



God's Design for the Family

Lesson 2: The God-given Role of a Wife

Key Verse: Colossians 3:18

“Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.”

Overview

In our previous lesson, we saw how God ordained marriage to be between one man and one woman. The sanctity of marriage needs to be honored and magnified as Satan continues to attack and destroy the establishment of the family. We also saw how two sinners can make a God-honoring family work. This happens as each spouse lives a Spirit-filled life that is submitted to the word of Christ.

In this lesson, we will be looking at the role of a wife and God's design for her in the family. In today's society, women and wives are told that they are to be independent, self-fulfilled, and even to stay away from marriage. Marlene Dixon, a sociology professor at the University of Chicago, wrote: “The institution of marriage is the chief vehicle for the perpetuation of the oppression of women. It is through the role of wife that the subjugation of women is maintained.”¹ One writer says, “Marriage is a clear tool of oppression for women, but it also limits the choice of women, as she is stuck in the rattrap of motherhood, domestic work, and to fulfill society's expectations that there is no self left. ‘I’ becomes ‘we’ in a marriage where women lose their individuality.”²

There are even so-called Christian women who think God's Word does not apply anymore when it comes to marriage. They think the God-given roles are of the past and do not apply to marriage today. Meagan Jordan, a writer for Sojourners, wrote, “When men discuss submission from a religious perspective, they quote the Bible to justify ruling over women. While writing this, an alert from my Bible app flashed saying, ‘Now, what should we learn from everything that is written in this book? The most important thing a person can do is to respect God and obey his commands, because he knows about everything people do’ (Ecclesiastes 12:13). However, are all of these really God's commands or the interpretation from another man? Throughout life, rules and systems are improved upon once the collective has reached a new perspective. So, when it comes to the Bible, how do we approach its commands that are no longer widely accepted or suitable in cultural practice?”³

These worldly views are antithetical to the biblical view of marriage and have caused many marriages to fail and families to suffer. Marriage is not “a tool of oppression for women.” It is not something that we can redefine because society is moving in a new direction. Marriage was established by God at the beginning of creation, and when each spouse obeys God's commands regarding his or her role, there is

¹ <https://www.heritage.org/marriage-and-family/commentary/defense-marriage-0>

² <http://legisnations.com/a-feminist-view-of-marriage/>

³ Meagan Jordan, The Danger of ‘Wives Submit to Your Husbands’ in Modern Society, Oct. 21, 2019, Sojo.net.

great blessing. Marriage is a God-ordained institution where a wife finds peace and great satisfaction. It is the place where a woman finds provision and protection from her husband. It is the place where she finds abundant love and care.

After establishing submission in Ephesians 5:21, Paul begins to outline how that submission works in a family. God has established certain roles to both the husband and the wife in the family. In Ephesians 5:22, Paul begins his address to the wives.

The Exhortation of Godly Submission

1. Ephesians 5:22. Who is a wife to submit to? _____
2. Colossians 3:18. What does Paul tell the wives to do? _____
3. 1 Peter 3:1. What is the relationship of submission here? _____

4. What is the motivation for a wife to submit to her husband? _____

The Explanation of Godly Submission

1. Ephesians 5:23. Why should a wife submit to her husband? _____
2. What illustration does Paul use to convey this truth? _____
3. 1 Peter 3:1–2. How does Peter describe the conduct or behavior of submission?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

The Example of Godly Submission

1. Luke 22:42. What does this verse tell us about Jesus? _____
2. Luke 1:38. What did Mary model? _____
3. Ephesians 5:24. What example does Paul give of submission? _____
 - a. In what things should a wife be submissive to her husband? _____
4. 1 Peter 3:6–7. What did Sarah do? _____

The Expression of Godly Submission

1. Titus 2:3–5. How are the older women in the church to act?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
2. What are the older women in the church to do?
 - a. _____
3. What are the older women to train the younger women to do?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
 - f. _____
 - g. _____

“Submitting to someone whom God has placed over you with loving authority is a relief, not a burden.”
—Nancy Wilson, *The Fruit of Her Hands*, 17

Application

1. Wives, are you submitting to your husbands in everything?
2. Older women, are you looking for opportunities to encourage the younger women?
3. Husbands, are you loving and leading your wife?