

## The Christian Marriage

### Directions for Honoring God and Loving Your Spouse

#### Selected Scriptures

1. **For Wives** (Eph 5:22-24, 33b; Col 3:18; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-6)

Wives submitting to their own husbands is to be done because of her trust in God (v.5) and her desire to glorify God. It is possible that her submission could contribute to the salvation of her unsaved husband (v.2; 1 Cor 7:14).

A. **The Command for Love** (Titus 2:4)

A Christian woman is to love her own husband (cf. Rom. 5:8; 1 Jn 4:10).

B. **The Command for Respect** (Eph 5:33)

A Christian wife is to have a proper fear for her husband, not a fear of terror but one recognizing and submitting to his servant-leadership (cf. 1 Pet. 3:2).

I. **The Standard of Submission** (1 Pet 3:1-2)

Similar to the admonition to servants (1 Pet 2:18ff), submission to her husband is not based upon his godliness but is evidence of hers (v.5; Titus 2:5).

II. **The Pattern of Submission** (Eph 5:22-24)

The reason a wife is to subject herself to her own husband is because that is the pattern shown by the church's relationship to Jesus.

C. **The Goal of Inner Beauty** (1 Pet 3:3-4)

A Christian wife ought to be intentional with her appearance (cf. 1 Tim 2:9-10). External beauty is enjoyable, but it is also fleeting, whereas the beauty of godly character does not fade and is precious in God's sight (cf. Prov 31:30).

D. **Further Encouragements:**

I. **Godly Examples** (1 Pet 3:5-6)

Peter refers to Sarah as a Biblical example of a wife's submission. He also encourages wives to act righteously without being terrified by anything.

II. **Godly Goals** (Titus 2:4-5)

The immediate goals of love, diligence, and kindness are all for the main goal of honoring, not dishonoring, God.

2. **For Husbands** (1 Peter 3:7; see also Eph 5:25-33a; Col 3:19; Titus 2:6-8)

A. **The Compassionate Leading Which Shows Her Value** (1 Pet 3:7)

The admonition here is that husbands are to live mindfully with their own wives. A husband with this in mind will foster an atmosphere in line with God's direction for the marriage and family relationships. Treating your wife with honor as one who has a different role but shares the same inheritance (Gal 3:28) is necessary for the healthy and happy Christian marriage.

B. **The Leading Example** (Titus 2:6)

A husband is not to dictate or expect behavior from his own wife, but model godly leadership by diligently laboring in good deeds and Bible study.

C. **The Example of Sacrificial Love** (Eph 5:25-33)

If the wife is to model her behavior after the church, the husband has the greater task to model his servant leadership after Christ Himself.

D. **The Love Without Bitterness** (Col 3:19)

Sacrificial love is not truly either if it is done with bitterness or resentment. It must be done with a willing heart.

3. **For All Christians** (1 Peter 3:8-12)

Similar to the admonition to submit to governing authorities (1 Pet 2:13ff), this section is not focused on one specific group of people, but is for all Christians.

A. **What Should Characterize Christians in Relationships:** (v.8)

Conformity to these character traits will normally result in less antagonistic relationships that are conducive to living in peace (Rom 12:18; Heb 12:14).

I. **Live Harmoniously**

Being like-minded or having a unified purpose is a common encouragement for believers (1 Cor 1:10; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 2:1-2).

II. **Live Sympathetically**

Christ Himself sympathizes with us in our circumstances (Heb 4:15), and we can sympathize with other believers by weeping or rejoicing with them (Rom 12:15; cf. 1 Cor 12:26).

III. **Live with Brotherly Love**

Nothing will mark the life of a true Christian more than love for others, and particularly love for the brethren (John 13:35; 1 John 4:20).

IV. **Live Kindheartedly or Compassionately**

This is similar to living sympathetically, but it is necessary when another Christian has sinned against you (cf. Eph 4:32).

V. **Live Humbly in Spirit**

If a Christian is ever tempted to feel self-important, Christ is not only our example for how to suffer (cf. 1 Peter 2:21ff), but He is our example of selfless action and humility (Phil 2:3ff).

B. **What Should Not Characterize Christians in Relationships** (v.9)

As a principle, the Christian should not repay evil for evil (see Matt 5:38-48), but we should seek to seek to repay evil with good (Rom. 12:17; 1 Thess. 5:15; cf. Prov 25:21-22). This principle governs our actions as well as our speech (Matt 5:22; cf. Eph 4:29).