

A Call for Courageous Women of Faith

Colossians 3:18

READY

Can you think of a woman you know who has set an example of godly submission in the home? Describe.

SET & GO

Primary Text: Colossians 3:18

Supporting Texts: Ephesians 5:22-24; 1 Peter 3:1-6

Set 1 *Read Colossians 3:18 and Ephesians 5:22-24. Answer the following questions:*

What phrases does Paul use in Col. 3:18 and Eph. 5:22 to describe **how** wives should submit?

In Eph. 5:23, what reason does Paul give to wives for submitting to their husbands?

What comparison does Paul make in Eph. 5:24?

Some guiding principles before discussion:

- God's design for the family has been corrupted by sin. As is apparent in Colossians 3:18-21, wives, husbands, and children need biblical direction and correction. No one person is the "family problem;" all contribute.
- Wives are called to submit to broken, sinful husbands. This means husbands will frequently fall short of expectations and will sometimes make foolish decisions, but these are not reasons for a wife's contention. In fact, this is **why** she will need to hope in God and not be "frightened by any fear" (1 Peter 3:5-6).
- Submission is not passivity. Submissive wives contribute to the discussion but do so respectfully. A wise husband listens to his wife (Prov. 31:11), and a wise woman learns to give counsel in ways that show she respects him.
- Submissive wives speak the truth in love to their husbands and do not ignore sinful behavior.
- Submission is not unconditional. Wives submit to Christ first and foremost, so if a husband asks her to do something contrary to the will of Christ, she must refuse him. However, she should **respectfully** refuse.
- Submission is not universal. Wives submit to "their own husbands" (Eph. 5:22), not to men in general.

Set 2 *Briefly discuss: It's clear that our culture is chaffed by authority—we don't like others telling us what to do. But authority is a central theme of the Bible. God has authority over all things and gives authority to people, including husbands. It's not hard to see why this deeply stirs emotions. Submitting to husbands is considered outdated, demeaning, bigoted, etc. It's seen as coercive and thought to be grounded in female inferiority. Submissive women are looked down upon as passive, weak, and fearful. But none of this is true. It's all a caricature drawn by the world. Biblical submission is honorable, and submissive wives exercise fearless faith against the grain of a hostile culture. That's hardly weakness!*

Go 2a Why does the idea of submission strike such deep chords? Why do we push so hard against authority?

Go 2b Paul commands wives to "submit **themselves** to husbands." What does this say about the nature of submission? Why would coerced submission be contrary to biblical submission?

Go 2c In reality, everyone is called to be submissive. What are ways that people of all kinds must submit? Discuss Christ's submission to the Father (cf. Jn. 12:49; 14:31). Did this make Him inferior?

Set 3 *Briefly discuss: Submission shows respect and honors the position of another. When a wife submits to her husband, she honors him as Christ's representative leader. He becomes to her a conduit of loving obedience to Christ Himself—she submits "as to the Lord." Biblical submission also implies partnership toward a goal. It's choosing to work alongside in a determined direction. Husbands are to be leading **somewhere**. But because they are broken, submission will require courageous faith. She will need to put her hope in God and not be "frightened by any fear" (1 Pet. 3:5-6), especially when she disagrees with his decisions. Ultimately, submission is a disposition of her heart rooted in a love for Christ. It is not merely external compliance but is sincere; and, as such, it is powerful (1 Peter 3:1).*

Go 3a Discuss how a wife's submission to her husband is really a means of obeying Christ (cf. Eph. 5:22 "as to the Lord"). How should this change her attitude toward submission?

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Go 3b Submission implies partnership toward some goal. How might this idea positively shape a wife's response? How might it become a temptation to resist or manipulate? If you are a wife, are you tempted to be passive or combative when you disagree with a decision?

Go 3c With respect to all of us, in what ways might we comply with authority but not submit biblically?

Set 4 ***Briefly discuss:** When the family functions as it ought, there is peace, harmony, and fruitfulness. Wives have a huge role to play in this. As the old saying goes, "If Momma ain't happy, ain't nobody happy!" When wives contend with husbands, there is a breakdown in the design and structure of the home. When wives trust the Lord and strive to support their husbands, families are stronger and society reaps the benefit. Most importantly, the gospel gets displayed as the wife acts in faith to show love and respect to the one who has been given to her as Christ's representative.*

Go 4a Wives can sometimes blame their contentiousness on the failure of their husbands. Why is this illegitimate?

Go 4b Why do wives/moms have such power to shape the atmosphere of a home? If you are a wife/mom, what kind of atmosphere are you creating? Answer this last question even if you are not a wife or mom.

Go 4c Discuss ways in which the gospel is displayed by a submissive wife.

FINISH

Our culture is passionately opposed to this way of thinking. If you are struggling with this yourself, please reach out to someone you trust who is biblically mature. As always, Pastor Kelly is available to answer questions.

Walk it Out!
Living Christian in an Everyday World
A Call for Courageous Women of Faith
Colossians 3:18

Wives, you are called to courageously practice your faith in Christ by joyfully submitting to your husbands in a manner pleasing to the Lord.

1. What Christ-honoring submission is NOT...
 - a. It is not _____.
 - b. It is not _____.
 - c. It is not _____.
 - d. It is not _____.
 - e. It is not _____.
 - f. It is not _____.

2. What Christ-honoring submission IS...
 - a. It is a glorious _____.
 - b. It is a conduit of _____.
 - c. It is a free _____.
 - d. It is _____.
 - e. It is courageous _____ in action.
 - f. It is _____ in mission.

3. What Christ-honoring submission DOES...
 - a. It displays the gospel.
 - b. It strengthens the _____.
 - c. It strengthens _____.

4. What Christ-honoring submission LOOKS LIKE...
 - a. When it's present.
 - b. When it's absent.