

“Family Matters Part I: Wives”

Col 3:18

Scripture Ref: 2 Tim 3:1-5; Gal 3:28; 1 Tim 3:12; Eph 5:22-24; 2 Chron 7:14

(Womanese Dictionary) (Men ARE Smarter)

- 1. Family’s are in crisis today:**
- 2. The family unit is being assailed from many areas**
 - a. Parents that are caught up in their own happiness who neglect their kids**
 - i. Parents who are involved with adultery – pornography – alcohol abuse**
 - ii. Workaholic parents**
 - iii. Broken homes**
 - b. Peer pressure to drink and take drugs**
 - c. Sexualization of teens, especially young girls**
 - d. Marketing of tobacco & alcohol to teens**
- 3. We are now seeing the results of the breakdown of the family in our society - As goes the family – so goes the nation**
 - a. 50% percent of first marriages, 67% of second and 74% of third marriages end in divorce**
 - b. Cohabitation: half of young adults aged 20-40 are cohabiting instead of getting married. Cohabitation has increased nearly 1,000 percent since 1980, and the marriage rate has dropped more than 40 percent since 1960**
 - c. 40% of children born out of wedlock**
 - d. Teen suicide is a leading cause of death ages 10-19 yrs**
 - i. Teen Homicide: In 2004, the average homicide rate for teen was 40 per 100,000**
- 4. The bible tells us that it is a sign of the times...**

2 Tim 3:1-5

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power.

- 5. Can it be arrested??? YES! if “as the family goes, so goes the nation”, there is something we can do**

- a. As Christians, we can do **OUR PART** by living in obedience to the Lord, to “go forth and multiply”, and raise our kids “in the fear and admonition of the Lord”
 - b. One of the greatest things we can do as Christians is the build healthy Christian marriages, healthy Christian kids, healthy Christian homes.
6. Over the next three Sundays, we will be talking about God’s model for the family – and how it can bless our lives here on this earth, and be rewarded in heaven.

18 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

7. Some say that Paul is sexist, or that he is against women... Actually just the contrary
8. It is worth noting that in Roman society, women had exactly ZERO rights as humans...
- a. They married young (11 or 12), married whomever their father had arranged
 - b. They were expected to be perpetually pregnant. Daughters were often “exposed” as useless, in favor of sons
 - c. They could be divorced for any reason, and they left their kids behind – never to see them again
 - d. Could not vote or participate in government, were not allowed to drink wine, which was punishable by death.
 - e. The advent of Christianity in the Roman world, brought to them through the teaching of Paul, brought real freedom to women, as Paul himself taught

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

- f. And it would seem that Paul was simply helping the new church to place themselves and their families in the proper order that God had ordained from the beginning...
- g. Lets break this verse down...

Rank & Order

9. **“wives, submit”**: This word does not mean ‘slavery’ or ‘subjugation’, but has to do with rank and order.
10. Need to understand: God is a God of order, and He has given us an order for the home...
- a. And order has nothing to do with worth, or value, or ability

- b. Order has everything to do with having things in their proper place, that the family unit might prosper in the Lord!
11. I was reading recently how the Army is trying hard to maintain its NCO corps, because these are the men that know how to fight wars.
- a. The new officers come into a unit, and the NCO's train them how to conduct battle operations.
 - b. Now the officers are the leaders, they are in charge, they are accountable for the results of the platoon.
 - c. The NCO can fight better, knows more – the order of authority is a matter of rank that has been established for order

The Sense of Submission

12. The form of the verb shows that the submission is to be voluntary – it is not to be forced on the wife by a bible-bearing husband.
- a. No – the submission is a sign of her willingness to obey the Lord in all things – this perhaps being one of the hardest!
13. True spiritual submission is one of the secrets of growth and fulfillment in the marriage...
- a. When a Christian wife is submitted to the Lord and her own husband, she experiences a release and fulfillment that she will find in no other place on this earth
 - b. *(Many ladies who have spurned this God-given role have found later in life that they are unfulfilled and long for the thing that they now are missing)*
 - c. This voluntary submission creates an atmosphere of growth in the home that allows both the husband and the wife to become all that God wants them to be!

The Sphere of Submission

14. *“wives submit to your own husbands”*: This defines the *sphere* of the wife's submission.
- a. Nowhere in the bible is there a command for women in general to submit to men. (does not say “women submit to men” but “wives...”)
 - b. In the sphere of society, government, the workplace, there is no biblical conflict for a woman to be over a man.
 - c. Only in the marriage relationship and in the context of a woman being a teacher over men in the church, is the woman called to this role.

1 Tim 3:12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man,

- d. So the sphere is “wives, to your own husbands”

The Motive of Submission

15. ***As is fitting in the Lord***: This is a crucial phrase. It colors everything else we understand about this passage. There have been several different interpretations of this phrase...
16. There is an interpretation that “**favors**” the husband, viewing “fitting in the Lord” means that a **wife should submit to her husband as if he were God himself.**
- a. This interpretation defines the phrase as the *extent* of submission.
 - b. The idea is “you submit to God in absolutely everything without question, so you must also submit to your husband in the same way.”
 - c. But this is wrong. Simply put, *in no place* does the Scripture say that one person should submit to another in that way.
 - i. There are limits to the submission your employer can expect of you: If an employer asks you to disobey God, you should not submit...
 - ii. There are limits to the submission parents can expect of children: if a parent asks a child to disobey God, you should not submit...
 - iii. There are limits to the submission a husband can expect of a wife: if a husband asks a wife to disobey God, you should not submit.
17. This does not mean that a wife can be argumentative with her husband (neither should the husband be argumentative with the wife)
- a. But a *simple “honey, your asking me to disobey the Lord, I cannot do that. If you choose to do that, then that is between you and God, but I cannot”*. (gee, I’ve heard that somewhere before...)
 - b. Only the most carnal and hard-hearted husband would push past that... and then later after it blows up, I’m sure that he’ll remember that conversation!
18. In no place does the Scripture teach an unqualified, without exception, submission – except to God and God alone. To violate this is to commit the sin of idolatry.
19. There is another interpretation that “**favors**” the wife seeing that fitting in the Lord means “*I’ll submit to him as long as he is doing what I think the Lord wants.*”
- a. *I’ll submit to him when he makes the right decisions and carries them out the right way. When he makes a wrong decision, he isn’t*

in the Lord, so I shouldn't submit to him then. It isn't fitting to do so."

- b. This interpretation defines the phrase as the *limit* of submission. This is also wrong.
 - c. It is true that there are limits to a wife's submission, but when the wife approaches her submission in this way, it degenerates into a case of "*I'll submit to my husband when I agree with him.*"
 - d. Simply put, *that is not submission at all*. It's easy to submit to someone when you are in agreement (in reality, that is agreement, not submission).
 - e. It is only when there is a *disagreement* that submission is tested.
20. As is fitting in the Lord does not define the *extent* of a wife's submission, nor does it define the *limit* of a wife's submission.
- a. It defines the *motive* of a wife's submission.
 - b. It means, "*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands because it is a part of your calling from the Lord, because it is an expression of your submission to the Lord.*"
 - c. It honors God's Word and His order of authority for the family.

Eph 5:22-24

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.

21. Therefore, as is fitting in the Lord means for wives, submission to their husband is part of their Christian life.
- a. When a wife doesn't obey this word to submit to your own husband as is fitting in the Lord, she doesn't just refusing her role as a wife. She is refusing her role as a follower of Jesus Christ.
 - b. This means that the command to submit is completely out of the realm of "my nature" or "my personality."

Misconceptions

22. Wives aren't called to submit because they are the "submissive type."
- a. To be honest – few of us are the "submissive type" – which is where many problems arise in the lives of Christians who refuse to submit areas of their lives to God.
23. Submission to the husband has nothing to do a mans intelligence, or giftedness, or capability.
- a. It has everything to do with honoring the Lord Jesus Christ.

- b. In the marriage, the husband is not smarter, or more capable, or more valuable
 - c. he is simply the one whom God has made the head – or the leader of the home –
 - d. And along with that leadership comes responsibility and accountability - he is accountable to God for the well-being of his family!
24. This has nothing to do with whether or not your husband is “right” on a particular issue.
- a. It has to do with Jesus being right.
25. Paul did not address the wives first because they needed to hear it,
- a. ...or that the woman is supposed to submit first, and then the husband will follow and love his wife.
 - b. Although, in many cases, that I have observed, it is the wife who will first seek the Lord, and seek to obey they Lord, and will begin to submit to her husband....
 - c. And then the husband begins to respond and love his wife the way God calls him to...
 - d. So perhaps God understood the stubborn and carnal nature of men, and so He stated it in this order... ???
26. **IMPORTANT POINT:** This means that a woman should take great care in how she chooses her husband.
- a. Remember, ladies: this is what God requires of you in marriage. This is *His* expectation of you.
 - b. So instead of looking for an attractive man, instead of looking for a wealthy man, instead of looking for a romantic man, you better first look for a man you can respect and follow!

Why Then?

27. So if submission has nothing to do with worth, or intelligence, or ability, or superiority – what does it have to do with? Why would God establish this order???
- a. So that there would not be disorder!
 - b. Even the secular world understands that what is BEST for children and the family is two loving parents, mother and father, in a loving and healthy home environment.
 - c. When that home starts to break down, the result is disorder – what we see all through our society.
 - d. If will just set aside all of our humanistic arguments and philosophies, and submit ourselves to God’s plan for our families...

- e. **We could see huge changes in our church – and that should spill out into the world around us.**

28. (So What???) In this world that seems to spiraling out of control, can we make a difference?

- a. **To quote of the politicians – Do you want HOPE? Do you want CHANGE?**
- b. **We CAN change our world – by contributing to our society a generation that can make a difference –**
- c. **A generation that knows God, that loves God, that will obey God, and thus will change the world they live in for Christ!**

29. All of the things that we feel are important, the environment, our country, our economy, the schools...

- a. **We can make a difference – but it starts right here – in our own lives – living out our lives in accordance with God’s plan and God’s word**

2 Chron 7:14

14 if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land

Copyright © 2008 Pastor Clay Ritter. This data file is the sole property of Pastor Clay Ritter. It may be copied only in its entirety for circulation freely without charge. All copies of this data file must contain this copyright notice. This data file may not be copied in part, edited, revised, copied for resale or incorporated in any commercial publications, recordings, broadcasts, performances, displays or other products offered for sale, without the written permission of Pastor Clay Ritter. Requests for permission should be made in writing and addressed to Pastor Clay Ritter, c/o Calvary Chapel of Wilmington, 2831 Carolina Beach Rd, Wilmington NC, 28412.