

# *Bringing the Bible to Life*

Biblical Counseling Workshops



Wife's Role  
Track V.3  
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# The Wife's Role in Marriage

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## I. God Wants Wives To Be Submissive.

Ephesians 5:22–24 (ESV)

<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

### A. The background of the command:

1. Be \_\_\_\_\_. Ephesians 5:1-17
2. Being \_\_\_\_\_ . Ephesians 5:18
3. Being \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Ephesians 5:19-20
4. Being \_\_\_\_\_. Ephesians 5:21

### B. The command:

1. Stated three times in this passage. Ephesians 5:22-24  
Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:4, 5; 1 Timothy 2:9-12; 1 Peter 3:1-6.
2. To be \_\_\_\_\_. The Greek verb “be subject” in Ephesians 5:22 (as well as in most other passages about submission) is in the present tense. God desires that a wife’s submission be a continuous part of her lifestyle.
3. This command is a \_\_\_\_\_. “*as unto the Lord*”
4. This command is \_\_\_\_\_. “*But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.*” Of course this would not include a request from the husband that would cause the wife to sin (cf. Acts 5:29).

### C. Obeying this command is not just a woman’s problem.

Consider the following Biblical ideas:

1. The problem with submission \_\_\_\_\_.  
Isaiah 14:13 (ESV)  
<sup>13</sup> You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;
2. Lack of submission was at the forefront of the \_\_\_\_\_ in the Garden of Eden.  
<sup>4</sup> But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. Genesis 3:4
3. Unwillingness to submit to God is a problem for \_\_\_\_\_. Isaiah 53:6
4. The “submission problem” will get worse in \_\_\_\_\_.  
2 Timothy 3:1-2 and 2 Peter 2:19.
5. The contrast is the life of \_\_\_\_\_. 1 Peter 2:21

- a. Every human being struggles with \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. The choice we face is to be like \_\_\_\_\_ or to be like \_\_\_\_\_, our adversary.

D. What submission is not:

1. Submission does not mean that the wife is \_\_\_\_\_ to the husband.  
John 5:30, 1 Corinthians 11:3, Gen 1:26-27, Gen 2:23, Galatians 3:28
2. Submission does not mean that the husband is \_\_\_\_\_. Romans 13:1
3. Submission does not mean that the wife cannot \_\_\_\_\_ or be \_\_\_\_\_.  
Prov 31

E. What submission is:

The word that is translated submission in our English Bibles is a \_\_\_\_\_ term that literally means “\_\_\_\_\_ in rank under.” In any organization, or relationship (even the Trinity), there has to be a plan for function and order. Someone has to “have the axe over his neck.” 1 Peter 3:1-6

1. Submission proves your \_\_\_\_\_. John 14:31
2. Submission is a picture of the \_\_\_\_\_. Ephesians 5:23

Jay Adams wrote, “Submission does not remove freedom, it allows for it. When is the train freer- when it is bumping over the hillside off the track, or when it is smoothly running along the track, confined or restricted, if you will, to the track? It is freer when it is where it ought to be, doing what it was intended to do. Restricted to the track means freedom. Confined to the track means ability to perform as it was intended to perform. What really brings freedom? Getting on the right track. When is a person freer in playing an organ or piano? Is he freer to learn to play a musical instrument when he says, ‘Forget the rules and the laws of harmony, the chromatic scale, and so forth’? He is not free when he says, ‘Forget it all,’ but rather when he spends the long, difficult hours practicing his scales. ‘How can this be?’ you ask. The one who sits down to an organ and says, ‘Forget the book and forget the practice’ is not free. He pulls out the stops, puts down one foot with a terrible growl. Then his hands come down like thunder- with a squeal and bellow and grunt. The result? Sheer cacophony! Noise! He cannot play the organ. He is not free to make music. That man isn’t free; he is bound by his own ignorance, bound by his own lack of skill, bound by the fact that he has not spent the hours that are necessary to learn how to make music. But the man who takes the long, hard road of restriction, who works within the structure, finally arrives at the point where he may throw away the books and write his own music. Freedom in God’s world never comes apart from structure. When one is free to live as God intended, he is truly free indeed.”

*Jay Adams, Christian Living In the Home, pp. 74-75*

## II. God Wants Wives To Be Fitting Helpers.

Genesis 2:18 (ESV)

<sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

- A. The word "helper" has a rather "insignificant ring" in our society. For example, we think of the "carpenter's helper" as the one who isn't as skilled as the carpenter and therefore does the menial tasks the boss doesn't want to do. In the Bible, however, the word helper speaks of a person who \_\_\_\_\_, or completes another person. A Biblical helper is a very important part of the equation. In fact, in many places in the Bible where this word is used, it is speaking about God Himself.

*For additional study:* Use a concordance to look up the uses of the words "help" and "helper" in the book of Psalms.

- B. Specific ways this rule may be fulfilled: Wayne Mack makes the following suggestions for ways a wife may help her husband:

1. *Making the home a \_\_\_\_\_ - a place of encouragement, comfort, understanding and refuge (Proverbs 31:11, 20). Do not use jokes about him or make cutting remarks to him. Do not constantly remind him of his faults, mistakes, and failures. Correct him only if it is absolutely necessary. Avoid the danger of allowing the home to be in shambles and full of disorder and confusion. But also avoid the danger of making the house a show place where everything must always be neat and immaculate. Husbands want homes to live in, not show places to visit.*
2. *Being \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 31:11, 12).*
3. *Maintaining a good \_\_\_\_\_ (Prov 31:26, 28, 29; James 3:13-18; Phil 4:4).*
4. *Discussing things \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (Ephesians 4:25).*
5. *Being \_\_\_\_\_ with her \_\_\_\_\_, her \_\_\_\_\_, her tasks (Philippians 4:6-13; Hebrews 13:5, 16).*
6. *Being longsuffering, forgiving, and forbearing (Ephesians 4:2, 31, 32; Colossians 3:12-14).*
7. *Showing an \_\_\_\_\_ in his problems and concerns (Philippians 2:3, 4).*
8. *Being an industrious, frugal, diligent, ambitious, and creative member of the team (Psalm 128:3; Proverbs 31:10-31).*
9. *Offering suggestions, advice, and corrections when needed in a loving fashion (Proverbs 31:26).*
10. *Keeping herself beautiful, especially in the inner person (1 Peter 3:3-5).*
11. *Maintaining a good spiritual life (1 Peter 3:1, 2, 7).*
12. *Cooperating with him in \_\_\_\_\_ (Ephesians 6:20; Proverbs 31:26-28; 1 Timothy 5:13, 14).*

13. *Building \_\_\_\_\_ to him in the children.* The wife's attitudes toward the husband are quickly picked up by the children. Lack of respect or confidence in his leadership, complaints about what he has or has not done will have debilitating influence on the children. She must avoid taking sides with the children or anyone against her husband. She must support and cooperate with him in discipline. All differences of opinion about discipline should be settled away from the children.
14. *Being \_\_\_\_\_ to him.* Appreciation should be expressed freely and in a variety of ways (Romans 13:7).
15. *Showing \_\_\_\_\_ in his decisions.* Disdain, lack of confidence, anxiety, or strong opposition over his decisions may cause him to become indecisive, defensive, or reactionary. If the wife doubts the wisdom of important decisions, she should ask questions in a non-threatening way, assuming that there are some facts she does not know and that he really does want what is best for them both (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

### **III. God Wants Wives To Reverence Their Husbands.**

Ephesians 5:33 (ESV)

<sup>33</sup> However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

- A. The word "respect" means to highly regard, notice, honor, prefer, esteem, praise, admire exceedingly.
- B. The responsibility of the wife is to "respect" her husband. That is a command, and not an option. Therefore, a wife cannot use the excuse that "he doesn't deserve it." The wife must give respect to her husband in spite of his imperfections.

## **WAYS A WIFE MAY EXPRESS LOVE TO HER HUSBAND (How to Convince Your Husband That You Love Him)**

Evaluate the way you express love to your husband. Go over the list and circle the ways you are neglecting. Ask your husband to go over the list and put a check mark in front of the ways he would like you to express love. Ask him to add other things to the list.

You may express love to your husband by:

1. Greeting him at the door when he comes home with a smile, a hug, a kiss, and an, "Am I glad to see you. I really missed you today."
2. Having a cup of coffee or tea ready for him when he comes home.
3. Giving him a lingering kiss.
4. Letting him know you like to be with him and making arrangements so that you can spend time with him without giving the impression that you really should or would rather be doing something else.
5. Being willing to talk to him about his concerns and not belittling him having these concerns.
6. Supporting him and cooperating with him enthusiastically and positive when he has made a decision.
7. Teasing and flirting with him.
8. Seeking to arouse him and sometimes being the aggressor or leader in relations.
9. Asking him to have sex relations more than he would expect you to.
10. Really letting yourself go when having sexual relations.
11. Caressing him.
12. Looking at him with an adoring expression.
13. Sitting close to him.
14. Holding his hand.
15. Rubbing his back or .
16. Wearing his favorite nightgown or dress or perfume or .
17. Expressing your love in words or notes.
18. Letting him know how much you appreciate him and what you appreciate about him. Do this often and for things that are sometimes taken for grant Pretend you are trying to convince him you think he is great and very important to you.
19. Frequently fulfilling his wishes and desires as well as the specific requests he makes of you. Try to anticipate what he might desire or wish and suprise him by doing it before he asks.
20. Playing with him (tennis, golf, party games, etc.); sharing his hobbies interests.
21. Enthusiastically cooperating with him and sharing with him in devotions and prayer; seeking to set a good example to the children concerning their attitude toward devotions and prayer.
22. Maintaining your own spiritual life through regular Bible study and prayer.
23. Handling your affairs decently and in order; structuring your time and using it wisely.
24. Being willing to face and solve problems even if it requires discomfort, change, and much effort.
25. Fulfilling your responsibilities.
26. Asking him for his advice and frequently following it.
27. Being ready to leave at the appointed time.
28. Standing with him and supporting him in his attempts to raise your children for God.
29. Thanking him in creative ways for his attempts to please you.
30. Asking for forgiveness and saying, 'I was wrong and will try to change.'
31. Actually changing where you should.
32. Working with him on his projects or....
33. Reading the literature he asks you to read and sharing your insights.
34. Letting him know when he has tough decisions to make (and even when they are not so tough) that you really believe he will choose the right thing and That you will wholeheartedly support him in whatever decision he makes, provided the decision does not violate clearly revealed biblical principle; being his best cheerleader and fan club.
35. Buying gifts for him.
36. Watching football or other sporting events with him and trying to really manifest an interest.
37. Keeping the house neat and clean.
38. Cooking creatively and faithfully.
39. Having devotions with the children when he is not able to be there.
40. Maintaining his disciplinary rules when he is not present.
41. Being appreciative and cooperative when he holds you, caresses or kisses you.
42. Lovingly giving him your input when you think he is in error.
43. Offering constructive suggestions when you think he could improve or become more productive. Don't push or preach or do this in such a way that you belittle him, but seek positive and non-threatening ways to help him become more fully the man God wants him to be.
44. Running errands gladly.
45. Seeking to complete, not compete with, him; being the best member of his team and seeking to convince him that you are just that.

## **WAYS A WIFE MAY EXPRESS LOVE TO HER HUSBAND (How to Convince Your Husband That You Love Him)**

46. Being lovingly honest with him-no back door messages-no withholding of truth that will hinder your relationship or future trust and closeness.
47. Being willing to see things from his point of view; putting the best interpretation on what he does or says until you have evidence that proves the contrary.
48. Pampering him and making a fuss over him.
49. Being happy and cheerful.
50. Refusing to nag.
51. Gently brushing a leg under the table.
52. Having candlelight and music at dinner.
53. Indicating you want to be alone with him and talk or just lie in each other's arms.
54. Giving an "I promise you" wink.
55. Going for a walk with him.
56. Letting him know you feel lonely when he is out of town or away from you for a period of      time.
57. Relating what happened to you during your day.
58. Sharing your fears, concerns, joys, failures, etc.
59. Seeking to support your ideas with biblical insights and good reasons.
60. Refusing to "cop out" or withdraw and attack or exaggerate or blameshift when he seeks to make constructive suggestions or discuss problems.
61. Giving him your undivided attention when he wants to talk.
62. Discussing the meaning of certain Bible passages or discussing how to improve your marriage or home or children or child raising efforts, etc.
63. Cheerfully staying up past your bedtime to resolve a disagreement or problem.
64. Holding him close while expressing genuine concern and tangible and vocal love when he is hurt, discouraged, weary, or burdened.
65. Being eager to share a good joke or some other interesting information you have learned.
66. Working in the yard or painting a room together or washing the car.
67. Planning vacations or trips together.
68. Wanting to keep your family memorabilia, newspaper clippings, church releases, etc., that have to do with your family.
69. Bragging to others about him and his accomplishments and how good a husband he is.
70. Joining with him in a team ministry at the church.
71. Doing a Bible study or Bible research together.
72. Doing a good job in bookkeeping about family finances.
73. Helping prepare the income tax report.
74. Keeping touch through letters with your family and friends.
75. Keeping yourself attractive and clean.
76. Inviting other people in for dinner or fellowship.
77. Developing and using the spiritual gifts God has given you.
78. Asking him to pray with you about something.
79. Expressing how much you love the children and being the children's cheerleader.
80. Managing to stay within the family budget and even saving some for special surprises.
81. Being excited about sharing the gospel with others or about answered prayer or about helping other people.
82. Making a list for him of things that need to be done around the house.
83. Being satisfied with your present standard of living or furniture or equipment when he can provide no more.
84. Not making nostalgic comments about your father's way of providing, etc., which may seem to imply that you think your father was a much better man than your husband.
85. Acknowledging that there are some specific areas or ways in which you need to improve.
86. Taking care of his clothes so that he is always dressed well.
87. Appreciating and helping his mother and father and relatives.
88. Refusing to disagree with him in the presence of others.
89. Cooperating with him in establishing family goals and procedures and then in fulfilling them.
90. Being silly and unconventional in your lovemaking at times.
91. Telling him before he asks you that you think he has done a good job, if he has done a good job. Don't be afraid of repeating yourself in commending him for what he is or does.
92. Being available and eager to fulfill his desires wherever and whenever it is proper and possible.
93. Beginning each day with cheerfulness and tangible expressions of affection.
94. Letting the children know that you and your husband are in agreement; communicating to your children when your husband      can hear (and when he cannot) how wonderful he is.



# *Bethany Biblical Counseling Ministries*

*Bringing the Bible to Life*

## **TRACK V** **MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**

20 Week series, Monday nights from 7:45 – 9:00

### V.3 WIFE'S ROLE

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#### **HOMEWORK**

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- 1) Summarize your main take-aways from this session, especially noting any areas that were either unclear to you or that you might disagree.

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#### **GOING DEEPER-ADDITIONAL MATERIALS, RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER STUDY**

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- 1) *The Excellent Wife*, Martha Peace
- 2) 1 Peter Sermon Series- "A God-Centered Wife" (10/9/11)  
<http://www.bethanycentral.org/resources/audio.asp?filterSeries=55&filterFromDate=10%2F09%2F2011&filterToDate=11%2F13%2F2011&submit=Search>