

## Ephesians 5:22-24 "The Spirit filled Wife"

Good morning and thank you for joining us! Would you please turn in your Bibles to Ephesians 5? We'll be resuming our study in verse 22 this morning.

The book of Ephesians is perhaps the clearest and simplest instruction manual regarding Christian living in the entire Bible. As we've mentioned before, chapters 1-3 teach us how to see ourselves, who we are in our new identity "in Christ."

And remember, before Paul ever gives us the first command in this book, before he says one word about what we should do, he encourages us to remember who we are. "In Christ" we've gone from rags to riches. We're God's kid - blessed with all spiritual blessings - we're chosen, forgiven, adopted, redeemed, accepted, and sealed.

It's only after we've been reminded over and over again of who we are that Paul begins to tell us how to live out our lives. That's the theme of the second half of the book, Chapters 4-6. Now that we know who we are, now it tells us how to live our lives.

And in the last part Chapter 5 and beginning of 6, the subject matter hits close to home. In fact, it deals with the home - the relationships basic to family life - husbands and wives, parents and kids. Employers and employees. This will be our focus for the next few weeks.

This morning, we're gonna study verses 22-24, but to make sure we aren't taking anything out of context, and get a sneak peak of next week let's read verses 18-33 and then we'll pray.

18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.[fn]

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 30 For we are members of His body,[fn] of His flesh and of His bones. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." [fn] 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each

one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

The title of this mornings message is The spirit filled wife  
LETS PRAY

If your marriage isn't all that you thought it could be, or hoped what it would be, I have good news. This is the instruction manual to have the greatest marriage possible.

Sadly, most people will refuse to obey what God's word says, and instead chase after what some author or influencer says on how to have a great marriage.

So, let's remind ourselves-this is God's Word! And His word is best! Then we should obey his word!!! **James 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.**

Now if you're not married-don't close your eyes to sleep just yet... You can share these truths with others!

We're only studying 3 verses about wives, but it's important to talk about marriage in general.

It's fairly easy to be a Christian - to show grace, and stand up for the truth - in the cozy confines of the Church. Being a Christian gets more difficult in the workplace, but there we're trying to be a witness. We're motivated to be loving, and kind, and patient with the lost people around us at our jobs.

The real test of our Christianity is how we behave at home, where we feel free to be ourselves. Are we tender-hearted, loving, and gracious, and merciful with the people under our own roof? Are we holy at home?

**SHOW PIC** On average, a professional photographer will take anywhere from 500 to 1000 photos at a single wedding. And that's not including the pictures taken by all the relatives and friends in attendance! **CLOSE PIC**

Its shocking, the entire Civil War was covered by fewer photographs than are taken at a single wedding today.

Marriage is meant to be many things... a romance, a legal contract, a social arrangement, and a working relationship. But above all else, marriage is a picture. Love shown in a marriage should be an illustration of Jesus and His Bride-the church. Look at your bibles in **5:32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.** Marriage is an earthly picture of spiritual realities!

And this is what elevates marriage above all other human relationships. God assigns to marriage a divine significance.

Of course God wants every marriage to be a source of great personal happiness. But there is more at stake in marriage than just your own happiness. Your marriage is a picture to a fallen world of spiritual truths. God intends for your marriage to preach the Gospel - to illustrate the relationship that exists between Jesus and His Church.

Think for a moment about the power of symbols and pictures...

**SHOW PIC** See a skull and crossbones and you know not to touch. **CLOSE PIC**

And as you read the Bible, you see that pictures are woven throughout scripture, and pictures are vitally important to God. In

**Matthew 12:40** "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Jonah's time in the whale's belly was a picture of Jesus on the cross and risen again

Here's another picture in the scripture...

God told Abraham to take Isaac to Mount Moriah, and sacrifice His only son-although God never intended for Abraham to follow through. Abraham's ordeal was meant to be a picture of what God would do years later on Mount Calvary. There the Father offered His only Son, Jesus, as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. No doubt, Abraham's experience on Mount Moriah was high drama - but it portrayed a higher reality.

And if you recall, remember how God was angry when His messenger, Moses, messed up the NT picture... When Israelites in the wilderness grew thirsty, God told Moses to strike the rock and water gushed out.

But when the Hebrews needed water again, God said to Moses, Speak to the rock and it will give water. Moses marred the picture! He was agitated and angry at Israel's unbelief. And in a moment of anger, rather than speak to the rock, Moses struck it a second time. And God got angry with Moses, not Israel!

Moses not only misrepresented a patient God, he distorted God's picture. Jesus was to be struck once - never again. Moses spoiled the NT picture, and he never entered the Promised Land.

Here's the point- God takes His pictures seriously. And this is true with the picture our marriages are called to display.

Marriage is a depiction of Christ and the Church. This is why your marriage will never see the Promised Land if husbands and wives don't live out their parts of the picture that God has assigned.

If you've been married for any length of time, you know it's easy to fall victim to the daily grind - the hustle and bustle of our lives. As a result of living under the tyranny of the urgent, it's easy to neglect our own spouse, and forget the significance of marriage in general. Hey, when was the last time you thought about the words of your wedding vows?

I would imagine you got married because you loved the person to whom you said "I do" - that's normally the case. But never forget, your marriage means something far greater than your own love and happiness. Your marriage belongs to God, and God wants your marriage to bring Him glory.

With the time I have left this AM, I want us to begin to focus on the roles God has designed for the wife, and next week we'll talk about the husband. But before we do, here's the cliff notes-

**33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.**

Wives need love, husbands need respect. Today, we're going to talk about the wife's role - for no other reason than that's what comes first in the text. Next week we'll speak to the husbands

**22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.**

The Greek word translated "submit" is "hupotasso." It means "to arrange under." The wife arranges or orders her life around her husband's. She plays off his lead.

**SHOW PIC** in the 1990's Scottie Pippen had a successful basketball career for the Chicago Bulls, playing alongside Michael Jordan. And that worked in Scottie's favor. Jordan drew the double teams, and would pass to a wide open Pippin. Scottie got rebounds when defenders left him to stop Jordan. Scottie Pippin became a superstar in his own right, by letting Jordan be Jordan, and playing off his lead. **CLOSE PIC**

In fact, the Chicago Bulls won six NBA championships because Scottie Pippin accepted a subordinate role. He acted for the good of the team. If he'd fought Jordan for control the Bulls would've been a second tier team. Instead, Scottie embraced his role in a bigger mission.

This is the attitude of a godly wife. For the glory of God and the good of her marriage she "submits." Submission is living "sub" or "under the mission of God's plan for marriage."

But of course this does not come naturally does it ladies?  
Garden of Eden...

**Genesis 3:16 To the woman He said:**

**"I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception;  
In pain you shall bring forth children;  
Your desire shall be for your husband,  
And he shall rule over you."**

It's in every wife's nature to want to grab the reins and call the shots in the marriage.

And as hard as it may be at times to submit to her husband, a godly wife sees the bigger picture. Because look at the end of verse 22 **"as to the Lord."** A godly wife sees submission to her husband as part of her obedience to Christ

Sadly, over the centuries domineering men have misinterpreted the phrase "as to the Lord" to mean a wife should obey her husband to the same extent she obeys Christ. That's a wrong understanding.

The Bible requires total submission to no one but Jesus. A wife's submission has limits. If following her husband causes her to compromise her faith - she should obey Jesus, not her husband!



In Acts 5, when the Jewish Sanhedrin told Peter to stop preaching Christ, he told them, **Acts 5:29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."**

There's always limits on our submission to human authority - whether it's a husband, or an employer, or a pastor, or a government. That limit to submission to human authority is reached any time human authority goes against God's word.

But the phrase "as to the Lord," is critically important. It means that for a believing wife submission to her husband is part of her Christian discipleship. She follows Jesus, by following her husband. She trusts the Lord to guide her spouse

Of course this is a struggle-many wives want to be the head, and call the shots. **SHOW PIC** Here's the problem... two heads sound like a great idea, until you try living it out in the day to day doldrums of life. Over time, 2 heads just won't work, because two heads are against nature. Your body has one head, not two. If it had two heads you'd always be arguing with yourself, and pushing and pulling. **CLOSE PIC**

The same is true in marriage. In a Godly marriage there's discussion - even debate - but ultimately someone has to make the final call, and in God's portrait that's to be the husband.

I've heard it put this way, "Marriage is like riding a horse. Only one person at a time can ride in the front."

Certainly, none of this means a wife can't have an opinion, or even a life! Of course, she can. She should pursue her own interests and ambitions.

But submission means she chooses to arrange her pursuits around her husband. Once Billy Graham's wife, Ruth, commented, "The best advice I can give to unmarried girls is to marry someone you don't mind adjusting to. God tailors the wife to fit the husband, not the husband to fit the wife."

When it comes to most decisions at the Hill house I solicit my wife Kim's opinion. I'd be dumb not to!! She's a wise woman with the gift of discernment. But Kim and I have agreed that we want to obey God's word, and allow our marriage to paint a divine picture. So she's cool with me having the final decision. I take that responsibility

And ladies, Kim will be the first to tell you that although it's difficult at first, submitting to your husband is actually freeing! She knows that I pray, and seek the Lord. Therefore if we disagree, she can say well Lord, Brian must've heard from you! And if I'm wrong, then she'll say 'well Lord, Brian messed up, it's between the 2 of you but I was obedient in my submission!"

And there've been plenty of times we've disagreed and it turns out I've been wrong. And she's never thrown it in my face with the 'I told you so'. Wives, don't ever do that to your husbands. Never throw a failure in his face, and say 'I was right, should've listened to me'. That will cripple a man's leadership. I'll talk more about that later.

Now I know that submission is a word that just grates against the flesh of most women in America today. And I'm sure some couples can come up with some other marital arrangements that work for a time other than submission.

But God's instruction for a woman to submit is about more than "what works." It's about the spiritual truths that He wants to convey through the institution of marriage...

Remember, marriage is God's idea - not yours or mine - and He can arrange it anyway He pleases.

One of the reasons wives struggle to submit is because often times the wife is smarter than her husband. Wives are tempted to take the reins from their husbands, since it's so easy for them to do so.

Usually the man is a step or 2 behind, a wife is quicker to figure things out and size things up. That's why she has to have patience and trust the Lord to grow her husband.

22-23

**22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.** Here's another reason submission by the wife is important, it's because God has designed the husband to be the head of the wife. That word head has the idea of headship and authority. It means to have the appropriate responsibility to lead.

The Bible repeatedly tells us that the man was created first and not the woman. God does have an order of things. Wives are to submit to husbands. The Church submits to Christ. Employees submit to Employers. God has specifically spelled out an order

But to be clear, men and women are absolutely equal! Nowhere in the scripture does it say women are inferior to men. Men and women are equal, but equal doesn't mean the same. God has specific roles designed for both men and women, husbands and wives.

**24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.** Ok men before you start getting ideas, does he really mean everything? This needs to be understood in the same way we understand submission in other areas of the Bible. For example, when Paul says in Romans 13 that the Christian must submit to the state, we know there are exceptions.

So, what are the exceptions to everything? When the husband asks or expects the wife to sin, or contradict the word of God, the wife is free from her obligation to submit.

Let's skip ahead and once again read again verse 33, **"Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband..."** Wives need love, while husbands need respect. Think about it, God knew before time began that He would order

the family as He has. So it's not surprising that He would wire the sexes accordingly

Since husbands are told to love their wives, it's because wives need their husband's love. And since wives are to submit to their husbands, it's because a husband's biggest need is his wife's respect. Notice Paul doesn't even tell the wives to love their husbands. A man feels your love through your respect!

Here's a truth every wife needs to know. When a wife declares war on her husband, he cannot win.

If a wife wants to fight her husband for the reins of the family, that man will eventually let her.

Sure, for a time a husband may try to shout, and scream, and argue with a rebellious wife - but he's not as good with words - or tears - as his wife. A husband can't compete.

So wives if you try and take the reins of the family, most husbands will let you and they will let you do so, by retreating. The husband will withdraw, they'll vacate emotionally.

The husband will then spend most of his time in the garage, or hang out with their buddies, or work a lot of overtime, or take up golf, or get season tickets, or find some other way of distancing themselves.

If a wife pushes to be the leader of the family, her husband will eventually let her

Proverbs 19:13 A foolish son is the ruin of his father,  
And the contentions of a wife are a continual dripping.

Ever had a dripping faucet? It's not a pleasant sound. It drives you nuts. Water torture is the way wartime armies interrogate their prisoners, and pry national secrets from them.

A competitive wife who undermines her husband's leadership is a form of torture. Proverbs 21:19 Better to dwell in the wilderness,  
Than with a contentious and angry woman.

A wife has the incredible power to either undermine or undergird their husbands leadership.

In my years of marriage counseling I've met many men who plaster a smile across their face and mask a deep-down hurt they feel inside. It's painful to be stripped of your manhood - to be emotionally defeated day after day - to be taken for granted, and get treated like a boy instead of a man... And then the wife wonders why the husband is so distant...

Ladies, men are really simple. Caring for a husband is like operating a broom. We're not real complicated, and we're pretty predictable.

Husbands thrive off their wife's respect.

God calls the husband to lead - but if he's to be the leader you really desire - he needs your respect.

Wives, do you show your husband respect? Do you appreciate what he does for you and the kids, or are you always complaining? Does your husband know he's enough for you?

Do you value his efforts, or do you ignore them? Do you chip away at your husband's confidence with stinging remarks, or do you build your husband up with encouraging words?

**SHOW PIC** The late Pastor EV Hill, struggled financially in the early days of his ministry. One night he came home to a dark house. He opened the door, and saw that his wife, Jane, had prepared a candlelight dinner for two. He thought, "How nice", and went into the restroom to wash his hands. But the light wouldn't turn on. He flipped the switch on and off, but no light.

The young pastor walked into the kitchen, and asked his wife why there was no electricity... She started to cry, "You work so hard. We're trying, but I didn't have money to pay the bill. I didn't want to discourage you, so I thought we'd eat by candles." **CLOSE PIC**

Dr. Hill finishes his story, "Jane could've said, 'I've never been in this situation before. I was raised in the home of a father who provided for his family - who never let his lights be cut off.' She could've demoralized me. Instead she said, 'Somehow we'll get the lights back on. But tonight let's eat by candles...'"

Ladies, because of how God wires a husband, your respect has a powerful sway over him for better or worse. You can lift him up with your support - or you can tear him down with your disrespect.

But I can hear some of the rebuttals now- “But my husband doesn’t deserve my respect! How can I submit to him- he’s made so many mistakes!!”

And you’re right. Every single wife in here could legitimately say their husband doesn’t deserve their respect. In fact, each husband here probably deserves your respect as much as you deserve the love of Jesus...

In the end, a wife submits to her husband, not when he deserves it, but because God commands it.

God is painting a picture. It’s a wedding photo of Christ and His Church - and He wants you and your spouse to pose for the picture! Husbands, love your wife like Jesus loves... And wives, respect and submit to your husband...

Here’s a final test you can take to determine if your marriage is looking like God’s design. If a stranger approached your kids, and said, ‘take me to your leader’, would your kids take them to Mom or Dad?

If the kids would get it wrong - or draw a blank - it means the picture that’s being painted isn’t very clear

Both husband and wife are called to die to self — submission is the way the wife does it.

Both husband and wife are called to sacrifice — submission is the way the wife does it.



Both husband and wife are called to see their marriage as a model of Jesus' relationship with the church — submission is how the wife honors that model.

Both husband and wife are called to honor the order of creation — submission is the way the wife fulfills her place in that order.

None of this is natural. None of this is easy. It comes from the instruction back in verse **18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,**

It's that word for being continually filled, over and over again.

If you're not fulfilling your role in your marriage, the blunt truth is you're disobeying God, and repentance is needed. And then ask for that fresh filling of God's HS to empower you to do what God desires you to do.

Men-read ahead