

Shine in Christ-Like Submission



Wives to husbands “as to the Lord” (vv.22-24,31)



Husbands for wives “as Christ loved the Church” (vv.25-31)

In the name of Jesus, our submissive Savior, dearly redeemed Bride of Christ:

“Half-in-the-bag,” is how she described her husband. Her only complaint not being there too. Such a Friday night could just as well have been ancient Ephesus as northern suburbs. We sinners die in the darkness by default, unless God the Holy Spirit shines His light of truth into our souls. Today through His Apostle Paul God commands: *“Live as children of light.”* (5:8) *“So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.”* (4:17-19 NIV)

Such a life can never satisfy, but ends in hell. So instead of getting drunk on wine, says the Lord’s Apostle, *“Be filled with the Spirit.”* (5:18) We heard last week about *“speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”* (5:19-21 literal) This is light: **Shine in Christ-Like Submission.**



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Bobby Riggs vs. Billie Jean King is ancient history. But in 1973 it was “The Battle Of The Sexes.” Bobby Riggs, world champion tennis player in 1939, was fifty-five years old in 1973. But every chance he got, he boasted that women could never play as well as men because they were just weak women. Riggs bragged that Billie Jean King, at age twenty-nine, was no match for his manhood. The Houston Astrodome, September 20, 1973, drew the largest ever live audience for a tennis match with prime time TV at 50 million viewers. 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 – She beat him in three straight sets. Afterwards he admitted, “She was too good, too fast. She returned all my passing shots and made great plays off them.” He died of prostate cancer at the age of seventy-seven in 1995. Ironically, King said, “Bobby Riggs was a true friend for the last twenty-five years. [He] helped a lot of people realize that everyone can have skills whether you are a man or woman...as well as helping men and women understand each other.”

Why does it take a “Battle of the Sexes” to prove that talent is not automatic across genders? For the same reason that in the historic pictures of the soldiers who built the Alcan Highway to Alaska during WWII, not one African-American is shown even though their regiment actually finished first. It’s our “Prosopon-Problem.” *Prosopon* is the New Testament Greek word for “face” – the place we always look for worth as sinful mortals. *“Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”* (1 Samuel 16:7) And that’s why not a woman here can naturally **Shine in Christ-Like Submission.**

The Holy Spirit can see way down deep in your soul. He knows that if you had been there in the Garden, you would have taken the forbidden fruit and tried to lead as did your mother Eve. She forgot that Adam was created first, that she was taken from him and made for him. When the order of creation got in her way, she rebelled. And so do you. You keep putting an “if” in God’s command. It’s not, “If your husband...,” or “If men in general...” Literally God says: “The women to their men as to the Lord because the man is the head of the woman as Christ is the head of the church and He Himself is Savior of the body. But just as the church submits to Christ, so also the women to their men in everything.” God knows your natural aversion to that word “submit” and how it has been misused by sinful men. So God

leaves it out twice and shows you indirectly in both parts of this command by looking at Christ. Looking at your husband will always disappoint. Only Jesus is your Knight in shining armor who came to save you from your sins. Knowing you intimately, still Christ Jesus loves you with an everlasting love. He's there for you when you cry and don't know why. He's there when you're so hurt you could spit. He's the Friend coming in when everyone else is going out. Jesus is the Savior who washed the stubborn, willful sin from your heart with His holy blood and Word-powered water. Look at Jesus and you will **Shine in Christ-Like Submission – Wives to husbands “as to the Lord.”** The rest is a losing battle for both.

 **Husbands for wives “as Christ loved the Church” (vv.25-31)**

The Lord God speaks directly to us men because He understands very well that unless He hits us right between the eyes, we just won't get it. Again, it's our “Prosopon Problem,” illustrated in that Internet cartoon where a gorgeous woman sees herself in the mirror as fat and ugly. But remember the image the fat, sweaty, gross guy sees? In the mirror he's Tarzan! Fifty-five and better than her whatever, whenever. But if not, he'll just drink beer and let her do everything – like Adam, following like a dumb ox, then blame her when it doesn't work. But, oh, if she hurts his feelings – because he has them somewhere in there too – silence speaks volumes about the sinful heart of man, unsubmitive to Christ.

God tells us directly, dear brothers. Our bitterness and anger against God's gift of women is disgusting in God's eyes. If she hurt you, it's nothing compared to what your stubborn pride and willful heart brought on the head of God's own Son. Her penny-debt obsessing us disappears in the shadow of the trillion dollar debt of our sins that crushed God's one and only Son. Do we have to talk about alcohol abuse? The foul mouth? Laziness at home and at church? One sin can condemn you to forever hurt in the unrepayable anguish and torment of hell. *“Forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors.”*

That's what I love about God. He sent Jesus to be my Savior too. He saw the hurt I feel and the hurt I cause by my sinful, unsubmitive heart. Instead of condemning and destroying me with Adam right there in the Garden, the LORD God, promised me a Champion to step up and pay my debt by His death on the cross in my place. All that would be ancient history except for this Word of the dear Holy Spirit. More mysterious than a woman, God married us to Him by faith in Jesus' full and free forgiveness.

Remember how King David was supposed to go to war? Instead he stayed home, got a soldier's wife pregnant, then killed him and his regiment trying to cover it up. Their first son died even after David confessed his sin. But the LORD graciously promised forgiveness, and David got it. He wasn't bitter or overcome by guilt and shame. He lived in God's forgiveness and comforted Bathsheba. Two more sons followed: Solomon the next king, and Nathan with the same name as the prophet who corrected David. Mysterious love and mercy, Solomon and Nathan became ancestors of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 1, Luke 3)

David could **Shine in Christ-Like Submission** because **Husbands for wives “as Christ loved the Church”** – has no “if” in it either. Christ-like, *agape*-love does not look at the wife to be God for man and fill all his fantasies. Sensual “love” cannot satisfy. But right down to the most intimate act of marriage Christ-like love shining with His kind **Submission** says, “All is well.” *“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.’”*

With the battle between God and man won by Christ Jesus taking all our sins upon Himself, the “Battle of the Sexes” is over too. Stop looking at each other and focus on Christ. Then we will brightly **Shine in Christ-Like Submission – Wives to husbands “as to the Lord,” Husbands for wives “as Christ loved the Church.”** In this bright sunshine we find the peaceful, loving heart of God. Amen.