

Chapter 13

CHRISTIAN FAMILY 3

WIVES SUBMIT TO YOUR HUSBANDS

"Most people get married believing a myth -- that marriage is a beautiful box full of all the things they have longed for: companionship, sexual fulfillment, intimacy, friendship. The truth is that marriage, at the start, is an empty box. You must put something in before you can take anything out. There is no love in marriage; love is in people. There is no romance in marriage; people have to infuse it into their marriages. A couple must learn the art and form the habit of giving, loving, serving, praising -- keeping the box full. If you take out more than you put in, the box will be empty." Dr. J Allen Petersen.

Submit: To yield. This implies that submission is self-imposed, not externally imposed. Submission is something we decide to do; it is a decision on our part.

- I. Submission is not a practice that only wives are expected to do. We see in the life of Jesus an example of submission that we can all follow.

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. (Ephesians 5:21 NIV)

- A. First of all we see from scripture that Jesus was submitted to God's divine purpose for His life. He knew that He had come to fulfill what had been spoken and written about Him as the Messiah. (Matthew 4:13-14; Matthew 5:17; Matthew 8:17; Mark 14:49; John 12:38; John 15:25)
- B. He was submitted to his parents; to their natural authority in His life. Through this relationship he learned submission and obedience in natural relationships. (Luke 2:51-52)
- C. Jesus also submitted himself to John's baptism. At His baptism, He received the Father's approval, not for His miracles, His teachings, or the healings he had done (at this point in his life he had not done any of these); but for His submission to authority and God's divine purpose for His life. (Matthew 3:13-15)
- D. Finally He submitted Himself to the death on the cross to bring salvation to the world. (Luke 22:42)
- II. We all make a choice of submission to God and His ways or of rebellion against God. James 4 tells us about this desire for worldliness or those things that the world offers. If we choose the world above God, the consequence is that we become an enemy of God. If we submit ourselves to God, resist the devil, and come near to God; God will come near to us and help us to live for Him. (James 4:1-10)
- III. Our first responsibility as both men and women is submission to God and His purpose for our lives. Submission will bring life, and not death. Submission is first of all an attitude of our heart; it is a decision we make. (Romans 12:1; Luke 22:42; Hebrews 12:9)

- IV. We can begin to practice submission by deciding to submit to those in authority over us.
- A. We should begin as Jesus did, by submitting to our parents. (Colossians 3:20)
 - B. We all have natural authorities in our lives as well. They include the government, the police, and our employer. God tells us very clearly that we are to submit to this natural authorities in our lives. (Romans 13:1, 5; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13)
 - C. As Christians we are also encouraged to submit to and to obey the spiritual leadership that has been placed over us. (Hebrews 13:7, 17)
 - D. In all of these areas of submission we are to submit to the authority; the position, not necessarily the personality. Submission breeds a positive response from those we submit to. There are times when the authority over us is not always kind, likeable, or easy to submit to. Submission does not mean weakness, lack of initiative, or a "walk all over me" attitude, or never being able to give input. Godly wisdom includes submission. (1 Peter 2:18; James 3:17)
- V. The Bible is clear in saying that the wife is to submit to their own husbands. But we must be careful to remember that submission does not begin and stop with the wife. We are to; *"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ..."* (Ephesians 5:21-24)
- A. The woman God created for the man is a strong person; not someone that is weak and unable to make decisions or to think creatively. God called her a "helpmeet" which means to complete, to protect, to aid, and to support. Submission begins in our heart attitude more than in the actual doing. Remember as women we don't have to prove our worth or our place because God has already given us a place, a job, and worth. (Colossians 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1-5)

<p>"A woman is never in an inferior place when she is in the place God has created for her."</p>

- B. God created us, both men and women, with a free will. We are not as puppets in His hand. We are to be yielded to his authority because He is God. But then He does allow us, in fact He even wants us to make decisions. Submission does not mean the wife is to be the husband's puppet either, but rather it is their willing yielding to the authority given to them as their husband.
- C. There are some things that can help wives in the area of submission to their husbands. First of all, it is a command, something that they might not do unless they were told. A wife's submission to her husband helps to meet some of the basic needs of the husband as a person. The husband has a need for admiration and for respect, and to be in authority. Second, we need to remember that it is submission to a position that God put in place. That means that as wives submit to their husbands they are submitting as to the Lord. (Genesis 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:14)
- D. There are some thoughts in Proverbs 31 that help us to understand the importance of the wife submitting to her own husband. The husband of this wife could safely trust in her. So much so that he had no need to take her by force. She did not need to be conquered because she was willing to submit to his authority in her life. Her husband and her children

rose up and call her blessed. (Proverbs 31:11, 28)

- VI. What are some of the specific responsibilities of the wife that God tells us about in His Word?
- A. The first is a willing submission to her husband's authority and leadership in the home. (Genesis 3:16; Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1, 5-6)
 - B. A wife should show and feel respect for her husband. Respect can mean to defer to, revere, to have high regard for or to favor. How a wife talks to and about her husband will give evidence of this respect. Showing this respect and admiration will meet a very real need of the husband. (Ephesians 5:33)
 - C. In Titus 2:3-5, the Bible tells us that the older women are to teach the younger women how to love their husbands. Love is a decision. It is something that can be learned. (Titus 2:3-5)
 - D. The same scripture in Titus also talks about the wife being self-controlled and pure; discreet and chaste. These attributes will bring honor to their husbands as well as to God. (Proverbs 31:23; Titus 2:3-5)
 - E. As wives we can have the privilege of creating a home. The atmosphere of the home is largely the responsibility of the wife. How she manages it, cares for it, and makes it a place of refuge for her family, will determine the atmosphere. A home needs to be where your family and those that may visit will feel safe and happy. (Proverbs 14:1; Titus 2:3-5)

THE PATTERN FOR THE WIFE

A wife of noble character: strength, ability, efficiency, valor, capable, trustworthy, and fear of God. The word noble is the same word as is used to describe the character of Israel's judges in Exodus 18:21.

A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate. (Proverbs 31:10-31)

SOME THOUGHTS FOR WOMEN WITH UNSAVED HUSBANDS

What do you want your husband to do? How do you want him to change?

- ❖ You want him to be saved.
- ❖ You want him to serve God with you.
- ❖ You want him to be a Christian husband and father (spiritual leader in the home).

I. You want your husband to be saved. (1 Corinthians 7:14-16; 1 Peter 3:1-2)

A. The scripture in 1 Corinthians talks about his willingness to live with you.

1. What are some of the things that will make him willing or pleased to stay with you?
2. At this point it might be helpful to study the duties and responsibilities of the wife as spoken of in scripture.

B. He can be won by the behavior, purity and reverence of your life. Your daily walk of Godly living before your husband will speak louder than the words you may say.

II. You want your husband to be a Christian husband and father, to take the spiritual headship of your home. (Ephesians 5:22, Colossians 3:18)

A. You might consider stepping out of any position that you want your husband to step into.

B. If you want your husband to be something, set yourself to be the scriptural counterpart to that.

- ❖ Head....subject
- ❖ Leader....follower
- ❖ Provider....be needy (don't do it all)
- ❖ Godly husband....Godly wife
- ❖ Godly father....Godly mother

III. You want your husband to serve God with you.

A. Service to God comes out of a love relationship to the Savior. Be glad if he begins to enjoy fellowship with Christians, but don't try to push him into "Churchianity" (it may inoculate him against spirituality).

B. Some things that are best not to do:

1. Don't push him into Church-type activity. Make sure the door is open....don't push.
2. Don't preach to him. It can be the same as nagging. It will also destroy the

headship/subject relationship.

3. Don't be super-spiritual. If he begins to seriously consider coming to the Lord and understands that he will start as a baby in Christ and you are projecting a super-spiritual attitude, he may say "What's the use. I'll never be able to catch up to her spiritually!"

C. You will want him to respond, not react.

IV. It will be especially important for you to establish your priorities as a Christian wife and mother.

A. If you determine your way of life is to be in accordance with Scripture, you must establish priorities.

1. Keep your own personal relationship with Lord alive and active.
2. Ministry in the home: Wife, mother, housework, cooking....these are your first spiritual priority.
3. Be careful not to use your ministry in the Church as an escape from your situation.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

Chapter 13 Christian Family 3: Wives Submit to Your Husbands

1. How can you see the verse that says "*Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ*" bringing a proper balance and harmony in the relationship between husband and wife?
2. Think and talk about some of the ways that a wife might show respect for her husband. How might she do this for her children? How might she do this in front of her friends? How might she do this in front of their friends?