



may not be hindered" (1 Pet. 3:7). Herein we find another teaching that clashes with worldly misconceptions. This instruction was revolutionary in its time, for among pagans and non-religious peoples wives had little worth and were seldom regarded with respect. It is Bible teaching that elevates the wife to an esteemed position and calls the husband "to honor" her and dwell with her in an "understanding way". We must also be careful not to be influenced by the worldly

interpretation of the "weaker vessel". The Spirit carefully chose the words "as the weaker vessel" knowing full well there is a gamut of relationships in which the wife may be emotionally, physically, or spiritually stronger than her own husband. Thus, we see the import of the preposition "as" which compares the woman to a "weaker vessel." The husband is to treat the woman *as if* she were a weak and delicate vessel, exercising the greatest care in his dealings with her.

As much as enemies of the faith push their false teachings regarding what God's Word says about the husband-wife relationship, we must be just as willing to dispel those notions as we are confronted with them. God has taught both the husband and the wife to act as servants, but He has given specific roles to each, and they must not exceed their divinely restricted capacities. God desires our happiness and all commands given to us are for our good. If He has given these instructions to husbands and wives, then we should recognize they are for our own good and happiness.



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ISSUE

13.19

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

May 8
2011



Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Steve Dixon
Pat Goguen
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Jason Garcia

The Submissive Wife & Loving Husband

By Jason Garcia

One of the most unpopular teachings of the Bible in today's world is that of the wife's role in the marriage relationship. The feminist movement has attracted many followers who constantly attack Scripture as reason for discrimination against women. I recall a conversation with one young woman who refused to give God's Word any consideration because she thought it was sexist against women. However, when we examine these claims we find that God has never *discriminated* based on gender. What so many in the world have called discrimination is actually God's plan for family structure. Each member has a role to play, and if we look closely we see that all members are actually serving one another, albeit in different capacities. What is it that Scripture has to say about the wife's role in the family?



Paul says, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to

the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior” (Eph. 5:22-23 ESV). The cynic would argue that this verse clearly shows gender discrimination in the Bible. But is God commanding that in all times and in all places regardless of what a husband would ask his wife to do that she is to mindlessly obey? Nowhere in Scripture do we find this teaching. If a husband were to



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ask his wife to do something which would violate her conscience or a commandment of God, then certainly she would be justified in disobeying her husband (cf. Acts 4:19-20). Paul, in this passage assumes the faithfulness of both parties, and it is under that assumption that he gives this instruction. In every family there is a primary guide—a head or ruler of the household. God has ordained the husband to maintain that position, not the wife. This does not mean, however, that the wife cannot speak what she feels to her husband or offer her own counsel, but rather the final decision is in the husband’s hands. There is a wealth other passages within the New Testament that speak to this issue. Peter says, **“Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands”** (1 Pet. 3:1), and on two other occasions Paul repeats the instruction he gave to the church at Ephesus—once to the Colossians and again to Titus. In all instances we find the same kind of language directed to the wife that suggests an obedient disposition toward the husband. Note particularly what Paul says to Titus: **“train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, WORKING AT HOME, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled”** (Titus 2:4-5 emphasis mine). Again we run up against a passage that has been misused and abused by worldly people seeking to label the godly as “old fashioned”, “non-progressive”, and “backward”. The assumption that is made by those folks is that this verse forbids women to work outside of the home. How can this possibly be when the Word of God teaches that the virtuous woman had responsibilities outside of the home as well (cf. Pro. 31:24-31)? If one were to consider in detail what the virtuous woman does, he will note business savvy characterizes the wife as much as her domestic duties. So what must we conclude, then, about God’s instruc-

tion in Titus? Simply that the wife is not to neglect her responsibilities in the home by succumbing to the sins of idleness or being a busybody—both of which can easily arise in a life with much unstructured time and freedom. However, even in daily business affairs the wife must still act in accordance with her husband’s wishes because, as we’ve seen, his authority encompasses all things in the family save for matters of conscience and religion—God has set the immovable standard in these realms.

What is the husband’s role in this relationship? We have noted some things in passing as we have discussed the function of the wife within the family, but let us consider a few other points God has offered to us to broaden our understanding. Just after giving instruction to the wives at Ephesus Paul said, **“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her”** (Eph. 5:25). Christ’s willingness to sacrifice Himself for the church because of the deep love He has for us is the archetype by which husbands are to love their wives. Husbands should have a disposition that leads them to constantly ask themselves, “What can I give or sacrifice to make my wife happy—to show her that I love her?” According to Paul, the ideal husband is as far from the image offered



to us from the world’s perspective. He is not to be an abusive, oppressive tyrant as the world pictures him, but a servant who seeks the best for his wife and family. The husband still serves the wife, just in a different way than the wife serves him. He is to provide for her, protect her, and comfort her—all of these Christ does for His church. Consider also what Peter has to say: **“Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers**