

Union with Christ in the Family

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 09 June 2024

Preacher: Paul Thompson

[0 : 0 0] all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which indeed you were called in one body, and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your heart to God. And whatever you do in word and deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Wives, submit to your husbands as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything.

This pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children lest they become discouraged. Bond servants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye service 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 Christ Jesus. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done. There is no partiality. And then chapter 4, verse 1, Masters, treat your bond servants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a master in heaven.

Let me pray. Lord, thank you for your word. I thank you for the opportunity to begin to look at these instructions here. And I thank you in your sovereignty that you've given us all that we need for life and godliness, that you've given us your spirit, you've given us your word. And so I ask the Lord that both of those things, the word applied through the spirit in our hearts, would work in our house, would work in our hearts, would work in our church, would work in our communities to make people reflective of your glory, but also people who show and live out of those who've been raised with Christ. Lord, help us to glorify you in what we do, help us to worship you, and give us attention as we look through this passage. In Jesus' name, amen.

So we're coming to a passage that many may be hesitant to preach on or have some consternation or some fear to look at, not because the passage is hard to describe or it's unclear, but because there's some tension inside the world today, even in Christian communities. What are the roles and responsibilities that are within a marriage? What does it look like for husband and wife who are married to live together? And so there are questions like, who does what in a marriage? Who should be responsible for these things? Who's in charge? Who calls the shots? Who wears the pants? Which person should say yes, dear? And which person should provide the direction? There's a lot of confusion today about how marriage should work. And it's easy for people to make up their own rules, their own instructions. It's easy to make up your own approach just because it's easier or just because it flows or it works. But we know that God is the one that created marriage. God created marriage in the Garden of Eden.

He created it and instituted it and demonstrated the first one in the Garden. He created it best when it functions as intended. Marriage works best when both parties are doing what they're called to do, when they're functioning together correctly. As we will see, marriage is a picture or a type of presentation of the union between Christ and the church. If we throw off or neglect certain parts of what marriage is, how it's supposed to work, what its function is in society, we fail to reflect or portray that image correctly. We do disservice to the image of Christ and the church when we do disservice to marriage.

[3 : 55] God graciously provides guidelines for how an optimal, God-honoring, Christ-empowered family works. Communities all throughout history have created these guidelines of themselves.

They've often been called the household table, the household rules, the household codes. They aren't a new thing. Luther referred to this concept of a host and fall, a house table or a house rule set that guard, put guardrails or guidelines for how a marriage and how a family was supposed to function. But they're not, they're older than that.

Plato and Aristotle wrote about the structure of a family. They talked and argued about what is the role of a father and a wife or a mother and slaves and masters. And even in the Greco-Roman era, there was discussions and disagreements about the importance of the rules and structure.

Again, who should do what? What should be the, who is property? Who has authority? Who has rights? All those things were discussions back then. And then Josephus even writes about marriage, taking much of his approach from the law of Moses.

He recognizes that adultery is wrong. He recognizes that many of the things that we would call Judeo-Christian values, but many of the things that were in Scripture, Josephus called out. But he also hinted at things like physical relationships within marriage were only for procreation and that there was a shame and uncleanness with that.

[5 : 30] And so throughout history, for thousands of years, people have been wondering and trying to work out what is the right way that a marriage should function? How does a husband and a wife together work to have a marriage that brings God glory?

What Paul wants this church to know, this church in Colossae, and other churches, we're going to look significantly in a little bit at the book of Ephesians, which is very similar. What Paul wants this church to know and understand is that while some of these household codes, they may function, right?

Because the Roman society functioned for a bit, they don't reflect the full aspect of what God created marriage for. They don't reflect the intended glory and goodness of what God has for us in marriage.

See, we might look at these verses here, we might look at the verses in Ephesians or 1 Peter or Titus, and we might say it's just pure old-fashioned Roman-influenced patriarchy, right?

That's old-fashioned, that's stuff that was in the past. We're modern now, we're new, we have a new take and understanding what men and women look like.

[6 : 45] But it's not just Greco-Roman-influenced patriarchy. It's not just Aristotle's musings. One thing that I really want to make really clear, as you look at this passage, is that this was God's intention all along.

That God has intended for marriage to reflect Christ and the church. It's also, it's a very different set of rules than you would have had in the Greco-Roman era.

The rules that Paul lays out here are earth-shattering to the people who are hearing them. And there are two key points that I want to point out in terms of just what this offered to this church in Colossae.

One is that despite arguments of the man is superior, the man is better, so therefore the woman submits, that was what was the Greco-Roman argument. The man is stronger, obviously he should be in charge.

Paul ties this to our union with Christ. If you've been raised with Christ, that was what we read in verse 1, he goes through and lists all the things that we should do. We should put on the new man.

[7 : 53] We should put on the new self and live with your spouse out of that. And then Paul goes into this passage. A good marriage is a result of both parties, the male and the female, the husband and wife together, putting off the old self, the sinful self, the things that we just read that we'd have put off, and putting on and living out of that new self, living out of that union with Christ.

So Paul wants the church to know this is a normal outworking of Christ's in you. Secondly, the big point is because this model for husbands and wives and the interaction in the family is based on Christ and what he has done, they're not based in any culture.

In fact, they're counter-cultural. He's commanding husbands to love their wives. In Ephesians 5.25, he says, Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

He's commanding men to love their wives, and that might sound pretty normal to us. Of course, men love their wives. That's pretty normal. But this type of sacrificial love that Paul's commanding is foreign to this secular world.

This type of laying down of your life is foreign. So as we look at this, we might have some fear, some trepidation, some hesitancy discussing things like submission and headship, and what does it look like for husband and wife to work and live together.

[9 : 28] But I want you to think about, for a moment, just how revolutionary this teaching was. How, in some ways, liberating to women Paul's teaching was. Because Paul is giving both sides of the marriage, both men and women, a command.

And it's a command that's difficult. A command that needs Christ in us to accomplish. A command that, when followed, will create and strengthen a well-functioning, healthy marriage.

The pressure is no longer just on one side. Both parties really are called to lay down their interests for the good of the common union, while still recognizing the structure that God has in place.

So let's get into this topic. What does it mean when Paul says, wives, submit to your husbands as fitting in the Lord? Because the books are so similar, I've pulled up on the screen here, Ephesians chapter 5, I encourage you, we're going to spend a good amount of time in that passage today to pull it up in your Bible, as well, but in the parallel passage, Paul is telling the church in Ephesus, wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its savior.

Now as the church submits to Christ, so also, wives must submit in everything to their husbands. So if you were to take a poll and ask, what is submission?

[10 : 57] What does the word submission look like? We'd have a bunch of different answers. We'd have some very strong headed answers. We'd have some kind of maybe more mutual submissive answers where we just, it's love.

But really, the word submission is to put oneself under. The word in the Greek is hypotasso. It means to place underneath something else.

And really, what Paul is saying is the wives are called here to place themselves under their husband. It's a willing placement of yourself under someone in authority or under their leadership.

But it's not under compulsion or force. So what Paul is commanding here really is, again, different from what the Greco-Roman or what the old order household table said was, it's not men make sure your wives are submissive and lead your wives and she better obey.

It's women. You're called to obey your husbands. And the reason given is because of the structure of Christ and Christ in the church. It's the intentional act and the general lifestyle of lovingly submitting to the direction and authority of the husband.

[12 : 13] And it's a disposition to honor and affirm the husband's authority. But at the fundamental root, it's an attitude and an act of obedience to Christ. It's obedience because Paul clearly says women are to submit to their husbands.

This word submission, though, is used multiple times throughout Scripture, this hypotasso. In James 4.7 he says, submit yourselves therefore to God.

Resist the devil and he will flee from you. In Romans 13.1 we're encouraged let every person be subject to the governing authorities for there's no authority except from God and those that exist have been instituted by God.

This is interesting in Luke chapter 2.51 talking about Jesus. It says, 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.

Romans 10.3 says, for being ignorant of the righteousness of God and seeking to establish their own righteousness they did not submit or put themselves under God's righteousness.

[13 : 26] It's important to call out though when we talk about submission as we look at those examples in Scripture just because somebody is called to submission or called to be submissive it does not always mean the person submitting or the one being submitted to have any disparity of value.

Meaning that just because a wife is called to submit to her husband and people are called to submit to the government and members are called to submit to elders it doesn't change the inherent value.

Being called to submit doesn't make a person less or more valuable as a human or an image bearer of God. There are times when that difference in our passages is the case.

There are times when the difference between those being submitted to and the ones to submission are vastly different. For example the demons submitted to Christ we're called to submit to God so there's ways that some people who are called to submit are different but in these human institutions that God's created in the church in government in marriage where humans working together this is not a statement of value.

When Paul says to submit he's not saying the person submitting is less or worse. It's a statement of order it's a statement of structure. A child is no less an image bearer than his parents and a wife is no less an image bearer than her husband.

[14 : 59] Each person in their workplace has a boss or leader that they're accountable to. It doesn't make a statement in terms of value it makes a statement in terms of the willing submission from one person to another.

It's a structure that God has provided to provide leadership. One provides the leadership one submits to it. Biblical submission then is the voluntary submission to your husband.

The self-driven self-purposed ordering yourself underneath the husband is the head. Paul gives some reasons in this passage in Ephesians chapter 5 as to why should wives do this.

Why does it make sense? Why would we ask a wife to submit to her husband? The first reason that Paul gives is because it's fitting. It's in our passage it's fitting or in Ephesians 5 is submit as unto the Lord.

A wife's voluntary submission to her husband her intentional pursuit of submission is obedience to God. It's fitting.

[16 : 09] It's appropriate for someone who has been dead, buried, and raised with Christ to live out the way that God has intended. It's a spiritual work. It's done as to the Lord.

So submit yourselves to your own husbands as to the Lord, as fitting in the Lord. It's work that you do spiritually even if your husband is not wise. even if you don't like the decisions he makes, even if he's not the perfect example of a husband, your submission to his leadership and authority is ultimately your submission to God.

The second reason that Paul says that wives are to submit to their husbands is because the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. Thomas Schreiner says, it's clear from Ephesians 5 that submission of wives to husbands is grounded in theology.

In Christ's relationship with the church, it is not an accommodation to the culture. The submission of wives to husbands mirrors the church's submission to Christ, hence it should be accepted as a norm and transcends the culture of the first century.

This phrase, the husband is the head of the wife, probably causes some anger and angst in the world at large. Even within the Christian community and the evangelical world, the concept of the husband being the head of the wife seems demeaning.

[17 : 42] Again, it seems as if there is a statement of value. Pastor John MacArthur in his book *Different by Design* comments, the God established principle of male authority in female submission for the purpose of order and complementation is for the purpose of order and complementation, not the basis of any innate superiority of man.

God's established principle of male authority and female submission is based on complementarian and order, not on the basis of superiority.

The husband is the head of the wife, not because he's the bigger, stronger, better person, but because that's the order that God has created. It's fitting in the Lord because that's how God designed it from the beginning.

That's how God designed it to be. The church has a head, the family has a head. When we're talking about submission, we're not talking about a subjugation, right?

It's not just pure obedience for the sake of obedience. It's not pure subjugation. It ultimately starts with an obedience to God and a loving acceptance of the order that God has established.

[18 : 59] The third reason that Paul gives in this passage is to submit in everything to their husbands like the church submits to Christ. Elizabeth Elliott similarly said, Supreme authority in both church and home has been divinely vested in the male as the representative of Christ, who is head of the church.

It is in willing submission rather than grudging capitulation that the woman in the church, whether married or single, and the wife in the home find their fulfillment. So this third reason or third motivation is closely connected with the one I just mentioned.

If Christ is the head and the church submits to him, then the family submits to its head. The argument is if imperfect individuals strive to submit in obedience to Christ because they know and acknowledge he's the head.

The perfect people in the church submit to Christ because he's the head of the church. Imperfect wives should strive to submit to their husbands because he is the head. He should, and guys, we're going to get to our section in just a few minutes, he should be the representative of Christ in your marriage.

He should be loving and caring for his wife like Christ loved the church. But even if he fails to do that, even if he's a poor example, Paul still calls on the wife to submit to his leadership.

[20 : 19] We've taken a quick look at what biblical submission is. We've talked about what Paul lays out here, some of the reasons why he calls wives to submit to their husbands. But when we talk about submission and we've talked about what it is, I want to make sure we talk about some of the things that it's not.

Submission is not following your husband into things that are sinful. It's not doing things that you know are wrong because your husband says to do them.

So if he says to shoot somebody, we're not going to shoot somebody. There are ways that we have to obey God rather than man. Staying with an abusive man, especially physically abusive, does not automatically make you submissive.

Allowing yourself to be hit or physically or sexually assaulted may look like submission. Some people may claim it submission. It may even be called submission by the husband. but it's more like involuntary subjugation.

Submission doesn't mean you submit to all men. It doesn't mean that every person in your life, every male in your life, has the ability to command you or to direct you.

[21 : 32] You're called to submit to your own husband. It doesn't mean that you don't confront sin that's in your spouse. God's given marriage, as we've seen in a second and we'll see in a minute, as the primary method of sanctification.

And part of that is that you guys are so close to each other that you point out sin, that you confront sin, that you discuss sin. So a wife is not unsubmitive if she points out ways that her husband is in sin, even sin that he may not see.

It's not submission to hide sin that you know of that your spouse is committing. It's not submission to keep your opinions and discussion to yourself, right?

The concept of submitting, we have this picture of a quiet, timid person who never discusses, never complains, never has an opinion. That's not what Paul was saying, that's not the picture of submission.

There should be in a healthy marriage, discussion, sharing of opinions, back and forth discussion about things that allowed the marriage to function healthily.

[22 : 43] There are many ways I think that we're tempted away from submission. Primarily selfishness, maybe we want our autonomy, we don't want to submit, we don't want to follow the commands of God because we don't want anybody infringing on our freedom.

We want to have our autonomy. we may be tempted away from submission because of passivity. Here's a caution that I want to make very clear.

Submission is not being passive in your marriage while your husband does all the work. It's not being passive while he does all the leading. The call to submission is an active, intentional inclination to yield to your husband's leadership and then support that leadership.

It's not just sitting down and waiting for him to do all the work and make all the decisions. It's an active attitude of submission that indicates the desire to yield to his leadership and then support.

Sometimes we're tempted away from submission because of pride. We think I could make decisions a lot faster, I could make them better, I could do things if I was in charge a whole lot better than my husband is.

[24 : 04] And so we could be tempted to push that aside, push submission aside for the sake of our pride. So how, what's it look like to submit, well, what's it look like to function in a marriage where submission happens?

Submission that happens despite disagreement is freeing. So, if you're having a discussion and your husband makes a decision that is not the decision you prefer, the weight of the decision, right or wrong, good or bad, falls on your husband.

It doesn't mean blame shifting or sitting waiting for something to fail because you're pretty sure it's going to. It means trusting God that you are doing what God's called you to do while your husband is doing what he feels God is calling him to do.

So there's a freedom in many ways to submission that says if my husband makes a decision that I don't agree with, I'm going to trust God with the outcome. I'm going to trust God with my submission, my obedience, and I will let the outcome be handled on my husband.

Submission is a commitment to support one's husband in such a way that he may reach his full potential as a man of God. So again, it's pointing out maybe the ways that there's sin in his life that he is not aware of.

[25 : 34] Maybe it's ways of submitting to the times he wants to read Scripture together. There's ways that you can support his growth as a man of God. What if you're married and your husband's not a Christian?

What if, as we've talked about in the beginning of chapter 3, you don't have a person that's been raised with Christ? Submission can change a hard-hearted man's heart.

1 Peter 3, 1 and 2 says, Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

So he's saying, even in the case where you have a husband that's not a Christian, that's not following, that you struggle potentially to submit to, he's saying a respectful and pure conduct could win somebody over more than a pushing back in a rebellious, disrespectful attitude.

So he looked at the command for wives to submit to their husbands. We've seen what God has called out in scripture, the ways that he's commanded wives to live in order of their lives.

[26 : 53] And then now let's look at what does God call husbands to do? What does it look like? What is God's command for a husband? I again have the larger passage from Ephesians chapter 5 up, Ephesians 5, 25 to 31 reads, Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of the water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

In the same way, husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself, for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes it and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.

Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. love. What does it mean to love?

What is love? In Greek, there are three words that are often translated in the New Testament love. There's eros, the sexual romantic love, where we get our word erotic.

It's a felt passion for others. We have the philia, the friendly affection, where we get the name Philadelphia, the city of brotherly love.

[28 : 19] But the word that Paul here uses is agape or agapo, the self-sacrificing, the preferential love, an active love that puts others ahead of itself.

And that's the word Paul uses here. Paul's using agapeo in the passage. He's saying, husbands have a self-denying, other-centered, active, pursuing love towards your wife.

Paul gives these commands and I think at first glance they might seem pretty reasonable, pretty attainable to us, right? Love your wife. That seems pretty simple. She's good looking.

I like her. I can love her. And he says, hold fast to your wife. Okay, well, I'm not a cheater. I can hold fast to my wife. I can stay married to her.

And he says in Colossians, do not be harsh with her. Okay, well, I'll try to be nice. I won't be harsh. But then Paul goes deeper and he says to love your wife with the same self-denying sacrificial love that Christ had for the church.

[29 : 30] And then all my dominoes start falling down. Christ gave himself up for the church. He sacrificed his life because of his love for his bride.

He laid everything aside and took on human form to save his people. Paul talks about this concept of Christ surrendering himself, coming to earth.

In Philippians chapter 2, Philippians 2, 3 through 8, Paul says, do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

Let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself.

By taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

[30 : 35] So, men, husbands, this is our standard. This is the standard for what it looks like to love your wife as Christ loves the church. Love your wife to that extent. This is really the crux of the passage.

Your job as a husband is to love your wife as much as, in the same way, in the same magnitude, in the same order, that Christ has loved his church. Jesus has loved his church perfectly.

Was his church perfect? Absolutely not. Has his church always been submissive? No. Christ has loved the church despite her sin and her flaws.

And he works with the Spirit and the Word to wash her, to sanctify her, to make her more like himself. Our passage mentions that. It says, Christ cleansed the church by the washing of water with the Word.

He cleansed her. God now keeps no record of wrongs for his people because they've been forgiven. Love is not resentful. It keeps no record of wrongs. We, then, men, need to be quick to forgive, quick to apply the Word of God to our wives, quick to see her moving towards Christ and sanctification.

[31 : 53] Paul goes on to say that Christ nourishes and cherishes the church. Christ's desire is for his church to grow. His desire is to see it sanctified so that it looks more and more like Christ.

He nourishes it. He cherishes it. He supports its growth. Paul again mentions nourishment and cherishing in verses 28 and 29 when he says, in the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies, he who loves his wife loves himself.

For no one ever hated his own flesh but nourishes it and cherishes it just as Christ does the church. His point is that once you're married, once you're married to your wife, to your husband, you're now one flesh.

You're united together as a family. You are one flesh. What hurts your wife hurts you. What supports and cares for your wife supports and cares for you.

And the same for wives. What supports and cares for your husband supports and cares for you. And if you as a person, a human being, as a man, take care of yourself, then obviously a godly husband will take care of his wife in the same way.

[33 : 09] If you want yourself to survive, you want your union, your marriage, your one flesh union to survive. We should want to see our wives grow into the image of Christ.

Christ. So we should nourish and support, cherish her. We should lead her in those things that will draw her to Christ. In our leadership of the family, we should not seek to just serve our own agenda.

We should seek the growth of our family that God's given us, growth of that union. We should lead in a way and love in a way that cares for, nourishes, and cherishes our wives.

That may look different for different people. Different families may have ways that nourishing and caring for your wife will be different than other people. Guess the best person to ask is your wife.

Ask your wife, how do I make you feel cherished? How do I nourish you? How do I care for you in ways that you need? Really, at the end of the day, our call to love our wives is a call to model love that Christ has shown to us.

[34 : 23] And not just the initial love he showed on the cross, but the ongoing love he has for the church now. We're called to model with that same intensity, that same purpose, that same self-sacrifice that Christ showed.

But what doesn't it mean to be a husband? What doesn't good biblical love look like? Paul, or any of the other biblical authors, ever tell the husband that it's his responsibility to ensure his wife's submission.

There are no passages that I could find in scripture that say that a man is responsible to make sure that his wife obeys. And there are people that would teach that the man is to discipline his wife.

There are people who teach that. There's no passage in scripture that teaches that a man has responsibility to ensure his wife's submission. The submission is a voluntary act in the wife.

The love is the act of the husband to the wife. It doesn't mean that the husband being the head should serve his own interest in his own self. We're called to lead our families to Christ.

[35 : 35] It doesn't mean that we don't confront sin. It doesn't mean that we're passive. It doesn't mean that we neglect to do the things that God's called us to do. When we're called to love our wives and our families as Christ has loved the church, we're really called to lay our own desires aside.

We're tempted, I think, because of our sin nature, to passivity or laziness or selfishness. There are ways that we may say, I don't feel like leading or I don't want to lead or I'm not interested in leading.

In all the leadership books you'll ever read, not leading, not deciding, not making a direction is still a decision. You are still leading your family even if you're keeping them right where they are.

And so we're tempted to do that because it's easy. But there's no growth, there's no maturity, there's no strength in that. We're tempted by our passivity and our laziness.

And I'm going to say this next part very carefully because it's more of an opinion than a command from scripture. But if a husband is too busy with video games or his hobbies or his friends to work together with his wife on things that she has on her plate, to parent their children together, to teach and instruct his children, to spend quality time with his wife, if he's too busy with those things, then that man needs to grow up.

[37 : 09] That man needs to understand the calling that Paul is giving here. You're called to lead. You're called to direct your family. You're called to shape it, its direction, its future.

Many men feel more at ease helping their bros conquer a map in call of duty than finding a way to love your wife, than finding a way to serve her and care for her and talk to her and get to know her.

If that's easier for you to play a video game than to find ways to love your wife, then I think your priorities are wrong. I would imagine it would be a difficult man to submit to if you care more about your games and hobbies than your family.

Another way that men can be tempted from love is abuse. Any sort of physical, verbal, emotional abuse is a failure to love your wife.

God didn't give you a stronger, bigger body to physically dominate your wife. He didn't give you strength over her to control her. He gave it to you to fight, to serve, to care, to shepherd, to protect.

[38 : 24] We abuse our headship when we abuse those in our care. So how do we do this? Well, how do we, as men, love our wives as Christ has loved the church?

We should lead in a way that our wife has something to submit to. We should be giving direction. We should be doing that leadership. When I talked about passivity, if we're sitting still, we're doing nothing, there's nothing to submit to.

We should be leading in a way and living our lives in a way that our wife has something to submit to. We should lead in a Christ-honoring way. We should lead in a way that our soulmate, the person that we're married to, a fellow Christ- follower, wants to follow us because we're both following Christ.

So lead in a Christ- honoring way so that the fellow Christ- follower follows you. Understand and get to know your wife. 1 Peter 3, 7 says, Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way.

That's different for every single man here who's married. Live with your own wives in an understanding way. He talks about that a little bit later.

[39 : 43] He says to honor her as the weaker gender, the weaker vessel. He says showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel since they are heirs with you of the grace of life. So that your prayers may not be hindered.

So Peter here, even in his example, is saying learn to understand your wife, understand her, but she's different. She's the weaker vessel. She's still an heir with you to the grace of life.

She's still a Christian just like you are, but show honor to her as the weaker vessel. So I hope that you've seen that both parties have difficult commands to follow.

Both parties have difficult things that they're committed in this script, in this passage. Paul says in two simple sentences, wives submit to your husbands as is fitting in the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives. Do not be harsh with them. And that is difficult. The wife is called to place herself under the authority and headship of another human being.

[40 : 53] One that is generally bigger, stronger, more aggressive, more powerful than she is. She has to trust this person she's submitting to. A husband is called to love, to hold fast to, and care for, to nourish the person placing their trust in him, placing themselves under his authority.

He's called to love them. Both parties need to seek to understand the other person. If they're striving to obey God in these areas, that person will struggle with these things.

You need to understand each other that there are ways that you're going to have sin that are going to cause conflicts. If you're seeking to obey what God has commanded, you will work, recognizing it's never going to be perfect.

You have to give grace to each person when the wife struggles to submit and when the man struggles to love. Both parties also need to understand that if a marriage is going to work, they need to dance together.

If you want a marriage that works as God designed it, you start with you. You start with the person that God's given you. You start with the Holy Spirit.

[42 : 12] And you start with the commands that God has given you in this passage. And you don't wait for the other person to get it right. If you want to have a good marriage, you focus on the things that God has commanded for you in this passage.

You don't look and see, I'm going to wait to this. They get home and this other person, my spouse gets their act together and then I'm going to get my act together. Obedience to God together, both people obeying these commands, really is the oil that keeps the engine of your marriage running smoothly.

If you're going to submit to your husband in ways that are God honoring and respectful and he's going to love you as Christ loved the church, that marriage will function so much smoother. You have to dance together. You have to be able to love and understand each other, care for each other in ways that won't feel comfortable.

If you want to see what makes a marriage work, if you want to look at those fine details of what is needed to make a marriage function, what both parties need to do to make it function as designed, we need to look back at those things in the verses prior, the things that Paul told the church in Colossae to put off.

If you can turn back in your Bible, it's in Colossians chapter 3, Paul in verse 5 says, Put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

[43 : 41] On account of these, the wrath of God is coming. And these you too once walked when you were living in them, but now you must put them all away, anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there is neither Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but Christ is all and in all.

These are the things, husband and wife, both. These are the things that will kill your marriage. None of these things that we've called out, that Paul has called out to put us to death, sexual immorality, impurity, passions, anger, wrath, malice, none of those things are submissive and none of those things are loving.

If you want concrete negatives, things that you can do, things that you can put to death, things that you can avoid in your effort to submit to your husband and things that you can do in your effort to love your wife, these are the things to put to death.

These are the things to pursue putting away if you want your marriage to live. Paul then lists the things that are those who are in Christ need to put on.

[45 : 04] In chapter 3, verse 12, he says, Put on then as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another.

And if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other, as Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body, and be thankful. Let the word of Christ throw in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Again, these things we've just read that Paul says to put on are things that apply to all Christians.

They apply to husbands and wives. If you want to submit to God in an honoring way, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience are going to be essential.

[46 : 14] If you want to love your wife in a sacrificial way, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience are again going to be essential.

Paul then wraps these up. He says, above all these things, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. So Paul says, here's the things you're to put off as Christians.

Here's things to put on as Christians. And last time we went through this, we talked about how they work in our corporate body, how they function in our church. But the same truth applies to how they function in a marriage.

If you're going to love your spouse, if you're going to care for them, these are the things that are Christ-like ways to show that love. If we're honest, though, none of us have ever done this well.

Maybe you sat and squirmed here as you listened to this, thinking about how difficult both of these things sounded. Maybe you're divorced because you or a spouse failed in one of these areas.

[47 : 27] Maybe you've got a great marriage. But if we're honest, we still sin against our spouse. We fail to live our life in our marriage following the commandments that Paul has laid out.

I've got two pieces of good news for those that are not perfect in their marriage. Those that are not perfect spouses. Jesus was the perfect spouse.

And Jesus loves perfectly. Jesus is our example in this passage of what it looks like to love somebody. And because of Jesus' act of obedience, Jesus has loved his wife way more than any of us ever could.

Jesus submitted to those in authority as a child way more than any of us ever could. Jesus was the perfect spouse to his church. The second item of good news is that God offers in the gospel the ability to repent of the ways that you failed and sinned against your spouse.

So if you've looked at this and you've felt either guilt or shame or the pressure of I can never do this, God offers you a gospel-powered solution.

[48 : 45] The ability to repent of the ways you failed and sinned against your spouse. Repentance really is just the acknowledgement and forsaking of the sin. It's turning to God with the desire to obey.

It's seeing the ways that you failed to do what God's commanded, confessing it, and then grabbing onto the gospel, accepting God's forgiveness.

If you failed as a spouse, if you're failing as a spouse now, even if you feel you're above average, you've still not measured up to the amount of love and submission of Christ.

You've not measured up to the duty that he commands. If that's the case, repent. Repent to God for your sin. Repent to your spouse for the ways that you've not lived up to God's ideal.

Repent for the ways that you've sinned against them. Then holding fast to the gospel and the forgiveness that Christ offers, seek to obey the commands that Paul has laid out.

[49 : 53] I'm reminded as we talk about sin and letting go of sin and repentance of Hebrews chapter 12. The author of Hebrews says, Therefore, since we're surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Marriage is a picture of Christ in the church. And even if you're not married, it's a reminder. A well-functioning marriage points to the glory of our Savior. It points to Christ who endured the cross, submitting perfectly to the Father's will to get what?

A rebellious, unsubmitive bride. Then he seated that bride with himself in the heavenly places. And one day, you and I will again sit.

We'll be seated together at the marriage feast, seeing and savoring the one who actually loved us perfectly. Let me pray. Lord, thank you for your grace.

Lord, if you look at this, and there are ways that this feels difficult, this feels impossible, because we're sinful people.

[51 : 29] Lord, help us to fix our eyes on Christ, to set our minds on heavenly things, to put to death the things that would harm our relationships, and to put on the things that would benefit them.

Help us to be lovers of our spouses, lovers of you. May we seek to grow together in grace and truth as couples, even those who are unmarried, to direct and order their lives in ways that would seek to glorify you in their relationship.

Lord, I thank you for your grace and your mercy. I thank you that you offer forgiveness to sinful people who don't live up to the commands that you've issued. Lord, I thank you for the day that one day we will behold you face to face.

We will worship. We will be with the one who paid for us and made us his bride. In Jesus' name, amen. Our closing hymn, The Sands of Time Are Sinking, looks forward to that day when we will be in the presence of the Lord, free of sin and enjoying life with the one who's loved us.

Let's sing this together. Let's stand. The Sands of Time Are Sinking, The dawn of heaven praise, The stubborn born I sighed for, The fierce remoral ways, Our garden in the midnight, The dayspring is at hand, And glory, glory fell there, In Emmanuel's land.

[53 : 35] The King there in His beauty, Without a veil to see, In world-welks may journey, Though sent as they between, The land with His bare army, The Lord of heaven.

The Lord of heaven's land, And glory, glory fell there, In Emmanuel's land.

O Christ, He is the fountain, The deep stream well above, The streams on earth are tasted, More deep I'll drink above, There too, There too, And ocean of fullness, His mercy, God bless, And glory, Glory fell there, In Emmanuel's land.

O bright eyes, Mother, The bright room space, The bright room space, I will not gaze at glory, But on my King of grace, God hath the crown He gifted, But on His pierced hand, The Lamb is all the glory, Of Emmanuel's land.

May be seated. This benediction, The Lord bless you, And give you, The Lord make His face, To shine upon you, And be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.

[56 : 02] Amen. Just a few announcements this morning. Today is our Biling the Lord's Supper service, That will start in just a couple of minutes, So please stay for that, We'll enjoy the Lord's Supper together, And then we'll go downstairs, And enjoy lunch together.

So I encourage you to come for that, It starts at 1145. Deadline for the youth, Sign up for the Dorney Park, Youth is sixth and twelfth grade, That's coming up, The details, Today is the deadline for that, The details are in the foyer.

Wednesday morning, The ladies will be meeting for prayer, Here at TFC at 10am. Next Sunday, We'll be collecting our monthly missions offering, For Pastor SB, And family in Andhra Pradesh, India.

Aaron, do you have anything to add to that? I do. Pastor SB, Serving in, Eastern India, Obviously, It's a difficult place for the gospels, Because we don't say his name.

So, He grew up in India, He serves in India, A church there, He also, Serves other pastors, Teaching, Spreading the gospel, He has the opportunity, To give advantage of the doubt community, Which is the, Lowest caste, Untouchable people, And, So he's asked for wisdom, In the past.

[57 : 32] Okay. iend Alors Name, Dr. If you have some tips for email, little of your intent. Eineing for viernesaters, Different knowledgeable people within the friendship It will turn out and walk you alone little by the direction you are saying, Oh, không, But it's so important to do two things.

ils n tr Mogens ra, QUI,