

# Why Do So Many of Us Struggle in Our Marriages?

Even with defined scriptural roles for husbands and wives, what are we missing?

# Observations:

- Many Christian husbands and wives struggle with achieving a harmonious, fruitful and happy relationship
- Even with scriptural roles for husbands and wives defined by God, many find it difficult to constructively work together
- Some are even tempted to think that the world's view of "equality" is closer to right than God's design of headship and submission

**Is there a pattern in the big picture that we're missing?**

# Scriptural Principles:

- To understand spiritual truth, each word meaning and passage of scripture must fit together in an overall big picture of truth (*“like puzzle pieces fitting together”*)  
*1 Cor 14:33, 2 Tim 3:16-17*
- If we only focus our understanding on individual words and passages (*“trees”*), there’s a danger of failing to seeing God’s big picture pattern of truth (*“the forest”*).
- Bottomline, the totality of God’s word must be examined together.

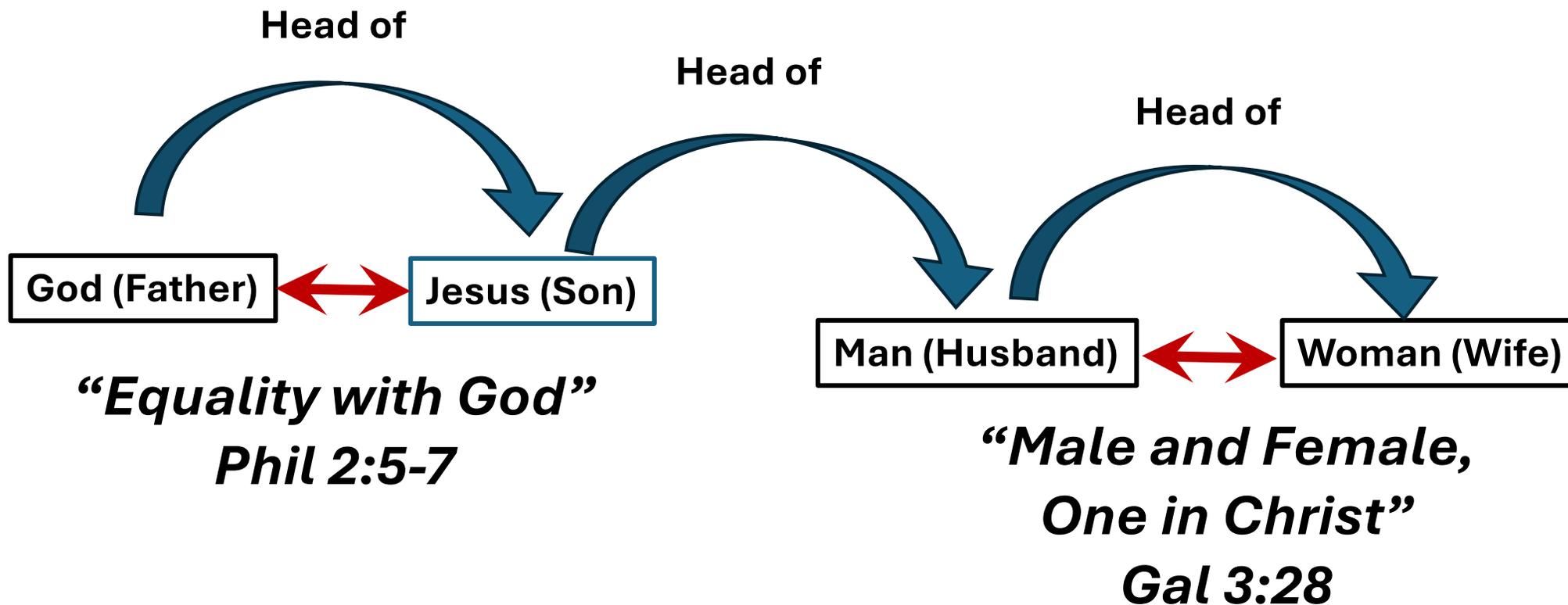
# God's Spiritual Headship Pattern

***God (Father), Jesus (Son), Man (Husband), & Woman (Wife)***

***1 Cor. 11:3***

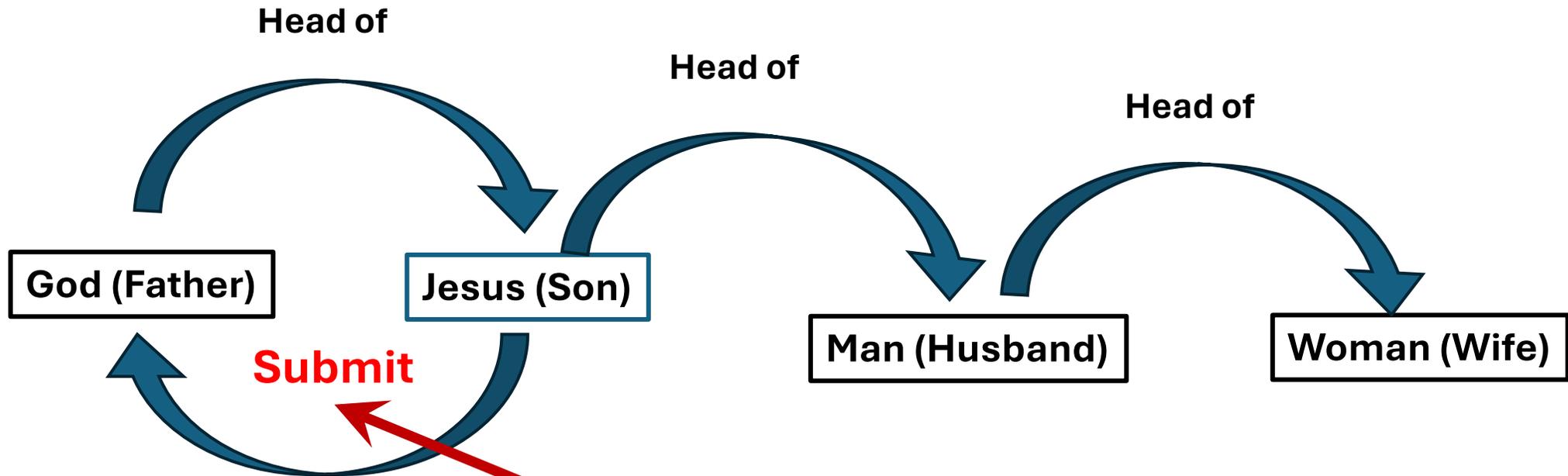
# Spiritual Headship Pattern

*1 Cor 11:3*



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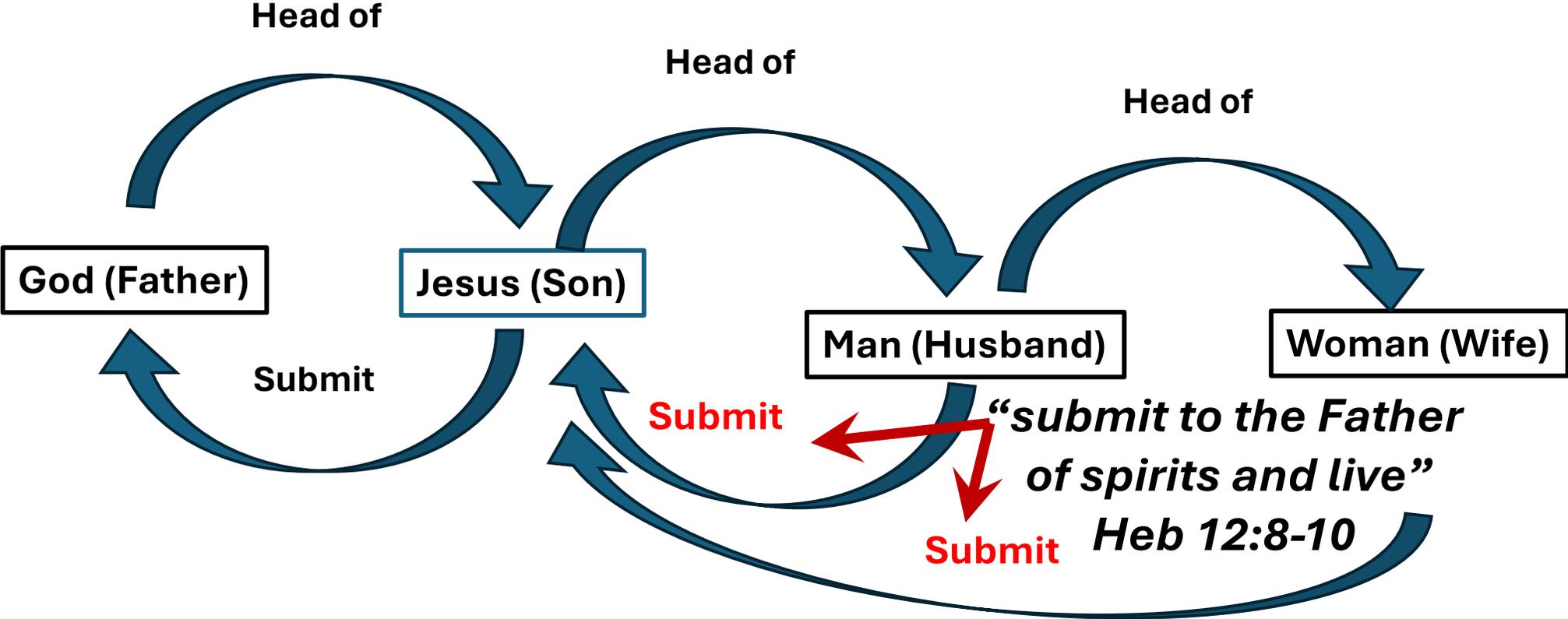
*1 Cor 11:3*



*“not as I will, but as You will”*  
*Matt 26:39*

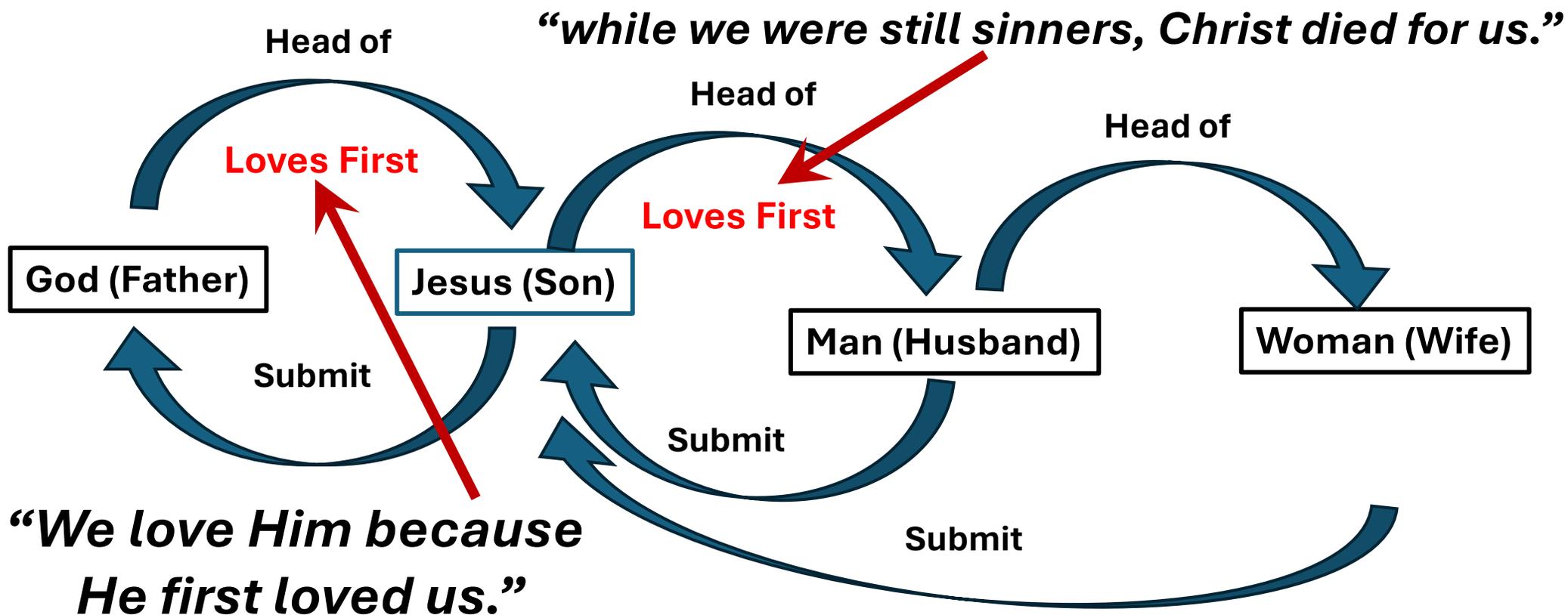
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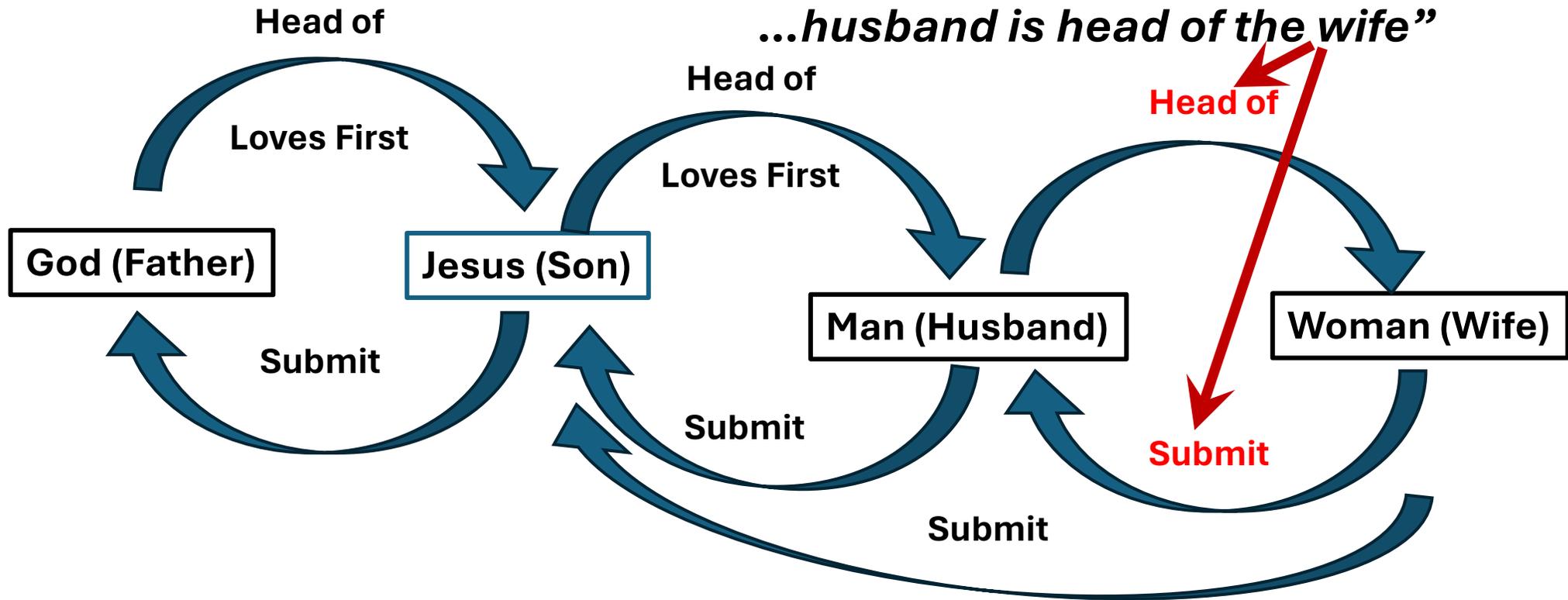
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# Spiritual Headship Pattern

*1 Cor 11:3; 1 Jn 4:7-11,19; Rom 5:7-8; Eph 5:22-33*

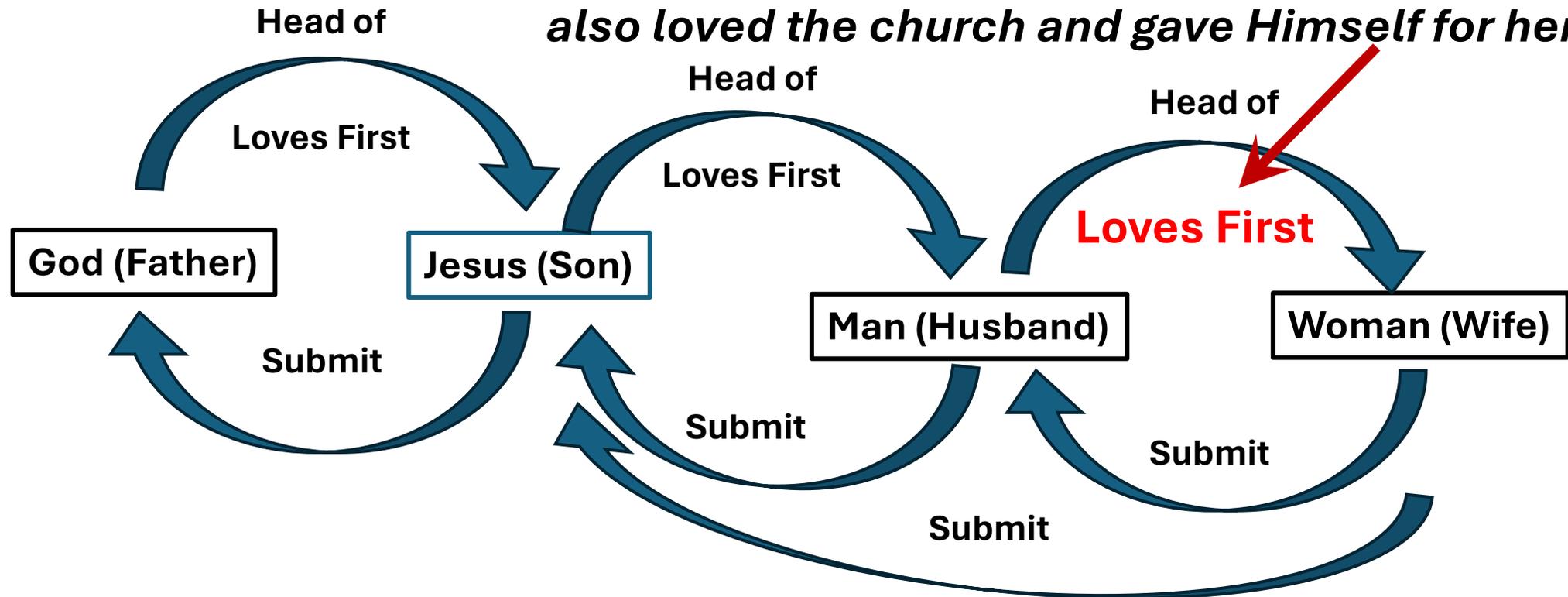
*“Wives, submit to your own husbands...  
...husband is head of the wife”*



# Spiritual Headship Pattern – Loving First

*1 Cor 11:3; 1 Jn 4:7-11,19; Rom 5:7-8; Eph 5:22-33*

*“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,”*



Who then is the husband's ultimate role model for headship with his wife? (Eph 5:22-27)

<sup>25</sup> **Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,** <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

# What is the pattern of His headship that the husband must follow? (*Eph 5:22-29*)

<sup>25</sup> **Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her**, <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup> **So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies**; he who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but **nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church**.

*“humbly, sacrificially, selflessly, love as his own body, nourishing and cherishing her – a husband is loving first”*

# How else has Jesus modeled headship in his love for the children of God? (*Heb 4:14-16*)

<sup>14</sup> Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a High Priest who cannot **sympathize with our weaknesses**, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that **we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**

*Should a husband's headship with his wife model empathy, sympathy, and showing helpful grace, favor, and mercy?*

# How did Jesus use His headship to lead His disciples? (*Jn 14:15; 1 Jn 4:19*)

<sup>15</sup> “If you love Me, keep My commandments.”

<sup>19</sup> We love Him because He first loved us.

“If” indicates that **His disciples had ‘free will’ choice.**

Also, the two scriptures indicate that **Jesus is using His loving first behavior to influence obedience, not controlling behavior.**

*Should a husband’s headship leadership with his wife model loving first behavior to influence her obedience and submission rather than his use of controlling behavior?*

# How are Husbands to connect empathically with Their Wives? (*1 Pet 3:7*)

<sup>7</sup> **Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel,** and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

As Jesus is able to sympathize with human weakness, husbands must seek to understand their wives for who they are. It is giving honor to their wives as one would treat the “fine china” with ultimate care and consideration.

# How else did Jesus use His headship to lead His disciples? (*Jn 13:12-17*)

<sup>12</sup> So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? <sup>13</sup> You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. <sup>14</sup> **If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. <sup>15</sup> For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.** <sup>16</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. <sup>17</sup> If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

*Does a husband’s headship create entitlements for himself or humble service responsibilities? Should doing any task particularly in the home be beneath him?*

# What is the burden level of submitting to the headship of Jesus? (*Matt 11:29-30*)

<sup>29</sup> “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for **I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.** <sup>30</sup> **For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.**”

*“Jesus is gentle and lowly in heart (humble) and His yoke is easy and His burden is light.”*

*Should a husband’s headship be any different? Should his headship be humbly and gently applied, producing an easy and light burden on his wife?*

Should a husband be careful to understand the big picture context of the meaning of his spiritual headship?

**Gen 3:16** “rule” [4910 mashal] to rule, have dominion, reign

**1 Cor 11:1-3** “head” [2776 kephale] ruler, lord, head

*If one merely uses human understanding without the big picture context of God’s and Jesus’ pattern of headship, one can get the impression that headship gives a husband unlimited decision-making control (rule) within the marriage and household.*

*How does Jesus rule over the children of God?*

***“Sacrificially, selflessly, empathetically, loving first to influence submission, humbly showing abundant grace, favor and mercy”***

*How can a husband rule any differently than our benevolent King?*

# What is a husband's key enabling leadership of a "virtuous woman" in *Prov 31:10-31*?

<sup>10</sup> Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. <sup>11</sup> The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain. <sup>12</sup> She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.

*"A husband granting trust in his competent, sufficient, and industrious wife."*

*Should a husband control decisions regarding household matters for which the virtuous woman (wife) is accountable?*

*Is it humble and selfless for a husband to impose decision-making control over household matters that are merely preferences and judgements with no spiritual implications?*

# So where does the submission role of the wife fit in the marriage relationship? (*Eph 5:22-24, 33*)

<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. <sup>33</sup> Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

*In a marriage following the plan of God's manifold wisdom, wives are influenced to respect and submit of their own free will to the loving first of their selfless, benevolent, and empathetic husband.*

# God's Loving First Pattern Enables Headship & Submission

## HUSBAND

- Headship role (*Eph 5:23*)
- Begins with devotion to God (*Rom 6:17-18*)
- Affects his relationship with God (*1 Pet 3:7*)
- Must prove himself loving his wife (*Col 3:19; 1 Pet 3:6*)
- Loving first headship influences her submission (*Matt 5:13-16; 1 Pet 2:12*)
- Headship accepts her submission (*Rom 12:16*)

## WIFE

- Submission role (*Eph 5:22*)
- Begins with devotion to God (*Rom 6:17-18*)
- Affects her relationship with God (*Col 3:18*)
- Must prove herself obedient to her husband (*1 Pet 3:1,6*)
- Submission influences his loving first headship (*Matt 5:13-16; 1 Pet 2:12*)
- Submission accepts his headship (*Rom 12:16*)

# God's Loving First Pattern Enables Headship & Submission

## HUSBAND

- Headship requires self-control – conducts himself according to knowledge (*1 Pet 3:7*)
- Headship respects subjection by “giving honor” (*1 Pet 3:7*)
- Headship requires sacrifice – gives himself up for her (*Eph 5:25*)
- Headship adapts to his wife – as weaker vessel (*Eph 5:21; 1 Pet 3:7*)
- Headship protects wives – he honors her womanhood (*Phil 2:3-4*)

## WIFE

- Submission requires self-control – conducts herself with a gentle (meek) spirit (*1 Pet 3:4*)
- Submission respects the woman's role as “precious” (*1 Pet 3:4*)
- Submission requires sacrifice – submits without fear (*1 Pet 3:6*)
- Submits to her husband – submits in everything (*Eph 5:24*)
- Submission protects husbands – she honors his manhood (*Phil 2:2-3*)

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