**Being a Fulfilled and Fulfilling Wife**

 In our previous lesson we studied what the Bible says about the husband’s role in the home. We learned that God wants husbands to be Christ-like learners, lovers, and servant-leaders. These expectations are far different than what many in our world think a husband ought to be. Each Christian husband has to decide, “Am I going to take my direction from the Word of God in these matters, or am I going to turn to another source of truth?”

 The same is true when it comes to the topic of the role of the wife. Many would consider the instructions we are about to consider from God’s Word to be outdated or even dangerous. Of course, such attitudes are nothing short of attacks on the authority of God and His Word. Let’s approach this study with the heart attitude of the Psalm writer in Psalm 119:9-16 …

*“9 How can a young man (or woman) keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word. 10 With all my heart I have sought You; do not let me wander from Your commandments.11 Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You. 12 Blessed are You, O LORD; teach me Your statutes. 13 With my lips I have told of all the ordinances of Your mouth. 14 I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches. 15 I will meditate on Your precepts and regard Your ways. 16 I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word.”*

In this lesson we will study three key Biblical words which explain the wife’s role in marriage.

**I. A godly Wife is an Honorer (through loving submission).** (much confusion/ misrepresentation about submission … Archie Bunker … Islam …) (Key = Biblical meaning)

 *“21 … and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. 22 Wives, be subject to your own*

 *husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.”*Eph 5:21-24

 *“… and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.”* Ephesians 5:33

 *“ … be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.”* Titus 2:5

 **A.** The **Command** – the Lord’s command to a wife is that she be subject to her **own** husband.

 1. This is a command to be continuously obeyed. The Greek verb, “be subject,” in Ephesians 5:22 (as well as in most other passages about submission) is in the present tense. God desires that a wife’s submission be a continuous part of her lifestyle.

 2. This command is a **spiritual** matter. What is the significance of Paul’s use of the words “as to the Lord” in verse 22? (speaks to motivation)

 3. This command is **comprehensive**. Vs. 24 *“But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.”* (Of course this would not include a request from the husband that would cause his wife to sin. cf. Acts 5:29)(for singles/don’t marry someone you’re not prepared to follow)

 4. Obedience to this command is not just an issue for women. God wants **all** His children to have a submissive heart (look closely at Ephesians 5:21). This does not come naturally to any of us. Consider the following:

 a) The lack of submission began with **satan**.

 Isaiah 14:12-15

 b) The lack of submission continued in the **Garden of Eden**.

 Genesis 3:1-5

 c) Unwillingness to submit to God is a **sin** we all have committed!

Is. 53:6

 d) It will become **worse** in the last days

2 Timothy 3:1-2

 e) The contrast and exception is the life of **Jesus Christ**! (submitted to earthly parents/ submitted to His Father/ humbled Himself to be servant of all! Mt. 20:25ff.)

 1 Peter 2:21-25

 Every human being struggles with submission. The choice we face is to be like Jesus Christ, or to be like satan, our adversary.

 **B.** Biblical Submission Defined

 1. What it is

 a) The word, “Submission,” is a translation of two Greek words: huppo=under; tasso=to place, or to station ones self; together they mean, to willingly arrange or place yourself in order under another.

 b) “Submission is a divine calling of the wife to honour, affirm, and nurture her husband’s leadership and to help to carry it through according to her gifts.”

 c) Submission is God’s way (perfect, all wise, all loving) of attaining and maintaining function and order in the home.

 i) True in **government** – Romans 13:1-7

 ii) True in the **church** – 1 Tim. 3 & 1 Peter 5

 iii) Also true in the **home** – Eph. 5:21ff. & 1 Cor. 11:3

 d) Submission is a way of life for all believers

 i) **Children** – Eph. 6:1

 ii) **Young people** – 1 Peter 5:5-6

 iii) **Employers and employees** Eph. 6:5, 9 & Col. 3:22; 4:1

 iv) **All people** – Romans 13:1

 v) **All believers** – James 4:7

 e) Submission includes **honour** and dedication toward her husband

 i) Functioning as her husband’s partner/ helper (Gen. 2:18)

 ii) It means that she does all she can to help her husband be a godly leader

 f) The wife’s submission is a **spiritual** matter

 i) The manner = “As to the Lord” Eph. 5:22

 ii) The model = “As the church is subject to Christ” Eph. 5:24

 iii) The means = “Being filled with the Spirit.” Ephesians 5:18 speaks about the importance of being controlled by the Holy Spirit.

 And by, “Being worshipful and thankful.” Ephesians 5:19-20 describes a person who worships God (note the emphasis in this verse on the heart) and who thanks God (note the words “always” and “for all things”).

 g) Submission **proves your love** for God

 Jesus said, “so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me.” How did Jesus say the world would know that He loved the Father?

 h) Submission is a picture of the church **obeying Christ!**

 “*23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.”* Ephesians 5:23

 What would you say to a woman who says, “I have no intention of submitting to my husband’s leadership”?

Jay Adams wrote, “Submission does not remove freedom, it allows for it. When is the train freer‑ when it is bumping over the hillside off the track, or when it is smoothly running along the track, confined or restricted, if you will, to the track? It is freer when it is where it ought to be, doing what it was intended to do. Restricted to the track means freedom. Confined to the track means ability to perform as it was intended to perform. What really brings freedom? Getting on the right track. When is a person freer in playing an organ or piano? Is he freer to learn to play a musical instrument when he says, ‘Forget the rules and the laws of harmony, the chromatic scale, and so forth’? He is not free when he says, ‘Forget it all,’ but rather when he spends the long, difficult hours practicing his scales. ‘How can this be?’ you ask. The one who sits down to an organ and says, ‘Forget the book and forget the practice’ is not free. He pulls out the stops, puts down one foot with a terrible growl. Then his hands come down like thunder‑ with a squeal and bellow and grunt. The result? Sheer cacophony! Noise! He cannot play the organ. He is not free to make music. That man isn’t free; he is bound by his own ignorance, bound by his own lack of skill, bound by the fact that he has not spent the hours that are necessary to learn how to make music. But the man who takes the long, hard road of restriction, who works within the structure, finally arrives at the point where he may throw away the books and write his own music. Freedom in God’s world never comes apart from structure. When one is free to live as God intended, he is truly free indeed. We hear much about women’s liberation today. I want you to be liberated. Here is the path of genuine liberation for a woman: submission. Submission allows her to run on the track; it allows her to make beautiful music in her home.” *Jay Adams, Christian Living In the Home, pp. 74-75*

 2. What Biblical submission isn’t

 a) It is not to be equated with putting the husband **in the place of Christ.**

 Colossians 1:18

 b) It is not giving up **independent thought** and becoming intellectually stagnant

 Colossians 3:16

 c) Submission doesn’t mean a wife cannot **influence** her husband. However, she must choose Biblical ways to influence him.

 i) 1 Peter 3:1-2, *“In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, 2   as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.”*

 ii) Proverbs 31:26, *“She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.”*

 iii) Overcome evil with good – Romans 12:17-21

 iv) Soft tongue – Prov. 15:1; 25:15

 v) Speaking the truth in love – Eph. 4:15

 vi) Patience – Eccl. 10:4; Prov. 15:18; Eph. 4:2

 vii) Sweetness of speech; godly appeal – Prov. 16:21

 viii) Reprove him – Matthew 18:16

 ix) Church discipline – Matthew 18:17

Submission is the best way to influence your husband because God honours obedience to His Word!

 d) Submission is **not giving in to** every demand of the husband

*“But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men.”* Acts 5:29

**II. A godly Wife is an Helper**

*“Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."* Genesis 2:18

 **A.** She compliments her husband as his **companion** and **helper**.

 **B.** She uses her many gifts and abilities to **assist** her husband

 Proverbs 31:10-31

 **C.** She finds fulfillment in **helping** her husband in his service for God

 1 Cor. 11:9

1. Being trustworthy and dependable (Proverbs 31:11, 12).

*(husband trusts her / she does him good all the days of her life)*

1. Maintaining a good attitude (Proverbs 31:26, 28, 29; James 3:13-18; Phil 4:4).

*(James warns against bitter jealousy & selfish ambition etc.)*

1. Discussing things lovingly, openly, and honestly (Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29).

*(speak the truth in love; lay aside falsehood; no unwholesome words)*

1. Being satisfied with her position, her possessions, her tasks (Philippians 4:6-13; Hebrews 13:5, 16).

*(content in whatever circumstances / content knowing God’s promises)*

1. Being longsuffering, forgiving, and forbearing (Ephesians 4:2, 31, 32; Colossians 3:12-14).

 *(forgiving as Christ has forgiven us)*

1. Showing an interest in his problems and concerns (Philippians 2:3, 4).

*(making the interests of others more important than own)*

1. Being an industrious, frugal, diligent, ambitious, and creative member of the team (Psalm 128:3; Proverbs 31:10-31).

*(“fruitful” in all areas of life)*

1. Offering suggestions, advice, and corrections when needed in a loving fashion (Proverbs 31:26).

*(lives with wisdom)*

1. Keeping herself beautiful, especially in the inner person (1 Peter 3:3-5).

*(clothes herself with Christlikeness)*

 10. Maintaining a good spiritual life (1 Peter 3:1, 2, 7).

**III. A godly Wife is a Homemaker**

 **A.** She diligently **loves** her husband and children

Titus 2:4-5 *“Encourage the young women to* ***love their husbands****, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.”* (matter of love and trust for husband AND the Lord) (how?)

 1. By building **loyalty** to him in the children

 The wife’s attitudes toward the husband are quickly picked up by the children. Lack of respect or confidence in his leadership, complaints about what he has or has not done will have debilitating influence on the children. She must avoid taking sides with the children or anyone against her husband. She must support and cooperate with him in discipline. All differences of opinion about discipline should be settled away from the children. (Wayne Mack)

 2. By **cooperating** with him in raising children

 *“Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and do not forsake your mother's teaching”* Proverbs 1:8

 3. By being **grateful** for him (1 Thess. 5:18 … in everything give thanks)

 Appreciation for one another should be expressed freely and in a variety of ways.

 **B.** She diligently works **in the home** – Titus 2:5

 1. She makes the home a comfortable place – Prov. 31:10-31

 2. She is organized and productive – Prov. 31:13-15, 21-22

 3. She is enterprising – Prov. 31:16-19, 24

 4. She is a generous neighbour - Prov. 31:20

 5. She is a teacher - Prov. 31:26 (1:8; 6:20) (Titus 2:3-4)

 6. She is blessed as a mother - Prov. 31:27-28

 7. She is an example of true godliness - Prov. 31:30-31

\*\*\* The way to show your husband the greatest love is to continually keep him in your prayers!