
God Explains Marriage – Ephesians 5:22-33 (Part 4)

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in everything.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ 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. ²⁸ So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord *does* the church. ³⁰ For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. ³¹ "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." ³² This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

³³ 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.

6 Preliminary Observations

1. **My Marriage Role Is Based Upon My Gender** (not chosen or interchangeable)
2. **My Marriage Role Is Commanded** (not an option or a feeling)
3. **My Marriage Role Is Without Conditions** (no "when" or "unless" he/she does this)
4. **My Marriage Role Focuses on My Actions Toward My Spouse**
5. **My Marriage Role Assumes an Imperfect Spouse** (submit/love anyway)
6. **My Marriage Role Is Built Upon a Spiritual Relationship** (broadcast by example)

4 Principles for the Wife

1. **Respond in Your Role** (each role has different "submission" responsibilities)
Doing things that we don't find natural, easy, or logical
Allow God's Plan to Work (one cannot [easily] lead someone who is unwilling to follow)
Why is the wife commanded first? (cp. 6:1 & 4; 6:5 & 9)
2. **WHAT: Wives Are to Submit to Their Own Husbands** (yielding to my God-assigned auth)
Yielding to a direction different than you would go
Assumes two views of what is right
Requires following your husband's decisions & directions
Allows suggesting, but not demanding (who is leading whom?)
3. **HOW: Wives Are to Submit as to the Lord**
 - **Measure: As to the Lord / As the church is subject to Christ**
Changes the entire approach & attitude of a wife
Changes the entire thought process of disagreement (not ideas)
Changes what is at stake (Titus 2:5)
NOT CONFUSING As the church is to Christ...
NOT NARROWLY DEFINED: ...in everything. (1 Pet 3:1ff)
Not conditional or circumstantial but positional (v. 33)
 - **Method (v. 33): "The wife ... to respect [lit. fear] her husband."** (position not person)
Fear = Proper response to God-placed authority
Doesn't justify sin/stupidity. but properly recognizes responsibility & accountability for it.
Does not ignore wisdom/intelligence of the wife but acknowledges God's assignment of the man to lead. The issue is not the person but the position (Gen 2).

Northridge Baptist Church – Pastor Kevin Subra – March 16, 2014

First Observations for the Husbands

1. God Begins with Wives but Has Much More to Say to Husbands

- God directly addresses wives with 40 words (in Greek)
- God directly addresses husbands with 112 words (in Greek)

2. God Requires Wives Only to Submit, but Husbands to Sacrifice

- God's command to husbands is actually much weightier
- God's command to husbands is actually much costlier
- Marriage responsibility must be taught to our sons!

3. God Gives Wives One Command, but Husbands Many Tasks

At least six tasks commanded or displayed by Christ's example:

- 1) LOVE your wife
- 2) Give yourself for your wife
- 3) Sanctify your wife
- 4) Cleanse your wife
- 5) Nourish your wife
- 6) Cherish your wife

4. God's Measurement to Husbands Seems to Be More Strict

- Wives are to submit "as to the Lord."
- Husbands are to love "just as Christ loved the Church."
- You can follow an imperfect husband only imperfectly due to the limitations, faults and sins of the husband. The husband will stop & start with uncertainty, change, forget, err, sin, etc. *Christ will never do so.* You're still following, but you follow a faulty husband (□ man in car not sure if he's lost).
- You can love an imperfect wife completely, because uncertainty, change, forgetfulness, errors, sin, etc. only display what the Church is like, and there is no limitation the unconditional love Christ displayed. Every "reason" not to love only enhances that love!