

WOMEN, Part 3

Loving and Submitting is for all Christians
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by Philip W. Shields

Greetings, brethren. This is the 3rd of what I had hoped would be the final message about “Women” but there is just so much, I will have to do a tape 4 after Passover – and that will be the last one. I urge you to print off the transcript from the email or website first, and follow along in print, as we’ll move quickly today. Why 4 messages? Because I ache when I consider the state of men and women in the church.

Satan is doing his utmost to divide and conquer the people of God – and the world for that matter - - by causing so much trouble between *men and women*, husbands and wives. At the same time, when I look around the church and I’m *so* inspired by the men and women I *do* see who are living the kind of male life or female life God had intended; or when I see the *few* truly happy marriages, my heart sings! And I want that for myself and for everyone else! And with humility, and God’s spirit, there is no reason why men and women in the church can’t be living the Godly ideal today. Time remaining before *our* Husband-to-be, King Jesus – returns is short! We need to be about fixing the problem, with His Spirit, don’t you agree?

Remember too that the Elijah to come will turn God’s children back to their Father – in heaven – AS well as, I believe, within literal families. And that is not likely to happen unless Dad and Mom have it together in their marriage; unless relationships in general between men and women in the church are working. Of course the primary relationship is the one with Father in heaven.

So we continue the series, and there will be one more message after this. Today’s message will CENTER on the roles of male and female, especially in marriage, according to God’s word. I hope the first two messages set the stage – and now in messages 3 and 4 we’re going to speak more frankly than ever on this subject. Please be sure you print off the transcript.

In this message we’ll discuss the roles of man and woman, our bodies not being just for our own use, sexual dues in marriage, and more.

In tape 4, the final message, we’ll discuss women in Israel, women in the church and their roles, women prophets in the past and coming in the future, and other interesting final points.

One more thing: We’re all – in a sense – “WOMAN”. OK, I hope I have the men’s attention now. What do I mean? Whether you’re male or female, do you not hope that you are the “WOMAN OF GOD”, the *bride* of Christ? Whether we are male or female, we better learn what woman is, how to be woman, and what that *means* – and how to treat women. I’m having to learn that better too! *I* haven’t done it right all along either! And *I’ve* had to repent too!

- **we must be the generation that CHANGES THE PATTERN of what our parents, grandparents may have been like,** unless you were one of the few with blissfully happy parents and grandparents. Right now, with over 60% of marriages ending in divorce, we’re not getting things straight. The divorce rate even in the church is very, very high. I am not picking on divorcees – because many who are still in marriages live in very unhappy marriages and wish they had the guts to divorce. I believe that is a true statement.

We *CAN* change the pattern we've had. **I certainly did not have a good model** of how to treat a woman, nor was my Mom the perfect woman either, when I try to look at it objectively. Dad and Mom divorced when I was 12. When I got married, the pattern that creates a poor marriage began to be replicated. Remember that we may *well* be living out the curse God said happens when we sin, remember? He said in **Exodus 20:5** that the consequences of our sins can reach out to the 3rd and 4th generations! It can take MUCH more work therefore, and much more *prayer to stop* the pattern, to *reverse* the pattern of generations of bad male-female relationships. I had to. You may have to. **THIS** is what this series is about: being the generation that says "NO MORE" and "Finally, Lord, I will fulfill *your* will for me and my male-female relationships, especially my marriage, and I ask you to *rebuke* Satan's hand in my marriage and *heal* my marriage, *heal* my relationships!" ***That means forgetting old biases and basing what we do on GOD'S WORD – ALL OF IT, and fulfilling the roles GOD commands of us.***

And when we make a stand to live in the blessings of God, instead of the cursings, what happens? **Read it for yourself in Deuteronomy 7:9** – "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy *for a thousand generations* with those who love Him and keep His commandments."

Isn't God awesome? WE disobey – and the curse is for 3 or 4 generations. We obey, and the *blessings* will affect our descendants for a *thousand* generations. Not just for 3-4 generations – but "a thousand"! *That* is why we are being blessed today in so many ways – because of our forefather Abraham's obedience! You be the man, you be the woman – who starts doing what God says to do, and believe it in faith and reap the rewards.

Does this work? Again, a personal testimony to GOD'S greatness. This isn't easy to publicly admit, but many know anyway: I had *shattered* our marriage, more than once. Nothing could save it, except GOD. God says to come to him with your *whole* heart when you really repent. Well, I came to him with my whole heart – and my whole marriage – *shattered* into a *million* tiny pieces! It looked *impossible* to heal, impossible to repair. But here we are, coming to our 30th anniversary, and I tell you – it's not by *our* power, *not* by our might, not by our will, *but by the grace of God* I stand here to tell you my wife loves me more than she ever has, and I love her more than ever before! But even now – there's danger in a statement like that!

As in ALL relationships, it can still be ruined if I go the wrong way again. ***Relationships are like a fire that has to be tended.*** It may be roaring now, but you have to watch it, tend to it, or even the biggest fire goes out. If the love in your marriage is going cold, you're not so hot for each other anymore – when was the last time you "stoked the fire" a bit, put another log on the fire, and gave something to your marriage? So if the fire is going out, see what you can do that brings some excitement once again to your spouse. *Remember, LIFE is about relationships!*

THIS MATTER OF AGAPE LOVE

Most sermons I hear on marriage stress men are to love their wives and for the wives to submit to their husbands, based on Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3 and other verses. But this matter of love and submission are NOT so limited.

Both partners are commanded to AGAPE LOVE – the selfless spiritual love -- the other. I find it incredible to regularly come across women in the church who want to claim that wives are never told to love their husbands. How can you read the Bible and come up with a statement like that?

First of all have they never read Titus 2:4-5? I'll start in verse one.

Titus 2:1-5 “But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: 2 that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; 3 the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things -- **4 that they admonish the young women to love their husbands**, to love their children, 5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, **obedient to their own husbands**, *that the word of God may not be blasphemed.*”

Surely that verse is clear. Now someone who has carefully checked this out will point out that the word in Titus 2:4 is NOT agape, but is *filandrous* – from philos—to love affectionately, to like, to be fond of.... But even there, do you wives feel affection, fondness, a liking for your husband? THAT particular verb is used one time in the whole Bible – and it is Titus 2:4. Peter used a SIMILAR word in John 21, when he claimed to “love” (phileo) Jesus, when Jesus asked him if he (peter) loved (agape) Jesus?

SO, some wives can claim and some will: “we’re not commanded to *agape* love our husbands anywhere.” Not so quick. If you’re single and listening to this, or even if you’re married, remember we are also told over and over and over – all through the Bible -- to agape love *everybody*, *even* our worst enemy. Surely *that* command means women are to also love their husbands.

Also remember Jesus’ command to “LOVE your enemies, PRAY for them, BLESS THEM” – read it -- **Matthew 5:43-48** – showing by our attitude and conduct that we truly are children of God. I find people in the church who can claim to love their *enemy*, to be praying *for* them – but have a hard time loving their husband or wife, or praying *FOR* their husband or wife from the heart. The greatest attribute is *love*, and this is where it all starts. The “love” mentioned there is also AGAPE, *proven* by Jesus’ question to us ALL: “for if you love *only* those who love you...?” -- BIG DEAL, He says!

So it is *easier* to love someone you know and feel loves YOU – but the kind of love we are to have for ALL PEOPLE, all men and women and children, all husbands and wives, all enemies – is a *love that is NOT BASED ON HOW THEY TREAT US or how WE feel we’re BEING treated by others. THIS applies in marriages too, and in ALL relationships* – at work, with our neighbors, with our enemies, with the clerk who’s making you wait and wait in line... 24/7, all the time, everywhere, with everyone.

Now aren’t you glad we have a SAVIOR? Aren’t you glad you and I can be forgiven? For how far *short* do we fall? You *know* we fail there, or am I the only one who has to grow so much in this department of love?

What I often see in marriages is this:

- husbands who “know” they love their wives, or claim they do, and so *aren’t* focusing much on it and *assume* their marriage would be just fine, if only the wife would learn to submit – the husband says. If you took a survey of church marriages right now, you’d have most of the men claiming their marriages are fine, and probably most women saying they’re worried about the state of their marriage. Men – wake up to that.

- And I see and know of too many wives who don't *feel* validated, don't FEEL their opinions count, don't feel *loved*, feel like a 2nd class partner in the marriage – OR, they've just plain taken over the marriage themselves, and THEY make the final decisions now. They have done a "Mutiny on the Bounty" – and their Captain Bleigh (the husband) just had to go!

Isn't it AWESOME to see marriages that work so well – the one or two you can think of? Don't they make you sick? Just kidding.... But don't assume they're not working super hard on their marriages too, to make them "click" so well like that. Don't assume your marriage would be that happy "if only" you had a husband like him, or a wife like her. Don't assume that. Many of you are!

Now here is something I'm learning more and more: ***I*** might feel ***I*** am loving someone, showing love to someone – but does the other person *feel* like I love her or him, *know* that I love him/her? I know there are times of "tough love" – but I am speaking more generally. My point is: if *overall*, I don't in *my heart* feel someone really CARES about me, really loves me, really wants the best for me – *they can claim* to care and love me all they want. Somehow it's not getting through.

Now the husband's *biggest* instructions in marriage ARE these: to **LOVE HIS** wife *as himself*, to **present her to himself as one without fault**, to **HONOR** his wife, to leave her feeling she has been clearly **UNDERSTOOD**, and to **GIVE completely OF HIMSELF** for her, just as Christ has for the church, and he is to be a **Christ-like head** of the marriage and of the wife (**Ephesians 5:25-33; 1 Peter 3:7; 1 Corinthians 11:3**) **I'll read that sentence again... write them down. Look up the scriptures** I just gave you. They're clear. I advise you to pause the tape and read them again FRESH. That's a *very* tall order! An almost impossible task by ourselves – unless CHRIST LIVES IN US and unless we submit to *His* guidance, men!

After all that, there are women who want to claim the man's role is far easier? This kind of love has to be there 24/7, in sickness and health, in euphoric times and in severe pre-menopausal times... more than a few of you will understand what I just said . . . right?

Men are *not* Christ in the marriage, but DO in a sense represent Christ – for isn't that what Paul *says* in **Ephesians 5:22-23**, and that is why wives are to be submissive to their husband as they would if their husband were Jesus? What else does "*as to the Lord*" mean (**Eph 5:22**)? And remember Sarah even called HER husband "lord" – (little L) – master, sir (**1 Pet 3:5-6**). And the husbands aren't off the hook in this matter of submission either – as you'll hear later in this message.

NOW let's get down to practical applications. We men really like the "submit" part that *they* have to do, *don't* we --- and we *will* talk about that in a minute, because it is as much a command for the wives as this is for men especially. **But how about OUR part, men,** of the way we are to treat our wives? Or for that matter, how are we to treat people, especially women, in general?

‘GIVING OF YOUR LIFE FOR THE ONE YOU LOVE’ – WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

This matter of loving is something *both* men and women do – so *focus* now. If you're single, you can apply this to other relationships. If you're a teenager or child – listen and learn, for this can shape your future happiness more than anything else you do – if YOU, even at age 9, 12, 15, or 17 – start applying some of these things:

“Give up your life” – our lives are the things we want, our time, the focus on us, --- and we can give it up, and there’s a great thing that happens when we do: we reap a greater life. Jesus, in this Passover season, set the example. He said He could not multiply until HE first died and was buried like a kernel of wheat. That’s not just about Christ, but it’s a principle of how we can grow: we must first die and let the self be buried.

This is not the modern pop psychology of “Looking Out for #1”, the “Me first” mentality.

A kernel of wheat must first **die (John 12:23-24; 1 Corinthians 15:36-38)** and be buried, and then that one grain produces hundreds of grains of wheat by giving itself up. We must let our carnal wishes and priorities “die” too, and let God produce in our self-sacrificing a life that produces *much* fruit -- or as Paul says, more glory.

Now turn to **John 15:12-14**: “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.** 14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.” -- including obeying *this* command to love everyone and to lay down your life for one another! What a great Pre-Passover command that applies 365 days a year! *This is the kind of attitude that strengthens relationships!*

Kids, this applies to you too: you’ve just gotten out of bed. Do you leave your pj’s on the floor for mom to pick up? Do you leave your bathroom a mess, with towels on the floor? When you make yourself a peanut butter sandwich, do you leave crumbs on the counter and the jar of peanut butter not put back in the fridge? Do you see dishes to be washed – and leave the good thought there – or do you *do* something to help?

Kids, teens – learn now to start being a bigger giver, helper – and I promise you: the blessings you will receive from God *and* your parents will leave you astounded! Live in the *blessings*, and not in the cursings!

Men and women: we’re often just kids who are older, aren’t we? We need to learn the same thing – and so do I. I’m learning. I’m trying! Don’t treat your wife as your personal valet, your personal go-fer (go-for this and go get that), or personal maid or your personal servant. NO, NO, NO! “HONOR HER”. “PRAY FOR her”. “Bless her.” “Love one another.” The greatest is he who serves the most, Jesus teaches. We do these things or we’re going to have “hindered prayers” – **1 Pet 3:7. So do you pray FOR your husband or your wife?**

So ask yourself: What makes my wife feel honored? Then go do it. Make a list of things to start doing, and things that leave her feeling DIShonored – and we *stop* doing those things. Maybe even have an honest discussion with her where you *listen* to her and take notes on those things. Certainly they won’t feel honored if we belittle them in public, gossip about them, holler at them, order them around like a personal slave, or if we don’t validate their needs and opinions and wishes.

What would make her feel like you understand her? Then go do it. When does she feel like you don’t give a hoot? When does she feel like you don’t understand? Clue: when we don’t *really* listen hard to what she’s saying. What we *should* do is listen attentively, then repeat back to her in different words what you think you hear her saying to see if you heard her or not (that’s called “Rogerian listening” or “active listening”).

Jesus is *our* head – but He was willing to give up all His rights and rank and power and prestige to come and be born in an animal shed, live as an outcast in Egypt, be raised in a largely *Gentile* -filled area of Nazareth, scorned by His own people----so that He could live and die for His Bride, the church!

And *we're* not willing to sit lovingly, cuddlingly, with our sweetheart and watch a “chick flick” with her? Do we really want to insist on our rights and make *her* get up and get us a beer when we want a beer? Do we get angry if there's no underwear in the chest of drawers – even if she's been sick or harried with 4 children to watch? Or do we do what JESUS-in-us is screaming at us to do – if we'd only listen – and get our butts up off the couch and take care of it, and see that we do something for her while we're at it? That doesn't mean you have become HER servant, or mean you have abdicated your leadership - but it does mean we can serve one another, as even Jesus Himself said *He came to serve, not to be served* (**Matthew 20:28**), yet we call Him “Lord”.

Do we *make sure* she *knows* who is “the BOSS” in your home? And *now* how does she feel? Like loving you? And then we complain that we don't *get* enough sex from her? A wife needs to feel romantic about sex. Men, we need to have some love, some caring, some thoughtfulness, some gentleness going on all day if we want some hot stuff at night! But too many men - - certainly in the world - - have been watching too many male oriented sex flicks that depict all women as always wanting sex all the time – and that's simply not the real world! They need to be romanced! More on that later. And more on this matter of *considerate* headship we men are to have, Christ-like headship that is kind – but IS still leadership.

Do we leave the channel on a bit too long, as some near-naked girl jiggles across our TV screen? And how does our wife feel about that moment? Do we insist our wives – who may be feeling weak from a particularly hard period – keep up with us, and *our* energy level? Are we task masters, or her loving protector? OK, I'm tired confessing all *my* sins and mistakes in my marriage over the years – so now you make up your list. In this pre-Passover time as I prepare this, why not start with one huge repentance for how we've utterly failed to be like Christ in our marriage, and then wonder why the wife can't submit to us as they would *to* Christ? Maybe they don't *SEE* Christ in their husband, as the head? That doesn't excuse them, but men – let's try to make it easier for them to do their part, by us doing *our* part! I can't be more frank!!!!

Or, just as bad, have some of us men abdicated our role as leader and protector, and have let our wives wear the pants? Make all the decisions? Shift over to her and make her carry the burden of debt and payments and decisions and child rearing and training – while we watch Monday night football? Have we become wimps who do whatever she wants? That's wrong too!

Men, I've had to repent.... And some of the examples I'm giving are things I've done too. But if we want our marriages to bring glory to God, we've got to understand what it means agape love our wives!

Proverbs 29:2 says, “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan”. If our wives, and even our children, aren't rejoicing – and they're not by and large – perhaps we need to look in the mirror, men and see if we're leading righteously, lovingly, in a Godlike manner – who lets it rain on the just and the unjust, who is forgiving, who does not lash out at us constantly for every infraction.

I've had to really learn this. And have a long way yet to go. I admit it. Can you?

And now women, your turn: YOU have also been called to give up YOUR lives for your friend... as our Master Jesus did.

So the real answer is that both sides are trying to love, both sides are trying to give to the other, to pleasure the other, to make the other one happy, to give to this marriage or this relationship.... That's the real score, isn't it? It doesn't cancel out the instruction for men to be a considerate Christ-like head of the marriage.

Marriage – and the male/female relationship -- is also like a bank account. You can't keep screwing up, called “*withdrawals*” from the account – and expect anything but marital *bankruptcy*. I say this to both the men and women. Our kindness, our good things, our praise, our gentleness – those are DEPOSITS into the account. Everything we do is to bring God glory. Do our marriages bring God glory – or shame? Do our relationships make God happy? Do we acknowledge God's words, God's commands to us, in our marriages or try to water down what the Bible clearly teaches?

We've heard for years, haven't we – that there are 2 ways of life: the way of *get* and the way of *give*. In marriage, it's an amazing truism, that if you want more from your marriage, you have to *give* more, just like if you want more warmth from your fireplace, you have to give it some wood, some fuel!! If we men want a wonderful wife, let's give our wives a wonderful husband, first! And if you wives want a wonderful husband, give him a wonderful wife – 1st. Don't wait for the other! If you've heard that “marriage is 50-50, it's give and take” – I tell you, that's *bunk*! A happy marriage is giving 100-100! And it's 100% on *your* part *whether or not* your spouse is doing his/her part. And in ALL relationships – *any* male-female relationship at work, friendships, etc – the more we *give*, the more we will receive back eventually, don't we? It's a *wonderful* law, *isn't* it? So in your relationships with people – and in your marriage – are you a **giver or a taker**?

What would your wife say about you, men? Are you a giver or taker? What would men say about their wives – giver or taker? We all need to become better GIVERS, like God. Even in the sexual activities you have with each other: do you come across as what's in it for you, or one who is trying to give to the other? You give, and you'll receive so much more than you can imagine.

Also remember we are to also show our love by *not picking* at our wives constantly. And some of you wives henpeck your poor husbands to death. It's gotta stop! I've had to repent of that too. Christ “presents us” to Himself as not having spot or wrinkle (**Eph 5:27-28**). He is patiently working *with* us, but not picking on us. Compliment the good. Become – instead of a “fault finder” – **become a “good finder”**; **Notice the many good things about your wife**, and you wives do that about your husbands. Notice the good things, compliment him/her on these good things – and you'll see those good things multiply. Find something not quite right with something she's tried very hard to get right – and watch her depression *really* set in. I speak again, from experience and am really trying to **become more of a “GOOD FINDER”**. Find the good, and then comment on it, and bless it! Watch the good grow.

Now let's tackle this matter of submission.

THIS MATTER OF SUBMISSION

This is *not* a marriage sermon, but I have to address this subject of submission now too. You ladies knew it was coming, didn't you?

But the *WHOLE BIBLE* is about submission. We have *all* been called to learn to submit. This is not a woman-only function, but *neither* will I go where so many liberals and even Christian *feminists* are going – that somehow they *water down* this word “submit” to mean everything but what the Greek means, or how else that same word is clearly used in other verses, as we'll see. But still, we *men* have to be a better example of submitting too – and if the women can see that we men have accepted this, a Godly woman will be more able to willingly submit to her head, the husband.

I like the word “submission” better than “submit” because the first one – submission – implies an *attitude* more than an action. It's the way we feel inside. **We've *all* been called to be in submission to someone!**

The word “submit” or “submission” **NT Strong's word # 5293 “hupo = under” hupotasso (hoop-ot-as'-so);** from NT:5259 and NT:5021; to subordinate; reflexively, to obey KJV - be under obedience (obedient), put under, subdue unto, (be, make) subject (to, unto), be (put) in subjection (to, under), submit self unto.

The GREEK word “*hupotasso*” is used **40x in the New Testament** and is translated in those 40 places as “made subject to, put under, be obedient to, obey, submit to.” Look it up. There's no getting around it. The demons are said to be *hupotasso* to the disciples; the universe is *hupotasso* to God; children are *hupotasso* to their parents, Christians are *hupotasso* – submitted to – the unconverted governing authorities over us, and so on. When I'm HUPOtasso to someone – the Greek *hupo* means “*under*”, I'm under that person. I remember someone getting upset when I said in a sermon that there *are* people *over* me and people *under* me, according to God's word. It shouldn't make me feel all high and mighty, or shouldn't lead me to *lord it* over people – *but neither can we just cancel out 40 references in the Bible to this word!*

*There are MEN who don't wish to ever hupotasso their bosses – submit to them – and there are men who are dictatorial jerks, and there are women who don't wish to acknowledge or obey – and therefore submit to our LORD Jesus' command to be submissive to those over them, including their husbands. You'll find many preachers and writers today who will find ways to cancel out the many verses that say to submit to your husband. So a lack of willingness on ANYONE'S part to submit, is an act of rebellion against the One who **told** us to submit to various ones: Jesus Christ. Can it be any clearer than that? And I'm not picking just on the women here. Men have got to start being better at submitting to those over us as well! Many (not all) Americans and Aussies in particular, because of our historical heritage, hate submission.*

Even our King Jesus bows the knee to Father in heaven (1 Corinthians 15:27-28). In fact He was the perfect example of submission – “I came not to do my own will, but the will of my father.” “My words are not my own, but my Father's” and on and on.

Now men listen carefully: If we men would model submission better, our wives might more easily follow that excellent example. By that I mean this: Some years ago my wife asked me how she could easily be submissive when I wasn't setting her a good example in areas I was supposed to be submitting in. If I come home griping and complaining about my boss, or company policies, or the minister, the governor, the congress, the president, the cop who gave me a ticket – how on earth is

my wife to be inspired to submit *if we aren't setting the example for her* where we have to be in submission?

Having said that, if the man is *not* a good model of submission to those over him, it still does not exempt the woman from doing her part in obeying God's word. In Jesus' case, Jesus as our husband, did model submission perfectly.

Ladies, having said all that, neither *are* we Jesus and whether or not we model it perfectly doesn't get you off the hook. I'm just saying it would be much easier – wouldn't it? – if you *did* see your husband being submissive to those over *him*, right?

I mentioned how *both* the man and woman have God-level roles to play. The man is the head, even '*as Christ* is the head of the Church'. What an awesome *responsibility* – and not something to be shoving down any woman's throat. We men are to be as *loving*, as *serving*, as *loyal*, as *faithful*, as Christ is. The word for "love" in "love your wives" is *agape* – the strong, spiritual *unconditional* love that is *not based on what others are doing and thinking*. Think about that. Our *love* for our wife is *not* dependent on whether or not she submits or loves us or obeys us. Though that would *surely* make it easier to love someone like that. Jesus loved *His* wife so much that He is *scarred* – perhaps forever – with proof of that love for her. After all, after His resurrection, He was still able to tell Thomas to put his hand inside the hole in His side! We men have *that* model to follow. A *very high task* indeed.

The wife also has a God-level responsibility! SHE has the responsibility of being a helper to the man, *as surely as God is our helper in time of need*. ***It also is a GOD-level assignment.*** It goes farther than that: the wife, according to God, is to also *respect* (**Eph 5:33** – the Greek is *phobeo* – meaning "be in awe of", believe it or not), *love and money* (**Titus 2:4-5**) and be submissive (**1 Pet 3:1; Eph 5:22, 24**) to her husband. Ladies, I feel *most* men preachers in the last 5 years, have *stopped* preaching this much due to fear of backlash from the feminists in the church! When they do preach it, it's often nowadays a watered down interpretation and application that has *no* correlation to the actual Greek!

EACH one is to do *his or her* responsibility regardless whether or not the other one does his or her part. Husbands are to love, give of themselves, honor, protect, and *understand* their wives regardless if she is submissive. Wives are to be submissive *regardless* if their husbands are always loving, caring, understanding and honoring.

The remarkable thing that happens is this: You want a submissive wife? Instead of nagging her to be submissive, you focus on *your* part. And watch how much easier it becomes for her to submit. Wives, you want a more loving husband? *Be more submissive*, from the heart without gossiping to all the other women about how abusive your husband is.

Ladies, I think you have to admit that in parts 1 and 2 of this 4 part series, I focused heavily on the men *honoring* you, being willing to even *serve* you as Christ does His affianced bride. I focused on not running rough shod over our wives. I focused on working together, teamwork, being willing to consider what you have to say. Using you as a *true* helper and considering all your thoughts and feelings. I emphasized that submitting is something the wife is to do – and *not* something we husbands are to *make* our wives do.

Now it's your turn, ladies, to **SEEK your husband's leadership; to encourage it, and to submit to him and his leadership, as Sarah did**, even calling her husband her "lord" (master) and whose daughters you are if you follow that example (**1 Peter 3:1-6**) Peter says it is often a matter of *faith* to submit – and Peter even put it in context of man "who obeys not the Word [of God]". Your children should not see you ever screaming at your husband, refusing to obey, refusing to submit. That does not bring glory to God.

NOW let's clarify for the record:

- **there is no justification that I could find after many hours of research to substantiate some who claim it doesn't really mean "submit".** Look up all 40 places that word is used. Interesting it is 40 times, isn't it. Submitting *is* a test, and 40 is the number of testing.
- **Submission to the husband does *not* mean you are to obey him instead of Christ or more than Christ** – when there is a conflict. If your husband tells you to participate in wife swapping, or stealing, or lying, or sabbath breaking – you must obey God rather than man (**Acts 4:28**). Neither is your husband literally Christ, as some men would have it. Christ *did* put him there.
- **Submitting cannot mean you give up having any ideas of your own or the ability to share a differing opinion.** The very fact that Peter – *and even Paul* --- talk about women who are submitting to their husbands, even unconverted husbands, shows they stepped out to follow Christ when their husbands were not willing to, or able to. That's fairly strong difference of opinion there. My wife, as many of you know, *often* differs from me – and she *should* tell me how she differs, and then I make a decision after *considering* her *thoughts*. I'll often *defer* to her wishes – but that's still the husband making the decision, and retaining headship. Men, deferring to your wife *from time to time* does not *have* to mean that you've abdicated headship – it just means you're being kind and gentle and considerate!
- **Submission does not mean the one submitting is less important, has less intelligence, or less potential.** After all, even *Jesus*, the king of kings, submitted to the humiliation of the scourging and the cross, but that did not mean He was inferior to Pilate, did it?

There HAS to be a leader. Paul makes it clear that man was created to be the loving, Christ-like head – not a dictator, but yes, the man is to be the head. Men, be loving heads of your marriage. Women, please seek his leadership and ask God to bless you and your marriage for doing so! And men, we would be *a total jerk* if we *abuse* that leadership, *don't* ever listen to our wives, and don't try to understand. You and I can *change* our mind, and *defer* to what the wife wants, and that is still being the head, making a decision to defer to her in this case or that case. But neither does a man have to defer all the time! Otherwise, who is submitting to whom? Let's read the verses again, this time emphasizing the women, since I focused on the men so much in tapes 1 and 2.

Now read the next passage slowly, and if you believe God's word is inspired, ladies – are you still doing this, or have you absorbed the world's feminism?

1 Peter 3:1-6 Wives, *likewise* [harking back to the less than perfect bosses to whom we are to submit in chapter 2], **be submissive** to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

Before going further with 1 Pet 3, note that he starts this passage in verse 1, with “**LIKEWISE**”. Let’s start in 1 Peter 2:13. The very *section* here is titled in my Bible “Submission to government”. Peter is referring to what he had just written, but is NOT saying wives are to submit to their husbands *in every way* like a servant does his master. The word “likewise” in the Greek (*homoios*) usually means “in a *similar* way” – but does not usually mean “in exactly the same way”. NIV says “in the same way”, but the Greek can more likely mean “also”, or “in a similar way”. If Peter meant that wives are to be submissive “in *every way*” as the previous section stated – he would have said the Greek “*kata panka*” (Heb 4:15) Let’s go back to chapter 2, because there’s a lesson here.

1 Peter 2:13-25 “Therefore **submit yourselves** to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, 14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. 15 *For this is the will of God*, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men -- 16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. 17 **Honor all people**. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. **Honor the king** [this was Nero! Did we honor Clinton, or Bush now? It is really wrong for us to be so disrespectful to and about our leaders, but we often are.]

18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, **not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh**. 19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. **21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:** 22 “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; 24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness -- by whose stripes you were healed. 25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

After talking about servants submitting even to the *harsh* – and *after* talking about Jesus suffering *unjustly*, and quietly to a *very harsh and unfair* human government – *after* all that, Peter continues – no chapter breaks in the beginning:

1 Peter 3:1 “Wives, *likewise* [“in a similar way” -- harking back to the less than perfect bosses to whom we are to submit in chapter 2], **be submissive** to your own husbands ...” even those who *aren’t converted* or don’t obey the word.

Peter goes on to talk about a wife having a *gentle and quiet* spirit, which *God* considers very precious (vers 4) and yet *acknowledges* in verse 5 that submitting often requires *trusting in God* to work things out.

1 Peter 3:2 continues: “when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. 3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward -- arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel -- 4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. 5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.”

Many of you ladies are *awesome* examples of this. Some of you ladies really have a hard time with this. Some of you don’t even want to admit you are supposed to obey and submit to your husbands.

What can I say? I can only implore the men to be gentle husbands, to *understand* you, to let you *feel* understood, to *honor* you – but in the end, if there is a difference of opinion on the direction the family will take, the man is the head of the house according to *God*.

Now men, let's make it *easier* for them to be submissive to us - - by *not* being tyrants.

Many modern women and liberal men like to use **EPHESIANS 5:21** to water down a wife's requirement to submit to her husband by saying "but you men are supposed to submit to us too. It says 'submit to one another'. So this thing of submission is a *mutual* role" – they say. And many of you are buying into that modern feminism and liberalism. Be careful not to water down God's word.

I caution you on that for these reasons:

-- by saying the above, they ignore how Paul goes on to *explain* what he means by that in the very next 15-20 verses or so. He goes *on* to explain that wives are to submit to their husbands, then in **Ephesians 6** that **children are to submit to their parents, and servants are to submit to their masters or owners**. *Nowhere* in there does he reverse that and say – you parents need to also submit to your children too. Nowhere does Paul or anyone else even one time ever say "husbands submit to your wives". Nor does he say "masters submit to your servants". Jesus gave the qualifier by saying a good master, like He was, is *willing* to serve those under him, but it doesn't *remove* the fact that He is still *Master*! Read it for yourself in John 13:12-17.

John 13:12-17 "So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? **13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.** *14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.* **15** For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. **16** Most assuredly, I say to you, *a servant is not greater than his master;* nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. **17** If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

So what's the point? Husbands *can* defer to their wives, and good husbands often do. But even in the deferring, they are retaining headship by making that decision. A good husband *will* confer with his wife, listen to her viewpoint, *discuss* differences of viewpoint, and then make a decision – and if it goes against the wife's viewpoint, that's where the faith and submission have to come in.

Some use **Genesis 21:12-13** to try to water down this matter of headship and submission too. **When Abraham was told to listen to Sarah**, it was because in this particular instance Sarah was *right*, and the promises were to come from Isaac, and Abraham was unwilling to defer in this instance and God had to intervene. *Perhaps ladies*, God intervened *because* Sarah *prayed* about it and had to be submissive until *God acted*.

But that specific command to Abraham cannot be taken as a command for all husbands for all times to listen to their wives! In fact, part of the original curse on man was because Adam listened to his *wife and should not have, in that case* (**Genesis 3:17**). Neither should Abraham have listened to Sarah's *wrong* advice to have a child by Hagar. That was *very* bad advice and we're still reaping the results of that *horrible* advice today – in the conflict between Ishmael's children and Isaac's children.

So **1 Pet 3:1** makes that clear. *Now let's read **Ephesians 5:22-24**. It does not say there that we husbands replace Christ, but ladies, it does say something about that:*

Eph 5:22-24 NIV “Wives, *submit* to your husbands *as to the Lord*. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife *as* Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 *Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.*”

Other passages on the man being the head of the family and marriage are in 1 Corinthians 11.

1 Cor 11:3, 8-12 “But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.8 For man is not from woman, but woman from man. 9 Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. 10 For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. 11 Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. 12 For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.”

The GOAL is to become ONE – as Jesus and His Father were one. Not at each other all the time. Not the constant striving for whose will is going to prevail. Even Jesus will listen to His wife and answer her requests. It’s called *prayer*! And the goal is to glorify God, by obeying all his words, even the hard ones we don’t like having to obey.

Now men, do your part. Love, really love your wife faithfully, solely, and *give* of yourself totally to her, serving her and providing for her, and praising and honoring her.

Do you *serve* your wife as Christ did – as I pointed out in tape 1? When was the last time you brought her a cup of tea or coffee? When was the last time you cooked breakfast in bed for her? When was the last time you treated her like the royalty she is? When was the last time you spoke DISrespectfully to her, or dishonored her in front of others? I hope we’re not doing that.

WOMEN: In faith, obey God and do your part too. As each wife and each husband does, will see a revival in male and female relationships the church has needed so badly for many years now.

And now let’s look at a very sensitive subject – but one that frustrates so many marriages and especially so many men: the area of our bodies and our sexuality and sexual drives. I think it is true that more men have a much stronger sex drive and sexual urges than most women do. There are exceptions to that “rule”.

OUR BODIES ARE NOT OUR OWN

This next SECTION should be simple if we simply obey the scripture and try to bring God glory in everything we do. Whose body is your body? **Be turning please to 1 Corinthians 7:1**

First of all we all surely know that when God comes into us, by His Holy Spirit, and indwells our body, He considers our body His temple. Some of us can’t do a whole lot about the temple we can offer God – if we were in an accident, or if we’re very old, or crippled up. But many of us *can* present a more delightful temple to God with some effort. Some of us have very large temples, like me – and I’m slimming my temple down as best I can, a pound or two at a time. But whatever we do, and have for God, surely we want to do it for His glory, don’t we?

Secondly, he claims to have bought us, owns us. But even beyond that, *who owns your body*? Feminists will hate this... so beware. Whether you’re single or married, or hope to be married – or not – what’s the deal here?

1 Corinthians 7:1-7

“Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. 2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. 3 ***Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.*** 4 ***The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.*** 5 ***Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again*** so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6 But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment. 7 For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.”

If you're single and *hope* to be married someday, who owns your body? Your future spouse does! Reserve your body for him or her. Make it something *special* you can offer to him or her alone – and no one else. Ever. I married a virgin and I'm the *only* man my wife has ever had intimacy with. That makes her even *more* special to me. **Now turn to 1 Thessalonians 4.**

What about married couples? How much can and should marrieds do sexually with each other? Keep in mind that people are called a “vessel” several times. Vessel. Paul was a chosen vessel. Our wife is called “the weaker vessel”. Our bodies are called “vessel” a couple places – vessel of honor or dishonor. So the word “vessel” can refer to *our* bodies, or to our spouse's body.

Let's look at **1 Thessalonians 4** for a verse that I think bears on this which mentions “vessel”. We know that in the New Testament our wife is called “the weaker vessel” (**1 Pet. 3:7**). Of Paul, God had said “he is my chosen vessel”.

1 Thess 4:3-5 “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to ***possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,*** 5 ***not in passion of lust,*** like the Gentiles who do not know God.”

Some feel “his own vessel” refers to our *own* bodies, but I think it is possible that it can mean our own bodies *and* our SPOUSE's body – since **1 Cor 7:4** says my wife has authority over my body and I have authority over her body. We are to treat one another in *sanctification* and honor – setting apart for holy use – *not* in mere passion.

So what does all this mean?

Since man and woman originally came from one body (Genesis 2), the goal is *oneness* – not just sexually, where it is obvious about becoming one when the man literally enters inside his woman – but oneness in that over time you *act* as one, *move* as one, *think* as one, knowing each other intimately, and *considering* each other intimately.

Now with that in mind, we must also address this topic of sexual oneness.

First of all – mostly to the men – I do not think we men should ever ask our wives to do something sexually that makes her uncomfortable or something she really detests and doesn't want to do: whether it's a form of sex, a sexual position, or some new sexual experience you've heard about. How is it *love* if we force her to do something she finds distasteful? We must *honor* her, remember, and if a position, device, or form of sex makes her feel DIShonored, then we must

not do it, or ask her for it. Neither should we require our wives to *dress* in a way that makes her uncomfortable. That is no longer showing her *love* and outgoing concern.

Now having said that, let's review **1 Corinthians 7:3-5** again, as it frankly is often a *sore* point in marriages, more often a sad complaint of *men* opening up to other men – than I think it is of women.

3 Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

“DO NOT DEPRIVE EACH OTHER –except for as long as you can fast and pray!” is my *paraphrase of that*. How many of you have fasted for more than a day or two or three? How often do you have sexual love? Once a month? I'll tell you: most men need it much more than that, or you are an accomplice, in my opinion, to his becoming more easily tempted at least in his heart and mind, if not in actual actions.

If you think that's too strong, why then would Paul say “so that Satan does not tempt you”? I've had men open up to me to say that people comment on what a beautiful wife they have, how beautiful she is to him and to other men, and yet she won't make love to him nearly as often as he *needs*. *As a result, he has a lot of pent up need that can become horrific temptations.*

Sometimes it's the wife who wants more – and the *husband* is the one not giving her the sexual dues *she* is due! That's hard for me to understand how there are marriages where the man has no interest, but I hear it happens as well. Of course **the sit-coms** are *full* of that notion that it's the women who want more sex and it's the men who can't perform – 3's company's Mrs. Roper, or Al Bundy's wife is another, and on and on. I think that's mostly a crock in the real world.

We've GOT to say this: it comes down once again to the 2 ways of GIVE AND GET. Too many men, including me many times in my life – but I'm trying to change this – **have looked at women, even their wives, primarily as sex objects.** Even the very act of lovemaking after some years of marriage *hardly* resembles “love-making” but “slam-bam get it over with”. I'll bet *none* of us were like that in the beginning of our sexual relationship with one another. But over time, each one forgets to *give* to the other, to *serve* the other, to bring *happiness* to the other... but rather thinking mostly about self-gratification, or “getting it over with”. Which one are you?

Men, I'm learning that if I'm not happy at times with my wife's desire for me, I need to look into the mirror! Have I made myself desirable? And I don't mean just by appearance, though that *is* a part of the whole picture too, isn't it? I mostly mean this: have I been *so* loving, SO sweet, such a prince charming to her all day today and yesterday that she is enraptured by me and *loves* the idea of cuddling together and kissing and fondling and all that? Or have I been inconsiderate, rough, insensitive to her feelings and needs, and then wonder why she has little desire for me? I speak to all of us men and women on this. A woman is not going to feel amorous and “hot” for her husband if *he* isn't showing her honor, time, respect, and sensitivity. It's not complicated – but still, too many of us men wonder why there's little passion.

Having said that, on the other hand, if for *whatever* reason one spouse is not willing to provide for the other's needs which do build up every few days in men, *the temptation level* goes sky high in many men – and men in the world often use other outlets for : strip bars, video, internet, flirting at work, and on and on. God's men have the *same* passions and desires, but hopefully are trying to control it better, but wives – *help your men out!* And men, sometimes *your* wives want more and need more sexual loving and sometimes it's the *man* holding back. More often though, I think more men want far more of it than women do. *Help* them be faithful to you even in their minds, ladies, 24/7, all the time. Out in the working world with lots of young women willing to flaunt their wares out there – low cut blouses, ultra-short mini-skirts, -- not to mention advertising media and everything out there screaming sex at you – it's a wonder there aren't far more incidents of adultery in the church than there are! But if husbands and wives are doing what GOD says in 1 Cor 7 – and providing for each other's sexual needs – we can *handle* the world's temptations.

Of course sometimes there IS also a physical component – in terms of health – that also could be playing a role here.

HUSBANDS –WE need to learn – me too – how *to set the stage* better *for* a romantic interlude. Women need the *atmosphere* of love. We can't run roughshod over them, treating them with disrespect – and then expect them to want to make love to us at the drop of a hat! **Saying it positively: if we honor, love and are super nice to them all day, the evening will be much nicer also to us.** Let's not make it hard for our wives to make love to us – either! *Neither should we demand* sexual positions or paraphernalia, etc. that she is *not* comfortable with! That's not showing love either.

Having said all that, a wise woman once told me that when she could see her husband getting grouchy, she'd put her most alluring nightie on and lure him to the bedroom to relieve some of this tension out of him! And he once again became easier to live with! *Great insight!*

**

Anyway, I have to end here. I hope we will fully submit to God in our male – female relationships. Let's remember they are to be *relationships* – and that the relationship with God is what centers everything else.

Men, let's be leaders – but *considerate*, Christ-like leaders.

Wives, I hope you will encourage your husband to *be* the leader, *seek* his leadership and advice – for in so doing, you're obeying *God* and bringing glory to God. None of this is to mean you are to ever feel you must submit to physical and emotional abuse, however.

I hope as we submit to God's word, that we'll see a renewed *vigor* between men and women, better marriages, more honor to God, and happier Christians.

Our NEXT MESSAGES will be about PASSOVER PREPARATION AND UNDERSTANDING. *

