

The Relationships in Marriage

Ephesians 5:22-33

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.

If God is the one who designed marriage then you would think that the Word of God would say something about how it is supposed to work. And it does in so many of places that we cannot talk about all of them today.

But I have chosen one passage that seems to be the most comprehensive. Its is not a favorite passage sometimes even of Christians. Some do their best to try to explain away or soften the message of Paul. Many try to tell us the same thing they do concerning other moral choices. They tell us that things have changed and we live in an enlightened age.

Some attack Paul and accuse him of being a woman hater. But that is just not so. The Bible and Christianity has done more to lift women up and give them their proper place in society than all the women liberation movements put together. But that is another message.

It is not just Paul but Peter says practically the same things in his epistle.

1 Peter 3:1-6 (NKJV) 1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. 3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel-- 4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. 5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

All of that is not to say that some people pick and choose what part of the Bible to believe and to practice. And as they do other passages they may emphasize the part concerning the responsibility of the woman while neglecting the responsibility of the men. We do not intend to do that today.

- I. Where rebellion might be found.
 - A. In this passage Paul first deals with the subject that is most susceptible to rebellion.
 1. In the relationship of servants and masters it is the servants who are susceptible to rebellion against their masters.
 2. Eph 6: 5 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh,
 3. In the parent child relationship it is the child that is susceptible to rebellion against their parents.
 4. Eph 6:1 ¶ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: 3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."
 5. And with the wife it is the wife who is susceptible to rebellion against her husband.
 - B. This is why Paul address these areas of personal relationships.
 1. The Bible almost never addresses an issue that is a non-issue.
 2. When Paul writes to tell people something it is usually because they are doing wrong in that area.
 3. And in many of the writings of Paul he deals with these same subjects but especially the husband wife relationship.
- II. Then it is first wives.
 - A. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.
 1. This is a simple statement.
 2. It has a simple meaning.
 3. It doesn't mean that the wife has to run everything by her husband.
 4. There are areas that are her domain and she rules there and her husband gives his blessing.
 5. It does not mean that the wife is not allowed to give her opinion and input.
 - a. For they are a partnership closer than any other on earth.
 - b. They are no longer two but one and every good husband will want to know his wife's thinking on an issue.
 - B. He gives a reason.
 1. As with servants and children it is in the Lord or as to the Lord..

- a. That means that this is not a cultural thing but something that God designed.
 - b. Life is filled with areas of submission at work or school, in government and sports.
 - (1) suppose the defensive tackle said, "I want to call the plays instead of the quarterback." It wouldn't work out so well would it.
 - c. In very few areas do we find everyone on a equal position as everyone else.
 - d. And of course all are in submission to the Lord.
2. But also there is the Christian witness.
- a. Paul is telling us that when we step outside of God's order of things that we become a bad witness for Jesus Christ.
 - b. That is why Peter says what he does.
 - (1) 1Pe 3:1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.
 - c. It is the same with servants, that they become a bad witness to their masters when they will not submit to them.
- C. Let the wife see that she respects her husband. Eph 5:33
- 1. I don't give away many things but I give away books on Love and Respect.
 - a. These books have save many marriages.
 - b. It is because there is a battle between men and women.
 - c. When the men do no feel respected they do not love as they should.
 - d. And when women do not feel loved they do not respect their husbands.
 - e. It is a vicious circle that never ends well.
 - f. If women would respect their husbands they would find that will rekindle the love that once had.
 - g. And if men would love their wives then they would find that their wife would respect them in return.
 - 2. Paul does not say there is a condition to this.

a. To love and respect are commands and not suggestions.

III. Then the Husband.

A. The command is simple but profound.

1. Love your wife.
2. Love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.
3. Love your wife as you do your own body.

B. Men crave respect not love and therefore are not as naturally prepared for love as their wife is.

1. Boys did not grow up playing with dolls but soldiers.
2. Boys are not nearly as verbal as girls and do not express themselves as well.
3. Women need to early on in the relationship teach their husbands what love really is.

C. The goal is for the betterment of the wife.

1. He gives us the example of Christ and the church.
2. Christ loves the church and gave Himself for it and desires that it might be perfect, without blemish or spot.

D. If the wife is to submit to the husband then that means that the husband has to take responsibility for the wife as Christ takes responsibility for the church.

E. And a husband that truly loves his wife will only want the best for her and will never mistreat her.

Now all of this does not mean that there will never be times of tension in a marriage. Anytime you put any two people together you will have tension. But in marriage love and respect will win out if both husband and wife are committed to Jesus Christ.

Marriage can be the greatest blessing in this life or it can become it's greatest curse.

Almost all marriages start at the same place. And they can all end in the same place.

But many do not expect that anymore. You hear people say well they had a good marriage but it was time for it to end.

Good marriages only end when one or the other are take from this earth.

Let us seek the wisdom that comes from above and not the wisdom of men especially in the area of marriage and morality.