

New Covenant Husband Wife Relationship

by Zac Poonen

This sermon focuses on the importance of building strong family relationships based on biblical principles. It emphasizes the need for husbands and wives to submit to one another in the fear of Christ, with the motive of bringing glory to God. The sermon highlights the significance of hidden actions and pure motives in family life, as these will be examined by the Lord. It also delves into the role of being filled with the Holy Spirit in fostering healthy relationships within the family and the necessity of resisting the devil's attacks on the home.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 10:31, 1 Corinthians 4:5, Ephesians 5:21, 1 Peter 3:7, 1 Corinthians 11:3, Ephesians 5:18, Ephesians 6:11

Topics: "Family Relationships", "Submission in Marriage"

Description

This sermon focuses on the importance of building strong family relationships based on biblical principles. It emphasizes the need for husbands and wives to submit to one another in the fear of Christ, with the motive of bringing glory to God. The sermon highlights the significance of hidden actions and pure motives in family life, as these will be examined by the Lord. It also delves into the role of being filled with the Holy Spirit in fostering healthy relationships within the family and the necessity of resisting the devil's attacks on the home.

Transcript

Okay, so I am going to break this up into two sessions, dealing with family life. The first part for husbands and wives and the second part for parents and children. So there are some introductory remarks I want to make, first of all.

So, the first is from 1 Corinthians in chapter 10, a principle that applies to all of our Christian life. 1 Corinthians 10 and verse 31, whether you eat or drink, eating and drinking is the most normal daily thing that we do. Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, that is, relate to each other as husband and wife, bring up children, do all to the glory of God.

So that's the first thing we must remember that we want to have a good husband-wife relationship, not to show other people in the church what a wonderful family life we have, that can be a tremendous temptation. I want people in the church to see what a wonderful family life we have, that is a completely wrong motive and you can't expect God to support you if your motive is wrong. Say, Lord, I want to do that, to bring glory to you, so that the devil's mouth is shut in my home.

By the way I relate to my wife or my husband, I bring glory to you, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. The same thing applies to bringing up children, I don't want to bring up my children in such a way that everybody in church will say, oh, look at that family, how they have brought up their children so well, there's such a tremendous temptation for that. In every area, remember this verse, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God and if you work out your salvation in this area from all the other things we seek, not the glory of God, you'll find that you come to the destination quicker.

And so that's the first thing I want to say. And the second thing I want to say as an introductory remark is from 1 Corinthians in Chapter 4 and that is, in the day that the Lord comes and He's going to judge our life, He's going to judge our family life, He's going to judge how husband and wife live, He's going to judge how we bring up our children, and what is He going to judge? It's not how well they behaved in the church service time, it's not how well other people thought your children were, though that counts for zero. 1 Corinthians 4 verse 5 says, in the middle, when the Lord comes, there are two things He's going to bring to light.

In other words, these are the two things He's going to examine in the final day in our lives. In husband-wife relationship, how you brought up your children. Number one, the things hidden in darkness.

That means how it was in your home when nobody could see how your children behaved. Not how they behaved in the church meeting, no, that is honor-seeking. But how they behaved at home in the darkness when nobody in the church saw them.

If you concentrate on that, it'll be okay in public. And the second thing is the motive. One the things hidden in darkness which nobody can see, and the other is the motive.

The motive with which you want to have a good husband-wife relationship, and the motive with which you want to bring up your children, that we said earlier, for the glory of God. So if you concentrate on that, because so often, you know, the emphasis can be, we must have a good testimony as husband and wife. That can be so much before the face of men.

Our children must behave properly and they not bring a bad name to the Lord, so much before the face of men. That's important because it says, let your light shine before men, the way you live and the way you bring up your children, so that they will see it and bring glory to God. That's important, but it's dependent on the motive and dependent on how we bring them up in the darkness where nobody can see.

So those are some introductory remarks. Then we go to, first of all, husband-wife relationship. So the first verse I want to show you is, husbands be subject to your wives.

Have you read that? Did I get it wrong? Did I get it wrong? I did not. Please read with me, Ephesians 5.21. That's why I started with that verse, because that's what you never hear another preacher preach on that. What does Ephesians 5.21 mean? Wives be subject to your husband is the next verse.

Don't jump to that verse first. A lot of husbands would like to start with verse 22, but I say we start with verse 21, which is both husband and wife be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. This is the introduction to verse 22 and a tyrant of a husband will never accept that.

They all like to start in verse 22 and even the people who've paragraphed the Bible start with verse 22. I think the paragraph should begin with verse 21. So, which means we recognize like the Bible says, the husband and wife are joint heirs of the grace of God.

So, I'll come back to Ephesians, but let's turn for a moment to 1 Peter and chapter 3, 1 Peter chapter 3, where we're told, verse 7, husbands live with your wives in an understanding way, knowing that she's a weak or wrestling as a woman, showing her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life. Heir is a title reserved to prince and princess and someone who's going to be a king or a queen. So, joint heir means there are two thrones, one for the husband and one for the wife.

So, the wife is not at the footstool, no. She's on an equal throne at the same level as the husband, joint heir. One is not superior to the other of the grace of life.

So, then the question comes, in what way do we go on to Ephesians 5.22, where it says the wives must be subject to their own husbands. If you've understood Ephesians 5.21 right, then you're ready for verse 22. If you have not understood Ephesians 5.21 properly, I would say don't rush into verse 22, learn verse 21 first, where both are to be subject to one another in the fear of Christ, recognizing that Christ is ultimately the head of your home, not you.

And you recognize that Christ is the head of your home and you are both joint heirs, then you are ready to be the head of your wife, not otherwise. That connection, I'd also like you to look at 1 Corinthians in chapter 11. 1 Corinthians 11, where you know this is the reason why men are told to pray without their head being covered and women are asked to pray with their head being covered.

Here's the reason. The reason is this, that the reason is that Christ, 1 Corinthians 11.3, Christ is the head of every man and Christ must not be covered. That's why men do not cover their heads in the church meeting, understand that.

Whereas the man is the head of the woman and man must be covered in the church. Man's glory is not to be seen in church, that's why a woman veils her head. It's more than a spirit of submission.

So here is the order, 1 Corinthians 11.3, God the father and beneath Him Christ. When we say beneath Him, we also know He's equal. Jesus Christ was equal with the father.

In what way is it said that God is the head of Christ? Jesus voluntarily took the place of submission to the father on earth, no compulsion. He voluntarily came and submitted to the father on the earth, even though He was equal with him and in that sense, man is the head of a woman, got it? So the man is the head of the woman, recognizing that God and Christ are equal, He and the woman are equal and the woman submits to the man exactly like Jesus submitted to the father. So Jesus demonstrated by His submission on earth that submission is not a disgraceful thing.

It's a glorious, wonderful thing to submit. Who demonstrated that? Jesus Christ. And who has the opportunity to demonstrate that in a home? Both husband and wife.

As the husband is subject to Christ and treats his wife in a respectful way, just like Jesus treats us with respect, you know that Jesus never forces us to do anything. The Old Testament law was thou shalt, thou shalt not, thou shalt, thou shalt not, that's old covenant. In the new covenant, Jesus used the word if, if any man will come after me, let him follow me.

So there is a freedom that Jesus gives us to choose every day, do I want to die to myself here or not? No compulsion. It's one of the most important things we learn in the Garden of Eden, that God sent Adam and Eve completely free, without any angel to supervise them, you choose all by yourself whether you want to obey me or not. I told you don't eat of that tree of knowledge of good and evil but I'm not going to force

you.

That is the freedom God gave man from day one and that is the freedom a husband gives to his wife to choose whether she will obey or not. And if she's a God-fearing woman, she will do what Jesus did in submission to the father. So we know that the husband is to love the wife like Christ loved the church.

So Christ is the example for the man. But here we read Christ is the example for the woman as well, in the way he submitted to the father. So we don't consider only Ephesians 5 where it says as the church is subject to Christ, so the wife... a woman must be subject to the man because the woman is to be subject to the man just like Jesus was submitted to the father.

And above your husband is God, that's why in situations where the husband is unconverted and we have numerous cases like that in the world of a woman whose husband is not converted. What should she do when her husband asks her to bow down to an idol? That we know she would say no. Why does she say no? There's a reason for it because above her husband is Christ.

That's why she says no I cannot bow down to an idol. It's not blind submission to the husband. Now if there was nobody above the husband then she just has to obey whatever the husband says but it's not like that.

There is a head above the husband and that is Christ. And so she has every right to say not only I will not bow down to an idol but darling I'm not going to tell that lie even though you want to ask me to tell a lie, I'm sorry I won't say it. I'm not going to cheat someone even though you ask me to do that.

I don't have to submit to you if my conscience tells me that Christ does not permit me to do that. It's very important to understand that. So it's a very beautiful relationship that God has planned for husband and wife.

You see just like the relationship that Jesus has with me, He never forces me to do anything. He's never forced me to do a single thing in my life in all the 60 years I've known him. What a wonderful relationship that is if a woman can say my husband never forced me to do a single thing in my life but what an example Jesus has been to me for me to follow.

That is how a husband is to lead. Jesus is a shepherd of the sheep and a husband must be the shepherd for the wife. It's not for the husband to say to the wife, why can't you get victory over your anger? Okay let the husband be the shepherd and demonstrate by leading the sheep in a life without anger and say follow me as I follow Christ.

This is true Christian marriage where the husband is the leader, not the leader commanding people like a general but the leader like a shepherd going in front of the sheep. And so if you can see this balance, you can see what a glorious thing it is, a Christian marriage is to demonstrate the relationship, the perfect relationship that God Jesus wants to have with us, that Jesus had with the father is demonstrated in a husband-wife relationship at home. So we were comparing the old and new covenant in the previous weeks but this also is important because in the old covenant there's no emphasis given on husband-wife relationship.

You go through all the 39 books of the Old Testament, there's no teaching on husband-wife relationship. It just says don't be unfaithful to your wife, don't commit adultery and in Malakai chapter 2 there are a few exhortations of not being unfaithful to your wife. But otherwise there's no teaching on husband-wife

relationship.

In fact in Deuteronomy we are even said that if you're not happy with your wife you can divorce her. Not that you can divorce but it says if you do divorce her because you're not happy give her a certificate of divorce. God never commanded divorce.

When the Pharisees asked Jesus about it he said it's because the hardness of your heart that God permitted. Permitted is different from commanded, He never commanded, He permitted. The Jews made that permission to a command but He did permit it I must say, He did permit divorce in the Old Testament and He said in Deuteronomy 24, if that woman whom you divorced wants to come back to you, you should not marry her again.

So in the New Covenant there's a tremendous emphasis on husband-wife relationship. This is one of the big differences between Old Covenant and New Covenant. Like you've often heard me say the church is like a three-story building where the foundation of this building which is very important is the fact that God loves us exactly like He loved Jesus, John 17 23.

Without that foundation you cannot build the true body of Jesus Christ and on that is the first floor and the first floor is a walk with God with a clear conscience, your personal walk with God, the husband and the wife each walking with God with a clear conscience. That is the first floor. On top of that is the second floor or the second story where husband-wife relationship comes.

You cannot have that for second story, the second floor, if you haven't got the first floor strong. So if a husband and wife don't keep walk with a good conscience, they're never going to be able to build the second story, their mutual relationship. They must remember that for a good husband-wife relationship, there has to be underneath a foundation that God loves me as He loved Jesus, I'm secure in that, I'm not trying to prove myself to my husband or prove myself to my wife, no, I've got to prove nothing.

God loves me as He loves Jesus, I'm secure in that love and on that foundation I walk with a good conscience, husband or wife, then you can build a good relationship as husband and wife and very very important and the reason why many husband and wife conflicts come, the second floor is beginning to be shaky because they're not founded on a good foundation, they don't believe that God loves them as they love Jesus, they are insecure or they don't each walk with a good conscience. So remember, when you have a problem there on the second floor, it's not because of husband-wife relationship, it's because of a faulty understanding of God's love and a faulty walk with God in a clear conscience. So once you solve the problem, it's like you know you have a symptom of some itching on your hand and the problem is some bug inside your body, it's not there, you can put an ointment there, it'll come up somewhere else, it's the internal root cause of that irritation on your skin that must be dealt with.

So very often the husband-wife relationship, you go to a marriage counselor and he tell you how to say, talk to each other and call up each other many times a day and say I love you, that doesn't solve the problem, you got to deal with foundation, you got to deal with the first floor, very very important and it's only on top of that comes the third floor where you build the church. So the church is as strong as the people who are rooted in God's love, walking with a good conscience and have a good husband-wife relationship, this is very very important and one final thing I want to say, there's not everything, it's I mean this could go on for hours but here is what I want to say, here is another thing which is never found in the Old Testament, be filled with the Holy Spirit as a command. We read of people on whom the Holy Spirit came in the Old Testament mainly for ministry but here it's not talking about that old covenant filling with

the spirit where the veil was on top and the spirit was poured upon the person and flowed out like that, is where the veil is removed, if I remove the lid of this jar then the Holy Spirit comes in and overflows from within, that is new covenant filling, that is the filling of the spirit mentioned in Ephesians 5.18, it's the only place in the New Testament where we read the command, be filled with the Holy Spirit and then do what? Speak in tongues? No, be thankful, speak with a spirit of gratitude and then go on to what? Be subject to one another as husband and wife, imagine that the command to be filled with the Holy Spirit leads on to the married life, so I wish more people had seen this as the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

What's the mark of a spirit-filled life? That you have a good relationship as husband and wife, that's what it says here, let me read it, be filled with the spirit and verse 21, be subject to one another in the fear of Christ and wives be subject to your husbands, husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and wives, please verse 33, respect your husband, husband love your wife. The most important thing, verse 33, that a wife needs to know is that her husband loves her, verse 33, and the most important thing that a wife must do to her husband is respect her husband, wives respect your husbands, husbands love your wives, this is the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit. And the other thing I want to say which is not in the New Testament is what comes after this section on the home, this home section starts with husband and wife, chapter 6 verse 1 to 4, parents and children and chapter 6 verse 5 and 9, servants and masters and in those days all servants, all homes rather had slaves and servants in their home, so it's all speaking about home relationships from chapter 5 verse 22 to chapter 6 verse 9. What is the introduction? Be filled with the Holy Spirit.

And what's the other side of this? Resist the devil. This is the other thing, it's the only place in scripture where we are told about putting on the armour of God to resist the devil and to stand finally against... against the schemes of the devil and having overcome everything, verse 13, that you stand firm, stand firm, verse 13, verse 14, it comes after home relationships. So here are two important New Testament truths, be filled with the spirit, fight the devil, resist him and overcome and in between these two brackets as it were is husband-wife relationship, parent-children relationship.

Do you see the importance of this? The devil is going to attack the home, that's what we read here and you got to be filled with the Holy Spirit to build this home the way God wants you to build it and there you see how important the home is in the New Covenant.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/DJ0NYwu7-sc.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/new-covenant-husband-wife-relationship/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net