to go back to the beginning and see what God's blueprint reveals concerning marriage.

The beginning, as we have seen in the above points, clearly reveals male authority over women and unless one embraces improper hermeneutics and a biased humanistic bent they will come to no other conclusion but one. The Bible teaches male leadership over the woman in every area and facet of life. As Jesus would say, "This is the way it was in the beginning." The above points have taken us back to the beginning, before the Genesis Fall, to give indisputable evidence that God ordained functional male authority and female submission to this authority.

What is taking place in our society, Christian homes, and even the church is in direct violation to God's beginning plan for marriage, the church, and all of societal living. When a marriage, church, and society defy God's plans they can only reap a harvest of misery, confusion, and heartache.

In conclusion, these thirteen Biblical arguments teach us that male headship and leadership was created by God and existed before the Genesis Fall. Male headship is not some kind of distorted male-chauvinist display of his carnal nature due to the curse. It is actually a

God-given right built into a man's personal existence. Manhood means leadership. To be a man means to be a leader.

The New Testament limits the ministries of women in certain respects due to conformity with the order of male rule and female submission, as it was established in the creation account of Genesis (1 Tim. 2:12-13; 1 Cor. 14:34; 1 Tim. 3:1-2; Eph. 5:22-23, 31-32; 1 Pet. 3:5). Throughout Israel's history women were never expected to be in governmental ruling positions (Isaiah 3:12) simply because of the man's ruling and headship authority over women (Numbers 30:1, 16).

It's interesting that only Miriam (a woman) was stricken with leprosy for challenging Moses' authority (Numbers 12:1-15). Places of leadership and ruling capacities were to always be filled by men. The Bible records exceptions to the rule (Judges 4:4-5) but never with God's approval. Such passages as this one are historical passages that record facts; they are not teaching passages that promote God's favor and blessing upon women rulers. This is because of the creative order established in Genesis. Man was created to rule and lead women – not vice-versa. This is true within the household, the church, and world governments. This is a clear, consistent, and uniform pattern established in the Bible and throughout history. The home, the church, and the world are to be subject to the Creator's and creation's order.