

## **The Role of a Wife: Part 1**

Ephesians 5:22-24

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, November 29, 2020

Good morning and welcome to another online sermon here at our Grace Fellowship Chilliwack YouTube channel. Before we get started in our message this morning, I just have an announcement to make, something exciting to tell you. And that is that the Christmas season is upon us. The holidays are here, you may not be able to tell right now with all the different things going on, all the kind of chaotic times that we live in, but they have snuck up on us. The month of December is almost here, and with that we have some special things we're doing as a church.

One of those is a sermon series we're doing as an elder board on the birth of Christ. This holiday, we are going to do a special series on Jesus birth and we're going to talk about three aspects of it. We're going to talk about the angels, the shepherds and the wisemen on three consecutive weeks. So, we're going to do those back-to-back to back with each of our elders, so that on December 13th, Quentin Smith will be preaching on the angels, and he'll tell us who they were and what they did at the birth of Christ. And as you can tell, it's a rare thing to have an angel appear at your birth. It's a rare thing to have an angel show up when you're born. But it's even rarer to have them sing. As far as I know, that's the only time in scripture where the angels actually sang at someone's birth. They often talked, but they never sang. And so, this will be a very interesting part of the story. Quentin will talk about that on the 13th.

And then on the next week, December 20th, Kevin Laser will do the same thing with the shepherds. So, he'll talk about those humble men and tell you what they saw and what they were all about as well.

It was a very interesting part of the story for them too, because the story kind of goes from the sky to the fields; kind of goes from heaven to earth, to these men; and they see a baby in a manger.

So if it's not weird enough to hear angels singing, now the angels are singing, leading these men to a stable. And a baby born in a stable would have broken so many Jewish customs, it would have broken all the cleanliness rules of the Jews and so they would have been floored at that. And Kevin's going to be talking about what that was all like on December 20.

Then on Christmas Eve, I'll tell you about the wisemen. At the Christmas Eve service that our children are putting together I'll tell you about the only non-Jews in the story, the only Gentiles in the story, the wisemen who follow the star from the east. But all this to say, please join us for these services. Please make it a point to be there because they will be a blessing to you. I think you're really going to enjoy what we have in store for you this Christmas season. Obviously, if everything is still shut down at this time, we'll have to do this online. Since we don't own our own building; we don't have our own property, we're at the mercy of the landlords in this so we kind of have to follow their lead as to whether we can meet in the Riverside Drive facility there. But if we cannot meet, we'll put this online, on the YouTube channel along with the Christmas Eve program that the kids are working on. I'll tell you more about that program next week. But our kids are hard at work at a Christmas play that should be really good as well. But all this is important stuff. I mean, this is crucial. Because Jesus' birth is one of the most important events of the Bible. It's one of the most crucial parts of the Bible. While it only appears in two books and only appears in Matthew and Luke, what they say is so powerful that you just have to take the time to study it. It's very important to do. In fact, you could look at it like this: Jesus was born in hard times.

And Jesus was born in a very difficult time in world history, which means that He knows how to handle hard times. Jesus knows how to handle difficulties and trials and tribulations and all that stuff, which means He knows how to handle what we're going through right now. And the Coronavirus is nothing to Him. I mean, when He was born, Herod killed all the babies in Bethlehem.

So, Jesus can get you through this time right now He can take care of whatever you're going through this moment. You don't have to be worried. You don't have to be afraid. And please join us as we talk about that in the upcoming weeks. We would love to have you be blessed by this time in Scripture and it will begin on December 13th. If you want to mark that on your calendars, December 13th. And with that said, while we're talking about that this morning, I want to invite you to turn in your Bibles to a book that addresses that subject. It talks about Jesus Christ and His life. And that is the book of Ephesians. So, if you would open your Bibles with me to the book of Ephesians; that is the book we're in this morning and we are in chapter five, which I would like to read to you before we get started. So, if you would, open your Bibles with me to Ephesians chapter five, starting in verse 18. And there Paul writes this, and he says,

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also as the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands and everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body.

FOR THIS REASON, A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, each individual among you also, is to love his own wife, even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.

We'll end the reading there.

Just to say a few words about that, while we often don't think of the book of Ephesians as a holiday book, we often don't refer to it this time of year because it doesn't talk about the events that I just mentioned. It doesn't talk about the angels and the shepherds and the wisemen, but it is a Christmas book in this sense. It's a holiday book in this sense; it says a lot about Jesus. This book of the Bible says a lot about our Lord. And what it says is that He changes you.

That's the message of the book of Ephesians. If you were to put it into a nutshell, this is what it says. It says, "Jesus changes your life". And in the passage we just read just now, it says He changes your marriage. That's where the change is the greatest; it's in your home. It's in your family.

If you notice, verse 18, starts off and says, "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit", and we've seen this verse a lot. And I've told you it's a strange passage in the book. It sounds very odd when you read it, but it's really not, because the theme of this chapter is sin. Before you get to verse 18, the theme is how to kill sin and defeat it. And Paul says this is how you do that now. This is how you kill sin and defeat it. You need to be filled with the Spirit. Just like you would put alcohol into your body to sin, you should put the Spirit of God and the Word of God into your mind to fight it. And as you do that Paul says, it changes your marriage.

That's the connection here. That's how the two parts of this chapter come together. As you put the Word of God into your heart and mind, it will change the way you live at home. There's an interesting connection here between verse 18 and everything that follows, in that as you do this, you'll change. As you put the Word of God into your mind it rearranges everything, and it begins with your family.

It doesn't do you any good to change everywhere else if you don't change there, right? It doesn't do you any good to change at work or at school or in the neighborhood if you don't do it with the ones you love the most. If you don't do it with the ones who see you the most. This is where it has to happen, Paul says. This is true religion and true religion is in the home. You can be a lot of things out there. You can be a lot of things in the world but that's not the real you. The real you is when you go home.

And I mention this because you meet people all the time who don't get this. You meet people all the time who want to change everywhere but in the home. They want to do it at work or at school or in the neighborhood. They want to change in the office or in the shop or with their friends having coffee. They want to grow there and make progress there and make improvements on those relationships, but they don't do it here. They don't do it in the home. And Paul says, it shouldn't be that way for us. It shouldn't be this way for Christians, because Christians need to work on their home as well. I also mentioned this because you meet people who seem to want to work on everything but their home. They want to pour time into everything but that. They pour time into their hobbies. They pour time into their possessions. They pour time into their boats, and their cars and their motorcycles, but they don't pour time into their wife. They don't pour any time into their husband or their kids. You don't want to do that either. That's not the way the Christian life is lived.

It's lived this way in the home. It's the most important thing you have. Your home is your most important possession, so you've got to work on that. And the passage that we just read says it starts with your spouse. That's what you see in Ephesians five, if you look in verse 22, it mentions, "wives", and then, "be subject to your own husbands as to the Lord". There you see wives and husbands because this is where the change begins. It begins with them.

Some people think it starts with the kids. They think it starts with the children. And the children are very important and they're going to be mentioned later in chapter six. But here it starts with your husband and your wife. I told you before, way back in the book of Genesis, when God created mankind; when He created the human race, He created one man and one woman and He put them together into the bonds of marriage.

He put them into a covenant of matrimony, He didn't put them into a neighborhood. He didn't put them into a community or a cluster of people. He put them into a family, and He did it before they had kids. That's important to mention. He did this before they had children because this is the foundation for everything. Marriage is the bedrock of society.

This is where the Christian life is lived out first and foremost, before anything else. You know, as Paul is writing the book of Ephesians, as he's giving you this great work about salvation, in the new creation, you're made new in Christ, he gets to this chapter, and he says, this is taking you all the way back to the first creation. This is taking you way back to the way the human race started. It started with a marriage. It started with the family.

We might add, it's the most tragic thing in the world when people forget this. It's the most tragic thing in the world when Christians, those who profess Christ, they say they love Christ, and they follow Christ, while they neglect their own family. They neglect their own spouse because it's so unnatural. That goes against creation. It's not the way God intended it to be. You know, I've talked to couples who have come in for help, they come in for counseling and they're so mad at each other that they can't even talk to each other. And there are times they can't even look at each other. And there are other times where it's so bad, they can't even sit at the same table. You've got the husband sitting over there in that side of the building. The wife wants to sit over there at the other side of the building. That's unnatural. That's not how God wants your marriage to be.

He wants you to repent of all that. He wants you to change. And Paul says, the good news is, that you can do that through the power of God. You can change with His help. This is the message of this book. This is the whole point of it. Paul is not writing about something you can't do. He's writing about something you can do. This is something God can produce in your life. If you get Ephesians one through four, and what all that talks about, and you can get this. You can have this kind of family. You don't do it in your own power. You do it in His. You don't do it in your own help, you do it in the help that God provides. You can't have a Christian family without Christ. You can't have a godly family without God. But to say that another way, if God is in your life, then you will have this. He will make it happen.

That's the hope that you can have. In Matthew 19, verse 26, Jesus says, "with men, this is impossible, but with God all things are possible". And He said that in reference to salvation. He said it in reference to eternal life, but it can apply to this, it can apply to anything in the Christian life. Your marriage may be impossible to man, your home may seem impossible to you because you don't know how to fix it, and you don't know how to change it and you don't know how to make it better. But the good news is God does.

What Jesus says is, that there is nothing impossible to Him. The word impossible does not exist in God's vocabulary. He can take care of your marriage, Second Corinthians 9, verse 8, says, "and God is able to make all grace overflow to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed" and that's the same idea there. And that is that God can make all grace overflow to you. Not some grace, but all grace. Not a little bit of grace or a pinch of it, or a smidgen of it, but all that you need. And He can make it overflow into your marriage, He can make it overflow into your home. He can make it overflow into your family. The point is you can do this in the power of God.

Christ has given you everything you need to have this type of home. Some people read this passage, and I'm afraid they're so discouraged by it.

You know, they read Ephesians five, verse 22, through the rest of this passage and they just want to cry because it doesn't look like this in their life. They don't look like this. That's not the point of the passage.

The point is you can have this. One author said, it's not about perfection, it's about direction. This can be the direction and the trajectory you're going in through the help of God, which is what we're going to talk about this morning.

So, if you're taking notes this morning, in Ephesians, five, verses 22 through 24, we're going to talk about two duties for the role of a wife in this passage. That's our outline for today. That's what this is about. If you're taking notes, we're going to look at two duties for the role of a wife. And we're going to start there because that's what the passage does. We're going to start with wives because that's what Paul does here. He puts the ladies first, he begins with them, because their role is so important in the home. That's why he does that. He starts with them because their role is so essential. And you can't really go anywhere if you don't deal with this first because you can say if the husband is the head of the home, the wife is the heart of it. Amen? I mean, she is the soul of the whole thing. If he is the leader, then she's the passion behind it.

We've all seen families fall apart simply because the wife did. We've all seen homes break up and deteriorate simply because the mom did that. It happens all the time. I mean, you see it every day, the mom quits, the family quits. And so, you don't want that. You want to make sure as a woman of God, for the ladies in our congregation; you want to make sure that you're not quitting on this, that you're fulfilling what this passage says. And to do that, let me help you with that. Let's talk about two duties for the role of a wife in this passage. And the first one is that she is to be subject to her husband.

The first duty for the role of a wife in this passage, it's one that we've talked about before; we've looked at it in previous weeks, in different ways, but that is that she is to be subject to her husband, to her own husband, which means that she is to acknowledge him as her leader; to knowledge him as her head and support him in that; build him up in that role.

And if you look in verses 18 through 22, again, just to read back over this so we can get the context here. Verse 18, says,

And do not get drunk with wine for that as dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.  
Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

You know as I told you before, as Paul is describing what it means to be filled with the Spirit, he is describing what it means to put the Word of God into your mind. The first thing he mentions is marriage. The first thing he mentions is the family because it's such an intimate part of you. It's such a secret part of you. Nobody knows what goes on in your family but you, and the members of it.

So, he starts there. And he says this, in verse 21. He says, "And be subject to one another, in the fear of Christ". In other words, this is what happens when you're filled with the Spirit, you will be subject to one another.

Some people think that being filled with the Spirit means you'll have some big emotional experience. And some people think that when you're filled with the Spirit, you're going to have these ecstatic moments where you feel lifted up and inspired and like you're in heaven itself, and Paul says, it's actually the opposite. When you're filled with the Spirit, you're going to be low. When you're filled with the Spirit, you're going to be humble.

And you will subject yourself to one another; and that phrase, "be subject", it's the Greek word *hupotasso*. We've studied it before. It comes from a compound word for *hupo*, "under", and *tasso*, "to put" It means to put yourself under someone to willingly follow their lead. And Paul says, we should do that with one another. We should do it with everyone in the church. And he especially ties this first and foremost to the wives because this would have been hardest for them, this would have been the most difficult for them because they would have to do this at home. They were called to do this in their own family, which means they would have done it on a daily basis. This would have been a regular part of their lives. It's one thing to be submissive to people you know, when you only see them on Sunday: maybe on a Sunday morning kind of setting. It's another thing to have to do it throughout the week. And this is where the role of the wife is discussed.

And if you look in verse 21 through 22, you know, Paul says, "And be subject to one another in the fear of Christ", and he mentions the wives. And if you notice in some of your translations, that phrase "be subject" in verse 22, it's italicized, because it's not in the original manuscript. It's not in the original Greek, so, the passage could be translated, "and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ, wives, to your own husbands as to the Lord". In other words, this is how the submission plays out in verse 21, this is how you apply it, you do it first with the wives, is what he means here. And the reason is given in verse 23, just to jump ahead a little bit, so you can see this for yourself. This is the reason why Paul asked wives to do this. And he says, "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything".

That's...you can tell by reading it, that's a mysterious passage and some pretty deep stuff in here, but it means that a wife should do this because she serves a higher purpose. She should do this for her husband because she serves a higher calling. Her marriage reflects the marriage of Christ. Her marriage reflects the relationship Jesus has with the church, which is an amazing thing to think about. It's an awesome thing. Because it gives it such a high standing. You can't get any higher than Christ. And you can't get any greater than the love that He had for the church. And Paul says in a similar way, a marriage between a husband and wife should reflect that. Both sides should reflect that.

A wife should remind people of Christ. A husband, or the way the church responds to Christ, should remind people of the way that Christ loves the church. The apostle John talks about this later in the book of Revelation. He tells us about Christ's marriage to the church in Revelation 19, toward the end of the Bible. It's one of the last chapters of the Bible, and John writes, (v 7, 9) and he says, "Let's rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, because the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has prepared herself." "Then he said to me, blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb."

Now that's deep as well, and it's a mysterious thing but apparently, John says, a day will come when this will happen. A day will come when the church will be married to Christ. We'll be joined to Him as one and we'll all sit down at the wedding feast. We'll all celebrate together; you, me and all the saints who have come before.

We'll all sit down. I hope I sit down by some of the apostles. You've probably got your heroes in the Bible; you want to sit down at the wedding supper beside them. And what Paul says here in Ephesians five, is that our marriage should be a reflection of that, now. Our marriage should be a foretaste of that day, now. It should be a little piece of heaven on earth. It should be a little piece of the wedding supper going on right now among us. When people look at us, they should see Jesus. We understand that. We hear that; we hear that a lot and it's true. But friends, when people see your marriage, they should see Jesus as well. When people see your home, they should see Jesus there. When people see your family, they should see Him. That's a sobering thing, but it's also an uplifting thing, because there's more going on than just you and your wife or you and your husband. There's something much greater happening here.

One commentator said this is so encouraging because it raises a wife's role from the mundane to the heavenly. And it raises it from the earthly to the spiritual realm. Some women get so discouraged when they have to do the ordinary task of helping their husband and taking care of the home because it's so monotonous, but Paul says that there is nothing monotonous about this. There's nothing boring about what you're reading here in this chapter.

You know, I mention this, because I think that a lot of people need to hear this today. A lot of people need to understand this about this passage, because they read it and think it's so demeaning; that you can read it in our 21st century lens, and think it's so belittling to women, because it puts them back in the dark ages. It puts them back in cavemen days when men used to beat and abuse their wives. But they say that because they don't understand the background for this. They say that because they don't understand the setting. There is nothing demeaning about this setting here. There's nothing belittling about this. This is put in the highest way imaginable. This is put in the realm of heaven itself.

In fact, if you were to search all of history, I will tell you, you will never find a love like this. If you were to read all the romance books from the time of Romeo and Juliet until today, you'll never find anything that even comes close. It's almost as if Paul could hear the objections that people would have to this. It's almost as if he could hear the concerns. And Paul says, before you even raise those concerns, I want to tell you that this is what's going on behind the scenes.

You know, a husband, needs to love his wife the way Christ loved the church. And listen friends, Jesus never abused the church ever. Ever! He never mistreated it. In fact, He did the opposite because He died for the church. He gave His life for the church. He gave everything He had. And Paul says, in the same way, this is how a husband should treat his wife. And in response, a wife should be subject to her own husband as to the Lord.

You know, in Paul's day, in the first century, wives had lots of duties toward husbands, but husbands had no duties toward their wives. I mean, none whatsoever. And in this passage here, Paul gives three verses to the wives; he gives eight to the husbands, because he gives them a massive responsibility. That's the setting for all of this. That's the context for verse 22. But having said that, we need to talk about what this verse means. "Wives be subject to your husbands as to the Lord." We need to talk about this; how to apply this.

I'll give you a couple things here. For one thing, this means a wife should respect her husband. I think that's simple. It's pretty obvious but it needs to be said. A wife needs to respect her husband in the home. This is one way to apply this to our lives. It's one thing it means because she sees him as her head; she sees him as her leader. He may not be very good at it. He may not be very skilled in the area of leadership because he's a work in

progress. He's trying but he's not there yet, but that doesn't matter because this is an objective thing. It's a positional thing. God has put him in that position and the wife should recognize that and respect him for it. That's how God ordained it.

The word "head" in verse 23, is a helpful one. There it says, "For the husband is the *head* of the wife" and that word is "kephale" in Greek, which means everything the English word means. It refers to the upper part of your body, the part above the shoulders, but it also refers to the part that gives you guidance. It refers to the part of your body that gives you leadership. Your body goes where the head goes. And that's the idea here because God has created the family in such a way that the husband gives it leadership. He's created it in such a way that the husband gives it guidance. And the wife needs to see that and respect him any way that she can. That means she should build him up instead of tearing him down. She should encourage and support him, and not try to take his place as leader of the home. She's always trying to put him out as the leader.

I don't know if you've ever seen this before but there's really nothing more tragic than listening to a woman tear her husband down in the home. There's nothing more depressing than sitting in a living room; sitting on a sofa or in a kitchen; and listening to her criticize him and attack him and complain about his leadership when he's trying, when he's making an effort. Paul says a wife shouldn't do that. She shouldn't respond that way. She should respect her husband. There may be times when there's not much to respect in her husband, and I get that. And there may be times when this is hard because of the husband's sin or selfishness. But the point here is she should just do it any way that she can. She should do it any way possible.

And this leads to another thing, to another way to apply this to our lives, and that is that a wife should be wise in this. This also means a wife should be wise in this because she needs to show some discretion, she needs to take care because this doesn't apply to everything. This doesn't apply to every situation because she can't submit if her husband asks her to sin. She can't submit if her husband asks her to do something that goes against God, and it needs to be said; we need to put that out there because there's a misunderstanding in this passage. When you read the entire verse, verse 22 says, "Wives be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord". We're going to talk about that in a moment, that last phrase, "as to the Lord". We'll explore it a little more but that doesn't mean that the husband is now the lord of her life. Some people take it to mean that. Some people interpret it that way. It doesn't mean that she should be subject to him because he's taken the place of God. That would be blasphemous. That's idolatrous and that's not what this means. This doesn't mean that what he says goes all the time. This doesn't mean that he's the ruler of everything in every way. That's not what this is talking about. This means that a wife should be subject to her husband, as an act of worship to the Lord. She should be subject to her husband as an act of praise. In other words, she should respect her husband because of the Lord. She should submit to Him because of Christ.

Because if marriage was God's creation, if marriage was His idea in the first place; and that's where this all begins, that's where the roles in the home begin; we didn't just make this up, it wasn't just created sometime in the first century. This goes all the way back to creation and what that means, if you're fleshing this out a little bit, is that the husband is not the highest authority in the home, God is. The husband is not the primary leader in the home, Christ is. And the husband submits to Christ and the wife submits to the husband but they're all under Christ.



So, for instance, if you're wondering how does that play out? Well, if a husband asks his wife to abuse the children, she can't do it. She has to refuse. And you know, fortunately, we don't hear about that a lot today. That's pretty unusual. But there are times depending on the home, where you hear about a husband asking his wife to discipline the child in an abusive way, or in a cruel way that physically hurts them. And when that happens, the wife has to refuse. She can't do it, because of God. God does not want her to do that. She has to honor Him first. If a husband asks his wife to change her religion, to renounce Christ and forsake him, she can't do that either. She has to refuse that. That's a big issue in Muslim countries right now. That's a big issue in places like Iran, where a wife comes to Christ, she comes to the Lord in faith and according to law, she has to forsake that or die in some cases. This is serious stuff. But Paul says even then you can't follow your husband, you can't forsake Christ. The point is this, submission has its boundaries. There are parameters to this. It doesn't apply to everything in every way. And a wife has to show wisdom in this. She has to think for herself, which leads to one more way to look at this verse and one more way to apply it to our lives, and that is, that a wife should follow willingly.

Third thing this means is that a wife should follow her husband, willingly or voluntarily. Because the whole thing breaks down if she doesn't do that. The whole thing breaks down if she is being forced into this role. Verse 22 is a passage for wives, it's not a passage for husbands to force on them. Verse 22 is a passage between the wife and the Lord, it's about her relationship to Him. It's not about the husband browbeating her into this or bullying her into this. Some people read this, and they're concerned with this passage and they're concerned because they think it opens things up for a husband to bully his wife. And I get that, I understand that.

And just to let you know, next week, we're going to talk about that. If you join us next week, we're going to talk about some of the concerns people have like the concern of abuse and bullying, in this verse. But for now, let me just say this is the farthest thing from Paul's mind as he writes this, this is the farthest thing from his heart because this is supposed to be a willing submission. In other words, she is to submit to the Lord, she is not to be submitted. She is to choose this of her own accord, this is not to be chosen for her. There are religions in the world that teach that if your wife is not submissive, you need to beat her. The Quran says that. That's a teaching in Islam. That's not Christianity. That's not what you're reading in the Bible.

The Bible says this is something that a wife chooses to do. And if she struggles with that, her husband needs to be patient. If she's struggling with this issue of submission, he needs to give her time because after all, he is supposed to be loving her like Christ loves the church. He is supposed to be loving her like Jesus, and Jesus was patient with us, wasn't He? Jesus was kind and gentle, and meek and mild.

But the point in all of this is that this is where this begins. This is where Paul's instructions for the home begin. They begin with the wife; they begin with her and her role in the home. She is to be subject to her husband, she is to respect him, and do it willingly, and do it wisely. She is to follow him anyway she can unless it leads to sin; then she can't do it. And she should do it knowing how important this is. I can't say this enough. But a wife should do this, knowing how crucial she is to the family. Because where would we be without our wives, amen? Can I get an "amen" from the men in the room? Where would we be without our moms and the ladies in our life? Their impact on the home is incredible. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, once said this about his mom. He said he learned more about Christianity from his mother than from all the theologians in England. He said that all the work that he did for the Lord, all the work he did for the gospel, ultimately traced back to her because of the impact she had on him in the home. She taught him the Bible, she taught him the gospel, she taught him

Christ. And I pray the same could be said about all the children in our church. I pray the same could be said by all the kids in our congregation. They'd say the same thing about their moms today. Your impact is huge.

In fact, I read this week that while many of the key figures in church history did not have fathers; many of them did not have a godly male influence in the home, most of them had female influences. Most of them had godly mothers. Men like Augustine, Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, George Whitfield, they all had godly mothers who raised them. And so, moms, don't think your role doesn't matter. It does matter. It's everything. It's why Paul starts with that.

And that leads us to another point to consider here, another duty for the role of a godly wife in this passage. Just to review this first one; first, a wife is to be subject to her husband. The first duty for the role of a godly wife in this passage is that she is to be subject to her husband, which means she has to acknowledge him as her head. She needs to acknowledge him as her leader and support him in that. She needs to build him up in that any way that she can. If she needs help in that, Christ is there to help her in that. If she needs some support in that, the Lord is there to walk her through it.

And that leads to another point to consider this morning, another duty for the role of a wife in this passage. And that is just this, she should do this "as to the Lord". The second duty for the role of a wife in this passage is that she should do this "as to the Lord", which means that she should do this out of love for Him, she should do this out of loyalty to Christ, because she sees a bigger picture in all this. She sees that there's more going on than just her little home and her little marriage. She serves a big God in this. We've already said a few words about this, so I won't say too much here. But I've already told you this phrase, "as to the Lord" in verse 22, it can mean several things here. You can interpret that several different ways.

It's interesting, as you read this passage, that Paul puts a lot in here. He doesn't just tell the wives what to do. He doesn't just tell them to submit and follow their husbands and leave it at that. He actually adds a lot more information in here to help them in this. And he tells them to do this "as to the Lord", which means several things. For one, you can interpret this to mean that she should do this as an act of worship to the Lord. She should do this as an act of praise which is very helpful. I'm repeating this for a reason. There's nothing worse than having to submit to someone when you don't see this. There's nothing worse than having to submit to someone when you don't see that God is in the picture.

When you come home or when you are home all day, and you're dealing with sinful kids and selfish kids, and then your husband comes home and he's sinful and he's selfish and you're having to deal with that. You're doing things that nobody appreciates, all day long. Nobody sees. Nobody pats you on the back; says thank you. You clean up, clean up, clean up all day. Or you go work a job outside the home, come home and do all these things; it can drive you crazy. It can make you want to quit. Paul says to help you with that, you should do this unto the Lord. That's what keeps you going. That's your motivation. Your motivation isn't that your children or your husband will appreciate you. You're not doing this ultimately for them. You're doing it for Christ. He's the one you want to please in the home.

So that's one way to interpret it. And again, I'm repeating this because it's so important. You could also interpret it to mean that you should do this as a sign of respect to God's creation. I've told you before that marriage was God's

creation, it was His idea and so you should do this as something have respect for that, unto that. Marriage, and the role of a husband and wife; it didn't come from the mind of man, it came from the mind of God. He thought it up, He invented it. And a wife needs to acknowledge that and see that this is something that He created for her life.

Just so you can see this in another passage of Scripture; so you can see this in another passage of the Bible, let me just read to you first Corinthians 11, verses 11 through 12. It says this, it says, "However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman, for as the woman originated from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman, and all things originate from God." Now, there's a lot in there, there's a lot of theology in that passage, but I just want to highlight one part of it at the end there, Paul says, "All things originate from God", that means all things come from God, all things flow from God. All things have their start in God, including marriage.

The relationship between husband and wife came from God. A woman is not independent of man, any more than a man is independent of a woman, because they both came from Him. This is the start of it all. This is the foundation. Paul didn't come up with this. He wasn't smart enough to, he couldn't do it. The culture did not come up with this, they couldn't have done that either. Their view of marriage was so pitiful, and so evil and so weak. One philosopher Demosthenes, he said that we have courtesans for pleasure, we have prostitutes for pleasure and our wives are just there for childbearing. That's it. So, they didn't come up with this. This came from the mind of God, which means that we can't ignore this. We can't shrug it off. It was given to us by His Word. Paul says this is "unto the Lord", this is not "unto men". If it were "unto men", you could ignore it. If it were "unto men", you would get discouraged and want to quit, but it's not. It's about something so much greater than that.

You know, I've talked to people about this, I have several people in my life; family, friends, that sort of thing that really find this text offensive. It really bothers them. And I've read this passage to them as we're talking about it and they've said, "Well, I don't agree with your explanation of that passage." "I don't agree with your interpretation of it." And I've said to them, "But I didn't interpret it, I just read it." I haven't explained anything. We haven't gotten to that point in the conversation. I just read it out loud. You can tell by reading it what this text says, it's just so obvious. But you always want to do it in a gentle tone.

I've talked to other people who've said that there's no way they could believe this. There's no way they could believe a wife should submit to her husband, because it's so offensive. I mean, this is so unpopular in the 21st century. And I've asked people that have said that, I said, "Well, unpopular to who?" "Men or God?" "Who is this offensive to?" "Us or him?" I mean, are we talking about the culture? Are we talking about the experts? Since when did that matter to us? Since when do they define what we believe? We want to please God. We want to go back to Him first and foremost, above all else. And this is where He starts off, in the home.

J. I. Packer once said that, "Disregard the study of God's Word and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded as it were, with no sense of direction, but study His word, follow what it says, and you will have an anchor to carry you through everything in life." Which leads me to ask friends, do you have that today?

Do you have an anchor to carry you through everything in life? Do you have something to stand on in your marriage? I mean, as you think about your role as a husband, as you as you think about your role as a wife and how it plays out and what it means, and all the details and intricacies of this thing. Do you have a foundation because you're turning to the Bible, because you're standing on Scripture? I ask you that because if you're not, let me tell you what will happen. You will stumble and blunder through life. As Packer says, if you don't stand on the Word of God, this is what will happen, you will go through life blindfolded. And so many people are doing that right now. They're doing that in their marriages, they're doing that in their homes. They're going through like a blind man. You don't want to do that today. You want to build your marriage on Scripture.

To ask this another way, if you're a husband in our congregation, or if you are a wife, where do you turn for help in your marriage? Where do you go for guidance? Do you go to the lost world when you're having trouble, when you're having conflict? Do you turn to the culture or the experts to see what they say? Do you go on the news or social media? Do you go on Facebook? Or do you turn to the Lord? Do you go to His word? Because if you go to His word, this is where it'll lead you. It'll take you to this passage in this text. And it'll say a wife is to be subject to her husband as unto the Lord. That's her role in marriage. That's what God has asked her to do. And for a husband, he is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. He is to care for her like that.

And I know this raises some questions. I know this raises some issues. And we're going to look at those next time. We're going to dive into those together. So please come back and join us for that. We are going to spend a week next week on objections to this passage and concerns and questions like abuse and things like that. Another objection some people have is, "What do I do with a passive husband?" "What do I do with a man who won't lead in the home?" We're going to look at all that together next time.

But for now, in my studies, this week, I came across a story that I wanted to share with you. It was from H. A. Ironside's commentary in the book of Ephesians. And he writes about the time one of Cyrus's generals, one of the wives of King Cyrus's generals was charged with treason. She was about to be put to death as a result of some treasonous things that she had done. And as he heard about it, the husband of this particular lady came running in. And he threw himself at her feet, at the Kings feet, King Cyrus's feet, and he said, "Let me die in her place." And as a result, the king said, "You know, love like this must not be spoiled." And he let her live. He forgave her treachery. And as they're walking out of this throne room, the man laying down his life for the wife of the man said, "Did you see how the king looked at us?" and the wife said, "I don't have any eyes for the king. All I could see was the man who loved me."

Friends, we need to love our wives and appreciate them. If we do that, it will make things so much easier for them in the marriage. This is what Christ has asked us to be as a home. The man is to die for the wife. The wife is to have eyes only for him and respect him in that. And let me pray for us that the Lord would grant us homes like this here at Grace; let me pray that He will grant us families like this, in His grace and mercy. Let's pray.

Father, as we've approached this passage this morning, we've looked at some serious things. But Lord, we know in your grace and your mercy, you are a God who allows us to get serious about your word and get serious about the text and we pray that Christ would be glorified as a result of what we studied this morning.

Lord, I do pray for the wives among us. I do pray for the ladies in our congregation. We have so many women who love you. And they want to give you glory in their lives, and they want to give you glory in their homes and

in their families. And we just pray, Father, that you would grant them grace in that. Help them to apply what verse 22 talks about: being subject to their husbands. And for the husbands Lord, I pray you would help them learn to grow in their love for their wife, Father, that our families in our church would match on both ends of the spectrum in this text.

Lord, thank you for Christ who makes all of this possible. Thank you that we do have a God who loves us and allows us to think of higher things in our marriage; higher things in our home, so that the mundane things are not mundane. Lord, would you be glorified, especially now in this time of the Coronavirus because we're spending so much time at home. Would you allow us to use that time wisely for Christ and for eternity and for our families, we pray, in Jesus name. Amen.

Thank you for joining us this morning. If you'd like to know more about our church, you can find us online at [GraceFellowshipChilliwack.com](http://GraceFellowshipChilliwack.com) or on our YouTube channel. Just type in Grace Fellowship Chilliwack and you can find several videos and resources there. For now, may the Lord bless you, and have a wonderful day.