

The Biblical View of Headship - Part 5 - Headship in Marriage: An Application and a Warning - Genesis 3:16

Memory verse

1 Corinthians 11:3 NKJV

But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

“Head” in this context, means; the leader, the chief, the one in charge, or the top person. Headship has everything to do with authority or rank and its corresponding role. It doesn’t have anything to do with value or worth or essence or being. It’s like the different ranks in the army—the person with the lower rank takes orders from the person with the higher rank, however they all work together towards the same goal or purpose, all being *sub* to the *mission*.

Why is headship important?

Where there is recognition of, and submission to, these roles, there is order, community, love, relationship, and harmony. We see this in the way Jesus related to the Father.

Outline— Headship in Marriage: An Application and a Warning (Genesis 3:16)

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1. The effect of the curse

Today we will learn about what went wrong with the institution of marriage. How can something that God created to be so good, joyous, and pleasurable, end up being so difficult and painful? We’ll learn that it all goes back to the curse, which came as a result of man’s sin: It’s all because of sin. As we read this section of Scripture from Genesis, it should remind us of what we have covered in previous weeks concerning marriage, and show that Genesis really is the book of beginnings; including *the first marriage and the first sin and the effect that that sin and the resulting curse had on marriage*.

Genesis 2:20-3:20 NKJV

Then the Lord God took **the man [Adam]** and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded **the man**, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

¹⁸ And the Lord God said, “**It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.**” ¹⁹ Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So

Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. **But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.**

²¹ And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

²³ And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴ **Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**

²⁵ And they were both naked, **the man and his wife, and were not ashamed [no sin, no shame].**

3 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" [*Satan plants a seed of doubt*]

² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" [*Adam added to God's command—you shall not touch it*]

⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." [*Satan lies, says God is hiding something good from them, and that they won't die—the goal being to get man to be independent of God, trusting his own wisdom instead of trusting in God*]

⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to **her husband with her**, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. [*the first instance of law, works, or human effort to bridge the moral divide between man and God*]

⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

⁹ Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

¹⁰ So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." [*perfect love drives out all fear of judgement or condemnation—1 John 4:17-18*]

¹¹ And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

¹² Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." [*Thus begins the blame game—it's never my fault*]

¹³ And the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴ So the Lord God said to the serpent:

"Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. ¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

¹⁶ To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; **your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.**"

¹⁷ Then to Adam He said, "**Because you have heeded the voice of your wife** [*Eve was deceived, but Adam sinned wilfully—1 Timothy 2:14*], and have eaten from the tree

of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.

¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. ¹⁹ In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."

²⁰ And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living [people].

So we see that the results or consequences of the curse affect all parts of life:

- Environmentally: there are weeds and thorns making food hard to grow.
- Work: instead of work being always enjoyable, it would in many ways become tiresome, difficult, and frustrating.
- Relationally: we blame others instead of taking responsibility for our own actions, words, and thoughts—this represents the death of humility and the birth of pride. This also represents the loss of submission and sacrificial love, which are replaced by manipulation and dominance—"**your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you**".
- Physically: childbirth for the woman would be painful, every living thing would begin to grow old and eventually die, the introduction of disease, mutations (genetic diseases), and eventually physical death.
- Spiritually: Man was separated from God. Man's love relationship with God was replaced by a legalistic or works based religion based on man trying on his own strength to be good enough (**fig leaves = human effort, law, or works**)—the basis of all other religions. However, man knows that he can never be good enough, which results in guilt (fear of judgement/condemnation) and shame.

A) The effect of sin: Who am I?—Born in the image of Adam vs created in the image of God

Sin corrupted Adam and Eve's original perfect nature, created in the image of God, so now all humans are born in the image of sinful Adam.

Genesis 1:26-27 NKJV

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.**" ²⁷ **So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.**

Genesis 5:1-3 NKJV

This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. **In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.** ² He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created. ³ **And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image,** and named him Seth.

The perfect human nature that Adam and Eve were created with was corrupted by sin. The consequence is that every single person born has inherited a corrupted or sinful human nature from Adam, and therefore, like Adam, will die physically because they are born spiritually dead (separated from God).

Romans 5:12 NLT

When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam’s sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned [in Adam—original sin, the sin that Adam committed affects every human (except Jesus who was born of a virgin)].

The good news is that when a person is born again, God gives them a new heart, meaning a new nature that is perfect like Adam and Eve were before they sinned.

Ezekiel 36:26-27 NKJV

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

Philippians 2:12-13 NLT

Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. ¹³ **For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.**

The table below helps to show the differences between the nature God created Adam and Eve with (and also our new nature when we are born again), and the sinful human nature that all people are born with. For a more complete list, see Galatians 5:16-26.

Perfect or new nature	Sinful human nature	Perfect or new nature	Sinful human nature
Selfless	Selfish	Gracious speech	Harsh and foul language
Humble	Proud	Patient	Impatient
Gentle	Harsh/rough/angry	Faithful	Unfaithful
Kind	unkind	Contentment in all circumstances	Frustration when things don't go your way
Others focused	Self-focused	Joyful	Unhappy
Self-controlled	lacking self-control	Forgiving	Bitter/unforgiving
Generous	Covetous/envious	Praises others	Jealous of others

We'll come back to these differences later.

B) The effect of sin: Running and hiding from God—Fear of condemnation vs love

Genesis 3:9-10 NKJV

Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?”

¹⁰ So he [Adam] said, **“I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”**

Here we see the spiritual effect of the curse; how it affects our relationship with God. Adam and Eve would have experienced dependence and peace because of their perfect relationship with God. They would have felt unity (oneness), security, and love, and they would talk to God about anything at anytime. However, sin brought guilt and shame. Guilt and shame change the way we look at ourselves and others. What happens when we feel shame and guilt? We become scared, distant, cold, angry, aggressive, and abusive, both in how we treat God, and how we treat others.

1 John 4:7-11, 17-21 NKJV

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

¹⁷ **Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is [perfect, blameless, sinless], so are we in this world [because believers are *in Christ*, this is how the Father sees us].** ¹⁸ There is no fear in love; **but perfect [completed, fully understood] love casts out fear, because fear [of judgement or condemnation] involves torment.** But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us.

²⁰ If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

²¹ And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

If a believer truly understands that, because of love, God has completely forgiven him, then he will be secure in God's love (love has been perfected)—only then will he be able to love others.

C) The effect of sin: Fig leaves—Faith in ourselves (human effort) vs faith in God (living by the Spirit)

Genesis 3:7 NKJV

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; **and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.**

Here we have a very practical picture. Adam and Eve tried to cover their nakedness, their source of shame, by human means. But God showed what needed to happen; God killed an animal and clothed them, showing that for them to be properly covered or back in relationship with Him, it would require something that they couldn't do—they would have to depend on God's provision of a sacrifice to pay the penalty of their sin. Cain, one of Adam and Eve's children, followed their thinking, bringing vegetables as an offering to God. Able, on the other hand brought an lamb and sacrificed it.

Genesis 4:2b-5 NKJV

Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³ And in the process of time it came to pass that **Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord.** ⁴ **Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering,** ⁵ **but He did not respect Cain and his offering.** And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

What we see in Scripture is that God, early on, most likely when God killed the first animal, established a way for man to approach Him—by presenting a blood sacrifice. They understood that the animal was a picture of the Saviour dying in their place, being punished for their sins. They would place their hand on the head of the animal and confess their sins—their sins were symbolically transferred onto the innocent animal. Now, because the animal was considered guilty, it must die, but because the man was now considered innocent, he could live. Paul really brings home the point that we must trust in God's provision (not our own strength)—both for salvation and sanctification (the power to obey God and change to become more and more like Christ).

Galatians 3:1-3 NLT

Oh, foolish Galatians! Who has cast an evil spell on [deceived] you? For the **meaning of Jesus Christ's death** was made as clear to you as if you had seen a picture of his death on the cross. ² Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the law of Moses? Of course not! You received the Spirit because you believed the message you heard about Christ. ³ **How foolish can you be? After starting your new lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?**

Galatians 5:1-6 NLT

So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law [trying to please God by human effort].

² Listen! I, Paul, tell you this: **If you are counting on circumcision [good works by human effort] to make you right with God, then Christ will be of no benefit to you [you won't be experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit in your life].** ³ I'll say it again. If you are trying to find favour with God by being circumcised [representing good works by human effort], you must obey every regulation in the whole law of Moses. ⁴ **For if you are trying to make yourselves right with God by keeping the law [good works by human effort], you have been cut off from Christ! You have fallen away from God's grace [you are no longer living by God's power, but instead by the power and desires of the sinful human nature].**

⁵ But we who live by the Spirit eagerly wait to receive by faith the righteousness God has promised to us. ⁶ For when we place our faith in Christ Jesus, there is no benefit in being circumcised or being uncircumcised [good works by human effort]. What is important is faith expressing itself in love [the fruit of the Spirit is love].

This is so important to understand. We are saved by our faith or trust in God's ability to save us. In the same way, we can only live the new life which is pleasing to God by trusting in God's ability to do in us what He commands us to do—to empower us to live according to the new nature.

Galatians 2:19-20 NLT

For when I tried to keep the law [by the power of the old sinful human nature], [the law] condemned me [I could never be good enough—I was constantly frustrated by my lack of ability to obey God]. **So I died to the law—I stopped trying to meet all its requirements [stopped trying to be good enough by my own strength]—so that I might live for God [by His power, not my own].** ²⁰ My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by [faith,] trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. ²¹ **I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless.** For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.

When I attempt to live the Christian life by my own strength I am **treating the grace of God a meaningless**, meaning that I am disregarding the divine power and nature available to me, pretending that I don't need God's undeserved help in my constant state of need. The cross does more than save us, it also sanctifies or changes us—we *can't change ourselves*.

D) The effect of sin: The blame game—Pride vs humility

Luke 18:9-14 NKJV

Also He spoke this parable to some **who trusted in themselves that they were righteous [a good definition of pride], and despised others [the result of trusting in yourself is that you will despise others]:** ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee [someone who trusts in the power of their sinful nature to try to please God] and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹² **I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.**’ ¹³ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Notice here that the Pharisee noted some of the good things that he had been doing in order to justify himself, to convince himself that he really was a godly man. There was nothing wrong with the good works that he was boasting about, but there was something wrong with his heart. Listen to what Jesus said was missing from his life

Luke 11:42 NKJV

But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and **pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.**

We can be the same, ignoring the anger and bitterness in our hearts and justifying ourselves by doing some good things that we pride ourselves on, whatever they may be. What do you notice about people like this? What do we notice (in retrospect) about ourselves when we are like this? When things go wrong we blame others because we are blind to the pride and selfishness that is driving us, motivating us, guiding us—we can’t and won’t accept the fact that the problem in the relationship could be me. Remember that the consequence of a Christian living according to the sinful nature is death—not eternal death, but rather the destruction of anything good that God has given us.

2. The application for marriage

The first and only perfect marriage included a man who sacrificially loved his wife, willingly putting her needs above his own, and a wife who respected her husband and willingly followed his lead (willing submission). Consider, which wife wouldn’t want to submit to a husband who genuinely loved her and whose decisions were therefore always seeking her good above his own. And what husband wouldn’t want to love a wife who was always obedient, gentle, humbly submissive and respected and honoured him. Can you see how God designed it to work?

But then something bad happened. Sin ruined everything. The world became cursed. In Genesis 3:16 we read the part of the curse that relates to marriage. Yes, even the marriage relationship was cursed.

Genesis 3:16

To the woman He said:

... your **desire** shall be for your husband,
and he shall **rule** over you.”

What does this mean? We can find out by looking at Genesis 4:7 where the exact same two words for **desire** and **rule** are used in Genesis 4:7. Here God is warning Cain about how sin wants to control and manipulate him, but he should rule over it.

Genesis 4:7

And its (sin's) **desire** is for you, but you should **rule** over it.”

What was trying to rule over Cain? *Sin, or sinful desires* (specifically his desire to kill his brother Able because of his envy towards him, God having accepted Able's animal sacrifice but rejected Cain's offering of vegetables).

Again, God's warning is that sin wanted to control and manipulate Cain, and to avoid being controlled by sin, Cain must rule over or dominate or suppress it. Now we go back to Genesis 3:16.

Genesis 3:16

Your **desire** shall be for your husband, and he shall **rule** over you.

Your desire shall be for your husband: Before the fall, the woman would *want* to submit to her husband—it would be her natural God given desire or instinct (perfect human nature). But after the fall, after all human natures became corrupted by sin, the opposite is true. Instead of naturally wanting to submit to her husband, she will naturally want to control or manipulate him—it's the opposite of what God originally created. What this means is that, because of the curse, Eve would have to continually fight a desire to control and manipulate her husband, a desire that works against God's ordained order for the home.

And he shall rule over you: Likewise for the man, instead of exercising godly, humble, sacrificial, loving leadership, Adam would now (because of his corrupt sinful human nature), rule over or dominate his wife. Instead of seeking her good, he would use her for his own benefit.

In summary, “Sin has corrupted both the willing submission of the wife and the loving headship of the husband” (Susan T. Foh, cited in Boice).

The Solution

Our sinful human nature is by nature selfish and proud and therefore cannot submit to or love others. Our sinful human nature makes it impossible for the wife to genuinely submit to and respect her husband, and for the husband to genuinely and sacrificially love his wife. Therefore, to enjoy marriage as God intended it, both husband and wife must first be submitted to God and walking according the power of His Spirit. It is the only way to live a life that pleases God and to have the marriage that God intended.

Romans 8:2, 5-8

And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. ...

⁵ Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. ⁶ So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. ⁷ For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. ⁸ That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God [can never have a godly marriage].

What is the only way two Christians can experience a Godly marriage? *By walking closely and humbly with God, continually seeking to do God's will instead of their own will.*

3. Conclusion: How to know whether or not I am “walking in the Spirit”

James 3:13-18 NLT

If you are wise and understand God's ways, **prove it by living an honourable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from [God's] wisdom [from above]**. ¹⁴ But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. ¹⁵ For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic [produced by the sinful human nature]. ¹⁶ For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind.

¹⁷ But **the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favouritism and is always sincere.** ¹⁸ And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

The main point James is making is that, for the believer, there are two types of wisdom or two ways of living—living God's way by God's power (**the wisdom from above**), or living man's way by man's power (the sinful nature being **earthly, unspiritual, and demonic**). James is all about faith proving itself by actions. Here he is putting up the challenge; if you think that you are living life as a believer empowered by the Holy Spirit and producing the good fruit of the Spirit, then **prove it by living an honourable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from [God's] wisdom [from above]**. Obviously if the fruit of our lives doesn't match our talk, then we are deceiving ourselves—*if we are not producing the fruit of the Spirit (love), then we are producing the fruit of the sinful human nature (see Galatians 5:19-23).*

James also tells believers how to go from living by the power of their sinful nature (law, human effort), to living by the power of the Spirit (grace).

James 4:1-10 AMP

What leads to strife (discord and feuds) and how do conflicts (quarrels and fightings) originate among you? Do they not arise from your sensual desires that are ever warring in your bodily members?

² You are jealous and covet [what others have] and your desires go unfulfilled; [so] you become murderers. [To hate is to murder as far as your hearts are concerned.] You burn with envy and anger and are not able to obtain [the gratification, the contentment,

and the happiness that you seek], so you fight and war. You do not have, because you do not ask. [1 John 3:15.]

3 [Or] you do ask [God for them] and yet fail to receive, because you ask with wrong purpose and evil, selfish motives. Your intention is [when you get what you desire] to spend it in sensual pleasures.

4 You [are like] unfaithful wives [having illicit love affairs with the world and breaking your marriage vow to God]! Do you not know that being the world's friend is being God's enemy? So whoever chooses to be a friend of the world takes his stand as an enemy of God.

5 Or do you suppose that the Scripture is speaking to no purpose that says, The Spirit Whom He has caused to dwell in us yearns over us and He yearns for the Spirit [to be welcome] with a jealous love? [Jer. 3:14; Hos. 2:19ff.]

6 **But He gives us more and more grace (power of the Holy Spirit, to meet this evil tendency and all others fully). That is why He says, God sets Himself against the proud and haughty, but gives grace [continually] to the lowly (those who are humble enough to receive it).** [Prov. 3:34.]

7 So be subject [submit] to God. Resist the devil [stand firm against him], and he will flee from you.

8 Come close to God and He will come close to you. [Recognise that you are] sinners, get your soiled hands clean; [realize that you have been disloyal] wavering individuals with divided interests, and purify your hearts [of your spiritual adultery].

9 [As you draw near to God] be deeply penitent and grieve, even weep [over your disloyalty]. Let your laughter be turned to grief and your mirth to dejection and heartfelt shame [for your sins].

10 Humble yourselves [feeling very insignificant] in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you [He will lift you up and make your lives significant].

What keeps the believer from humbling themselves and relying on God's strength to live the new life (living a life of childlike dependance on God)? What can keep him bound up in law keeping, trying to do what he knows God wants him to do by human effort? Pride! It all comes down to pride. Pride is the root of all sin. As Frank Sinatra infamously sang, "I going to do it my way".

A proud person won't submit to God and won't admit that they are wrong (and if they are forced to admit their sin then they are not willing to change). The sin may be unforgiveness, bitterness, a love of pleasure, selfishness, anger, wrath, discontentment or any addiction.

*The main point here is that the believer can only overcome the evil tendencies of his sinful human nature by the **power of the Spirit** (v 6), and he can only access God's power (grace) when he submits himself to God and humbly seek God's forgiveness for his sin.*

The electric circuit analogy

Consider an electric circuit. For the lights in the house to shine or produce light, they must be connected to a power source, and, the power switch must be in the "on" position—otherwise the house is in total darkness because there is no source of light.

For the unbeliever, it's like the house is not yet connected to a power source, meaning that the house will forever remain dark—the lights can never come on until the house is connected a power source. It's like what happens when there is a blackout, you can turn on the light switch, but nothing happens.

For the believer, the Holy Spirit is the power source that they are connected to, and so long as the switch is in the “on” position, the lights will be on, making the house full of light. However, if the believer chooses to put the light switch to the “off” position, then the house will be full of darkness—even *though it is connected to the power source*.

Ephesians 5:8-9 NKJV

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit [product or effect] of the Spirit is in *all* goodness, righteousness, and truth).

These verses in Ephesians tell us that living in the light means living by the power of the Spirit, with the fruit (product or effect) of the Spirit being **all goodness, righteousness and truth**. Notice the word *all*: the fruit or effect of the Holy Spirit is *only goodness, righteousness and truth*. The new “light” nature is *perfect* and can *only* do and be what is *good*.

Also consider the phrases “**you were once darkness**”, and “**but now you are light in the Lord**”, as describing the two contrasting natures. The unbeliever is described as **darkness**, meaning they are always walking in darkness—they can only produce the evil fruit of the sinful human nature. In contrast, the believer is a new creation, a new person, forever changed; they have a new nature—they are “**light in the Lord**”. However, it is possible for the believer to not live or **walk as children of light**. *Consider that if the believer chooses to not walk as children of light (they are not being empowered by the Spirit to produce the good fruit of the Spirit), then by default they will revert to living in darkness and will again produce the evil fruit of the sinful human nature.*

It really is that simple. For the unbeliever the lights are always off, they are always living in darkness, only producing the evil fruit of the sinful nature. However, for the believer, the lights are either on or off; the believer chooses to either walk in the darkness or walk in the light. If they have humbled ourselves and asked for God’s forgiveness (as well as whoever else their sin has affected), then they will be living by the power of the Spirit.

However, if the believer has not confessed and forsaken their sin then they have broken the circuit—the switch is at the off position (sin separates us from God). However, remember that it’s not so much *what* we do, but *why* we do it; motive and attitude are everything. The believer can choose to be *light*—humble and motivated by love, or *darkness*—proud and motivated by selfish reasons (doing things to justify themselves, impress others, or simply for their own benefit). There is nowhere in life where this is more obvious than in marriage and family relationships, where it is impossible to pretend to be someone different to who you really are.

If you really want to know what you are like, ask your spouse, or if you are not married, ask someone else who knows you well. Then take what they say to the Lord, see if it is true, and if it is, repent.