

# G P S

## For Grandparents, Parents and Seniors

By Rick Shrader

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### Headship in the Human Family

**F**rom the beginning God created men and women to be in a marriage relationship with the man as the head of the woman. This was never a master/slave arrangement but rather a complementarity of assigned roles among equals. The Bible gives examples of what this relationship looks like.

In the Godhead. “The head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor 11:3). The Father and the Son, though equal in essence, are complement in function or person. “Priority is not necessarily superiority.” Two can be equal with one as the head. Jesus said, “I always do those things that please Him” (John 8:29).

In the Garden. Adam and Eve were both created in the image of God and thus of equal worth as human beings (Gen 1:27; Gal 3:28). Yet the man is the head as the spiritual priest of the new family, having been created first and from the ground; having named the woman as Eve and mother (Gen 2:23; 3:20), being responsible for the tree and for Eve’s first disobedience (1 Tim 2:14). We sinned in Adam, not in Eve.

In the First Marriage. “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him . . . Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife” (Gen 2:18, 24). Now Adam had a helper in his dominion mandate. “Then God blessed *them*, and God said to *them* . . . Have dominion’ (Gen 1:28). It is not the woman who leaves father and mother but the man. He will begin a new family with her as his partner. He will be the tiller of the ground (from which he came) and she will be the filler of the earth (responsible for the body out of which she came). Complementarity is not a result of the fall but of the sinless creation of man and woman.

In the Fall. Paul makes it clear that though Eve was first deceived (1 Tim 2:14; 2 Cor 11:3) we sinned in Adam not in Eve (Rom 5:12). The human race was in Adam (Heb. *adam*, “man,” Gen 2:7; “mankind,” Gen 5:2; “sons of men,” Prov 8:31) and therefore the sin is truly ours as a member of the race of “man.” In the punishment meted out by God, Adam would still till the ground but in sweat and Eve would still bear the race but in pain. Both would do their part in the dominion mandate and the complementary responsibilities would remain the same.

In the Family. Now when we are told that “the head of woman is man” (1 Cor 11:3) we understand the nature of that headship. Submission is not inferiority and headship is not superiority. Headship is leadership and submission is followership. This arrangement was ordained by God in humanity’s innocence in the garden. Husband and wife find their God-given purpose in the family relationship. Children also find their purpose in their submission to parents (Eph 6:1-3).

In the Church. “There is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28). All Christians are equal as children of God. Yet in the preaching of the gospel and the pastoring of the church, only men are found in the New Testament (1 Tim 3:1-7, Tit 1:5-9). Women find their fulfillment in a complementary role (1 Tim 2:12; Rom 16:1-3) as has always been the case in God’s world.

And so. We will come back to the subject of grandparents in this arrangement. Children grow up and start their own home. A grandparent’s role changes but never loses a spiritual influence. “Wisdom is with aged men, and with length of days, understanding” (Job 12:12).

## Book Review

### *Men and Women in the Church*

By Kevin DeYoung

I have read Kevin DeYoung on a variety of topics and have always found him helpful. This paperback book (of about 150 pages) is one of the best things I have read recently on the family and which closely aligns with the article in this paper. He writes, “So what is this book about? In simplest terms, this book is about divinely designed complementarity of men and women as it applies to life in general and especially to ministry in the church.” Of creation DeYoung writes, “The man’s primary vocation is ‘naming, taming, dividing, and ruling.’ The woman’s primary vocation involves ‘filling, glorifying, generating, establishing communion, and bringing forth new life.” Of the effects of the fall he writes, “The marriage relationship, which was supposed to be marked by mutually beneficial headship and helping, becomes a fight over sinful rebellion and ruling. God designed sexual difference *for* one another; sin takes sexual difference and makes it *opposed* to one another.”

DeYoung wrote this book in 2021 so it is up to date on marriage and church issues. In this volume he will also cover the headship issues in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, the marriage of Christ and the church in Ephesians chapter 5, and the preaching/teaching order in 1 Timothy chapter 3. For solid biblical information on these issues as well as gender and complementarity, this book will be a great read.

## Statistics

The multi-generational household (where more than one generation of families live together) has been fluctuating back and forth for a century. The Pew Research Center points out that in 1900, 57% of adults 65 and older in the US lived in multi-generational households, whereas by 1990 only 17% did. That dramatic drop was due to the mobility of seniors created by retirements, Social Security and Medicare, and post-war prosperity. This created what is called “the social contract,” the so-called agreement between generations, “you leave me alone, and I’ll leave you alone.”

Pew Research is reporting that recently, beginning in about 2008, the multi-generational household is making a comeback with over 6.6 million seniors living with children and grandchildren. This is due to the down-turn in the economy but also to the fact that Boomers have a whole generation of children who are now able to provide for them in their senior years. A real question becomes, who is the “head” of the multi-generational household? 58% of the time it is the grandfather, in 42% of the time it is the son (depending on who moved in with whom!). Pew Research Center, “The Return of the Multi-Generational Family Household,” accessed 8/29/22.

## A Short Word Study

Most people are afraid of dying. They kid themselves about what’s on the other side of death. The believer has assurance that death is just the door to a far better existence, that to be “absent from the body” is to be “present with the Lord” (2 Cor 5:8). The Psalmist said, “You will guide me with your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but you?” (Psa 73:24; see also 49:15). The word “receive” (*laqach*) is used of Enoch in Gen 5:24, “And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took (received) him.” It is also used in 2 Kings 2:10 of Elijah, “If you see me when I am taken (received) from you, it shall be so for you.” Paul knew that to die and be separated from our body is to be immediately taken into God’s presence. One day, however, the trumpet will sound for the whole church and living believers will be “caught up” (received) together to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thes 4:17), body and soul together! In either case, as the Psalmist expressed, “Whom have I in heaven but You?”

## On the Light-Hearted Side

Jacob was 92 and Rebecca was 89 and they were engaged. As they were walking they passed a drug store and went in. “Do you have heart medication?” they asked. “Yes, of course” was the answer. How about for rheumatism?” “Yes, of course.” “Arthritis, jaundice?” “That too.” “What about wheelchairs and walkers?” “All speeds and sizes” was the answer. “Great,” Jacob said, “We’d like to use this store as our bridal registry.”