

LESSON 5

THE WIFE'S PLACE IN THE HOME

Scripture Texts: Genesis 2:18, 21-22; Ephesians 5:22-24, 33; 1 Peter 3:1-6; Titus 2:3-5

Christianity puts the home at the center of its plan for the beauty and strength of the church. It is greatly important, then, in safeguarding Christian principles, to build the home on solid foundations; for when homes crumble, the church feels the weakening of its earthly structure.

Christianity has lifted women from a state of degrading servitude and bondage to one of honor and respect. Through Christianity she is able to give full expression to her talents and gifts. In the Christian home she works and sacrifices for those whom she loves "as unto the Lord." In her obedience to her Lord and Savior, the Christian wife finds the pattern for a truly happy married life. God has given the wife an extremely important position in the home.



MEMORY VERSE: *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.*

Colossians 3:18

God's Purpose for Woman

Genesis 2:18 And the Lord God said . . . I will make him an help meet for him—a helper, a companion. First Corinthians 11:9 states that the woman was created for the man.

Genesis 2:21-22 . . . and he took one of his ribs . . . and the rib . . . made he a woman. From an intricate part of man himself, God made an intimate helpmate for the man. Proverbs 19:14 reads, **House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the Lord.** A sensible wife is a blessing given by the Lord.

Wives Are to Submit

Ephesians 5:22-24 **Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands**—obey them. When there is a disagreement in opinion where no agreement can be reached, the husband's decision is final. In what spirit should wives submit? **As unto the Lord**, knowing it is the Lord's will. Wives should be subject to their husbands **as the church is subject unto Christ**—in reverence and love and devotion. Likewise, the wife is to submit to her husband, not from force and fear and bitterness but because of her respect and love and devotion to him.

Ephesians 5:33 **Let . . . the wife see that she reverence her husband.** These words emphasize the unity that follows holy wedlock. As the wedding ceremony ends, a new life begins, an experience of interdependence and mutual helpfulness. The wife can no longer do just as she pleases; she has taken on the responsibility of a husband and a home; later children come, and their demands tie the mother more closely to her new responsibility.

How far should obedience go? If a husband asks his wife to sin or act against her conscience, she should always obey the highest authority. Colossians 3:18 says . . . **as it is fit in the Lord**--this is in all things that do not conflict with the will of God.

Subjection Wins Souls

1 Peter 3:1-2 **Ye wives, be in subjection**—yield to your husband's decisions. This command applies even though the husband is not saved, for it says, **if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation** (behavior) **of the wives.** A rich reward awaits the wife whose godly life wins her husband to the Lord

by her obedience. **While they** (husbands) **behold your chaste conversation** (behavior) **coupled with fear**. Not fear of the husband but fear of God.

1 Peter 3:3-6 **Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair** (ornamentation), **and of wearing of gold** (with no useful purpose), **or of putting on of apparel** (clothing worn for the purpose of drawing attention to oneself). The wife's adorning is not to be with fine clothes, jewelry and hairdos. Such things are outward and material. True, lasting beauty is in **the hidden man of the heart**. Godly wives should have **a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price**—very precious. This does not imply that women should allow their hair to look unkempt, or their clothes to resemble a grain sack. God expects all to look one's best; we represent Him to the world. **Holy women** of the past, including Sarah, are examples of this.

Keepers at Home

Titus 2:3-5 **The aged women . . . may teach the young women to be sober**—this refers to self-control and serious-mindedness. First Timothy 3:11 speaks of this example. **To love their husbands, to love their children. To be discreet, chaste**—these virtues will keep a wife from doing or appearing to do anything which would tend to mar her complete loyalty to her husband. **Keepers at home**—her interests are there, and so she stays as closely there as she can. **Good**—godly, full of good works. **Obedient to . . . husbands**—because **the husband is the head of the wife**. We are to live in a way **that the word of God be not blasphemed**. These qualities are not just personal matters; they are also part of our Christian witness in the world, that unsaved people may respect what we believe and teach. They can see what kind of lives we live. If our home life is not good, they may think and say that the Bible is not true and that Christianity is worthless. And we would be responsible for their terrible blasphemy. (Read 1 Timothy 5:14.)

What is meant by this command of Scripture? Is the working mother breaking it? Which is more important to our children—better clothes, fine car, furniture, higher education, etc., or Mother at home when they come home from school, her ear to hear their troubles, her voice to comfort and counsel, her loving watchfulness to see the start of a bad habit or mistaken belief, her knee for prayer and reading and teaching, and all the other things "Mother" means? Can a wife best serve her husband by working outside or by keeping the home? The answer is obvious. Sarah was in the tent (Genesis 18:6-9).

JUST A THOUGHT

Is a baby sitter bringing up your children?