

Many people of our time- intelligent, sensible people in other realms-seem bent to force marriage to function contrary to its divine nature. Most would immediately see the folly of trying to channel a person with the artistic talent of a Michelangelo into some other field such as building hay rings or shoeing horses, or of trying to change a person with the creative musical genius of Beethoven into the local blacksmith, or of trying to change an inventor, such as Thomas Edison, into a dry goods merchant. As necessary as these professions are, these men were better suited for something else. But these same good people somehow fail to see that to divert woman from her special sphere in the home where she is equipped to do that which no man can do-to place her into some other line of work is equally ill-chosen in its own right. God has assigned a certain role in marriage to the husband and to the wife. These respective roles are a part of the basic order of marriage. To ignore them, or devise our own substitutes, is to invite disaster. In the words of Larry Christensen, "The emancipation of women has brought many needed reforms, but has had the unfortunate side result of robbing women of securities and protections which are their right. Women today-are put upon to shoulder financial problems and worries in the family, to take the lead in raising the children, to represent the family to the community, to make major family decisions, to be spiritual leaders in the family. "All of this is contrary to Divine Order. A woman is not normally equipped by nature to sustain this kind of psychological and emotional pressure and still fulfill her God-appointed role as wife and mother."

The fact that women can do some of these things with excellent competence only camouflages the error of removing her from the real purpose for which God intended her. A woman may have the ability to be an excellent pulpit preacher, but God actually forbids her from doing what is otherwise a very worthy work (1 Cor. 14:34-35).

She has other important things assigned to her. It is said that the preacher Peter Marshall tended to put women on a pedestal. In their sphere, they probably deserve that. They have so much to do that a man cannot do. In one of his sermons, he observed, "Modern girls argue that they have to earn an income in order to establish a home, which would be impossible on their husband's income. [Read Titus 2.] The average woman, if she gives her full time to her home, her husband, her children...if she tries to understand her husband's work.. .to establish around the family a circle of true friends.. .if she provides in the home a proper atmosphere...[if she takes proper time to train the children], if she can do all this, she will be engaged in a life work that will demand every ounce of her strength, every bit of her patience, every talent God has given her, the utmost sacrifice of her love.. .it will demand everything she has and more. And she will find that for which she was created. She will know that she is carrying out the plan of God."

Consider leadership. It is vital-in business, in the church and in the home. Everywhere. In family things, while the husband leads, the wives are the husband's helper. She is necessary. Far from degrading her, God placed the woman at the husband's side for the great good she does him. Whatever activity or endeavor is before a woman in familial things, she should ask herself, "Does this help the family; does this help my husband?" This one simple question will often make a godly woman's decision easy. While the men are also concerned with the family, they must further consider, "Does this help the church?" We may argue with God, but His ways are always best for our own peace, satisfaction, and salvation, here and hereafter.