

The Things That Matter Most

by Warren Wiersbe

The sermon emphasizes the importance of submission in marriage and the home, and how it can lead to freedom, fulfillment, and spiritual blessing.

Duration: 45:09

Scripture: 1 Peter 3:1

Topics: "Marriage Relationships", "Christian Living"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the topic of submission and consideration in the home. He begins by addressing the question of why Peter spends more time talking to wives than husbands. He emphasizes the importance of knowledge in relationships, urging husbands to dwell with their wives according to knowledge. The preacher also highlights the significance of consideration, which involves understanding, honor, and prayer in the marriage relationship. Overall, the sermon serves as a spiritual inventory for the home, encouraging couples to evaluate their relationships and strive for growth and unity.

Transcript

The nice things about expository preaching is no one can accuse you of choosing a theme. You start in verse 1 of chapter 1 and keep on going and you take what comes. And tonight we come to 1 Peter chapter 3 verses 1 through 7, dealing with the all-important subject of the home.

It so happens that a large percentage of the people who live in this near north side are not married, they are singles. It also happens that those who are married, most of them do not have families. Someone says, why in the world then preach about this subject? Well, for several reasons.

Number one, it's in the Bible. All scripture is given by inspiration of God and all scripture is profitable. Number two, some of you are going to get married.

You may look in the mirror and think it's pretty hopeless right now. I told you about the lady who sent her picture to the Lonely Hearts Club and they sent it back and said we aren't that lonely. Some of us are married and it doesn't hurt for us to hear this again and be reminded of it.

And some of you will be able to assist those who may need this kind of assistance. So we make no apology for this theme tonight. It's the word of God and it's going to help us.

Peter's been talking about submission. It began back in chapter two, verse 12, really, where he talks about in verse 13, submitting to the ordinances of man. Verse 18, the servants submitting to their masters.

That talks about our Lord Jesus Christ who submitted himself to the will of God. And so in chapter three, verse one, in the same manner, in the same manner as I have described our Lord Jesus as being subjected to the will of his Father, ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands that if any obey not the word, that means they aren't saved, they may also apart from the word, that means without nagging and preaching and hollering and arguing, be won by the behavior of the wives while they behold your chaste conduct coupled with fear. Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of braiding the hair and of wearing of gold or of putting on of apparel.

Now, obviously, he's not talking about these things as things in themselves. Otherwise, he'd be teaching nudism. He doesn't say it's wrong to put on apparel.

He doesn't even say it's wrong to fix your hair and wear gold. What he's saying is don't make this the most important thing. But let it be the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, all these other things are, even the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

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, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord, whose daughters ye are as long as ye do well and are not afraid with any terror. There's a difference between the reverential fear of verse two and the terrifying fear of verse six. In like manner, that's the way he started in verse one, talking to the wives.

And so he talks this way to the husbands. Just as I said, we should be in subjection to ordinances. Just as I said, we should be in subjection to our masters.

Just as I said, our Lord Jesus was in subjection to the will of God in like manner. Ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered. We have in our society today an amazingly strange situation.

Now here it is. We have more studies on marriage than ever before. We have more books and tapes on marriage than ever before.

We have more magazine articles. We have more experts, more counselors, and more advisors available in this field than ever before. And yet we're having more problems among married people than ever before.

And this includes Christians. Something's wrong. I walk in bookstores often because this is my interest and books are my tools.

And I check out the section on the home and it gets larger and larger. And you can find books in Christian bookstores written by fine, competent Christian people on every subject relating to the home. Some of them very explicit.

I reviewed a book recently on the self-willed child. My mother could have used that book when I was a kid. Something's wrong.

We have this great mass of information and yet for some reason it's not distilling into the hearts and minds of people. And I fear that there are many Christian homes that are staying together only for the sake of reputation. There has already been an emotional, if not a physical, divorce, but not a legal one.

And this is sad because the home is the one remnant of paradise that we still have on earth. Everything else was wiped out, but the family, the home, is still a remnant of paradise. Now the apostle Peter knew something about marriage.

He was a married man. Every once in a while someone says to me, I don't like to read what Paul had to say about marriage. You know, Paul was a stodgy old bachelor.

I say, what's rather interesting, Peter was a married man. He must have been a good married man. His mother-in-law lived with him.

And if he could get along with his wife and his mother-in-law and be able to write things like this, he knew something. And yet Peter says the same thing Paul says, so you can't argue about them. Peter heard Jesus teach about marriage.

Peter himself was a married man and Peter was inspired by the Spirit of God to write these words. And so he says something to us we need to listen to. And you know, all of this looks so complicated, but when you just look at it and meditate on it and pray over it, you discover that Peter is saying this.

A home can be a happy, holy, Christian home. A marriage can be something to enjoy, not something to endure, provided that the husband and the wife fulfill their duties to one another. That's all he's saying.

Now, says Peter, to make it easy for you, I'm going to boil it all down to two duties, one for the wife and one for the husband. The wife has the duty of submission. The husband has the duty of consideration.

Now, if the husband will show consideration and if the wife will show submission, you won't have any problems. You may have some difficulties and troubles. You may have some hard places to go through, but those things, instead of pulling you apart, will draw you closer together.

You may have difficulties to face, but they will not be weapons to fight with. They'll be tools to build with. And so I send you home tonight with two words ringing in your memory, submission, consideration.

Now, before we look at verses one through six, where he deals with submission, I want to answer the question bouncing around in the minds of some of you. Because I have discussed these things with some of you, and some of you who are single have wondered, why in the world does Peter spend six verses talking to the wife and only one verse talking to the husband? That's not fair. There should be three and a half verses for the husband, three and a half verses for the wife.

We want this thing to be equal, equal rights all the way around. Well, the answer is so very simple. Do you know what Christianity did for women when Christianity was unleashed in the Roman Empire? It completely changed their status.

Up until the time that the gospel went across the Roman Empire, women were things. They were just a smidgen higher than slaves. The husband had dictatorial rights.

Women were not to be seen. They certainly were not to be heard. Though there were pagan homes where there was love and a depth of devotion, they were somewhat exceptional.

Now, the reason Peter has to say more to the wife is because she had a whole new position in life. Being a Christian woman gave her a whole new status. It was much harder for a woman to become a Christian, particularly if her husband was not saved, than it was for the man to be saved.

You see, in those early days, if the head of the household was converted, it was very natural for the rest of the household to get converted. The wife would say, I want to become a Christian. The children old enough to understand would say, we want to become Christians.

Not always, but often. This is why you find households being baptized in the New Testament. And so he has to spend a little more time with the wife who's all new to her.

And he had to deal with certain aspects of her new status in society and in the home. So he doesn't give six verses to the women because the women have six times more problems than the men. Or because the women create six times more difficulty than the men.

No, it's just that he has more to tell them. And it all balances together. The wife has the duty of submission.

And Peter gives us three reasons why a woman should be in submission to her husband. Number one, it is an obligation. God says so.

In the same manner, ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands. It is an obligation. Number two, it is an opportunity that if any obey not the word, they also may, apart from the word, be won by the behavior of the wives.

And number three, it is an ornament. Not only are you a blessing to your husband, but in submitting yourself, you develop the beauty of Christian character. And this he deals with in verses three through six.

So these three reasons for submission. Number one, it's an obligation. Number two, it's an opportunity.

And number three, it is an ornament. It's an obligation. God commands it.

In the same manner, ye wives be in subjection. Now, subjection is not subjugation. There are people who when they read verses like this and like Ephesians chapter five, they lose their insulin.

They start developing the DTs. And they say, oh, don't talk to us about submission. Because they think submission means slavery.

That headship is dictatorship, lordship. He uses Sarah as an example of what a wife ought to be. She called him Lord.

When she got the word that she was going to have a baby, she said, hey, this can't be. My Lord is rather old, and I'm not too young myself. But you don't find that Abraham was lording it over Sarah.

Once he listened to Sarah's bad advice and got into trouble, once he listened to Sarah's good advice and saved himself some trouble. So subjection is not subjugation. Subjection is the willing, loving, accepting of my place in society.

You see, it goes all the way back here to the ordinances. Chapter two, verse 13, submit yourself to every ordinance. Now, is it right for us as citizens to be under the authority of government? Yes, it is.

Is the government always right? No, it isn't. Do we have a right to rebel and blow the place up because they aren't? No, we don't. There are orderly ways of making changes.

Verse 18, servants be subject to your masters. Is it right for an employee to be in subjection to an employer? Yes, it is. If you didn't, you'd have chaos.

How about our Lord Jesus? For even here unto were ye called because Christ also. Was it right for Jesus to come as a servant and be in subjection to his Father's will? Yes. If it is right for me as a citizen to be under authority, if it is right for me as an employee to be under authority, if it is right for me as a Christian to be under authority, then it is also right for me as a husband, for you as a wife to be under authority.

Now, Paul makes it very clear in Ephesians chapter five that this subjection is not one sided. In verse 21, he says that both husband and wife are to be submitted to the Lord, submitting yourselves one to the other in the fear of God, the husband submitted to the Lord and therefore to the wife, the wife submitted to the Lord and therefore to the husband. Submission is not subjugation.

Now, I'll tell you how you can tell the difference. Some wife at this point may be saying, I wonder if I'm submitted or subjugated. Well, here's the difference.

Submission is a joyful act of love. Subjugation is a difficult act of fear. Submission brings out the best in you.

Subjugation brings out the worst in you and in your husband. Submission leads to freedom. You become all that you can become.

Subjugation leads to bondage and there's no fulfillment. Would it shock you if I told you the Bible taught the equality of men and women? He tells us we are heirs together of the grace of life. He says that we pray together.

Did you know that men and women were made by the same creator? They're equal in creation. They were made of the same material. Dust.

They were given the same dominion and God blessed them. And God said unto them, have dominion. The same Savior died for them.

The fact that Jesus came as a man does not exclude the women. The same Savior died for them. The same Holy Spirit lives in them.

In Jesus Christ, there's neither male nor female, bond nor free. We're all one in Christ. The Bible teaches equality.

I used to work for the Rockwell Manufacturing Company. I've told you that several times. I'm glad for that experience.

I wish everybody going into missionary work or ministry of some kind would spend a few years being knocked around in a manufacturing company. And every once in a while, Colonel Rockwell would go through the plant. And you know what? He was no better than I. I was sitting there at the clock.

I used to punch the tickets and give the fellows their work. I was important, you know, with the clock. And here came the Colonel with all of his authority.

He's no different, no better than was I. But he had a different authority. Now, if there is not authority in society, you have chaos. If there is not authority in employment, you have chaos.

If there is not authority in the church, you have chaos. If there's not authority in the home, you have chaos. Subjection has nothing to do with inferiority.

The fact that I worked for Colonel Rockwell did not make him superior to me or me inferior to him. It just meant there were different levels of authority. And if there were not, we'd never manufactured a valve.

So he's not talking here about inferiority, superiority. He's talking about order and authority. And so submission is an obligation.

And I'm going to ask a question now. In your home, is there cooperation or competition? Now, if two people get married and there is the proper submission to the Lord and to each other, you're going to have cooperation. And it's beautiful.

The wife knows his weaknesses and she compensates with her strengths. The husband knows her weaknesses and he compensates with his strength. And when there is that submission to the Lord and to his authority, there is cooperation.

When one party says, I will not submit. I am better. I work harder.

Then you don't have cooperation. You get competition. And dear friends, you can't build a home on competition.

Can't be done. So I'll say to you single folks tonight, don't marry girls. Don't marry a man you cannot lovingly, sincerely be submissive to.

I don't care how much money he has. I don't care what kind of car he drives. I'm not interested in any of those things.

If you lovingly, honestly cannot submit to him, don't get married. You're better off in single blessedness than married cussedness. Now there should be submission, not only because it's an obligation, but it's an opportunity.

He's talking to Christian wives who got saved after they were married. He's not talking to Christians who married unsaved people. That's not in the Bible.

It's wrong for Christians to marry unsaved people. Don't argue about it. Don't debate it.

Don't discuss it. It's just there. Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

Oh, but I prayed about it. Fine. Quit praying.

Read your Bible. It's an opportunity. Here's a Christian wife and she wants to go to church and she wants to serve the Lord.

And Peter says, hey, your first obligation's at home. Let's win your husband. How do you do it? Submission.

Oh, but what if he asks me to do something wrong? You submit unto him as unto the Lord and don't be afraid. God will take care of it. It's an opportunity.

An opportunity to do what? To be a spiritual blessing. You know, one of the great joys of Christian marriage is that a husband helps his wife to grow spiritually and a wife helps her husband to grow spiritually. That's the opportunity of submission.

Now, where there's competition, you tear each other down. And oh, when a husband and a wife want to start fighting, they got tools to do it with. Words or no words.

Pouting. You can't have any money. There are several weapons you can use in a family if you want to fight.

Money, words, or lack of words. The children, they're great weapons. If you want to manufacture some juvenile delinquents in your home, just do this.

Mother says, hey, you can't do that. And dad says, oh, yes, he can. And before long, the kids say, hey, we can play both ends against the middle in this house.

They're using us to fight each other. It's one of the worst things you can do. Submission is an opportunity for spiritual blessing.

He's saying to the wife, you'll never win your husband by arguing with him and preaching at him. When I counsel couples about to be married, I sometimes ask the question, is there anything in the other person's life you plan to change after you get married? That's an interesting question. They kind of look at each other, you know.

If they say yes, I say, then change it before you get married. Because marriage does not create problems. Marriage reveals problems.

You say, well, I can say I can straighten him out after we get married. Great. Do it before you get married.

He's talking here to Christian wives who were prone to argue and prone to nag. May I just say a word as one who has been a husband for some 25 years? Nothing will drive a man out more than nagging. Nagging about, I can say because we've never done it, nagging about money and nagging about the color of the kitchen and nagging about the... Now, men can nag too.

I know men who nag. You know what Peter's saying here? He is saying to us, if we are submissive to one another, we don't need arguments, we don't even need words. Our actions, our attitudes create such an atmosphere in the home that it's easy for us to get better.

And the wife's attitude and the husband's attitude creates such a beautiful atmosphere that each one starts growing and becoming better. Now, submission is not only an obligation and an opportunity. And I'd like to spend the rest of my time talking about the opportunity, how Christian husbands and wives can build each other up, be a spiritual blessing to one another.

But he goes on to say that submission is an ornament, verses 3 through 6. The tragedy back in Peter's day in the Roman Empire was that, like today, many women live for fashion. They competed with each other in fashion. They had to have the most outlandish hairdo.

They had to have the most expensive clothing. Now, Peter's not telling us that it's wrong to look nice. I think one of the best ways for a man to be proud of his wife and really want to be with her is when she takes care of herself and she looks nice.

No reason why a woman has to be unkempt, or a man for that matter. What he's saying is don't put the emphasis there. He's talking not about externals, but about internals, about character.

He's saying just as you want the outside to look beautiful, work on making the inside beautiful. Work on a meek and a quiet spirit. That's just the opposite of nagging.

Work on an inner beauty, not a glamour, not an artificial glamour. Not the kind of beauty you buy in a bottle. Now, some folks need all the help they can get, and I'm not going to argue about that.

But we men have a tendency sometimes that same way. What he's saying is develop Christian character. Submission is an obligation.

God says do it. Submission is an opportunity. God can work through you.

Submission is an ornament. God can work in you. And wherever you find a wife who's not submissive, you're going to find an angular, abrasive kind of a character.

Usually, the wife who cannot get along with her husband can't get along with other people. Usually, the husband who can't get along with his wife can't get along with other people. He's talking about building character.

The home, the Christian home, ought to be such a place where the things that matter most are not prices, but values. What good is a \$200,000 house filled with a million dollars worth of trinkets if there's no home? So he said you better live for the things that really count. The ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit in the sight of God's of great price.

Now, if God came down to my home or your home and began to put price tags on things, I wonder what those price tags would be. Here's this shelf full of goodies that you are so proud of. He might put a zero price tag on that.

You see, you can't build a home on prices. A home is built on values. You can't build it on externals.

It's built on internals. It's built on character. Can't build it on things.

The only difference between men and boys is that men buy more expensive toys. And sometimes those expensive toys have a way of wrecking a home. Now, we've said three things to the wife.

We've said submission is an obligation. Are you and your husband competitors or partners? We've said that submission is an opportunity. Are you each changing the other for the better? Can you really say I am a better person spiritually because of this marriage? And thirdly, we've said that submission is an ornament.

Can we honestly say that we are living for the things that really count? Character and not things. Well, we must hurry. I don't want to give you the impression that the wives need all the preaching because we husbands need it too.

In verse 7, he says, like men, are you husbands? And the husband says, all right, Peter's going to go to meddling now. Yes, he is. And the word he uses is consideration.

All that he says in verse 7 is summed up in one word, consideration. He said, if a wife is to have submission, a husband must have consideration. Now, what is consideration? It involves three factors, knowledge, honor, and prayer.

If a husband is considerate of his wife, she has no problem being submissive. There isn't a godly Christian wife in the world who would not gladly submit herself to the protection and the provision and the blessing of a husband who has consideration. Now, consideration, first of all, involves knowledge.

And like men are ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge. I read a book once on Einstein's theory, general theory of relativity. Please don't ask me what it said.

I thought I'd show my friends how smart I was. I understood Einstein. I read the book and put it down and said, well, I'm glad that's over with.

Somebody asked Mrs. Einstein one day, Mrs. Einstein, do you understand Dr. Einstein's theory of relativity? She smiled and said, no, but I understand Dr. Einstein. I said, good. Every once in a while, a wife will say, oh, my husband's read so many books and done this and done that.

Doesn't make any difference. You ought to learn all you can. But you know, a wife and a husband need to understand each other.

The first factor involved in consideration is knowledge. You dwell with your wife according to knowledge. I went to get my license renewed the other day, not my marriage license, my driver's license.

They sent me that notice that said we want you to come down, get your picture taken and everything. And so I went down there and watched people. I love to watch people and went through the written exam just like that.

And they checked my eyes and I went through that and I was stood in line. Hurry up and wait. I was watching people.

I thought to myself, you know, you go through an examination to get a driver's license. Some of the people they took out on the range and made them drive and rejected them. Why? Because you can get in an automobile and if you don't know how to drive and don't know what's involved, you can kill somebody.

If they had requirements like that for marriage, I wonder what would happen. You can go down to City Hall and get a license, go find somebody to marry you. You're married.

No preparation, no training, no examination. It's no wonder nearly half of our homes are falling apart. Now, I could bluff my way through on my driver's examination, maybe have an accident.

They'd catch up with me. They'd say, hey, wait a minute, man, there's something wrong with you. That doesn't happen.

I've never heard them reclaiming a marriage license. Of course, you can't. Once you're married, you're married.

That's the law of God. Men need knowledge. I'm not complaining because of all the books and tapes that are available today.

I read them. I wish I had read some of them 30 years ago. Somebody said to Tim LaHaye one day, my, you've written some wonderful books on raising children.

He said, yes, I wish I'd known all these things 30 years ago. Knowledge. Now, what are we supposed to know? Dwell with your wife according to knowledge, knowledge of how she's put together and knowledge of her moods and knowledge of her needs and sensitive with the extra ear and listening with the heart.

Now, this involves communication. You can't have knowledge without communication. Do you know that the average American married couple spends a whole 37 minutes a week talking to each other without interruption about something other than the children, the bills and the backyard? A whole 37 minutes.

That's marvelous. How can a man say I know my wife when he doesn't have any time to talk to her? Listen to her. A year or so ago, three pastors called me up, came in to see me.

Each of those three pastors had been through the same experience. Their wives had walked out on them. And I said to each of the men, weren't there some signals? Didn't you catch any signals? And one of them said, well, I can look back now and see that they were there, but I was too busy to follow them.

Knowledge. And so we husbands have a big responsibility. Knowledge.

Read the Word of God and find out what a husband's supposed to be, what he's supposed to do, and do it. When all else fails, read the instructions. Which leads me to ask this question of husbands and wives.

Do you understand each other better today than you did a year ago? Is there communication not just on the level of things or the level of events? Is there a communication on the level of real, excuse the term, gut level concerns and anxieties and worries? Is there an openness and an honesty that leads to knowledge? Now, his second responsibility, if he's going to show consideration, is honor. Dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel. Now, some of the feminists don't like that.

There have been books written showing how much stronger and better equipped women are for life than men. Maybe so. But generally speaking, the wife is looked upon as the weaker.

Now, it doesn't mean that the husband is strong in everything. Each man has a weakness. Each woman has a weakness or more, each of them.

And as I said before, the strengths of the wife will compensate for the weaknesses of the husband and vice versa. But he's talking here about honor, respect, showing respect to her. Courtesy, kindness.

Opening the door for her, not slamming it in her face. Oh, what a tragedy it is when a man is courting a woman and he can hardly do enough kindnesses for her. Then he gets married and he can hardly ignore her anymore.

And he forgets to be a gentleman. Now, no woman has any problems submitting to a man who has knowledge. He knows what he's doing.

He understands and who has honor. Are you taking each other for granted? That's what Peter is saying. Don't take each other for granted.

Then the third factor involved is prayer. As being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered. Every married couple has an inheritance.

Now, some refer this primarily to the bearing of children because children are an inheritance. I go much farther than that. I believe that when God brings a Christian man and a Christian woman together and he joins them in marriage, he has an inheritance for them.

And they are heirs together and we are enriched together. Now, he's not talking about money riches. He's talking about the kind of an inheritance that you can't measure with slide rules and computers and calculators.

That spiritual inheritance. Did you know that your home is an investment in eternity? And so there has to be prayer. Now, the husband is to be the one to lead in this.

If there's one complaint I have heard from Christian wives in nearly 30 years of ministry, it's this, Pastor, I would give anything if my husband would only take the lead in spiritual things. He accuses me of taking over and being bossy, but I have to do it because he doesn't do it. I can't think of a greater privilege than for a young husband, new husband, new wife to join their hands and hearts in prayer every day.

Read the word of God. I can't think of anything more wonderful in our home than as the children come along, teach them how to read the word of God and pray. The family prays together.

It's a privilege. I wouldn't want to give that privilege to somebody else. I jealously cherish the privilege that I've had over these years of gathering our family.

We read the word of God. When I've been out of town, my wife has taken over and done it. Hasn't upset anything.

Prayer. It's amazing how many Christian couples do not pray together. Then they wonder why they argue and why they can't get along with the children and why things happen.

In fact, at the end of verse 7, Peter dares to say that if our home is not right, God will not answer prayer. One of the thermometers for measuring the spiritual life of the home is answered prayer. I would rather at my funeral, one of the children be able to stand up and say, as we look back over our family, we see that God answered prayer.

More than anything else he could say, because answered prayer is the thermometer of spiritual life. Now, if a husband and wife are not getting along with each other, they can't pray. God won't answer.

That's one of the rules of the Christian home. Now, we've said all of this. I'm going to wrap it up into a little inventory and then we'll be on our way.

Are you partners or competitors? Submission is an obligation. Are we both growing and changing for the better? Submission is an opportunity. Are we living for character, the things that really count? Submission is an ornament.

Do we understand each other better today? Consideration involves knowledge. Are we taking each other for granted? Consideration involves honor. Is God answering our prayers? Consideration involves prayer.

In other words, these seven verses become somewhat of a spiritual inventory for the home. I recall some time ago, a folder came to our home through the mail, one of these occupant things. And it was from the fire department during National Fire Prevention Week.

And it said, there are X number of home fires every day. Here, take an inventory of your home. And here it said about your outlets and your inlets and this and that.

I thought to myself, that's a good thing. Be terrible to have your house burned down around you, especially while you're in it. I thought to myself, I wonder what would happen if every year the church mailed out an inventory to homes and said, husband and wife, would you sit down and just take this inventory? Half of the people who got it would be angry.

You keep your hands off our home. But you know when they've got problems, you know where they run for help? The church. There are times when I have to really pray for patience, not to say things that I know I shouldn't say.

Here's some couple or here's some family. They haven't got time to come to church. Kids can't go to camp.

They won't go to Sunday school. Then they have trouble and they come to the preacher. And I feel like saying, hey, where have you been for the last year? You can't say that, that's mean.

Be good to take an inventory of our homes and husband and wife say, are we partners or competitors? Is there submission? Are we growing in character and spirituality? Are we depending on things, externals? Do we have to have a lot of gadgets and toys to keep our home happy? Or is there the development of Christian character? Do we understand each other better than ever before? Do we take each other for granted? Is God answering our prayers? That's what a Christian home is all about. It's not complicated. It's not even difficult.

It's simple. Submission. Consideration.

Both of which are born of love. Who does this for us? Jesus. By nature, I don't want to submit.

By nature, I want to fight. I was born that way. Then Jesus comes into your heart and He changes you from that pugnacious attitude of rebellion and vindictiveness to a submissive attitude to Him.

Who's the one who gives us love? Jesus. What He's saying simply here is, here's a wife who's submitted to Jesus. Here's a husband submitted to Jesus.

And the love of Christ flows through the both of them. And there's submission and consideration. And out of this comes an atmosphere that leads to growth and honesty and openness and understanding and tenderness.

And your home becomes a heaven on earth. Mr. Spurgeon said our home should be so heavenly that if the angels were to visit us, they would not know that they were away from home. Heavenly Father, I pray that something that you have said to us tonight will result in our being holier and happier and more useful in our homes.

Thank you, Father, for those you have given to us who are a part of our family whom we love. I pray that you'll help us to measure up to all that you've had to say to us. And I pray, Father, that because of this, our children will grow to love you and to serve you.

That they will bring great honor to your name. Pray for our singles who are here, how thankful we are for them. Some of them you have chosen always to have a life of singleness.

This is their life and their ministry. Now bless them in it and help them to be a blessing in the homes where they'll minister. Some will be getting married.

I pray you'll help them to get married on the right foundations. Pray for those, Lord, who have been married for some years, who have problems. Help them in facing and solving them.

Help us as men. To have consideration. Deliver us from selfishness, from exploiting.

Help our wives to have submission. And may we be the kind of husbands that they find no difficulty, but only delight in submitting. And may their submitting result in their growing, their happiness, their freedom, their fulfillment, and not in their exploiting.

Do it for Jesus' sake, I pray in His name, Amen.

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