

HOW TO LOVE YOUR WIFE

INTRODUCTION

We will take a look at Ephesians chapter 5. The topic is, “**How to love your wife.**” Love is a physical act of giving something to someone, or it is the physical act of caring for someone. So, we will talk about how to take care of your wife. This passage from verse 22 through the end of the chapter is greatly misunderstood by many people. This is the most favorite passage in the Bible that men use to tell their wives, “You must be submissive!” However, if you look closely at this passage, you will find that it is quite the other way around.

We are going to look at this passage now and I hope that we can do some new discovering. The Apostle Peter wrote that many men do not have spiritual power and spiritual victory because they don’t treat their wives right. Even some of their prayers are not answered because they do not treat their wives the way they should. I really believe that this is one of the spiritual problems that church leaders in Ukraine have. I think if you change that, you will find greater blessing from God in your spiritual ministry.

With these initial new thoughts, we are now ready to read this passage of Scripture.

Ephesians 5,21-33,

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 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. Now as the Church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church -- for we are members of his body.

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery -- but I am talking about Christ and the church.

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.”

I. MUTUAL SUBMISSION & COMPANIONSHIP!

You may have used this passage to tell your wives that they should be submissive and that you are the boss. And the truth is that this passage does not even talk about wives. It is talking about **husbands**!

First of all, in verse 21 it says, “*Submit one to another.*” That means that sometimes you husbands should be listening to your **wives**. Sometimes you should be obeying your wives. You should be serving your wives because it says here it is a two-way relationship.

We will begin with reading verse 21, “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” Now notice that in many Bibles this passage is separated from the passage below. But the apostle Paul wrote it all together. In the original Greek it’s all together. It means I must listen to you and take advice from you sometimes. Sometimes you must listen to me and so we must listen to each other and help each other. In the same way men, husbands, must listen to their wives. Many, many times God uses the wife to correct the spiritual walk of the husband. Many times a husband is thinking about the future and he forgets about the details of the present time. His wife has good counsel for him. If the wife says, “I would be careful,” or “I wouldn’t do that,” or “You better pray about that first,” you better listen! You better pay attention!

II. SUBMITTING TO THE HEADSHIP OF A HUSBAND!

Alright, let's look at verse 22, "... *Submit to your husbands as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, His body.*"

It says that wives especially should submit to their husbands, because the husband is the **head** of the wife, just as Christ is the head of the church. It does not say that Christ is the **boss** of the church. He does not say, "Do this! Do that!" He does not force you. He does not work as a boss. In John 15:14-15, Jesus said,

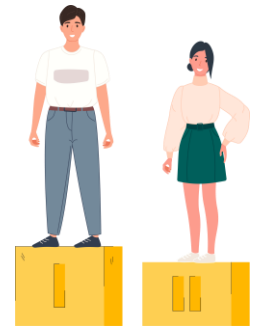
"You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you."

"I did not call you **servants**, I called you **friends** so that you can know me **intimately** and we can work **together**." And in the same way, God wants the husband to operate intimately with his wife.

Now many men read here, "Wives, be the slave of your boss!" That's not what it says. It's simply saying that God has given a chain of command. It begins with God the Father and then Jesus Christ was obedient to the will of God the Father. Because of His obedience God put everything under Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has given to the family a leader. Not a boss! Not an employer! A leader! Now some of you may think a leader is a person who pushes others around. That's not a leader, that's a pusher!

A leader is a person who takes a little child by the hand and says, "Come, let's go across the street." Jesus Christ doesn't force you against your will. He encourages you. He talks to you. He speaks in your spirit. But He doesn't act like a tyrant! He doesn't act like a boss! The chain of command comes from a husband to the wife and from the wife it goes to the children. This is God's way of creating order in the home, in the family.

I heard it explained in the following way when I was in college. A spiritual lady gave a speech on this topic. She said, "The family is like a ship. If there are two captains on one ship it will go nowhere and the ship will go down. With two captains on a ship, nobody knows where it is going to go. You can have only one captain. God has given this responsibility to the husband." Now worldly men will think, "Oh, I'm the boss. Everybody should serve me." Jesus said that he who is the ruler of you, let him serve you. Instead of the wife serving the husband, the husband ought to be serving the wife. Instead of your wife sewing your clothes you should be washing the dishes. If you are the leader you are supposed to serve. That's precisely the point that many men don't want to do! They have the idea that the wife exists to serve them and to please them. That's a wrong tradition! It's not according to the Bible, and that is why God cannot answer your prayers. That's why you don't have all the spiritual power you need!



III. HUSBAND, BE YOUR WIFE'S SAVIOR!

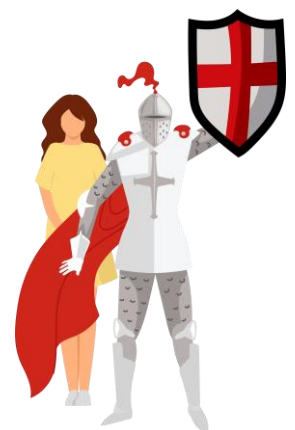
Next let's look at verse 23. Notice what it says here, "*Christ is the head of the church, His body of which he is the Savior.*"

He is the Savior! Are you the savior of your wife? Does your wife tell all the neighbors how you are the savior of her life? "Oh, when I was a little girl I had to work hard for my father, and I had to help my mother, and I had to get up early. Life was so difficult. Then I married Ivan. Life has become so wonderful. I can sleep longer in the morning now. He helps me with the children. He goes to the market and carries the heavy bags. It's so wonderful to have a husband like him!" Can you say that's your wife's testimony? If that's not her testimony, then there is a problem with your leadership.

The Bible says Jesus is the Savior of the church. He redeemed the church. He is helping the church. He guides the church. He makes the church better. He makes it easier for the church. He is the Savior.

He is the Savior, and He wants **you** to be the savior of your wife. He wants your wife to be able to say over and over again, "Ahhh! I am so glad he is my husband." Or, "I didn't know what to do, but my husband had a solution." Whatever difficulty there is in your family, you are supposed to **save** her from that problem. If there is a financial problem, you are supposed to save your wife from that. Whenever sickness or other problems with the children arise, you are supposed to save your wife from them. You are to be the savior of your wife.

What about you? Are you the savior of your wife? If you can say that, Praise God! Hallelujah!



IV. HUSBAND, EARN YOUR WIFE'S SUBMISSION!

Now let's look at verse 24, *"As the church submits to Christ, so also the wives should submit to their husbands in everything."*

Many people think that submitting to Jesus Christ is hard. They are mistaken. Jesus said, *"My yoke is easy and my burden is light."* He says, *"My ways are not like your ways, my ways are higher than your ways. My thoughts are higher than your thoughts."*

Is there anybody here that's a believer because he thinks being a believer is worse than being an unbeliever? Anybody? You all got married to Jesus Christ because you thought it was better! It is better! He is not a tyrant! It ought to be a pleasure for a wife to submit to her husband. She ought to delight in pleasing him and in meeting his needs. Because when she irons his shirts, she knows that he will lay a hand on her shoulder and say, "Thank you. That's beautiful," instead of saying, "Is it ready or not?" That will cause a wife to want to submit to her husband. Submission is something that is **earned**. Submission comes when a wife respects her husband. Earn your wife's respect. What is the problem with many believers? They simply do not believe that God is love. They simply do not believe that God really **wants** to take care of them. They do not understand the greatness and wonderful grace of God. Just as God is a gracious, loving God who wants to help us, so a husband should be a gracious and loving helper to his wife. The more the husband is like God or like Jesus the easier it is for the wife to submit to him. Submission must be **earned**. Submission must be **deserved**. Submission **cannot** be demanded.

V. HUSBAND, LOVE YOUR WIFE!

Let's go on to verse 25. *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church."*

Oh, we haven't even come to the real heart of the message yet! The real thing is still coming! *"Husbands, love your wife just as Christ loved the church."* Actually, this whole passage is not talking about wives. This whole passage is talking about husbands! This is what many men have lost track of. *"Love your wives just as Christ loved the church!"* How did Jesus love the church? In many ways! He left heaven and came to earth; He died for the church. He gave the Holy Spirit to the church. Oh, what a beautiful thing for a husband to give his spirit of power to his wife while he is absent.

Love is commanded. It's written, *"...love your wives."*

Notice that this is a command. Maybe you want to hate your wife, but...you must love her. It is **required**! We are so dumb. We think love is natural. Love is not natural. If love is natural, why do we have so many divorces? The majority of unbelievers get divorced. Is that because they love their wives? No! It is **not** natural to love your wife. It is natural to love **yourself**. God commands you to love your wife.

VI. HUSBAND, GIVE YOURSELF UP!

How are you supposed to do that? Well, right in the same verse, it says, *"...just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."* (verse 25)

Love is sacrificial! It says here that Christ not only loved the church, but He gave himself up for the church. When was the last time that you gave up something from yourself for your wife?

Love Is Sacrificial! What do you do in the morning when the alarm goes off? Do you say, "Okay, it's time to get going. It's time to wake up. Five minutes and I'll be there too." That's a natural tendency. Let us imagine that it is Monday morning, and it is time to get up. What is your elbow doing? It is prodding your wife. Time to get up!!! What is your elbow saying? "I love **me**, but I **hate** you." That is what your elbow is saying. Jesus wants us to do the opposite. What you should do is give yourself up for your wife. "Oh, Honey, just lay there a few more minutes — I'll get up. Just turn over a little bit and just relax. I will get the tea going. I will go to the store and buy the bread. I will stand in line at six o'clock for the milk." It is **sacrificing** for your wife.

All right, in how many of your homes do the wives get up first? Show your hands? Yes, yes, yes, well, I think we are going to have good holidays for the wives, because of course you don't want to be hearers of the word only. You want to be doers!

Brothers, in these little ways we show just how selfish we are. Our thoughts are first here and then there. God wants it to be the other way around. Jesus Christ gave Himself up. Many times when we don't really like to do something we tell our wives, "Okay, you go and do it."

What did Jesus do? He heard that Lazarus was sick so He ran over. No! He stayed behind because He knew it was going to be better for Lazarus. He did not stay to be more comfortable, but better. He stayed behind and sacrificed Himself.

VII. HUSBAND, MAKE YOUR WIFE HOLY!

What are you supposed to do with your wife "...to make her holy?" (verse 26)

Your Responsibility is to **cleanse your wife!**

In these verses it says, "*Jesus loved the Church and He gave Himself up for the Church in order to make her holy.*" He had this very specific purpose. He wanted to accomplish something. He wanted, it says here, to make her holy. Is your wife holy? What are you doing to make your wife holy? Nothing? It's a great sin. Jesus gave Himself up to make His Church holy. It's your job to imitate Jesus and make your wife holy. It is your **responsibility** to make your wife holy. Holy means beautiful, lovely, kind, perfect and good. It may seem strange, but you can only help someone else be holy if you are holy. What is your lifestyle? Are you following in the footsteps of Christ? As you become holy, your wife is covered by your holiness. And through your example she can see how to become holy. You cannot force holiness on any other person any more than Christ can. But by your own godliness you can provide the covering for your wife, the example and the motivation to holiness. As head of the home it is your responsibility to make a good reputation for your wife. It is your job to lead her, and to provide the possibilities for her to have a wonderful reputation.

What does it mean to be holy? When somebody comes to you and looks you in the eyes and says, "You must be a very blessed man to have such a beautiful wife. When the young girls in the church, like those about 14 or 16 years old, when they tell one another, "When I grow up I want to be like Svetlana," or "I want to be like Anna." Then that lady is a holy lady. She is the best example anybody can think of, right?

VIII. HUSBAND, CLEANSE YOUR WIFE!

"... cleansing her by the washing with water through the word". (verse 26)

When was the last time you had a Bible study with your wife? How often do you have a real Bible study together? All the men who are leading a *Basic Christian Life* class are you teaching your wife *Basic Christian Life*? Yes / No? Are you cleansing your wife through the Word of God?

I want to see the hands of all the men, real high up, the men who are teaching the *Basic Christian Life* course to their wives. Not many I see. Who thinks the *Basic Christian Life* course is a wonderful course? Almost all hands are up now. *Basic Christian Life* is good for you, right? Wouldn't it be good for your wife? You want to grow spiritually, right? Would your wife like to grow spiritually also? Or maybe she doesn't need to grow spiritually. Maybe she doesn't need to be a good Christian. Of course she does. You should be teaching your wives the *Basic Christian Life* course. You should be helping your wife to grow spiritually.

One of our problems is that a number of men have created a **spiritual divorce** between themselves and their wives. Some of our men have been studying the Bible and doing many courses, but they never taught their wives or gave them opportunity to learn. Now they have grown spiritually. They understand God in a completely new light. They are considering all kinds of spiritual work. Their prayers have completely changed. And here is the poor wife, a baby Christian. She has never read through the whole Bible. She does not understand hardly anything about God's character. All her prayers are, "O God, help me!" So the husband and wife can no longer communicate together spiritually. He has created a **spiritual divorce**. Do not let it happen to you! As you grow spiritually, be sure you take care that you cleanse your wife with the Word of God.

"Cleansing her by the washing with water through the word." If there's anything you need to do, you need to teach your wife the Bible. At least once a week you must take an hour and teach your wife the Bible, study the Bible together. There's no other way that she is going to become pure. There's no other way she's going to become holy.

IX. HUSBAND, MAKE YOUR WIFE RADIANT!

It says in verse 27, *“And to present her to Himself as a radiant Church”*. Christ is setting the example for you, husband. He wants you to present your wife radiantly to yourself. Is your wife a radiant wife? Is she a radiant mother? Is she a radiant Christian? Is she a radiant Sunday school teacher? Is she a radiant member of the church? What do other people say about your wife, George? If there's a lady with a problem in the church, does the pastor tell her about your wife? Does he say to this lady, “Why don't you go and talk to George's wife?” Does the pastor, does the elder, do the church leaders, use your wife as an example because they think of her as the most radiant lady they can find in their church?

A radiant woman! Some of you ladies do not have a very radiant face. You have a sad looking face, as if life is hard and difficult. Husbands, it is your job to make your wife a **radiant woman**. If I came to your church and asked, “Who is your wife, Sergei? How would I recognize her?” Your answer should simply be, “Do you see that radiant lady over there? That's her!” That is what the Bible wants your answer to be. That is what God wants you to do with your wife. He wants her to be **radiant**.

If a lady in the church needs help, and she wonders, “Whom can I ask?” She will look and think, “Oh, there is Svetlana. She is always smiling. She always seems to be so happy in Jesus. She looks like she does not have any problems. I will go and ask her for advice.” That is the kind of wife you should be creating. That is **your** job as a husband. Christ wants you to present your wife **radiant**.

X. HUSBAND, REMOVE YOUR WIFE'S STAINS!

“...without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish...” (verse 27)

It says, “Without stain.” Is your wife without stain? You know what a stain is? Some ink on your finger or some dirt somewhere. How do you know whether your wife has a stain or not? Ah, it's very easy to tell, very easy. You know, Sasha has a wonderful wife. If I wanted to ask somebody else about his wife, I would say, “Describe a little bit what kind of lady she is.” “Oh, she's a good mother, she's a good cook, she takes good care of her family, and she is a Sunday school teacher, but...” As soon as I hear that word “but”, there comes **“the spot.”** “Ah, she's a wonderful church member, and she does this and this, but...” You got it right there. Right there is the stain. That one qualification mark “but” 90% good, “but” there are one or two things.

So we can know if there is a stain and what it is. She is a wonderful Christian lady, it is just too bad that she is lazy. Or, she is a precious woman, only if she just was not so dirty. Everybody has something. As the head of the home it is your job to help her remove that spot. You need to polish that. Of course as another human being you cannot remove sin from your wife's life, but you can pray for these things that God will work in her life. You can talk to her in a humble way about what you feel the Holy Spirit is grieved about in her life. You can share honestly with her about your own shortcomings and ask her to pray for you. And as she observes these things in your life and feels your deep love for her, those stains will be removed. *“Love covers a multitude of sins.”*

Almost all of you can think of at least one “but.” That's the place where you will begin to minister to your wife. It's your job; it's your business to remove that spot from your wife. That's what Jesus Christ is doing today in heaven. He is answering our prayers, He is meeting our needs, and He is constantly trying to make us more beautiful. If there's anything you must do as a husband, you must make your wife more beautiful spiritually. And praying for her is a good place to begin. This is what Christ is doing for us all the time.

You all know what spot-remover is and how to use it. Okay, Monday morning get the spot-remover and get busy. You need to do your spiritual work at home, brothers. Once your spiritual work at home is done, then God can use you someplace else. Many of you have never read Acts chapter 1 very well. You've been reading something like “begin with the ends of the world and then go to other countries close by and then work in Samaria and then work in Judea and then, if you have time left, work in Jerusalem.” Is that how it is written there? No, I don't think so. You need to begin at home the Bible says.

It is your job as her husband to find out what the negative thing is and to begin to disciple her and build her up in Christ. It says that your wife should be without stain or without wrinkle or without any other blemish and this is the job of the husband. It is a life-long job to become more Christ-like. When you become more Christ-like you can make your marriage more Christ-like, and in a Christ-like marriage your wife finds the environment to become more perfect so that she doesn't even have a wrinkle.

XI. HUSBAND, MAKE YOUR WIFE WRINKLE FREE!

“...without ... wrinkle or any other blemish.” (Verse 27)

You know what just a little wrinkle is? Okay, there are few over here, just some little ones. You are supposed to remove those wrinkles. That wrinkle means her skin is rough; it's bubbly; it's not smooth. A wrinkle means that her life isn't a smooth life. There are little annoyances that she causes in the lives of other people. Her character is rough; it is not as smooth as it should be. There should not be any other blemish, anything that you can think of that shouldn't be there. Now maybe your wife is not patient? Maybe your wife isn't prayerful? Maybe your wife is not spiritually intelligent? Maybe your wife is not spiritually active? You better help her so that she will become patient, so that she will become prayerful, so that she will become active, so that she will become spiritually intelligent.

Maybe it's not spiritual. Perhaps some of you wished your wife to be a better mother for your children. This is how you see the wrinkle. The Bible says that God does not want your wife to have those wrinkles. “Oh, we like this lady so much. It is too bad that she is so short-tempered.” This is a wrinkle, and it is a reflection on you. You are married to this short-tempered lady. Or are you married to the non-praying lady? Or are you married to the spiritually lazy lady? Sit down together and do some Bible study or have another lady come and counsel her. So that she will become patient, so that she will become prayerful, so that she will become spiritually active, so that she will become spiritually intelligent. Your wife should become wrinkle-free.

XII. HUSBAND, PRESENT YOUR WIFE WITHOUT BLEMISH!

*“...without stain or wrinkle or **any other blemish**, ...” (verse 27)*

She is not to have **any** blemish. How do I find out about that? We have already talked about so many things, is there anything else? Any blemish at all? If I asked some other people in the church about your wife, and they said, “Oh, this is a perfect lady.” And I said, “Well, we are all human. There must be something negative about her. What would you list as some negative characteristics about this lady?” “Oh, I don't know.” “Well, there must be something.” “Well, I am going to have to think about that.” “Well, how do you feel about her?” “Well, I, I, I cannot think of anything really, that..... Maybe there is something, but I, I just wouldn't know what!”

Here is a lady without blemish!

XIII. HUSBAND, PRESENT YOUR WIFE HOLY!

“... but holy and blameless.” (verse 27)

The Bible says your wife is supposed to be holy. How do you know if your wife is holy? You find out when other women in the church tell their daughters, “When you grow up, I hope you will be like Sergei's wife.” Somebody is thinking Sergei's wife is holy. Somebody is thinking, “There is a Christian heroine. Yes, I think, here is a beautiful woman, the best example in our church. How I wish my girls would be just like her when they get older.” That means she is holy. Oh, she is not perfect. She will make mistakes. But she is held up as a perfect image of Jesus Christ for all the other girls to admire and to try to become like that.

Let's say you go down the street in your neighborhood and somebody says, “Who's that man?” The reply is, “Well, I don't know who it is, but he is the husband of that sweet lady that lives around the corner.” Oh, your wife is holy.

Your wife's holiness is represented if one lady says, “Who is this man?” And the other one says, “Oh, don't you know him? That is the husband of that beautiful woman who always does so many good things for the neighbors.” Do you get the idea? He is known by his **wife's** reputation. Then perhaps the first lady replies, “Oh, he must be the luckiest man in the world to be married to such a wonderful woman like that!” Of course he is! But how did she get to be like that? He helped her on her spiritual journey. He supported her in her Christian growth. He watched the children so she would have time to read her Bible and pray. He disciplined her. By God's grace and with the assistance of the Holy Spirit he “made” her holy.

XIV. HUSBAND, LET YOUR WIFE BE BLAMELESS!

“...without ... any... blemish, but holy and blameless.” (verse 27)

How can I know whether your wife is blameless or not? There is another fairly easy way to find out. Let us say there is some gossip in the church about another lady and your wife Svetlana. So one of the ladies says to someone else, “Uh, have you heard about this woman and Svetlana, and this big problem they are having?” And the other lady says, “Yeah, I heard about that.” “Oh, that is too bad, isn’t it?” “Yeah, it is a shame they can’t get along together.” Now I already know that Svetlana is not blameless. I already know that!

But let us say that Svetlana is in trouble again. Somebody is gossiping about her again. One lady says, “Have you heard about this problem with Svetlana? I don’t understand it.” And the other lady says, “Yeah, I also don’t understand it. I don’t know who is to blame and I don’t know anything about this situation, but I know one thing, I know that it cannot be Svetlana! Svetlana is not guilty! I don’t care what everybody else says, I know what kind of a woman she is, and I don’t believe that she is guilty! I don’t understand it, but I am absolutely sure the other lady has to be at fault somehow!”

Do you see that in this last case this last lady is completely convinced about the lifestyle of Svetlana? She does not even have to think about it. She does not have to worry about it. She says, “I know how that lady lives, and I will always be behind her — always! Because she is a Godly woman in our church!”

Her life has been so sweet, so good, that people are convinced it cannot be her fault. You know what happens when there’s talk? People say, “Huh, this is strange. I never thought this of her. How is that possible?” All these kinds of comments are not good enough comments. Only if somebody says, “I’ll not believe that! I know that lady! I think she is a godly woman and I don’t care what anybody says! I am not going to believe that!” To the person who says that, Svetlana remains blameless. That’s how your wives should live.

XV. HUSBAND, BECOME A MAN OF EQUAL LOVE!

Alright, let’s read a little bit in verse 28. *“In the same way husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.”* I’ve already mentioned that if you suggest that your wife gets up while you lay a little bit longer, you don’t love your wife the way you love yourself. When the baby cries at night, who gets up? I got up. Almost always I got up with my children at night and I let my wife sleep. I love my wife and I must prove that love by a loving action, by showing my love to her more than to myself. I must constantly try to think of things that make life easier for her, nicer for her, and I must serve her rather than serving myself. Because I love my wife and have done many loving things for her, her life has become sweeter and so has mine. Her sweetness has made my life better and better. ***“He, who loves his wife loves himself.”***

XVI. HUSBAND, BECOME ONE FLESH WITH YOUR WIFE!

It says in verse 29, *“After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church.”*

When New Life leaders moved to other cities I suggested that they better stay with their wives for the first week to help them settle in. It was my concern that their wives were taken care of. They came to new apartments they had never seen. They carried little children in their arms and the truckers set all their belongings right there in the hall and said, “Bye, God bless you!” I felt terrible about that so I encouraged the men to stay with their wives and help them. Some of you men look fairly bulging around your waist. Some of you take good care of yourself it looks like. But it doesn’t say, “Take care of yourself.”

It doesn’t say wives should be submissive and they should serve their husbands. In this whole last passage it says nothing about the wives. Only verse 22 and verse 24 say that the wife should be submissive. The rest of the whole passage talks about what the man should do. The passage continues, *“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh.”* But in many, many marriages, and in some of your marriages, it’s not one flesh at all. There’s a big difference between the way the husband is treated in the family and the way the wife is treated in the family.

I have five children. I was there every time a child was born and I stayed right there by my wife. I held her hand, I rubbed her back and I helped all I could to make giving birth more comfortable. We had that child together. I didn’t say, “Well, it’s your problem. Go, see a doctor.” In how many things are you together? When my first child was born, husbands were not allowed to be in the hospital. I just said to the doctor, “Well, we’ll have to have it

someplace else then.” We prayed, and we prayed and then just two months before the baby was born the hospital said, “Husbands can come in.”

It’s a terrible problem in families when women don’t grow spiritually with their husbands. Pretty soon the husband is on a high spiritual level and the wife is left on a low spiritual level. They can talk about the potatoes together, they can talk about the goats together, but they cannot talk about Jesus Christ with each other because you have grown spiritually and you have a completely different understanding about spiritual things than what your wife does. In a short time you can’t pray together because her prayers are unintelligent, just like a child’s prayers. You’ve been learning to pray in a better way through the *Basic Christian Life* course and she doesn’t understand the way you pray. But you don’t believe in her childish prayers any longer. Now your home is split by a ***spiritual divorce. A spiritual divorce!*** Yes, you are still living together physically but there is no spiritual unity and God cannot bless you. God cannot answer your prayers. God cannot give you a larger spiritual ministry.

It says here, “The two will become one flesh.” It goes on to say that this is a profound mystery. Usually, I can tell whenever my wife is having a headache or how she’s feeling without my wife saying anything about it. Equally, she knows many things about me without us having to talk together. Being emotionally warm is part of being one flesh. Now Paul goes on about this mystery. He says, “I’m talking about Christ and the church.” Paul is constantly referring to the idea that your relationship with your wife should be the same as the relationship with the Church and Jesus Christ. However, each one of you must love his wife as he loves himself. I don’t want to tell you how much you love yourselves. Loving yourself comes automatically. If you’re cold you put on a cap. If you’re hot you would take a jacket off. If you’re tired you’ll sleep. If you’re hungry you eat something. Automatically you love yourself.

CONCLUSION

That’s how God wants you to love and take care of your wife. Totally automatically! If you will learn to do that, I guarantee that a miracle is going to happen in your home. Let us praise God for that. He designed it that way. A holy wife and a holy family were His idea. Am I ever thankful for that! Praise be to His name!

And now I want to present this lady that’s being with us graciously for this lecture. This is my dear wife Diana. And I just love her very much. And I would like to give her a little present. I know she likes little gifts and I want to present this to her for being with us here at this time. God bless you!

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by New Life for Churches. You have the privilege *upon completion of your practical assignment* to use this lecture with others.

Practical assignment

At the next session you are to report in writing the length of conversation and results. This should be a ½ page report. It should state how long your discussion was; what your wife’s reactions were; what insights you got; what plans and activities you have to minister to your wife for the next 3 months.

Such a written report may be intimate, so you don’t need to share it publicly—just with your leader or another brother either oral or written.