

The Christian's Walk (4)

Ephesians 5:22-6:9

Introduction

A. Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:21: “²¹submitting to one another in the fear of God.”

B. In Ephesians 5:22-6:9, Paul applies this statement by addressing three common relationships:

1. Husbands and wife (5:22-33)

2. Parents and children (6:1-4)

3. Employers and employees (6:5-9)

Husband and Wife

5:22-33

I. Instruction for the Christian wife

[5:22-24](#) ²²Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

A. ²²“Submit” means “be subject”

1. This is a command for all Christian wives
2. This is a command; not a suggestion
3. This command is reinforced in Colossians and 1 Peter:

Colossians 3:8

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

1 Peter 3:1-6 (AMP)

In like manner, you married women, be **submissive** to your own husbands [subordinate yourselves as being secondary to and dependent on them, and adapt yourselves to them], so that even if any do not obey the Word [of God], they may be won over not by discussion but by the [godly] lives of their wives, When they observe the pure *and* modest way in which you conduct yourselves, together with your reverence [for your husband; you are to feel for him all that reverence includes: to respect, defer to, revere him—to honor, esteem, appreciate, prize, and, in the human sense, to adore him, that is, to admire, praise, be devoted to, deeply love, and enjoy your husband]. Let not yours be the [merely] external adorning with [elaborate] interweaving *and* knotting of the hair, the wearing of jewelry, or changes of clothes; But let it be the inward adorning *and* beauty of the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible *and* unfading charm of a gentle and peaceful spirit, which [is not anxious or wrought up, but] is very precious in the sight of God. For it was thus that the pious women of old who hoped in God were [accustomed] to beautify themselves and were **submissive** to their husbands [adapting themselves to them as themselves secondary and dependent upon them]. It was thus that Sarah obeyed Abraham [following his guidance and acknowledging his headship over her by] calling him lord (master, leader, authority). And you are now her

true daughters if you do right and let nothing terrify you [not giving way to hysterical fears or letting anxieties unnerve you].

B. ²²To your own husbands

1. First, the wife is called to submit to one man in particular; not all men in general—to submit to her “own husband”
2. Second, this statement applies to both Christian and Non-Christian “husbands”

C. ²²As to the Lord

Because the Christian wife is submitted to Christ in loving obedience, she submits to her own husband

D. ²³For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church...

The Spirit-filled wife recognizes that her husband’s role in giving leadership is not only God-ordained, but is a reflection of Christ’s own loving, authoritative headship of the church

E. ²³He is the Savior of the body.

As Christ rescued His church from the dangers of sin, death, and hell, so the husband provides for, protects, preserves, and loves His wife, leading her to blessing as she submits

F. ²⁴Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

1. “In everything” means “in everything”

2. The statement, “let the wives be [subject] to their own husbands in everything”, must be interpreted in view of Acts 5:29: “We must obey God rather than men.”

G. Application:

1. Ephesians 5:22-24 is not an issue about a woman’s worth, but rather, about God’s perfect order and design for marriage

For example, Paul wrote concerning Christ:

1 Corinthians 11:3

...I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.

aa. This statement is not about **worth**

God the Father and God the Son are equal in glory, eternity, and power

bb. This statement is about **order**

Because He loves the Father, Jesus Christ always submits to the Father’s will

2. When a husband leads his wife in love, and the wife submits to her own husband, she feels safe and secure under her husband’s leadership

And both husband and wife are happy and benefited because they are both functioning in their proper, God-ordained roles

3. Ephesians 5:22-24 is the opposite of Genesis 3:16: “your desire *and* craving will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” (AMP)

a. Genesis 3:16 speaks about the woman's desire to rule over man, and her struggle to submit

b. For this reason, a woman needs to be Spirit-filled to fully obey Ephesians 5:22-24

II. Instruction for the Christian husband

5:25 ²⁵Husbands, love your wives...

A. This is a command; not a suggestion

1. In most cases, women have difficulty **submitting** to their husbands, and men have difficulty displaying real expressions of **love** towards their wives

2. For this reason, the Bible commands husbands: "love your wives"

B. This command is reinforced in Colossians and 1 Peter:

Colossians 3:19

Husbands, **love** your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

1 Peter 3:7 (AMP)

In the same way you married men should live considerately with [your wives], with an intelligent recognition [of the marriage relation], honoring the woman as [physically] the weaker, but [realizing that you] are joint heirs of the grace (God's unmerited favor) of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered *and* cut off. [Otherwise you cannot pray effectively.]

C. "Love"

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

⁴Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵or rude.

It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never ends...

5:25 ²⁵just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

A. The standard and example of love that every Christian husband needs to have for their wives is the love that Jesus has for His Bride, the Church:

1. First, Christ “**loved the Church**”—a 1 Corinthians 13 kind-of love

2. Second, Christ demonstrated His love for the Church—He “**gave Himself for her**”—a reference to Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross

- ▶ Daily personal sacrifice
- ▶ Daily dying to “self”

B. Question: “Husbands, how would you feel if Jesus loved you the same way you love your wife? Would you be happy and blessed, or sad and miserable?”

5:26-27 ²⁶that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

A. Christ made us holy by His blood and the Word of God

B. In the same way, **Christian husbands** must love their wives with purifying love

1. A practical way for Christian husbands to love their wives with purifying love is by refreshing them by bathing them in the Word of God
2. “Husbands and wives that pray and read together, stays together”

5:28²⁸ So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies...

A. This statement emphasizes the “**oneness**” between husband and wife

B. A Christian husband is to care for his wife with the same devotion he naturally manifests as he cares for himself—“nourishes and cherishes” (see Ephesians 5:29)

5:28²⁸ ...he who loves his wife loves himself.

A husband who loves his wife in these ways bring great blessing to himself from her and from the Lord

5:29²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

“Nourishes and cherishes”

These two words express the two responsibilities of providing for your wife’s needs in order to help her grow mature in Christ and to provide warm and tender affection to give her comfort and security

5:30³⁰ For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

A. We are one with Christ, and He nourishes and cherishes us

B. In marriage, a husband and a wife are “one”, therefore, a Christian husband needs to nourish and cherish his own wife

5:31³¹ “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

A. Reference to Genesis 2:24

B. This quotation emphasizes permanence and unity in marriage

C. “Joined” means “super-glued together”

III. Message for the Christian husband and the Christian wife

[5:32-33](#) ³²This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. ³³Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

A. Christian marriage is intended by God to show-off the loving relationship between Christ and His Church

B. What do people see when they look at your marriage?

Parents and Children

6:1-4

I. Instruction for Christian children

[6:1](#) ¹Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

A. This command is reinforced in Colossians:

Colossians 3:20

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

B. “Obey” means “to honor; to respect; to submit to”

Jesus exemplified this command in His youth:

Luke 2:51

And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

C. Children must obey their parents “in the Lord”

Glorifying God and pleasing Him needs to be the main motive behind our obedience towards our parents

6:2-3 ²“Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: ³“that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

A. Deuteronomy 5:16

B. Kids who obey their parents in the Lord are blessed in both their young and adult years of life

II. Instruction for Christian parents

6:4 ⁴And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

A. “Do not provoke your children to wrath”

1. In the pagan world of Paul’s day, and even in many Jewish households, most fathers ruled their families with rigid and domineering authority.

The desire and welfare of wives and children were seldom considered.

2. Paul makes clear that a Christian father’s authority over his children does not allow for unreasonable demands that might drive his children to anger, despair, and resentment.

B. “But bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

This calls for systematic discipline and instruction, which brings children to respect the commands of the Lord as the foundation for all life, godliness, and blessing

C. This command is reinforced in Colossians:

Colossians 3:21

Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

Employers and Employees

6:5-9

I. Instruction for Christian Employees

6:5⁵ **Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh...**

A. Slaves in both Greek and Roman culture had no rights legally and were treated as “labor equipment”.

B. When Paul wrote this letter, half of the residents in Rome were slaves—“slaves” were common throughout the Roman Empire—including Ephesus

C. These words can be applied today by all **Christian employees**—people who work for others

D. “**Obedient**”—“keep on obeying”; “don’t stop obeying”

6:5-8 ⁵Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.

Paul reinforced this command in Colossians:

Colossians 3:22-25

Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eyeservice, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

II. Instruction for Christian employers

6:9 ⁹And you, masters...

A. Slave owners

B. This command can be applied by all **Christian Employers** today

6:9 ⁹And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Paul reinforced this command in Colossians:

Colossians 4:1

Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.