



Love, Submission, and Respect to Your Husband

by Jan Patterson

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests but also for the interests of others.

Philippians 2:3-4

Introduction

- If we compare ourselves to the Scripture in any area, we fall short. We need to keep growing and changing.
- We face this needy area of life every day, all day. It is easy to be in a habit and think we are okay.
- “I don't know if I will EVER love my husband the way he should be loved.”
- A wife must love and submit to and respect her OWN husband, according to his individual character, natural inclination, and capacity. PAY ATTENTION to these.
- These 3 commands are not dependent on the husband, and as such, are a choice we make.

Meanings

A. Love

1. The love commanded in Titus 2:4 is found only that one time in the NT.
2. It means to be kindly-affectioned toward your husband.

The foundation of all domestic happiness
New American Commentary

3. It means to be his friend—to like (accept) him, have tender feelings for him, think well of him, and be affectionate
4. This love emphasizes strength of companionship, pulling together toward goals, kindness and mutual friendship.
5. Other passages to help:
Philippians 2:3-4

I Corinthians 13:4-9, Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not, arrogant, ⁵ does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, ⁶ does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part.

Romans 12:10, Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor.

B. Submission

1. It is first of all a general spiritual attitude true of every believer in all relationships (Ephesians 5:21)
2. It is the most common command to wives in the NT—to “arrange yourself” under your OWN husband.
 - Ephesians 5:22 adds “*as to the Lord.*”
 - Ephesians 5:24 begins with “*as the church is subject to Christ.*”
 - Ephesians 5:24 ends with “*in everything.*”
 - Colossians 3:18 adds, “*as is fitting in the Lord.*”
3. It is a military term of a VOLUNTARY SUBORDINATION—a wife is not to be coerced by her husband.

It is not best that there should be the open exercise of authority . . . When “commands” begin in the relation of husband and wife, happiness flies, and the moment a husband is disposed to command his wife, or is under the necessity of doing it, that moment he may bid adieu to domestic peace and joy.

Albert Barnes

4. I Peter 3:6, “*Sarah OBEYED Abraham, calling him lord.*” It was her way, her custom. It means to LISTEN and HEED.
5. Genesis 3:16, “*Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.*” Eve took the lead in sin, and from now on would be subject to her husband's will. Ever since, it has been woman's fallen nature to struggle in this area.

C. Respect

1. This word closes the Ephesians passage on the marriage relationship. I Peter 3:2 speaks of a wife's "*respectful behavior.*"
2. It is "spontaneous, obedient regard," (Expositor's Greek Testament). Its root means to frighten or terrify, and it is translated awestruck, afraid, or intimidation.
3. "Let the wife see that she notices him, regards him, honors him, prefers him, venerates and esteems him; and that she defers to him, praises him, and loves and admires him exceedingly," (Ephesians 5:33, Amplified Bible).

*Respect does something
to the soul of a man—
God made him that way.*
Emerson Eggerichs

4. The basis for your respect is his headship and position, not how he acts. (I Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23)
5. Bible examples: the positive include Sarah, Esther, Proverbs 31 woman, Rebekah, Rachel; the clearest negative example is Michal.

6. Some ways a wife can unintentionally show disrespect:
 - correcting, interrupting or talking about her husband in public
 - “fixing” his appearance in public
 - how she talks to him and about him, in public as well as in private

Some Practical Situations

A. When parents disagree over children

1. Mothers usually spend more time with the kids and are more aware of what is going on.
2. Men see things differently, less emotionally
3. Consider Genesis:
 - Sarah took matters into her own hands, and left Abraham little choice
 - Isaac and Rebekah had favorites in their boys, which led to multiple, lifelong difficulties
 - Noah and his sons, Lot and his wife, Adam and Eve
4. What does a wife do in times of disagreement?
 - Submit, as in any other situation.
****Communication is key****
 - There is a right time, place, and spirit.
 - IT WON'T HELP TO GET EMOTIONAL.
 - Remember that men don't process information in the same way women do—too much detail, and tend to react and decide NOW.
 - Best not to accost with the words, “We need to talk.”

B. When the husband won't be the leader

1. Submit to what she thinks he would want
2. Stay out of his role
3. Encourage him, pray for him, and support him as the leader. Obey the biblical pattern even if he doesn't.
4. Make suggestions, but leave decisions to him.

C. When the husband is iron-fisted or difficult

1. I Peter 3 is for situations like this.
2. Be sweet, keep your tongue, and pray, pray, pray!

*Wifely submission in
[any spiritual] environment is KEY
to children's proper submission.*

John MacArthur

Conclusion

1. Life is different than in early marriage.
 - Familiarity should not breed contempt. You should have a DEEPER love, appreciation, and respect, and a strong sense of “subordination.”
 - Don't look back and be discouraged, look forward and change. Concentrate on your OWN husband and your stewardship to him.
2. The teenage years have unique challenges.
 - “Growing pains”—they think more deeply, are more strongly influenced by others, and begin thinking about the future
 - Schedules can get crazy.
 - A wife has to work harder to put her husband first.
3. Reminders:
 - Continue to actively, verbally be “kindly-affectioned”
 - Continue to hold him up and submit to him in your heart as the head of the home
 - NEVER cross him or argue with him before children (or at all!)
 - Continue to stay within his budget, and train children to be glad for what they have rather than always want more
4. Remember that Love, Submission, and Respect are HEART ATTITUDES first; they are COMMANDED in Scripture; and they are a CHOICE. Concentrate on learning, loving, submitting to, and respecting your OWN husband.

Sources used:

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