

The Renewed Marriage

Colossians 3:18-19

INTRODUCTION: If you are new to Christianity you need to know that the Bible is a compilation of documents. There are 66 total. Some are historical in nature, some are poetic, some are apocalyptic speak to the end of time. Others are formal letters written from a Church Leader to Churches or individuals.

Colossians is one such letter, written by Paul the Apostle to the church in the Greek city of Colossi. So far we have learned that the church in Colossi had been heavily influenced by a cultic sect of Christianity called **Gnosticism**. Much of the letter to the Colossians was written to defend the church against gnostic teaching.

- So you see the first chapter going into great detail about the **HUMAN** and **DIVINE** nature of Jesus, because the Gnostics rejected the dual nature of Christ.
- Then in the second chapter he called us to stay out of the ditch of error and stay on the path of following Christ, as you received Christ Jesus, so walk in Him.

Up to this point, Paul's instruction has been corporate, but here in chapter 3, he moves from the church, to the home.

- You see what you **BELIEVE** inevitably effects how you **BEHAVE** for better or worse.
- Bad teaching is not just a **FAITH** problem it is also a **FAMILY** problem.

You see God created the family to function in a certain way. It is supposed to be a place of safety, joy, fulfillment, grace, adventure, acceptance and unconditional love. If each member of the family follows the pattern God provides, every household has the potential to experience those things in ever increasing measure. But if you DON'T KNOW God's pattern, or if you just DON'T CARE - it is the equivalent to taking a Lamborghini off-roading. It will kinda work, but it's not an enjoyable ride.

So that is exactly what was happening at Colossi, families were falling apart. The home was not a place of safety and security - it was a place of anxiety and turmoil. Some of you today are not enjoying your marriage, you aren't enjoying parenting, what I want to communicate to you is - God's word is given to **bless** you not **burden** you. So let's get the Lamborghini out of the ditch, and back on the road and start enjoying the journey.

A reporter once posed the question to **Albert Einstein**, "Suppose you had one hour to solve the world's greatest problem, how would you go about solving it?" Einstein replied, "I would spend 55 minutes clearly defining the problem and solve it in the five minutes remaining". Clearly understanding the problem we seek to solve makes solving the problem so much easier.

There were a couple of problems effecting the families in Colossi.

- Gnosticism** - Remember we said the last time we were together that one of major tenants of gnosticism was that the spirit of a person is **androgynous** without gender, so the physical body's gender is a temporal evil. Very similar to the androgynous tendencies of pop culture today. Men rejecting masculinity and women rejecting femininity, a rejection of the traditional Judeo-Christian structure of leadership and authority in the home. Remember this is what Paul was addressing in 1st Corinthians in that obscure passage about head coverings. They were throwing off anything that pointed to gender.

You say, well what's wrong with that? Well biblically, your gender is far more than a plumbing issue or a chromosome issue. It goes to the very core of who you are spiritually. Thus, when a man and woman come together in marriage, there are clear patterns they are to follow.

The scriptures teach that the husband and wife are equal in standing, but that the husband is to be the godly leader.

- Chauvinism** - A second problem the families of Colossi faced was an overtly Chauvinistic culture. Wives were treated like a combination of concubine and household slave. Even in a Jewish home men were permitted to divorce their wives for the slightest infraction. If she lost her attractiveness, divorce. If she burnt dinner, divorce. Women very rarely were able to get a divorce from their husband. Men took multiple wives but you don't see women taking multiple husbands. Even the architecture reflected the disparity. If a home had two stories, the husband lived in the entire upstairs, the wife slept downstairs with the kids.

The Gospel was counter cultural in this regard - God calls the husband to love his wife more than any other person on the planet, more than his kids, more than his work. He says to treat them like a precious vessel, think of fine china.

This is the designer's intention for marriage.

ILLUSTRATION: If you take a train and place it on the tracks, it can develop almost unstoppable momentum. But, if you say, "those tracks are too confining, too narrow, I want to go off the tracks and into the field" You break the designer intention and you rob the train of its power.

The same is true of marriage. If you follow the designers intention your marriage will be a remarkable force for good. But if you don't you'll lose the power and sooner or later you'll wonder why you go on this train in the first place. Listen - Marriage isn't the problem, it's the way you are driving it.

Let's look at God's design...

1. The Renewed Wife

¹⁸ Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

Paul isn't calling women in general to submit to men in general. This is a particular command for Christian women in a covenant relationship with a Christian man. It is not making application or implication to the women in the work place, women in politics, or any other arena of life in this particular passage. This verse is about the home.

ILLUSTRATION: I have two daughters. I've never, ever told them... girls just listen to boys and do whatever they say. No! As a matter of fact, it's right the opposite. Baby, watch out for boys, they are hormones in sneakers. Always assume an ulterior motive.

¹⁸ **Wives**, submit to your husbands,

Now the word submit was taken from military terminology.

It is the Greek word **Hupotasso** which means to arrange under the authority of another. In those days it was used to describe ranks in the Army. The general, the captain, the colonel, the Sargent the private.

The Military teaches that its soldiers are to salute the rank not person. So it doesn't matter if it is a good captain, it's a captain.

The verb form occurs 38 times in the New Testament, 23 times in the Pauline literature, but only one time in Colossians.

When the Greek word is in the Active voice it speaks of a forced submission
When the Greek word is in the Middle voice it speaks of voluntary submission

In 1 Corinthians 15:27–28 it is in the Active voice and has reference to God's authority...

²⁷ For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. ²⁸ When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

Same word but in the active voice. Our hupotasso is in the **middle** voice - so rather than a forced submission... it refers to a **voluntary** submission. It's something that a mature woman does as an act of her will because of her faith that God is able to lead her through her husband.

So Paul is saying that wife should recognize the God given rank of her husband in the home.

The word Paul uses to call the wife to subject herself to her husbands rank is very different from the word **Hupa-ko-u** which he uses to call children to **obey** their parents. Therefore subjection is not mere obedience, but rather a voluntary subjection and deference.

MacArthur put it this way - *The husband is not to treat his wife as a servant or as a child, but as an equal for whom God has given him care and responsibility for provision and protection, to be exercised in love. She is not his to order about, responding to his every wish and command.*

- **Paul echoes this command in Titus 2:5** when he is teaching what Older women are to teach younger women. One of the things he mentions is they should learn to...⁵ be subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.
- **Peter goes even further in 1 Peter 3:1** ¹ In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,

You can affect the faith of your husband by your behavior! That's amazing... I don't think that stops at conversion. I'm telling you for better or worse you ladies have AMAZING influence over these men.

- **Ephesians 5:22–24 (ESV)** ²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ 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. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

NOTE that the command is not rooted in **culture** - it's rooted in the **Gospel**. There are some things that Paul taught that he rooted in the culture... head coverings for example... greet with a holy kiss... but this command is rooted in the Gospel.

¹⁸ Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

That is to say - because it is fitting. The inverse is also true - rebellion, a lack of submission is not fitting for the Christian wife.

There is nothing more sad than to see a woman who persistently bucks against her husbands leadership. There is nothing more sad to see than a husband who is stuck with that sort of wife.

Proverbs 19:13 ¹³ b. the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping.

The Word Contentious Means – *One given to strife, one easily angered, never content and satisfied.*

ILLUSTRATION: You know who I think of when I read that? **Harriet Oleson** in Little House on the Prairie. She made life misery for poor Nels... and what happened, little Nellie was just a blessing wasn't she?

Chuck Swindoll said, *It is my observation that all things being equal contentious mothers raise contentious daughters.*

2. The Renewed Husband

¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

Just as the command to the wife was in contrast to the androgynous ideas of the Gnostics. The command to the husband is in contrast to the Chauvinist ideas of the Culture.

Paul made the same point, but elaborated more in Ephesians when he wrote:

Ephesians 5:33 (ESV)

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

- He speaks to the husband and says – LOVE YOUR WIFE
- He speaks to the wife and says – RESPECT YOUR HUSBAND

Why did Paul NOT say wives love your husband or husband respect your wife?

Dr. Emreson Eggerichs said it was for 2 reasons: First it is assumed that the wife will by nature react to her husband in a loving way, and by nature the husband will have respect for his wife.

Second, very simply because these are the greatest needs in a man and woman respectively.

ILLUSTRATION: Dr. Eggerich explains, “*At a recent couples retreat the men and women were separated to either side of the room. The speaker asked the men, “Would you rather live life feeling unloved or disrespected” The men unanimously choose to be unloved. He posed the same question to the ladies and they unanimously choose to be disrespected if they could experience deep love.”*

Listen to me -

- Most Men respond to **disrespect** with anger and volume
- Most Women respond to a **lack of love** with tears.

SECRET: When your husband raises his voice... communicate respect. When your wife cries... reiterate your love for her.

FIVE WAYS TO BETTER REFLECT COLOSSIANS 3:18-19

- a. **Expect Disagreement** - EX: A woman said, "I'll gladly submit as long as I don't disagree..." The only time submission is necessary is when you disagree.
- b. **Respectfully Object** - Ruth Graham said, "*If two people agree on everything, one of them is unnecessary*". God brought you into this relationship for a reason, you have something to contribute. A wise husband recognizes that.

When your husband is about to make a decision that is not clearly sinful, but may not be best for your family – it is ok for you to speak up, but do so in the most respectful way. Let's say it's a spending decision.

Put your yes on the table first – Let him know that you are on his side.

When guys view the person across the table as a threat they go into war mode.

- c. **Own the Tone** - Andy Stanley- said don't make a statement in a way that you would expect "stupid" to be attached to the end. EX: take out the trash...
- d. **Choose Your Tribe** Please beware of surrounding yourself with ladies that speak hatefully about their husbands. Men don't surround yourselves with guys that belittle or objectify women.
- e. **Remember who's Boss**
 - If your husband ask you to sin, it is a moral imperative that you do not submit to him, but to your higher authority Christ.

ILLUSTRATION: I heard about a local church recently teaching that the husband is the priest of the home and he should do priestly functions on behalf of the family. Listen, Julie doesn't have to go through me to get to Jesus. We are a kingdom of Priests. She has direct access.

CONCLUSION/INVITATION: Joke; *A little boy was talking to his daddy one time and he said, "Dad, where were you born?" He said, "Well, I was born in Kentucky." He said, "Well, where was mother born?" He said, "Well, she was born in Indiana." He said, "Well, where was I born?" He said, "You were born in Georgia." He said, "Where was baby sister born?" He said, "She was born in Alabama." Then the little boy broke out into a huge grin and said, "Dad, isn't it great that God got us all together."*

God can get us all together. It begins with submitting to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

– That's why before Peter tells you to submit to your husband he says.... **I Peter 2:22 3:1** "Entrust yourself to Him (God) who judges justly... wives, in the same way be submissive to your own husbands... that they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives."

The Lord's Supper

I Corinthians 11

- Deacon's come forward.
- Fence the table – Saved, Baptized, in good standing.
- Explain the procedure – WE WILL PRAY, READ A PASSAGE and PARTAKE TOGETHER.

THE BREAD

1. Pray –

2. Read –

1 Cor. 11 -

24and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

4. Partake

THE CUP

2. Pray –

3. Read

1 Cor. 11

25In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

4. Partake

Closing Reading ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.