

A [Response](#) to “Marriage without a **Helpmate**”

In the January 2020 edition of *Pentecostal Life*, Dr. Daniel Segraves offers a thought provoking article regarding the biblical relationship between a man and a woman in marriage. In this article, Dr. Segraves begins in Genesis with God’s creation of woman as a “help meet” i.e. a “suitable helper” for the man in **procreation**. Then he examines the implications of man’s sin in the Garden, and how this affects the marriage relationship. Dr. Segraves contends, “When God told Eve her husband would rule over her, it was simply His observation about what their relationship would be as a consequence of sin.” He further postulates that because of Christ’s death, Christians can “seek to find the restoration of marriages as God intended ... characterized by mutual submission of the husband and wife (Ephesians 5:21; **I Corinthians 7:4–5**).” Dr. Segraves contends that the word “submit” does not appear in the Greek text of Ephesians 5:22. Likewise, he asserts that the word “submit” in Ephesians 5:21 “calls for the wife to submit to her husband, but also for the husband to submit to his wife.” He further adds that the word “head” (*kephalē*) in Ephesians 5:23 and I Corinthians 11:3 does not necessarily refer to rank or authority, but indicates “the idea of source or origin.” Dr. Segraves concludes his article pointing out that Jesus included women among His disciples and closest friends.

While Dr. Segraves does not specifically mention women in ministry, I feel that his conclusion illustrates the article’s greater intent as an affirmation of women’s roles in the five-fold ministry. To this conclusion, I agree. However, **a woman’s call into the pulpit ministry does not exempt them from the biblical precepts of a wife’s submission toward her own husband**. This is the danger in fully embracing the Egalitarian interpretation. Many denominational errors affect the Egalitarian view, which is why we must affirm women’s roles in the pulpit ministry strictly from Apostolic theology.

**Comment [DS1]:** Bro. Weatherly, thank you for your response to my article. It is well-written, and I appreciate the opportunity to consider your view. You will see my comments below. Blessings!

**Comment [DS2]:** Although procreation is certainly a significant reason for the creation of male and female, the first reference to the creation of humans sees other reasons indicating equality apart from procreation: “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’ So **God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth’” (Genesis 1:26-28).

This earliest statement about humanity reveals God’s intention for the relationship between male and female. It describes shared dominion and shared imagery (i.e., both the man and the woman are made in the image of God). Before Genesis 3, there is no hint of male dominance and female submission.

**Comment [DS3]:** The relationship between husband and wife must take I Corinthians 7:3-5 into consideration. I don’t see this in your response. Paul’s treatment of marital relations in the house codes, like Ephesians and Colossians, cannot be in opposition to this answer to the Corinthians: “Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”

**Comment [DS4]:** Before I respond to your understanding of Ephesians 5:21-23 and I Corinthians 11:3, I should point out that in the history of Oneness Pentecostalism, we have had significant numbers of married women called into the five-fold ministry. To reject the idea of mutual submission would certainly have introduced unnecessary difficulties into these relationships.

Dr. Seagraves correctly explains the difference between the mistaken term, “helpmate,” and the biblical term “help meet.” The phrase “help meet,” a noun-adjective phrase, later became misunderstood as a modified noun, “helpmeet” or “helpmate.” The adjective “meet” in the KJV refers to something that is suitable, proper, or fit. Thus, God took Eve “out of” man to be his suitable helper or companion in **procreation**.

However, a wife’s submission to her husband is not the result of Adam’s sin in the Garden. Genesis 3:16 does not simply state that the husband shall rule over his wife. This statement actually contrasts with “thy desire shall be to thy husband.” God’s judgement that a wife’s “desire shall be unto her husband, and he shall rule over you” speaks of sin’s effect on the relationship of a husband and wife. The phrases “your desire shall be to your husband” and “he shall rule over you” are antithetical. The word “desire” translates from the Hebrew word *teshûqâh*, found in only three OT passages.<sup>1</sup> The grammar of Genesis 3:16, in Hebrew, equals the same syntactical setting found just fifteen verses away in Genesis 4:7—both spoken by the LORD. Notice the comparison below:

Genesis 3:16b, ... and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

Genesis 4:7b, ... And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

In Genesis 4:7, sin’s “desire” was to possess or control Cain, but the LORD instructed Cain to “rule over” it. This implies an active struggle between Cain and sin. Susan Foh explained, “The woman has the same sort of desire for her husband that sin has for Cain, a desire to possess or control him. This desire disputes the head-ship of the husband ... as a result of the fall, man no longer **rules** easily; he must fight for his headship. Sin has corrupted both the willing

<sup>1</sup> Gen 3:16; 4:7; Song 4:7 [This should be Song 4:10.](#)

**Comment [DS5]:** Again, the woman’s role is not limited to procreation. From creation, the woman was intended to share equally in exercising dominion, and she shared equally in reflecting God’s image.

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**Comment [DS6]:** I’m not quite sure I understand the consistency of the two statements “a wife’s submission to her husband is not the result of Adam’s sin in the Garden” and “God’s judgement that a wife’s ‘desire shall be unto her husband, and he shall rule over you’ speaks of sin’s effect on the relationship of a husband and wife.” These two statements seem to oppose one another. Genesis 3:16 addresses two results of the fall: (1) the multiplication of sorrow, conception, and pain in childbirth, and (2) a negative change in the marital relationship.

As R. S. Hess points out, “The desire of the woman for the *’adām* and his dominion in Genesis 3:16 must be compared with the words of God to Cain in Genesis 4:7, where the rare word for ‘desire’ as well as the word for ‘rule’ also appear together (Hess, 1993a). In both cases the desire is one of authority, and the struggle is one of the wills that exists between people. The statement of male dominance is a judgment of the way life would be, not an expression of the divine will. It is no more sinful to reject and seek to overturn it than it is sinful to use weed killer in light of Genesis 3:18” (R. S. Hess, “Adam,” *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker, eds. [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003], 20).

**Comment [DS7]:** In his comments on Genesis 3:16 and 4:7, with which I agree, M. D. Gow remarks on “[a]nother view [that] has been argued by S. T. Foh (summarized in Wenham 1987, 81-82), noting the parallel with Genesis 4:7, where sin seeks control over Cain but he must master it. Hence she argues that the urge is not a desire for sexual intimacy but a desire to be independent of or to dominate her husband, but he will rule her. Against this view Walton notes that in each of the three texts where *tesuqa* appears there is no common object desired, so it is better to regard it as referring to a basic or inherent instinct. Whichever view one accepts, the comment of D. Kidner is apt: ‘To love and to cherish’ becomes ‘To desire and to dominate’ (Kidner, 71) Consequently, it ‘is hard to see how discussions of ‘male headship’ as an

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submission of the wife and the loving headship of the husband.”<sup>2</sup> The NLT renders Genesis 3:16 as “You will desire to control your husband, **but** he will rule over you.” Thus, Genesis 3:16 does not describe a woman’s submission to her husband because of the Fall. In fact, the opposite is true. Genesis 3:16 declares that because of the Fall, the woman would desire to rule over or control her husband, but the husband would rule over his wife. The New Testament affirms, repeatedly, that the husband’s authority over his wife is due to the order of creation—before the Fall of man. Egalitarians casually overlook this point.

Dr. Seagraves declares that the word “submit” is not found in the Greek text of Ephesians 5:22. However, the word “submit” (*hypotassō*) does appear in the Textus Receptus of which the KJV and NKJV translate. Likewise, the word “submit” (*hypotassō*) occurs in the parallel verse in Colossians 3:18, “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.” Commentators often refer to Ephesians and Colossians as the twin epistles. Colossians and Ephesians contain numerous synonymous passages. In one form or another, Ephesians contains approximately 75 of the 105 verses in Colossians. Just examine Ephesians 5:19–6:9 side by side with Colossian 3:16–4:4 to see that they are synonymous.

Egalitarians often misapply Ephesians 5:21, “submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God,” as teaching a mutual submission between husband and wife. However, the participle “submitting” (*hypotassomenoi*) grammatically coordinates with the preceding participles of vss. 19–20 (*speaking, singing, making melody, giving thanks*) indicating a mutual submission among believers.<sup>3</sup> The fact that a wife is to submit to her own husband in Ephesians

<sup>2</sup> Susan T. Foh, “What is the Woman’s Desire?” *The Westminster Theological Journal* 37 (1974/75), 381–2.

<sup>3</sup> A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 4:544.

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**Comment [DS8]:** Genesis 3:16 does not describe a woman’s submission to her husband at all. It describes her desire to control him, which is a consequence of the fall. Before the fall, there is no evidence of friction or attempts at manipulation between Adam and Eve.

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**Comment [DS9]:** I see no New Testament evidence that the husband’s “authority over his wife is due to the order of creation before the fall of man,” and I discussed the pre-fall relationship between man and the woman in my second comment above.

**Comment [DS10]:** This is a matter of textual criticism, but regardless of the Greek text used, the point is the same. We cannot have the same word (*hypotassō*) meaning different things in such close proximity. In other words, “submit” cannot refer to mutual submission in Ephesians 5:21 but not to mutual submission in the next verse.

Your point is not precisely what Robertson meant. As he pointed out, the word translated “subjection” is not in the Greek text of B, one of the earliest manuscripts (c. 325 A.D.), “But the case of *andrasin* (dative) shows that the verb is understood from verse 21 if not written originally” (A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1931], 4:544). Robertson also said it was grammatically “possible to start a new paragraph” with Ephesians 5:21 “as an independent participle like an imperative.” In other words, Ephesians 5:21-22 are grammatically joined. Whatever submission means in one verse is what it means in the other. The only way this would not be the case would be if Paul wrote something like, “Husbands, do not submit to your wives.” If ...

**Comment [DS11]:** Keener’s comments on Colossians 3:18-21 are also helpful: “Aristotle had developed ‘household codes’ directing a man how to rule his wife, children and slaves properly. By Paul’s day persecuted or minority religious groups suspected of being socially subversive used such codes to show that they upheld traditional Roman family values. Pau ...

**Comment [DS12]:** The following is an excerpt from the book *Marriage: Back to Bible Basics*, written by me and my late wife, Judy. We were married 46 ½ years.

“One of the most extended treatments of marriage in the New Testament is found in Ephesians 5:21-33. The literary form found i ...

5:22 is made abundantly clear in Paul’s conclusion in Ephesians 5:24, “Therefore as the church is subject (*hypotassō*) unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.”

Besides, Ephesians 5:22–24 are not the only NT passages, which instruct wives to submit to their own husbands. As already mentioned the parallel passage in Colossians 3:18 declares that wives should submit to their own husbands. Likewise, Paul instructed in Titus 2:4–5 for the older women to teach the younger women to be “obedient (*hypotassō*) to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.” In addition, Peter, the Apostle to the Jews, charged wives to “be in subjection (*hypotassō*) to your own husbands” (I Peter 3:1) using the holy women of old as an example, who trusted in God “being in subjection (*hypotassō*) unto their own husbands” (I Peter 3:5).

Paul taught that a wife is to submit to her own husband because “the husband is the head of the wife.”<sup>4</sup> The basis for Paul’s teaching is not the judgment of Genesis 3:16, but the creative narrative of Eve being “out of” Adam’s flesh and bone and the marriage relationship that a man “shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.”<sup>5</sup> Dr. Seagraves indicates that the word “head” (*kephalē*) can refer to rank, but also includes the idea of source or origin, as with the head of a river. Even if we were to accept the term “head” (*kephalē*) to indicate “source or origin,” this still would not negate the idea of a wife submitting to her husband. We commonly understand that “source or origin” establishes authority. Take for example that fact that children are to submit to their parents’ authority as their source or origin.

However, the word “head” (*kephalē*) in both I Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23 refers to “authority, leader, or chief” as defined by the standard NT Greek lexicons (BDAG, Thayer,

<sup>4</sup> Eph 5:22–23.

<sup>5</sup> Eph 5:30–31, cf. Gen 2:23–24 (LXX).

**Comment [DS13]:** See comments on the beginning of the previous paragraph.

**Comment [DS14]:** See previous comments.

**Comment [DS15]:** This is an excerpt from my book *First Peter: Standing Fast in the Grace of God* (Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame Press, 1999, reprint 2010).

D. Responsible Conduct in Marriage (3:1-7) - (1) Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; (2) While they behold your chaste conversation, coupled with fear. (3) Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; (4) But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. (5) For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: (6) Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. (7) Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

This section continues Peter’s treatment of the house codes, which originated in 2:13. (See the discussion of house codes in the introductory section to 2:13-17.) Here, Peter called on believing wives to defer to their unbelieving husbands, with a view to leading their husbands to faith in Christ. (See the ...)

**Comment [DS16]:** Again, this seems to be at odds with the earlier statements “a wife’s submission to her husband is not the result of Adam’s sin in the Garden” and “God’s judgement that a wife’s ‘desire shall be unto her husband, and he shall rule over you’ speaks of sin’s effect on the relationship of a husband and wife.”

**Comment [DS17]:** There is nothing in Ephesians 5:30-31 or Genesis 2:23-24 to suggest that “the husband is the head of the wife.” Instead, these texts point out that the two are “one flesh.” The focus is on their equality, as in *‘azer kenegdō*, not on any idea of male “headship” or “authority.”

**Comment [DS18]:** Hopefully, these biblical texts do not call on a wife to submit to her husband’s authority in the sense that children are to submit to their parents’ authority!

Cremer, and Moulton–Milligan).<sup>6</sup> In fact, the LXX utilizes the word *kephalē* metaphorically twelve times, with each of these occurrences referring to “authority, leader, or chief.”

Judges 10:18, And the people *and* princes of Gilead said one to another, What man *is* he that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? he shall be **head** (*kephalē* LXX) over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

Judges 11:8, And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore we turn again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be our **head** (*kephalē* LXX) over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

Judges 11:9, And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the LORD deliver them before me, shall I be your **head** (*kephalē* LXX)?

Judges 11:11, Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him **head** (*kephalē* LXX) and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words before the LORD in Mizpeh.

2 Samuel 22:44, Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people, thou hast kept me *to be* **head** (*kephalē* LXX) of the heathen: a people *which* I knew not shall serve me.

Psalms 18:43, Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; *and* thou hast made me the **head** (*kephalē* LXX) of the heathen: a people *whom* I have not known shall serve me.

Isaiah 7:8-9, For the **head** (*kephalē* LXX) of Syria *is* Damascus, and the **head** (*kephalē* LXX) of Damascus *is* Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people. And the **head** (*kephalē* LXX) of Ephraim *is* Samaria, and the **head** (*kephalē* LXX) of Samaria *is* Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

Jeremiah 31:7, For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the **chief** (*kephalē* LXX) of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.

Lamentations 1:5, Her adversaries are the **chief** (*kephalē* LXX), her enemies prosper; for the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions: her children are gone into captivity before the enemy.

<sup>6</sup> Liddell–Scott represents the only lexical support of the idea of “source or origin” in classical Greek, citing only two questionable examples. This is not accurate. See the comment above that begins “Lexicons are not dictionaries.”

**Comment [DS19]:** Lexicons are dictionaries. They do not define words. Words are defined by the context in which they are used. That some lexicons or other resources may not recognize the possibility that “origin” or “source” are in the range of meaning is not the final word. To reject “origin” or “source” in favor of BDAG’s “superior rank” (which is applied to “the husband in relation to his wife”) immediately introduces theological problems. “The divine influence on the world results in the series . . . : God the [*kephalē*] of Christ, Christ the [*kephalē*] of man, the man the [*kephalē*] of the woman” (BDAG, 430).

The *Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, a more recent and complete resource that reflects current Greek scholarship, recognizes “beginning, origin” and “mouth” (as of a river) as within the range of meaning for *kephalē* (Franco Montnari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* [Boston: Brill, 2015], 1120). ...

**Comment [DS20]:** My comments about the use of the use of *kephalē* in the LXX take into account that the revision of the LXX by Tov and Polak introduces *kephalē* in cases where it does not appear in the earliest text of the LX...

**Comment [DS21]:** The word *kephalē* does not appear in Judges 10:18. The word translated “head” is ἀρχοντα.

**Comment [DS22]:** The word *kephalē* does not appear in Judges 11:8. The word translated “head” is ἀρχοντα.

**Comment [DS23]:** The word *kephalē* does not appear in Judges 11:9. The word translated “head” is ἀρχοντα.

**Comment [DS24]:** Judges 11:1 does have the phrase κεφαλὴν καὶ εἰς ἀρχηγόν which the NKJV translates “head and commander.” Other translations render the phrase “head and chief,” “head and ruler,” “leader and ...

**Comment [DS25]:** Both II Samuel 22:44 and Psalm 18:43 (virtually synonymous texts) use κεφαλὴν in the sense of leadership. This is recognized by some English translations.

**Comment [DS26]:** The use of κεφαλὴν in these verses introduces various meanings. Sometimes it refers to a city, sometimes to a person.

**Comment [DS27]:** The use of κεφαλὴν here apparently refers to nations considered to be superior to “the remnant of Israel.”

**Comment [DS28]:** The use of κεφαλὴν here refers to Babylon as the conqueror of Jerusalem.

The LXX, the mother of NT Greek, never employs *kephalē* to signify “source or origin.”

For example, in Genesis 2:10, “into four heads,” the LXX renders the Hebrew *rô’sh* (heads) as *archē* (source, beginning) not *kephalē*. Thus, the word “head” (*kephalē*) in I Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:24 describes the husband’s position of authority over his wife, not as the source or origin of his wife. Likewise, I Corinthians 11:8–12 appeals to the LXX creative narrative as the basis for a wife’s submission to her husband. However, Paul qualified his statement in verses 8 & 9 with a “nevertheless” statement that man is not autonomous from the woman, and woman is not autonomous from the man in the order of the Lord. Likewise, a wife’s submission does not imply or demand inferiority. In I Peter 3:1–7, although a wife is to submit to her own husband, they are still “heirs together of the grace of life.” Thus, a true, Apostolic theology of women’s biblical roles includes both their Godly call into pulpit ministry and a wife’s submission to her own husband. The fact that God calls women into the five-fold ministry does not exclude them from submitting to their own husbands.

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**Comment [DS29]:** The absence of a word to represent a specific meaning does not prove the word has the meaning in other contexts.

**Comment [DS30]:** There is no connection between the absence of *kephalē* in Genesis 2:10 and the use of *kephalē* in I Corinthians 11:3. If *kephalē* in I Corinthians 11:3 refers to “the husband’s position of authority over his wife,” it also refers to the authority of Christ over every man (with the contextual indication that Christ is not the authority over women; that is man’s role) and that God is the authority over Christ. This creates questions about the deity of Christ and His relationship with God. The context provided by I Corinthians 11:11–12 indicates I Corinthians 11:3 refers to source or origin, not at

**Comment [DS31]:** See my comments above on I Peter 3:1–7.

**Comment [DS32]:** This is easy to say, but if the husband has “authority” over his wife in any meaningful sense of the word and with no regard for mutual submission, it invites conflicts, struggles, and marital difficulty. If one person in the marriage has “authority” over the other, that person is the *final* authority. How can a married woman with a call to any of these gifts exercise the spiritual authority inherent in the gifts if her husband has authority to which she must submit simply because he is male? How would this work in the case of I Peter 3, when her husband is an unbeliever?