

# God's Word to Wives

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[ 0 : 00 ] Our first reading is from Genesis chapter 2, verses 18, 25. That was its name.

The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam, there was not found a helper fit for him.

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man. And while he slept, took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.

And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.

She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man. Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife.

[ 1 : 24 ] And they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. Our second reading is from Ephesians chapter 5, verses 22 to 24.

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. Now, as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

Here ends our reading. Thank you very much, Sister Haas. Well, good morning.

I trust you well this morning. Let me first say that just a couple days ago I managed to damage my glasses.

[ 2 : 32 ] And, you know, I can't see without them. I must tell you. And so, two things. Firstly, I'm hoping this is not too much of a distraction for you as I try to put them on and take them off.

And secondly, I'm going to need some help from you as we proceed through this message. Why don't we begin by looking to the Lord in prayer.

O Lord, we come, O Lord, with humble hearts to you this morning.

Father, as we do, we are aware of this privilege to look into your word, to be fed by a word, to be cleansed by a word.

But, Father, we must also acknowledge our inadequacy. We are inadequate both to speak and to hear your word.

[ 3 : 54 ] Lord, we ask that you would help us. Oh, how we yearn for your help this morning. Lord, cause your Holy Spirit to anoint our tongues and to anoint our heirs.

Lord, we pray that this time will be productive. Not for our glory, but for yours.

And Father, we pray also that we would hear aright. We pray that as we listen to these words, that we would not be confounded.

Lord, that we would set aside our own prejudices and we would hear them as we ought.

In the name of Jesus, we pray. And all God's people say, Amen. Amen. Brothers and sisters, what a privilege it is to indeed look to the Lord once again as we bring his word.

[ 5 : 11 ] Today, we begin a five-part series where we will be talking about the family.

The family. What does God say to wives? What does he say to husbands? What does he say to children? What does he say to the family more broadly?

God speaks to families. And this first message, can I say something?

Can I tell you something? I wondered why Pastor didn't preach this message himself. Perhaps I shouldn't have said that, but it's on my mind. I thought about it.

But this first message is easily misunderstood. It's easily misunderstood. And frankly, it cannot, in its true essence, be embraced by the world.

[ 6 : 26 ] Not in its true essence. And indeed, it's often a concern for even well-meaning believers.

as I considered this message, I thought to myself that if I were going into politics, I would have to be really, really careful about this.

Because someone could pull just a little thing that I say and just say, wow, I told you so. I told you the kind of guy he is.

But can I tell you that as you listen to this message, it's important to listen to the entirety of the message. And as important, it's necessary to have regard for context.

The context of this message is, as we've said already, God's message to the family. And God speaks particularly in these verses and the verses that were read in Ephesians to wives.

[ 7 : 43 ] And he speaks to wives within the context of the family. A few days ago, I was having a conversation with a brother and we were talking about this, these verses in Ephesians.

And I made the observation that it's interesting that Paul found it necessary to say to women 2,000 years ago to submit to their husbands.

The point that I wish to make here is that women today are no different from women of yesterday. I'm not saying that's a good or a bad thing. That's not the point. I'm just making the point that he found it necessary to say that to them. And if you think about it, we have a perspective of women of yesterday, 100 years ago, certainly of 2,000 years ago, that they were submissive, that they were subservient.

That's our perception. But Paul writes to them and by extension, he writes to women today.

[ 9 : 13 ] And I believe that Paul's message to women, to wives, may be summed up this way. Wives are commanded to submit to their own husbands as unto the Lord.

Wives are commanded to submit to their own husbands as unto the Lord. And in order to navigate through this really very, very short message, we have two simple points.

The first is the command for wives to submit. And the second, the reasons for wives to submit. Let's now consider point number one. perhaps this command for wives to submit brother Troy, where's sister Faye?

Step up for a second. You want to tell her come back? You got to tell her. You got to call sister Faye, please.

[ 10 : 35 ] perhaps this command is there she is. We will hold it for you. Hold it a little bit for you. Perhaps this command for wives to submit is best understood by examining three key words and phrases within the command itself.

Let's take a look. I believe the verse is projected for us. Paul writes wives submit one word.

Submit, Paul writes. Let's consider that word. Submit to your and the next word he uses is own. Submit own and then Paul says he concludes the sentence by saying as to the Lord.

I want to suggest to us that in those words and phrases we find much of what Paul is saying to wives and I want to examine this command through those words and phrases.

[ 12 : 09 ] Firstly, submission. Paul says submit. The word submit is translated from a Greek word called a Greek word upo tatus tatus sorry upo tatus I'm sure I got that wrong which is derived from the word upo meaning under and the word tatu meaning to arrange to order.

So Paul is instructing wives we take those two words together he is instructing wives to be under the authority if you will of their husbands and he's saying by this that they ought to be voluntarily placed under the authority or the leadership of their husbands.

Paul's command to Christian wives is to place themselves in this position for reasons that we are going to understand as we continue the message.

But there are other passages in scripture that support Paul's instructions at this point. If you were to take a look at Colossians 3 and 18 and 1 Peter chapter 3 1 through 6 you find similar instructions. Paul says to wives put yourselves voluntarily under the leadership of your husbands.

[ 14 : 22 ] Submit to your husbands. But how is this done? How is this submission done? What does it look like?

I want to suggest a few things for us. First, I think that it is done by showing respect through words and action that affirm leadership.

Words, not words alone, but action also that affirm leadership. Next, I think we demonstrate what Paul instructs here by building up our husbands' wives rather than pulling them down.

We do this by supporting and encouraging husbands. Can I tell you wives, just in case you like, what in the world's happening here?

Next week, someone's going to preach to the guys. So just hang in there, hang in there. And in a minute, you're going to see that this is really, this is so sweet for women.

[15:58] This is really so sweet. But Paul says, women ought to submit. Ought to submit. And at the very beginning, we talked about how difficult it is for the world to embrace this.

Difficult. Could you imagine me going somewhere and saying, boy, listen, women ought to submit to their husbands.

husbands. First of all, somebody's going to take that out of context. Going to take that completely out of context. But how else do we demonstrate submission?

By subordinating our interests. Wives, by placing your interests below that of your husbands.

By being thoughtful. By not being argumentative. life. Can I suggest another one?

[17:18] I want to suggest something else. By asking your husband for his input and advice on things that you're thinking about.

I say a couple. I want to tell you about a couple. Now, this might seem trivial to some of you. But what about, wives, when you want to cut your hair or put some color in your hair?

What about asking your husband, what do you think about this? Or what about when you're thinking about a certain set of clothing and your husband?

And you say, I wonder why don't you ask your husband? Or when he says to you, when your husband says to you, Sister Faye, you're laughing, when your husband says to you, well, why are you wearing this?

And you say, well, I think I look good in this. And he says, well, you know, I don't think so. Or perhaps he doesn't say that. No, let's get it right now.

[18:42] No, no, hold on, hold on. No, wait. He doesn't mean by that, he doesn't mean by that that you don't look good. It means that you don't look good for anybody but him. That's the point.

That's the point I'm making. But rather than submitting, you say, well, quite frankly, I don't know what you say. I can't figure it out.

And I'm being very serious. It is beyond my comprehension that a wife, that a wife would leave home in an outfit, women, forgive me.

I'll tell you the passage of the priestess. Would leave home in an outfit that a husband says, is a bit much.

That is beyond my comprehension. I'll never get that. But I can't say that I'll never get it. I'll leave space for the possibility. But at the moment, I don't get it.

[19:50] But I think all of this is a part of submitting. Asking your husband for input, advice, and before something is done, this is a part of submission.

take a look at what Paul writes to the church. Paul says in verse 24, he says, now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in, and the men say, and the men say, what happened to the men?

The men, let's try this one more time. If I can't get the men, if I can't get the men, listen, I'm going to try it one more time. Paul says that the women should submit in everything, and the women say amen.

Paul says that the women should submit. I didn't write this. I'm just reading it to you. Am I reading it correctly? You have a problem with it?

If you have a problem with it, you've got a problem with Paul. Paul says that wives ought to submit, should submit in everything to their husbands.

[21:09] Now, either Paul means everything, or he doesn't mean everything. But here, but can I tell you what submission does not mean?

It's vital to make clear that submission, men and women, is not about weakness or inferiority.

As a matter of fact, someone who is weak or inferior really can't submit. it. The truth of the matter is that all of us, all of us, if you go back to verse 21 of chapter 5, you will see that all of us are called to submit to all of us in different ways.

That's not what we're talking about now. We're talking about wives submitting to their husbands.

But the point I want to emphasize is that submission is not about weakness or inferiority, but about choosing to honor and respect your husbands.

That's what it's really about. It's not blind obedience. submission does not mean that a wife has no voice or is expected to follow a husband blindly, especially in matters that contradict God's word.

[ 22 : 57 ] That's not what Paul is saying to us. Paul is not saying to us, I really want to make this point clear. Wives, he's not saying to you that you ought to have no voice.

whatsoever. That's not what he's saying. Indeed, wife ought to have a voice in everything.

In everything. And certainly he's not saying that women are inferior to men.

That's not what he is saying either. women are equal, someone says, in worth and in dignity.

Submission here refers to roles. It does not refer to value. I want to say that again.

[ 23 : 59 ] Men and women are equal, are of equal worth and dignity. Submission refers to roles, not value.

Consider Genesis chapter 1, verse 27, which says, so God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him.

Male and female, he created them. God created man and woman. And Galatians 3, 28 teaches us that there is neither Jew nor Greek, there's neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

I point again that Paul here is not speaking of value, speaking of position.

There is neither male nor female. We are all one in Christ Jesus. Submission does not mean abuse.

It doesn't mean that a man has a right to, a husband has a right to abuse his wife.

[ 25 : 28 ] wife. It doesn't mean, wives, that you leave your intellect at the door. That's not what it means.

It doesn't mean that you leave the things that you desire at the door either. That's not what it means. Submission is not subservience.

It doesn't mean that all you do all day is sit down and serve your husband. That's not what it means either. It's not a second, you're not a second class citizen.

That's not what the scripture is teaching us. Paul, in this chapter, in verse 22, uses a really important word here.

Paul says, wives, submit yourselves. Submit yourselves. Notice what he says. He says, to your own husbands.

[ 26 : 48 ] It's interesting to me that Paul used the word own here. First of all, Paul could have said, submit yourselves, women, wives, submit yourselves to your husbands.

Frankly, if you think about it, on its face, it seems to me that that would be adequate. And by the insertion of the word own, it seems that that would be a bit redundant.

Unnecessary. But for emphasis, for emphasis, Paul says, wives, submit yourselves to your own, to your own husbands.

Here's the point Paul's making. Paul is saying to wives, this is not a call for women to submit themselves to every man.

man. That's not what this verse, is not a call for women to submit themselves to every man everywhere. Rather, it is a call for women to submit themselves to their own husband.

[ 27 : 56 ] husband. And then Paul concludes this sentence with this clause he writes, as to the Lord.

Women, wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands. Then he says, do it as to the Lord.

Brothers and sisters, women especially, oh, what encouragement. Paul says to us that you can pursue, you can embrace this command as if it were worship, as if you were doing it to the Lord. Paul takes this command to a new stratosphere as it were with these words, as to the Lord. You can submit as to the Lord, the Lord's watching.

It is he who is being served and who is being worshipped. He is the believer's motivation. Faith, obedience, and reverence are more important than what one might believe one's husband deserves.

[ 29 : 24 ] By the insertion of these words, Paul is telling us that perhaps you are saying, my husband doesn't deserve this leadership position over me.

Perhaps he has wronged me in this way or that way, but Paul says, do it as unto the Lord. Perhaps you are saying, he wasn't good to me in one way or the other, or he doesn't know as much as I do.

Paul says, do it as unto the Lord. A wife's ultimate allegiance is to the Lord, submission, though, Paul writes about here.

It's not about, it's a faith journey. And that's why I said earlier that unbelievers can't do this.

They really can't do this in its full essence. Let's move on to point number two, the reasons why.

[ 30 : 43 ] The reasons wives are to submit. Paul writes, for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself his savior.

man is the head. Paul says, you are to submit because the man is the head.

He says the same thing in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 3. Headship means that the husband is to provide leadership and direction.

It does not mean superiority. Paul is not saying that the husband is superior. It's just different.

Headship is about responsibility.

It's about love and it's servant leadership that Paul speaks about here. It's not about dominion and it's certainly not about control.

[ 32 : 06 ] This headship that Paul writes about is best understood when we consider the rest of what Paul says.

He says, even as Christ is the head of the church, his body and himself its savior.

For the husband is the head of the wife, Paul writes, even as Christ is the head of the church, his body and is himself its savior.

wives, do you see, are you getting the picture? Paul says that the husband, he ought to be sacrificial, his love ought to be sacrificial, because he describes this relationship, his relationship to the wife, his relationship to the church, sacrificial love, putting self last, looking out for the interest of his wife.

While the focus is on wives, the husband's headship comes with a heavy responsibility to love, to serve, and to protect his wife.

[ 33 : 48 ] wife. Why are we to do this? Why are you to submit?

Because it's God's design. It's God's way for ensuring that there is unity and order in the family. Submission and headship are part of God's design for marriage.

Marriage is no different from the body or an organization that requires a head. Could you imagine a situation where in it there is an organization and there is no head, there is no leader.

It's leaderless and everyone has their say and everyone has their opinion as they ought to have.

But at the end of the day, no decision can be made because there is no way to arrive at a conclusion.

You know what happens at the end of the day? Let me tell you what this looks like in a non-Christian home. In a non-Christian home, a couple things generally happen.

[ 35 : 11 ] One, either the wife, either the husband is going to do whatever he wants or the wife is going to do whatever she wants.

Either they will say that they're going to do something and they do something completely different, not letting the other know precisely what's happening, or they're going to, here's the big word, compromise.

They're going to compromise. They're going to settle on something that neither one of them really, really likes.

Paul is saying to us, Paul is saying to us, but wives, we've got to have the faith to believe that ultimately at the end of the day, after we've gone back and forth, after we've looked into this issue, we've talked about it, we've gone back and forth on it, Paul is saying, and when your husband says, listen, I really think I've heard you, I love you, I believe this is the best thing for us to do, this is where we got to go.

Paul says, you got to support him. But he also says that there are circumstances in which he might not be that loving. Perhaps he's not that considerate.

[ 36 : 46 ] Paul says, by faith you still got to follow and believe that the Lord is going to work it out. God's design is for the roles of the wife and the husband to be complementary and not to be competing.

Can I say something to women? Women, don't endorse the views of other women who tell you that you should not submit to your husband.

Don't endorse the views of women who tell you that you need not share X, Y, Z with your husband. You ought to share it.

That's God's design for order. Submission requires grace and sacrifice. We know that already. But can I tell you, the Bible also teaches us that when you submit to your husband, the Bible tells us that you win your husband over.

And women, I got to tell you, my experience is, and it took me a while to figure this out, that women are so much smarter than men in so many ways.

[ 38 : 21 ] In so many ways. I don't know a woman yet who is not smarter than a husband. Women can do things, they've got a sense of things that men really do not have.

A wise man would listen to his wife, would take into consideration those things that she says, can I tell you, I'll tell you the truth, fellas, I struggled with this for years.

I would ask my wife a question. I'd say to her, what do you think about X, Y, Z? And she'd give me an answer and I would say, I don't understand that answer.

It's not making sense, it's not logical to me, it's not A plus B equals C, she's just moving right to D and I'm like, how do you get there?

So I say, explain it, what do you mean by X, Y, Z? She says, well, this is what I mean and I say, well, no, that's not following, that doesn't make sense to me, you've got to explain it to me.

[ 39 : 36 ] And by the time we get through with that, we've gone off tangent talking about something else and then months later, years later, I realized that the answer was D after all.

But I didn't get it because I didn't rely on her wisdom. I didn't rely on her sixth sense, as it were. But can I tell you, the women, the wives here today, perhaps you are naturally, if I can use that term, perhaps you are naturally independent.

independent. Maybe you go to work where there are many who report directly to you. They look to you for leadership.

But you come home to a man who is on the lowest rung of the corporate ladder.

nobody looks to him for leadership. Nine to five, go to work, 50, 20, 100 people reporting to you.

[ 40 : 57 ] You come home to this man, nobody reports to him. How do you adjust in a situation like that? What do you do?

But God's design doesn't change. God's design is the same. It's the same for you to submit so that there is order in the home.

What if there are issues? issues? Of course, if you've got an issue, you've got to speak to your husband.

Issue that seems that it's so big and it's getting bigger and you think it could create problems.

Perhaps you might seek counseling.

But can I say one thing to wives? the last thing that you want to do is to shame your husband publicly if there is an issue at home.

[ 42 : 10 ] Remember, it's going to be hard for a man to get over something like that. Wives, we must trust that God's design for marriage is meant for our good and for his glory.

submission is a demonstration of trust in God's wisdom and his provision. Sisters, can I be brutally honest with you?

Want to be brutally honest with you? Can I tell you that even if you were married to the angel Gabriel, you'll not be able to fully submit?

that's the truth. How much more difficult it is if you married to someone like pastor or me?

you know, so how much more difficult it is.

[ 43 : 35 ] Yet God has called you to do this. He's called you to submit despite the difficulties, he's called you to submit to your husband no matter who he is.

And as I said, we can't do it perfectly. And even if we found a perfect man, we still won't do it perfectly. we need the Lord's help.

We need the Lord's help to do this. And we always, we're always going to need the Lord's help. So, perhaps you are a wife, and you are indeed submissive.

You're asking the Lord, Lord, say, Father, I'm submissive, but Lord, how long, Father, how long must I endure this situation?

how long will I, must I endure this burden? And I tell you that the scriptures do not give you the right to be anything but submissive, even in a difficult situation.

[ 45 : 12 ] further to that, I want to encourage you, if you find yourself as a wife in that situation, to consider what the scriptures do tell us.

Consider Isaiah 55, verse 11. chapter 11. chapter 11. This is what the Lord says, So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth.

It shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

But here's another scripture in Psalm 25, verse 3. Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame.

They shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. What's my point? My point is that this is the Lord's word and this is his command.

[ 46 : 37 ] Wives ought to submit to their husbands. And if you find yourself being submissive and finding that things are difficult, just know that the Lord's word will not return to him void, that he sees you do this as to the Lord, as an act of worship, worship in faith, and he sees you, and you will not be put to shame.

Women, wives, to be submissive is to humble. And to be humble is to be like our Savior, Jesus Christ.

He is our greatest example of humility. Paul writes in Philippians chapter 2 that he emptied himself and became a servant so that he might reconcile you and I to God.

Let us pray. Father, Lord, we are so aware that in this room people heard these words differently from different positions, different places.

different experiences. Some, O Lord, perhaps heard them and maybe they were saddened by the words that they heard today.

[ 48 : 50 ] Perhaps, O Lord, some heard these words and memories came flooding to the fore of their minds. Perhaps, O Lord, some were hurt, some were perhaps some were encouraged by these words.

Perhaps, Lord, some were forward-looking and hopeful. Lord, we don't know, but we know that you know. We know that you know.

And, Father, our prayer in this moment is that you would speak to each wife, each woman individually based on where she is today.

Lord, we pray in the name of Jesus that the words found in Ephesians, chapter 5, that these words would be like a bomb, Lord, in the relationship, in every relationship, in every marriage, Lord.

we pray, oh, Lord, that none, that no wife, no woman would leave this place disheartened.

[ 50 : 23 ] But, Lord, we pray instead that everyone would leave knowing that you have given us your word to help us.

you have given us these words specifically, oh, Lord, so that our homes, our families might bring you glory, they might be a delight.

Oh, Lord, give each wife increased a desire to submit to their own husband.

And, Father, we pray that each husband would lead his wife with love, with servant leadership, and indeed would submit to her in various ways that would cause her ultimate submission to be a delight and a joy.

In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. what do you do you