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PEREMPUAN DI ERA MODERN

Memahami Gereja sebagai Pengantin Wanita

Abstrak

Di era modern, gereja menghadapi berbagai tantangan, salah satunya adalah pandangan terhadap wanita dan peran mereka. Ideologi feminis sangat memengaruhi peran wanita di zaman modern. Meskipun berakar dalam liberalisme, feminisme mencakup banyak aspek, seperti penahbisan wanita, kesetaraan dalam pernikahan, hak aborsi, bahasa netral untuk jenis kelamin dalam Alkitab, dan pencarian untuk ketuhanan yang feminin. Feminis Kristen sering kali merujuk pada ajaran agama dan ideologi di luar bukti-bukti Alkitab dan teks-teks Kristen lainnya. Wanita, khususnya istri, melambangkan citra pengantin, yaitu gereja di hadapan Kristus. Penelitian ini, menggunakan metode kualitatif dari *Systematic Literature Review* dan penelitian eksploratif, menelusuri naratif Alkitabiah tentang wanita seperti jatuhnya Hawa dan mengeksplorasi bagaimana feminisme telah memengaruhi pandangan gereja terhadap peran wanita sebagai istri yang dapat menghasilkan perpecahan pernikahan yang menghambat kesatuan di antara suami istri. Penelitian menemukan bahwa sementara feminisme cenderung mendorong istri untuk memiliki otonomi mereka sendiri, mereka melewatkan pesan yang terdapat pada Kejadian 3:15 yang dapat memecah kesatuan suami istri. Pemahaman terhadap peran wanita akan memberikan wawasan dan berkontribusi pada identitas dan posisi yang benar dari jemaat sebagai pengantin di hadapan Allah.

Kata-kata kunci: istri Kristen, feminisme, kejatuhan Hawa, mempelai Kristus, peran perempuan.

WOMEN IN THE MODERN ERA

Understanding Church as The Bride

Abstract

In the modern era, the church faces various challenges, one of which is the view of women and their roles. Feminist ideology has greatly influenced

the role of women in modern times. Although rooted in liberalism, feminism covers many aspects, such as women's ordination, equality in marriage, abortion rights, gender-neutral language in the Bible, and the search for a feminine deity. Christian feminists often refer to religious teachings and ideologies beyond the evidence of the Bible and other Christian texts. Women, especially wives, symbolize the image of the bride, the church before Christ. This research, using the qualitative method of Systematic Literature Review and exploratory research, traces the Biblical narrative of women such as the fall of Eve and explores how feminism has influenced the church's view of women's role as wives which can result in marital divisions that hinder unity between husband and wife. The research found that while feminism tends to encourage wives to have their own autonomy, they miss the message found in Genesis 3:15 which can fracture the unity of husband and wife. Understanding the role of women will provide insight and contribute to the correct identity and position of the church as a bride before God.

Keywords: Christian wives, feminism, fall of Eve, bride of Christ, women's roles.

INTRODUCTION

The church is the body of Christ with Christ as its head, as in Ephesians 5:23, 24 (King James Version): ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body. ²⁴Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Throughout its millennia, the church, comprising the assembly of the Lord, has strived to uphold a foundational faith rooted in the Scriptures and walk according to His Word. In this modern era, society finds itself in a postmodern age, embracing the principles of liberalism and advocating egalitarianism, which posits that all individuals are equal and entitled to the same rights and opportunities. The concept of feminism, a movement advocating for women's rights based on gender equality, first proposed in 1792 by Mary Wollstonecraft in England and later termed in 1837 by French philosopher Charles Fourier, has become an

integral part of the modern society within which the church exists. It has influenced the church's and women's perspectives on their positions and roles as wives.

Feminism affects how women see themselves, which is the ones with full authority, and does not limit them to be the head of a family. It also affects how society expects them in an egalitarian role, having the same position, influence, and responsibility in decision-making as men.

The position and role of women as wives, emblematic of the congregation's relationship with Christ, trace back to the fall of humanity as depicted in Genesis 3 of the Bible. Understanding the position and role of a wife holds great significance. It goes beyond a wife finding favor in God's eyes; rather, it pertains to comprehending the fundamental importance of this understanding to the entirety of the Christian congregation, both male and female. The assembly, the church, is the bride before Him. Previous research has

been focusing on the area of wives as victims in a marriage conflict; however, this study aims to illuminate the biblically accurate way to look at the women's position as wives and to pull it to an even more comprehensive point of view, the position and role of the congregation before God, as a proper understanding of the position and role of a wife or woman thus determines the correct comprehension of the position and role of the congregation as His bride.

To answer the following research questions: First, how has feminism influenced the church's perspective on women's roles within the congregation, particularly as wives? Second, what does biblical exegesis reveal about the roles of women, especially as wives, in the church, with a focus on the Genesis account of the Fall? Third, how is the tension between egalitarianism and traditional interpretations of women's roles affecting the contemporary church, and what is the significance of a woman's position as a wife within the congregation? Fourth, what challenges and potential dysfunction arise when traditional teachings intersect with evolving societal norms regarding women's roles in the church, and how do these challenges impact women and their husbands? And fifth, how can the church promote restoration, equipping, and unity among its congregants, especially in women's roles as wives, while recognizing the church as the bride before Christ? The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology, a scholarly approach that operates independently seeking to uncover and assess all pertinent literature related to a specific topic to draw conclusions about the focal question by thoroughly

examining the available body of knowledge, is used to systematically search for, discover, and synthesize evidence. The methodology coupled with exploratory research investigate critical aspects concerning the position, role, and dysfunction of Christian women in the modern era. A collection of scholarly articles, identified using relevant keywords, were subjected to verification across their titles, abstracts, keywords, body text, and conclusions, facilitating a categorization process (coding). This article formulates an array of secondary data that provides insights addressing the propositions.

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. Feminism's Impact on the Church's Perspective on Women's Roles

The association of feminist principles with the structure of modern society has not left the church unaffected. The concepts of gender equality and women's rights, proposed by the feminist movement, have provoked reflections on traditional roles assigned to women within religious contexts. The initial propositions of feminism by Mary Wollstonecraft and its later terminology by Charles Fourier laid the foundation for challenging societal norms.

Feminism is a multifaceted movement that encompasses various perspectives and approaches and seeks to address and challenge gender inequalities and advocate for the rights and empowerment of women. Intersectionality, voluntary childlessness, Chicana feminism, and ficto-feminism are some of the topics within feminism that have been explored in recent research.

Intersectionality is a concept that recognizes the interconnected nature of social identities and systems of oppression. In the context of feminism, it highlights the importance of considering how race, class, sexuality, and other factors intersect with gender in shaping women's experiences and struggles for equality (Calderaro & Lépinard, 2021). Research has shown that young white feminists in France and Switzerland acknowledge the need to include non-white feminists but often struggle to incorporate intersectionality into their activism effectively. This gap between desire and reality has been interpreted as a form of hypocrisy and a way to maintain positions of white privilege within the movement (Calderaro & Lépinard 2021).

Voluntary childlessness is a phenomenon that has gained attention in recent years. It refers to the deliberate choice of individuals or couples not to have children. This decision has implications for fertility rates, societal aging, healthcare, and economic growth. Research has explored the experiential journeys of women who have chosen voluntary childlessness to gain insights into their motivations and the impact of this choice on contemporary society (Shaw 2010).

Chicana feminism came about during the second wave of feminist protest in the 1960s and 1970s. This type of feminism centers on the lives and challenges of Mexican-American women. Chicana feminists took established Chicano movement values and changed their meanings to fit their feminist aims. They put Chicano history and family structure at the heart of their ideas (Roth 2007).

Ficto-feminism offers a way to study feminist history in management and

organizational research. It blends collective biography, autoethnography, and fictocriticism to give a new historical perspective. This method draws from feminist arguments and aims to challenge traditional narratives by incorporating fictional elements and personal experiences (Williams 2021).

Feminism encompasses a wide range of topics and approaches and has played a significant role in challenging traditional gender roles and expectations, including the roles and positions of wives within marriage. Feminist perspectives have sought to address the unequal power dynamics and societal expectations that often accompany the role of a wife.

One aspect of feminist discourse on the role of wives is the importance of autonomy and personal agency. Feminists argue that wives should be free to make their own choices and decisions within their marriages rather than being confined to traditional gender roles and expectations. They build solid preferences for pursuing their interests, careers, and personal goals rather than solely focusing on their roles as wives and mothers (Young 2005).

Feminism also critiques the societal pressure on wives to prioritize their husbands' needs and desires above their own. It includes challenging the notion that wives should be submissive and obedient to their husbands and instead advocating for equal partnerships (Jakobsen 2018).

Freeman (1993) explains that today, political parties have become increasingly divided over various topics, including gender roles, sexual behavior, reproduction, childcare, family structure, the interconnection of work and familial responsibilities, and military

service. These subjects, deemed unrelated to politics or non-partisan two decades ago, have emerged as focal points of contention among political factions (Freeman 1993). In Britain, when the 1960s and 1970s sexual liberationist and feminist movements provided women with alternative resources for identity construction, Christian religiosity sharply declined (Brown 2009). LaHaye (1993) stated that because the Bible repeatedly articulates this principle (Genesis 3:16, Ephesians 5:22, Colossians 3:18, Titus 2:5, 1 Peter 3:1-6), and as illustrated in the story of Abraham and Sarah, the concept of wife submission occupies a central position as the husband's authority is not derived from personal achievements, intellectual superiority, moral excellence, or physical prowess, but rather is divinely ordained (LaHaye 1993).

Within the ecclesiastical realm, these challenges often push into the church's changing perception of women's roles, particularly as wives. Feminist ideas have influenced the church's understanding of women's identities, responsibilities, and contributions within the congregation.

2. Biblical Exegesis of Women's Roles

Kelley (2007) said that a wife is responsible for praying for her husband's wisdom and guidance in following God and for obeying him in all things he tells her within the context of God's Word; this is as a support to her husband, as a man must go in the direction God is leading him (Wilson 1990). Cobb and Grigsby (2002) pointed out that the wife is protected from God's will when she defers to the husband.

One may look at the Genesis account of the Fall to comprehend the interaction between women's roles in the church and the scriptural foundation. In Genesis 3:11b-19, the King James Version (KJV) Bible shows the statements God gave after the fall:

- ¹¹ ...Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?
- ¹² And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.
- ¹³ And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.
- ¹⁴ And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:
- ¹⁵ And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.
- ¹⁶ Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.
- ¹⁷ And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;
- ¹⁸ Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;
- ¹⁹ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Focusing on verse 15, textually, “enmity”, in the original Hebrew text “הַבִּינְיָה” (*eivah*), conveys a deep-seated and enduring conflict. This term signifies a state of opposition marked by animosity and hostility. The reference to “thy seed” and “her seed”, in Hebrew “וְהָעֵרְוָה וְהָעֵרְוָה וְהָעֵרְוָה” (*u'vein zar'acha u'vein zar'ah*) emphasizes the hereditary aspect of this enmity, suggesting that it will extend to future generations. This textual detail underscores the longevity and generational significance of the conflict. While in Hebrew, “it shall bruise” is rendered as “וְהָעֵרְוָה וְהָעֵרְוָה וְהָעֵרְוָה” (*hu y'shuf'kha*), and “thou shalt bruise” is expressed as “וְהָעֵרְוָה וְהָעֵרְוָה וְהָעֵרְוָה” (*v'atah t'shufenu*). Here, a strikingly literal image is presented. “It” (“אִתּוֹ”) presumably refers to the seed of the woman, and “thou” (“הָעֵרְוָה”) refers to the serpent employ metaphorical language to describe the outcome of the enmity. These phrases emphasize the victory of the woman’s seed and the suffering and struggle involved in achieving that victory.

Grammatically, the structure of the verse employs parallelism. “I will put enmity between thee and the woman” is followed by “and between thy seed and her seed,” reflecting a balanced and parallel construction that reinforces the idea of enmity between these entities. Furthermore, the use of the pronoun “it” in “it shall bruise thy head” refers to “thee,” signifying that the seed of the woman is the agent responsible for bruising the serpent’s head. Similarly, “thou shalt bruise his heel” employs “thou” as a reference to the serpent, emphasizing its role in injuring the woman’s seed.

Literally, the declaration, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman,”

signifies the divine establishment of hostility or antagonism between two distinct entities: “thee,” symbolizing the serpent, and “the woman,” representing Eve. This enmity is to be a fundamental aspect of their relationship. Continuing, it states, “and between thy seed and her seed.” This statement implies that the enmity extends to the serpent and the woman and their respective descendants. It signifies an enduring conflict or opposition between the offspring of the serpent and the offspring of the woman, thus underscoring the perpetual nature of this enmity. The verse proceeds, “it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Here, a strikingly literal image is presented. “It,” presumably referring to the seed of the woman, is prophesied to “bruise thy head,” which can be understood as inflicting a potentially fatal wound upon the serpent. Conversely, the serpent is foreseen to “bruise his heel,” signifying an injury of lesser consequence to the woman’s seed. This imagery conveys the concept of a decisive victory by the woman’s seed over the serpent, albeit not without some form of injury or struggle.

When one focuses on verse 15, it is evident that God put enmity between the serpent and the woman and between their seeds. The serpent knows that the woman is supposed to bruise its head.

What happens today is the result of the serpent’s diversion for the woman, so that instead of focusing on her role as a wife before God, or even if she needs to look outside of her-- enmity to the serpent, when looking outside of herself, a woman is tempted to put enmity to her husband in the daily lives. Today, not only do women tend not to look inside to

reflect, evaluate, and focus on having wisdom from God for their position and roles, but they gravitate towards looking at their husbands for mistakes, blaming them, and making themselves victims in many daily situations.

The fact that God directs women to submit, not to put enmity on their husbands and become a helper as their husbands have many weaknesses shows that husband and wife, while constantly looking at themselves before God to be better, is an inseparable entity that God intends to use as a perfect weapon and brilliant tool to face the enemy and walk in His agenda for each couple on the earth. God shows how when Eve abandoned Adam, wandered by herself to face the serpent, and fell into the serpent's trap, the result is devastating.

The scriptural underpinnings of the role of women as wives can become the basis upon which these roles have been established.

Ephesians 1:22-23 (KJV) shows that Jesus is the head of the church, which is his body:

²² And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church,

²³ Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

In the original Greek text, verse 22, “καὶ πάντα ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοῦς πόδας αὐτοῦ” (*kai panta hypetaxen hypo tous podas autou*) or “hath put all things under his feet” signifies that Jesus Christ has been granted complete authority and dominion over all things. The phrase “ἔδωκεν κεφαλὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ” (*edoken kephalēn hyper panta tē ekklesiā*) or “gave him to be the head over all things to the church” emphasizes that Jesus has been appointed as the supreme authority,

specifically for the benefit and governance of the church.

In verse 23, “ἥτις ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ” (*hētis estin to sōma autou*) or “Which is his body” establishes a metaphorical relationship between the church and the body of Christ, signifying unity and mutual dependence. “Τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν πληρουμένου” (*To plērōma tou ta panta en pasin plēroumenou*) or “The fulness of him” suggests that the church is the embodiment or completion of Christ. “Τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν πληρουμένου” (*Ta panta en pasin plēroumenou*) or “That filleth all in all” underscores the idea that Christ, through His church, permeates and fills all aspects of creation.

Ephesians 1:22-23 underscores the preeminence of Christ as the head of the church, who holds authority over all creation, with the church serving as His body, representing His fullness in the world.

In Matthew 8:20 (KJV), Jesus said that He does not have a place to lay His head: ²⁰And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head. “The foxes have holes” and “the birds of the air have nests” are contrasting examples of creatures that have designated resting places. “The Son of man” is a title Jesus often used to refer to Himself, emphasizing His humanity. “Hath not where to lay his head” conveys that Jesus, during His itinerant ministry, lacked a permanent dwelling or a place of comfort. Here, the word “head” is used again, pointing to Jesus as the head of the church, while Ephesians 1:23 states that the church is His body. The connection between the two verses, connected with the previous discussion, lies in

the meaning where the church, as His bride, must “accept” and “be ready” for “His head” so He can have a place to lay his head, that is His body, the church. If the body, church, or bride, has their own “heads,” their own thinking and preferences, just like established in Matthew 8:20, then Jesus does not have a place to lay His head.

3 Navigating Modernity: Egalitarianism, Tradition, and Congregational Dynamics

The contemporary church finds itself at a crossroads, negotiating the tension between traditional interpretations of women’s roles and the principles of egalitarianism that penetrate modern society. Bettencourt, Vacha-Haase, and Byrne (2011) include an example of U.S. society, which has become steadily more liberal over the past few decades, allowing more room for older adults to move in a liberal direction (and be influenced by their younger relatives) than there is for younger adults to be influenced by older adults. In other words, there might be less difference between younger adults’ attitudes towards feminism and “society’s” attitudes towards feminism (Bettencourt et al. 2011).

As today’s society is directed toward egalitarianism, it is essential to understand the value of woman’s position and role as a wife. To take this further, the congregation, being the bride of Christ, must follow this position and role before Him.

Isaiah 54:5 in the KJV Bible shows that the congregation is His wife:

For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

By submitting to God and never blaming Him for the situation, although it may be unacceptable for one’s preferences, one is preparing to be ready to become His wife as in Revelation 19:7 (KJV): “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”

Obviously, with egalitarian beliefs, congregations from various denominational backgrounds have different responses to this tension. Some churches embrace egalitarian ideals, while others adhere to traditional roles. The exploration extends to women’s lived experiences within these congregations upon their perceptions of the role of a wife within the church.

4. Challenges and Dysfunction in Women’s Position and Roles

The advent of feminist ideologies and evolving societal norms has not been without challenges and potential dysfunction. Some complexities arise when the congregation’s traditional teachings and women’s societal expectations intersect. By examining these challenges, we gain insight into the potential sources of dysfunction and the strategies churches employ to navigate these difficulties, fostering restoration.

Through exploratory methods, this investigation gains a deeper understanding of how tradition, contemporary societal values, and theological beliefs affect women and their husbands.

An example is the following case of a wife (Nm, 31 years old, Jakarta, Indonesia). Through learning from media and society,

Nm has had feminism in her mind. She always felt that she was a victim of a vicious husband. On the other hand, her husband became so desperate that he even fell sick several times in one month, and was willing to leave home to run from his frustration. She was proposed to hear what her husband said and felt as the first step into a recovery from her dysfunctional position, using the basis of Deuteronomy 6:4 (KJV) when Israel was asked to hear God: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD:”

While among other verses like in Jeremiah 2:2 (KJV), God regards Israel as His bride:

... Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land *that was* not sown.

Being a wife who started to listen, Nm started to stop blaming her husband. She tried listening to what he said without disagreement, and stop thinking negatively and applying God’s words in the Bible to her life and trust what her husband said. She started to perceive that the husband is a “personification” of God, that is, how God wanted to train her to be flexible and accepting to whatever God wants in her life. In other words, she gradually started to make her preferences nil, while at the same time unknowingly applied Galatians 2:20 (KJV):

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Miraculously, but not surprisingly, her husband, having been heard by his wife each

time he said something, started to change, becoming tender, more approachable, and even proven to be correct, developing Nm to be better. Each day, their relationship improved; today, they are a strong team ready to move toward God’s agenda. Nm realized that she should never blame her husband for anything wrong, but realized that the object to be fixed is inside her, and she put her enmity not to her husband, but the serpent that she should separate from her own heart, mind, and path.

Another exploration result is found in the life of Is (33 years old, Tangerang, Indonesia) in which she found out that her husband had been with several women behind her back. She was sure that her husband was the one at fault. She saw her friends having rich husbands looking good on social media, making her even more frustrated. Her focus was never towards how she is before God, or how competent she is in her position as a wife, but rather to her unfortunate fate as her husband’s victim. When asked, her husband admitted that he was no longer interested in her, as he felt that his wife had her own thoughts and ways and whatever he communicated was useless because she would always go with her way and whatever she felt right.

Again, the wife’s dysfunctional position appeared as she put enmity on her husband, not realizing that it was the serpent that she needed to put the enmity on by looking inside herself before God, and how God saw her, whether she was in the correct position.

When given the truth from the Bible, such as Ephesians 5:22 (KJV): “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord”, Is slowly reflected upon her position and gradually made it right before

God. The manifestation is being a reflective wife and stopping to point her finger at her husband. She had her ups and downs, and so did her husband. However, a few years later, the relationship was getting better, and finally, the playboy husband was no longer interested in any woman other than her.

This study involved an interview with a Christian wife of a stroke husband, Md (68 years old, Jakarta, Indonesia), where she shared her husband's complaints throughout his active life with her. She just started to study the Bible after her husband's sickness. She realized that he never got any acknowledgment he deserved throughout his life because she never agreed with him, even though sometimes the disagreement was kept in her heart. As a result, she was always separated from her husband in thoughts and ways, and she never contemplated that there was anything wrong with her, as society encourages women to go with what they believe. The unfortunate husband, doing everything he could but still always at fault and never had any recognition for what he did, was not strong enough to face the situation and had a stroke. The dysfunctionality of Md as a wife has resulted in her husband's permanent stroke. It loads her with guilt and forces her to face that time can never be turned back.

Among the wives in the exploratory study, their children were inevitably affected. Some grew to be spiteful of men, some lost a father figure desperately needed in one's healthy life, and others became naughty. The wives' dysfunctionality did not only affect persons but the whole family.

The experiences of these women and their husbands are the reflection of how

God's congregation should treat Him as their husband in their daily lives by affirming Him as their head and never blaming Him for any unfavorable instances, as those situations are God's precious way in knowing Him as their Groom and valuable precedent to develop His perfect bride.

5. Redeeming the Narrative: Restoration, Equipping, and Unity

Amidst the discussions on women's roles, it is crucial to discern pathways toward restoration and it would be helpful for churches to empower and equip women and wives to be in the correct position, as shown in biblical scriptural principles and practical insights. By acknowledging the church as the bride before Christ, a holistic understanding of women's roles will contribute to the congregation's collective identity.

CONCLUSION

This research explores the feminist influences and the church's understanding of women's roles, particularly as wives.

Feminist discourse on the role of wives emphasizes the importance of autonomy and personal agency. Feminists argue that wives should be free to make their own choices and decisions within their marriages rather than being confined to traditional gender roles and expectations. They advocate for equal partnerships and challenge the notion of wives being submissive and obedient to their husbands. Biblical exegesis of women's roles, particularly in the context of the Genesis

account of the Fall, provides further insight into the significance of women's positions as wives within the congregation. The Fall narrative highlights the consequences of disobedience and the woman's role in the temptation.

One potential source of dysfunction is the separation and disagreements that can arise between wives and their husbands as women assert their leadership and autonomy, just like what Jesus says in Matthew 8:20, causing the Son of Man not to have a place to lay His head, because His body refuses and has already had its own head. Wives also tend to blame their husbands and not realize that through the scrutiny in Genesis 3:15, God had put enmity between them and the serpent and not to their husbands, so instead of becoming one with their husband to face the serpent, there is a division within marriages hindering the unity and partnership that should exist between spouses. Understanding of women's roles will contribute to the congregation's correct identity and position as a bride before God.

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