

Colossians
“A Worthy Walk”
III. Main Teaching: 1:15-4:6

3:1-4:6 **Walking in the Wisdom of Christ**

3:18-21 Pleasing in Christ

3:13-17
“Grace Garments in Marriage”

I. Intro.

II. 18 Five things about a wife’s role in marriage

III. 19 How to love your wife

I. Intro.

Paul doesn’t just challenge believers generally he challenges them specifically, in their homes and on their jobs. He has something to say to wives, husbands, children, parents, employees and employers. The first thing to note is that these challenges were to believers as his call to them was to live a life pleasing the Lord. Looking out upon America today it is plain to see that something is wrong with the home today. A full 1/3 of all US households or 15 million children are being raised without a father. Another 5 million children are being raised without a mother. There are 13.7 million single parents raising 21.8 million children which is 26% of all families in America. The highest rate of this by far is in the African American family where 72% of all households are single parent households. Saints the first institution the Lord established on earth was the home and as the home and family goes so goes the society and the nation. Confucius once said, *“The strength of a nation is derived from the integrity of its home.”* Saint’s prior to this section as truthful as it was it still remained a theory but the moment Paul takes it out in

these verse it quickly moves into a reality as he places the practice of this tow step process in the most difficult areas we human face,...RELATIONSHIPS.

II. 18 Five things about a wife's role in marriage

As Paul wrote what "grace garments" would look like in a marriage we need to remember just how radical that would have been for the reader of this letter at this time.

- Under Jewish law a wife was a possession of her husband not a person. She had no rights as a husband could divorce his wife for anything where as a wife had only three reasons whereby she could divorce her husband, leprosy, apostasy, and rape of another woman.
- In Greek society a wife lived her life incomplete seclusion. She was not allowed to go out alone, and did not even join her husband for meals. She was his servant and was to be loyal to him alone. Whereas he was free to have as many relationships outside of marriage as he wanted.

Under booth of these cultures 100% of the duties belonged to the wife and 100% of the privileges belonged to the husband. The Christian ethic of marriage was one of shared duties and privileges as in a Christian marriage a person doesn't ask "*What can my spouse do for me, but what can I do for my spouse?*" Christian marriage is a partnership where the duties and responsibilities may by different but they are shared and equal.

Vs. 18 Paul chooses to start with wives but I believe that he does so because the family is the key relationship we humans have and there is none more important to the harmony of the family then wives. The word for submission is a military term that means to arrange under rank and suggests not superiority but different roles. Whenever a man teaches on marriage and starts talking about wives and "*submission*" he is at an extreme disadvantage but let me start out by pointing out *five things about a wife's role in marriage*:

- **Paul addresses this section to wives:** He doesn't say, "***Husbands, tell your wives to submit to you as it is fitting in the Lord.***" As such this section is a word of the Lord to ***women only*** not to husbands or men. We have no right to come to wives in specific, or women in general and demand submission. For us husbands and men it as though verse 18 doesn't exist; our verse is verse 19 which as we shall see in a minute doesn't exist to wives and women.
- **Submission must be defined as understood in New Testament times:** The word doesn't have anything to do with equality and in fact this word is also addressed to men in the Bible so in no way can it be described as sexist. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, just before he speaks to wives about submission, he uses the very same word and says that we Christians ought to be, "***submitting to one another in the fear of God.***" It is also a word that is used of Jesus willing submission unto death to the Father. Clearly this submission was voluntary and not forced and in no way lessened His equality to the Father. The word means ***as we are filled with the Spirit our desire ought to be the yielding of our lives for the benefit of our spouse.***
- **Submission is specific not universal:** Paul made the use of this voluntary yielding of a wife's life "***specific***" and "***not universal***" to all men or other husbands as he placed in this sentence the words "***own husbands***". She is not under the same obligation with other men that are not her husband other than the generally ***yielding of our lives for the benefit of others*** spoken of in Ephesians 5:21. Let alone men who seem to think it is their place to order women around as their personal servant as some inferior species to them.
- **Submissions attitude and aim:** Wives voluntary submission to their husbands is the attitude in which the wife is doing so. She is doing so because it is the Lord's will that she do so and in so doing she is "***pleasing the Lord***" as well as ***voluntarily relinquishing her rights*** to Jesus!
- **Submission means strength:** Paul adds that it is "***fitting in the Lord***". There is an order to His creation and he has so designed the family with a structure where the husbands greatest need is to be supported, to be under girded that will enable him to stand up to the stresses of life. It is not a lesser position as the two are one; it is the way in which she was created to be a help mate where her strengthens complement his weaknesses.

III. 19 How to love your wife

Vs. 19 In this headship it is the husbands responsibility to treat her is a self-sacrificing love that Jesus has demonstrated towards his bride the church. Paul gives husband what their "***graces clothes***" look like in a marriage and again we need to understand specific things about this.

- **Paul address this section to husbands:** Just as was the case with wives this section is exclusive in nature, addressed just for husbands and not for wife's to tell their

husbands. Husbands need to be concerned with verse 19 and wife's need to be concerned with verse 18.

- **Love needs to be defined in N.T. terms:** The word Paul chooses "love" is specific in definition as he uses the word *agapao* and not *eros*, *philo*. Paul is telling husbands that they need to treat their wife's like Christ treats the church.
- **To not do so is bitter:** Husbands can't treat their wife's like they do their buddy's by being sarcastic, sharp, or silent.

I like the fact that God only gave each partner "**ONE**" rule instead of some exhaustive

list. These two commands reveal that there is a difference between how men and women

sense "love":

- *Men:* Define love generally by "**support**". Support the fellow and he will know that you love him. So you can see why Paul's words calling for the "voluntarily relinquishing of her rights" is so important to maintain harmony in the home.
- *Women:* Define love in terms of "**security**". A woman needs to feel secure in her marriage and that is how she defines her husband's love.

You see **God intends our marriages to harmonious in which we sing a duet and not a battle in which we have a duel.**

In Ephesians 5:25-33 Paul gives **four views on what "loves security" looks like for a woman.**

1. Vs. 25b **Sacrificially:** "*gave Himself for her*" Paul uses Jesus' example for His bride, the church saying that Jesus "*gave Himself*" for her. This sacrificial love can be seen in two ways:
 - a. **Positively:** Jesus shared Himself with us. Husbands are to be sharing all of our emotions, dreams and thoughts with our wives. This kind of sharing is sacrificial for husbands and it requires for us to feel supported because you will really know how vulnerable we are.
 - b. **Negatively:** **Jesus loved us to death**, literally, the death of Himself. Husbands are to love their wives to the death of ourselves. We will be dying to all our self-seeking pursuits and we will be placing our wives interest's above our own.
2. Vs. 26-27 **Specially:** **Jesus spoils or treats His bride as being extremely special.**

Jesus' love for you and I is the kind of love that wants us to "*be all we can be*"! Paul

lists two specific ways in which Jesus sees His bride, than he reveals the two ways in which Jesus accomplish His goal for His bride, (you and I):

- a. Vs. 26 **Sanctify**: Our wives were created to be our **companion** to **complement** us in what God has called us too. It is the water of the word of God that cleanses the character of a person and a character that has been cleansed will be equipped to function as God has designed us!
 - b. Vs. 27 **Glorify**: Jesus' goal is to continually beautify His bride. Looking at this section of scripture the inward beauty of a wife is the direct result of the husband loving her in a special way. If that is our goal then I'm betting our wife won't have a hard time voluntarily relinquishing her rights!
3. Vs. 28-30 **Unconditionally**: The husbands love for his wife is to be automatic as his care for himself. Husbands don't treat our hands with anything but the utmost care. When my big thumb gets in the way of the head of the hammer I don't call it stupid or laugh it. In verse 28 Paul tells us that there are two things you and I always do with regards to our own bodies:
- a. **Nourish**: We spend time every day making sure that our bodies are taken care of. Paul says, "*Just treat your wives as you treat yourselves.*"
 - b. **Cherish**: In the Greek this word means to foster tender care, so not only to we provide for the physical wellbeing of our bodies we are constantly trying to pamper them. Husbands we need to spoil our wives all the time not just on special occasions. Can you imagine your mouth wanting an ice cream Sunday and your brain saying, "*Hey, it's not your birthday, who died and made you boss*"?
4. Vs. 31 **Unbreakably**: You see how secure our wives would feel if they experienced love that won't ever allow anything or anyone to come in between us. For "loves" sake that we will leave our parents and by "*glued*" to our wives men. Our bounding with our wives fellows is to be unbreakable.

Vs. 32-33 The goal of marriage is the same goal of our relationship with Jesus, “Oneness”! Paul has not one time spoken about our “rights” in marriage, no he has instead of spoken to us about our “duties”.

- A. Wives biggest challenge is to continue to love their husbands by supporting them by “voluntarily relinquishing their rights”.
- B. Husbands biggest challenge will be to continue to love their wives in a way that cause them to feel secure, sacrificially, specially, unconditionally, and unbreakably.