

Most of you have probably noticed that an increasingly popular home improvement project in the last decade has been the creation of a **home theatre**.

While people have been showing movies in their homes since the 1950's, the advent of both digital and laser technology has enabled more and more households to designate entire rooms where the figures of the big screen can come to life.....(some even in 3D)...right in their own homes.

What most people are **not** aware of, however, is that home theatres have actually been around since the beginning of time.

Because... the human family was designed by God to be a **living DRAMA** of who He is and how He relates to His people....

That means... your marriage... your parenting...your family... is **not an end in itself**...

Neither is it merely a launching pad for happy, successful people...

Your family is rightfully **God's Theatre**... created so that He could show you and those in your audience **Who** He is....on the big screen of how you function according to His design...

Even though, we **all** fall far short of displaying God's true character in our family.....

To the degree that you **WANT** this to happen..... God is able to give you... and others Intermittent glimpses.... **video clips** (if you will) of who He is.... and what He has done....

through Your Family as **God's Theatre**

That is the analogy I hope will help you as we look at what is perhaps the most famous section of our study of Ephesians....(going to begin shortly in 5:22)

First I want you to understand that this section (on marriage) is located in the broader context of Paul teaching the church **how to walk with God in every area of their life**....

He wants us to SEE that all the events and every relationship in our lives.... is designed to be a part of **His drama**....**lived out by us**....

He has written **the script**..... for this play.....here in the Bible.....

Footnote here:

If you don't BELIEVE that..... that **THIS** is the Divinely Inspired MANUSCRIPT... of the life God wants to live through you....

Then the theatre of your life and home... will never be anything more than **some sideshow** about **YOU**.....

which (as you know) is here today and gone tomorrow.....

And there is no clearer way to determine if you think it is about you.....than when you come across some **difficult text**.... like the one we are going to study today.....

You will CHANGE or **TWIST** the Script..... according to what seems best to you.....

You will OVERLOOK or DISCOUNT....or even OMIT....them in order to make God fit into **your** box.

But God has given us His Holy Word..... **not** so we can **re-define HIM** (according to our liking)...

But so that His Holy Spirit can **RE-SHAPE us**...into the image of His Beloved Son....

One of the most powerful agents for Him accomplishing this... is by putting us together with another sinner in **MARRIAGE**.

If you are a single adult (widowed, divorced, not yet married) please do not think you are not included in what God has to say today....

As long as you are a part of the Bride of Christ – the church...You are likewise part of the Drama He is putting on display... you are part of His family...

Since it was before Christmas when we last looked at this section....

Let's go back up to (Eph. 5:15) get some CONTEXT....

God (through Paul) tells us to be **CAREFUL** how we walk.... not to be drunks.... but to be **FILLED** with His Spirit... **rejoicing** with singing...and letting the Word of God flow out of our mouths to build up one another...

This REJOICING... this **corporate gladness** of having been brought into GOD's family... is what empowers us to do the sometimes difficult ROLE He asks us to fulfill..

Ephesians 5:20-21

"giving thanks always and **for everything** to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **submitting** to one another out of **reverence** for Christ."

The backdrop of the stage of Your Home Theatre.... is a consistent practice of **THANKING** God for everything....He has put in your life...

Thank Him for your spouse (if you have one).... even though they might not be all you want them to be....

Thank Him for your children....even if they are causing you grief right now....

Then... according to your role....

SUBMIT – one to those in authority over you....out of the **fear** of Christ.

- SUBMISSION is not something most Americans value.

We don't like to think of ourselves as **anybody's subjects**....

What we value is **INdependence**....

While we might tip our hat to authorities..... truth be known we really don't **like** ANYONE telling us what to do.....

so that we can focus on maximizing our **own potential**....and doing whatever seems right in our own eyes....

Whatever **FEELS right** at the time.

SUBMISSION sounds like the **opposite** of any of those things.....

Especially when God asks you to submit to someone who **sins** against you every day..... difficult is too soft of a word to describe that task....

That is why He tells you WHO it is that you are really submitting toas you obey His command...

If you desire...

Your Family as God's Theatre...

1. **Yield to the Director of the Play**

A theatre director is ultimately responsible for making sure that everything in the play comes together.... Often he is the one who casts actors in their roles...and asks them to follow his lead....

The **Director** of God's play...(going on all across the world right now)....is the Lord Jesus Himself.

Reigning from His **Directors Throne** in glory.... He has sent His Holy Spirit into the lives of husbands and wives and children and employees...

and church members and pastors....

and the Spirit brings to their remembrance His directions from the Script.

The Spirit gives each of them GRACE.....

to **YIELD** to those God has placed in authority over them....

to do so **as if** they are yielding to / submitting to Christ Himself.

So when God says.... submit to others.... He is **NOT** telling you to do so on the basis of their character or worthiness.....

But to do so as an ACT of **obedient worship** towards Christ Himself.....

To submit and be subject to God ordained authority BECAUSE Christ has **said to** in His Word...

Because of a common distortion and twisting of Scripture in our modern era.....

I think it is necessary to clarify here.... that this does **NOT** mean in the theatre of God.... every believer submits to everyone....

While Scripture does call us to **outdo one another in showing HONOR**...

We are called to a reciprocal contest (if you will) of me respecting and honoring you....and you me...

Of me preferring and considering your needs as more important than my own....and you me...

We are to serve one another.... just as Christ came to serve us....

Those commands apply all across the board of anyone who is a Christian....

But the Gr. word for **SUBMIT** (in the NT) and even in extra biblical literature... is **never** used to describe a **reciprocal** relationship of what some are purporting today as "mutual submission."

Wayne Grudem – The Gr. word used here (hypotasso) **always** signifies a ONE DIRECTIONAL submission to authority.....

Authority -is God's means of creating ORDER and structure in the home, in the workplace and in the world....

So we see in Scripture... God's commands that:

employees willingly submit to their supervisors....

That **children** should submit to and honor their parents....

That **citizens** should be **subject** to governing authorities.....

that **the church** should submit to Christ....

- Those relationships are NEVER reversed.

And in the theatre of the HOME..... (because God wants to display Christ's relationship to His Bride the church)....

He specifically says....

Ephesians 5:22

" Wives, **submit to** your own husbands, **as to the Lord.**"

This is merely a FILLING OUT of the submission Paul was calling for in v. 21...

But note...he repeats the motivation.... "as **to** the LORD."

Ladies... this is an **earnest appeal** from the LORD to do something very difficult..(because of sin)....

But it is an appeal from **the ONE** who willingly submitted to death on the cross for those very sins....

when Jesus was **not** WANTING to go suffer the wrath of God in your place....

He prayed to the Father.... "...nevertheless, not **my** will, but Yours be done.."

and He is merely asking you to follow in His footsteps....

He is asking you **TRUST** Him ...so that by being subject to the authority of your own husband.... you DISPLAY the proper order of bride to bridegroom....

of Church to Savior...

HUSBANDS - It is important to note that God is **not** telling you”make sure your wife is submissive to you...”.

That is **NOT** your job!....

(You’ll find out next week.... that your plate will be full... trying to carry out **your** covenant RESPONSIBILITY towards your wife)

Here.....God is exhorting the wives to willingly **submit yourselves** to your own husbands... as if you are submitting to Jesus Himself...

It is an act of **FAITH**..... you are (by the grace of God) taking Him at His word.... often **in spite of** whether your husband is worthy of such an honor.

Few things **astonish** me more.... than to watch ladies fear God and trust in Him enough to SUBMIT to husbands while they are clearly sinning or in error.

To watch them RESPECT him..... when he has actually dishonored himself....

To some of you, that may seem nothing short of **ridiculous!**

But here is how God works that together for good....

1 Peter 3:1-2

" Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives— when they see your respectful and pure conduct."

We men... can only imagine how HARD it often is.... but to the degree that God gives you faith to do so..... I hope you will experience **God's pleasure** today.....

This is not a call for you to submit to every man in the church or certainly in the world....

You have been joined to **one** man....God asks you to submit **to Him**.

Ultimate reason for that The STRUCTURE of the Marriage must be in proper array... if God is going to be able to **tell His story** through your family theatre...

If you want that....if you genuinely WANT the beauty of God's story on display through your family....

Ask Him for grace to....

2. Faithfully Play **Your** Part

May have seen in the news this week that a two headed calf was born over in Russia....

I didn't want to show you a picture because it is weird looking to say the least.....

But I bring it up because they are saying that both heads eat.... and function as if they were both the control center of the rest of the body....

Not sure what caused the mutation.... but it is clear that God designed cows...(before the fall) like all other creatures to have **ONE head**....

In the same way He designed the new creation of the union of a husband and wife to only have one head.

Ephesians 5:23

"For the husband is **the head** of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior."

The **rational** God has for defining roles and relationships within marriage....is His larger purpose of showing off the glorious mystery of the **spiritual union** of Christ and His church.

The HEAD represents a position of **authority**. God the Father has made Christ the King of His people.... the church.

Just as Christ reigns in loving authority over His Bride (the church) for her good....

Men are to be the head of their homes.

This does NOT mean men are more **valuable**....

God forever declared that men and women are **equal in VALUE**... by saying...in Gen. 2 that we have been created in His image....both male and female.

You recall that Adam was created first.... and then God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him and took from his side a rib.... and fashioned a woman out of the man.

He created her to be his HELPMEEET.... His companion....

One called alongside.... to **COMPLETE** him....

This completion took place in MARRIAGE... as God made the two ...one.

Matthew 19:4-6

"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold

fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh'? So they are **no longer two** but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.'"

A married couple is ONE new family unit.... **no longer two** (says your maker) but ONE....

God has ordained that the husband is the head of the wife.....and has **designed** him to live out of that capacity. He has designed a man particularly to **shoulder** the responsibility to direct and provide for his family...in some ways to **PROTECT** them from the world.

I love the word picture of God making a man the **UMBRELLA** ...over his wife and family...

He takes the hits....he keeps her dry.... as well as any children God gives them

Likewise, God has **UNIQUELY** designed women to nurture and care for both her husband and the children.

- To be the **HEARTBEAT** if you will of the family....

To exercise **compassion** towards others and to **HELP** her husband in any way she can.

Hear me!

God has designed the wife to make **WISE recommendations** and to help her husband see things from a balanced perspective...

The husband **NEEDS** that input from his wife..... otherwise he will often shoot from the hip without properly considering all the factors.

But in the end.... it pleases God (ladies) if **by faith**.... you are able to leave the final decisions on important matters to your husband. Rest assured, he will stand before God for any careless mistakes he makes without properly weighing the input you give him.

But according to God's design.... the husband is the **HEAD** ...

So what God has designed in marriage is **EQUALITY** with a **divinely appointed order**.

WARNING (men) – this authority (**headship**) is **DELEGATED** to you by God... to be used for the good of your wife and family. Your authority is **LIMITED** by the parameters God has set forth for all His children here in His word.

John Stott says it well (men) - "you can never command what God forbids...or forbid what God commands..."

So **ladies**, while you are to submit to your husband as unto the LORD.... that does not mean He is your God...

He is abusing his God given authority if he is ordering you to sin.....

We have ONE Lord **together**... the LORD Jesus Christ.... our marriages... and our families are **subsets of His Body** for which He sacrificially gave up His life.

In order to put the beauty of His redemption on display...

- **You must play the part for which you have been CAST by God....**

TRUST Him to be glorified in your marriage as you do....

Each ROLE is integral to the success of the PLAY.....

One of the ways Satan is sending a **mixed message** to our world through families today.... is by both husbands and wives DISTORTING their roles.... God predicted this would happen back in Gen. 3

Instead of being content to sacrificially love and **lead** His wife...men either resort to RULING over them with an iron fist.... OR (on the other hand) abdicating their responsibilities altogether....

Likewise, instead of trusting God to care for them under the safety of faithful obedience.... wives have sought to **USURP** their husband's role.... and take it upon themselves....

In the new creation which God brings about in believers through Christ, however..... we have new power to SHED those sinful and destructive desires and patterns ...

In order to GO BACK TO God's original design!

Ephesians 5:24

"Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands."

The basic principle behind the religion of Islam is submission.

As Islam spread across Africa centuries ago.... thousands of people were forced to convert...(to submit to Allah and his ordinances) or die by the sword.

Forced SUBMISSION.

But when God brings someone into his household... the church...

He does so bringing them within the hearing of the good news of His love for them in Jesus Christ...

As they hear the TRUTH of the word of God..... His Holy Spirit germinates those seeds of life.....

God opens their eyes... to understand what He is saying to them

He grants them a realization that they have sinned against God and deserve hell....

As God gives them ears to hear....that He has sent a Savior!

They find in themselves a new DESIRE to run to Christ!

Now... They **WANT** to follow Jesus.... they **WANT** to obey His commands.... because they have experienced His love.

That is who makes up the CHURCH of the living God.....

We are not PERFECT people.... we are simply sinners whose sin debt has been paid by Jesus on the cross....

So He has become our HEAD... our authority...

And even though we FAIL often.... we **WANT** to submit to our GLORIOUS King Jesus....

Out of LOVE.... we WANT to do even the hard things he asks..... if it will bring honor to His name....

So that the Word of God will not be reviled....

Wives....to the degree that you find grace to submit to your husband....

you gloriously DEPICT how Christ's Bride the church responds to Him.

Your Family (imperfect as it may be) has become God's Theatre....

If God has convicted you today.... that in some way you have fallen short in fulfilling your ROLE... your part in His drama.....

There is grace to repent... receive forgiveness.... and get back up on stage...

to TELL His story with your life.