**RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR SPOUSE**

Sunday School Lesson 3

*Building Right Relationships*

Ephesians 5:21-32

3/19/2023

**Introduction:** Last week, we weren’t quite able to cover everything that was listed in the first lesson on having a proper relationship with your spouse; so we will pick up where we left off in the class. As a review of what was covered, we noted first that a marriage relationship must have a proper structure in order for it to thrive. This means that the foundation must be there. That foundation is common faith in Jesus Christ. As believers, we are instructed to not be unequally yoked together with an unbeliever or just generally this world (2 Corinthians 6:14). Having a proper marriage structure also means that the leadership in the marriage must be properly set. Christ is in charge, and then the authority falls to the husband. The last part of having a proper structure is understanding the design and purpose of the marriage. A properly structure marriage relationship will understand that God designed marriage to be a benefit for us, and that the wife has been given as the help meet for her husband. From there, we noted a few other things. Firstly, the husband is to take the lead in the matter of love. He is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. Secondly, the wife is expected to purposefully reverence her husband. Today, let’s consider a few more important helps.

1. **THE HUSBAND MUST HAVE KNOWLEDGE, HONOR, AND GRACE IN THE MARRIAGE.**
2. **The husband must dwell with his wife according to knowledge and in giving honor.**1 Peter 3:7a Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, The Bible does not elaborate on what specific knowledge is being referred to here; consequently, this leaves us with a general idea and application. The husband ought to dwell in the home with knowledge of what God commands for him as a husband and believer, what the wife needs, and what knowledge the wife may be able to impart unto him. I believe the context of this chapter shows us that the husband ought not to dismiss the conversation of his wife and that the husband ought to take ownership of his leadership in the marriage and lead it with proper knowledge. I believe it also speaks to his knowledge of her as a weaker vessel. He ought to honour her by properly considering her needs.
3. **The husband must dwell with an understanding of their mutual grace from God.** 1 Peter 3:7b and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. The husband ought not to think of himself too highly in the marriage. Both members of the marriage are heirs together of the grace of life. He did not do anything in and of himself to be deserving of the leadership role of husband. With this in mind, he ought to treat his wife with that same grace that he has received from the Lord and that he hopes to continue receiving from the Lord. Otherwise, he is opening himself up to having his own prayers not being answered. Most folks think of prayers not being answered as when a husband and wife are fighting or when a husband is not being forgiving. Yet, the Bible speaks to this here as a result of not dwelling with your wife with a common grace in mind. You ought to be gracious to your wife. Show her good favor.
4. **THE WIFE SHOULD EMBRACE THE INNER BEAUTY OF A GODLY SPIRIT.**
5. **The wife can win her husband by her conversation.** 1 Peter 3:1-7 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; 2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. 3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. 5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: 6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.The verses here are dealing with a wife who has a husband who is disobedient to the Word. What is the wife to do? She is to win him with her conversation. She is to win him with her spirit. Ladies, never undervalue the beauty of a Godly spirit! It is going to have more value in the long run in your relationship than the physical beauty. It is that meek and quiet spirit that may help to lead your husband out of ungodliness. Instead of turning to frustration and fighting, focus your effort on having the right kind of spirit.
6. **The wife can cause much damage to the marriage with a contentious spirit.** Proverbs 19:13 A foolish son is the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping. (27:15) Proverbs 21:19 It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman. Proverbs 13:10 Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom. This is not to say that a husband can’t cause problems with contention as well, but the Bible puts the onus on a contentious wife. I believe this is because of the authority structure of the marriage. The husband is to lead the home under the leadership of Christ, but the wife may not always agree with that leadership. This then creates the contention. The Bible speaks of the contentions of a wife being as a continual dropping. The idea is that once the contention starts, it is very difficult for the contention to stop. That’s because it’s based in pride. It’s based in an unwillingness to submit to the leadership that God has established. If the opposite of love for the husband is bitterness, then the opposite of submission and reverence from the wife is contention. Ladies, determine that contention in the marriage is not going to be commonplace.
7. **THE HUSBAND OUGHT NOT TO BE BITTER AGAINST HIS WIFE.**

* Colossians 3:18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. If the husband is to lead the way on love, then it is not surprising that the Bible has a specific command for the husband to avoid bitterness against his wife. The definition of bitter is sour, disagreeable, sharp, or harsh. Bitterness spoils love. It changes the taste of love from something pleasant and delightful to something that is disagreeable to the senses. Many times, when people speak of falling out of love, the real issue is that they have become bitter and stopped loving as they ought to. Husbands must not allow themselves to get to a place where the wife or the things that the wife does is just constantly disagreeable to them. When you allow this to happen, you have become bitter against your wife, and you will not be able to love her as you ought to do. It was also often cause the husband to be that harsh person back to his wife in communication. This speaks back to the first object mentioned – a need for loving grace.

1. **THE WIFE OUGHT TO REALIZE HER VALUE AS A VIRTUOUS WOMAN.**
   * Proverbs 12:4 A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones. Proverbs 31:10-12 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. 11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. 12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. 1 Timothy 5:14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. 15 For some are already turned aside after Satan. There is great value in a virtuous wife. In fact, I would challenge that it’s the greatest value that the wife can provide to her marriage relationship. Many ladies today are challenged by the world regarding their value. As mentioned last week, women have been convinced that they only have value if they bring in some type of monetary contribution to the home. A virtuous woman is simply focused on doing right in her relationship both with the Lord and her husband. Let that be the goal of every wife.
2. **THE HUSBAND AND WIFE OUGHT TO DO THINGS THAT PLEASE THE OTHER.**

* 1 Corinthians 7:33 But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. 1 Corinthians 7:34 There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. Paul’s general acknowledgement of marriage is that the husband and wife are focused on pleasing each other. While the point of this text is to remind us first of our need to please God, it should go without saying that you ought to do things that please your spouse.

1. **THE HUSBAND AND WIFE DO NOT HAVE CONTROL OVER THEIR OWN BODIES.**

* 1 Corinthians 7:2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. 3 Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. 4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. 5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. This is an important principle to remember in a marriage relationship.
* WIVES FOCUSED ON PLEASING HER HUSBAND.
* HUSBANDS FOCUSED ON PLEASING HIS WIFE.

1 Corinthians 7:33 But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.

* WE ARE TO REMAIN COMMITTED TO OUR SPOUSE.

1 Corinthians 7:10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: 11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

* WE DO NOT HAVE CONTROL OVER OUR OWN BODIES. (DUE BENEVOLENCE)
* MEN GIVE HONOUR UNTO YOUR WIFE AS UNTO A WEAKER VESSEL. (HEIRS OF GRACE)

1 Peter 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

* HUSBANDS AND WIVES ARE JOINED TOGETHER. (THEY LEAVE FATHER & MOTHER)

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

* WE ARE ONE FLESH. THIS IS WHAT GOD INTENDED.

Mark 10:2 And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. 3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? 4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. 5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. 6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. 7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; 8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. 9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Genesis 2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

* HAVING A WIFE IS A GOOD THING

Proverbs 18:22 Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord. (Hebrews 13:4)

* A PRUDENT & VIRTUOUS WIFE IS A GREAT THING.

Proverbs 19:14 House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the Lord.

Proverbs 12:4 A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.

Proverbs 31:10-12 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. 11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. 12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

Proverbs 31:28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.