

Husbands and Wives

There are many thoughts about the marriage relationship and what the Bible says about husbands and wives.

Introduction

One of the things we watch on our website is the things that people are searching for when they come to our website. It is amazing the number of people searching for marriage advice or information about godly marriage relationships. We're glad they are searching and we're here to help. Two of the common search phrases are husbands and wives and submission and respect in marriage.

We are married and are going to be celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary in the coming months. Every day we find ourselves loving each other a little more. We enjoy each other's company and want to include the other in all we do. Our friend group refers to us as "the newlyweds" often.

The love we have for one another finds its foundation in Jesus and the scripture. We have built our lives and marriage on that foundation. We are going to talk about husbands and wives and how to build your marriage on a solid foundation of Jesus Christ and the scriptures in the Bible. We are also going to try and strip away culture and its influence on the marriage relationship between husbands and wives.

Wives Submit to Your Husbands

There is a lot of common thought in the world about what the Bible says about marriage relationships. Often local culture is overlaid on top of scripture to create what people believe. This sometimes causes people to read a particular verse in the Bible and apply it in a fashion that is out of context with the rest of scripture. There is not a more relevant example of this than what is found in Ephesians 5:22-24.

Ephesians 5:22-24

(22) Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. (23) For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. (24) Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

People for centuries have taken this teaching from the Apostle Paul to the church in Ephesus and used it to further their own ideas of what society should be like and not accept what God started in the beginning. Paul was writing to a church that was heavily influenced by the ruling Roman-Greco doctrine of a male superior military-style chain of command household. His teaching was to enlighten and bring correction to Christians in a way they could understand culturally and still fulfill God's will for their lives and for all mankind.

Paul tells wives to submit to their husbands as they do the Lord. This submission is not one of servitude or even slavery. This is voluntary submission so that there is a better channel of communication and a means to accomplish what the husband and wife team have been called to do in the name of the Lord.

We voluntarily submit ourselves to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We trust Him to lead and guide us for everyone's benefit. This is what the Apostle Paul is teaching wives to do with their husbands. Wives,



trust your husbands, help them, guide them, speak to them, and love them. Do all you can so the both of you can succeed together in whatever way the Lord has asked you to serve.

This teaching does not remove your voice or the ability to share ideas or thoughts with your husband. It also does not prevent you from pointing out errors or helping hold your husband accountable for the things God has instructed us all. In everything, we are called to love one another, and when we love one another as a husband and wife should, this communication should come easy.

The wives are not the only ones being tasked here. Husbands have a role in the marriage relationship also, and it's not just providing for the family.

Husbands Love Your Wives

In many cultures, it is the husband's job to provide for the family. That may mean working hard all day out in the field or going to work at a job all day and bringing home a paycheck. This is necessary, but not necessarily solely the husband's job. Again, we are trying to separate culture from scripture. Let's read what the Apostle Paul has to teach about husbands in Ephesians 5:25-31.

Ephesians 5:25-31

(25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (26) to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, (27) and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. (28) In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. (29) After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— (30) for we are members of his body. (31) "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

Husbands, you are to love your wives just as Christ loves the Church. Jesus gave up his life for the salvation of mankind. Those that accept his sacrifice and voluntarily make Him Lord of their life are the Church. You are to love your wife the very same way. You need to be willing to make sacrifices for your wife, and your family for that matter.

Paul teaches how Jesus makes the Church holy and blameless by cleansing the Church and removing every stain, wrinkle, and blemish. This helps the Church be all it can be and ready for the day we are called into the presence of God the Father in Heaven.

Husbands, you are to love your wives and support them just as Jesus loves the Church and supports her. You are responsible to do all you can do to help your wife radiate the beauty of the Lord and be without spiritual blemish, stain, or wrinkle.

Husbands, we are often tasked with making sacrifices. Make those sacrifices for your wife and your family just as Jesus did for the Church, willingly and lovingly. Do not begrudge when you have to sacrifice to lift your wife up or to help your family move forward in the Lord.

Do not lord the authority your wife voluntarily gives to you over her. Jesus holds us all openly. He does not tie us down or lock us up so we can never go out and get dirty or make mistakes. We cannot do that



with our wives or families either. We must be their biggest fan and do all we can to support them and lift them up.

The husband and wife relationship boils down to two things; mutual respect and honor.

Mutual Respect and Honor

Mutual respect and honor between husbands and wives are the real keys to a successful marriage. Regardless of culture, husbands and wives must respect one another, honor one another, and love one another. Look at the two verses that surround the text we have read already today. Ephesians 5:21 and 5:33.

Ephesians 5:21, 33

(21) Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

(33) However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

You can see here that Paul is teaching that despite the militaristic and male-dominated culture he is writing in that day, there is to be mutual submission, respect, and love for one another. Husband is not over wife and wife is not over husband. Neither is better or more important than the other. The two become one when they marry and are presented to the world as one.

The marriage relationship is mutually beneficial to both husband and wife but also a great union to be celebrated and used to serve others in the name of Jesus Christ.

Mutual respect, love, and honor between husbands and wives mean there are no ulterior motives. Everything we say and do is to lift the other up regardless of what we are doing. The role in the household is not specified and we must be careful not to confuse culture with what Paul is teaching here.

Nowhere in Paul's teaching do we read that it is the man's job to go to work and provide while it is the wife's job to stay home and take care of the house. These are just roles that can be held by either husband or wife or both.

Conclusion

The Church has historically used this passage of scripture to keep wives submissive, seen and not heard, so to speak. This is not what Paul is teaching. Paul is teaching a very simple doctrine. When cultural bias and practice are removed we see husbands and wives are to submit to one another voluntarily, honoring one another and exhorting one another just like the relationship between Jesus and the Church.

Husbands, love your wives. Respect them, honor them and cherish them. Be your wife's biggest cheerleader. Wives, love your husbands. Respect them, honor them and cherish them. Be your husband's biggest cheerleader. In this, you will be one flesh and show a united front to the world that you are a power couple in Christ and nothing can come between you.

