

## THE BIBLE AND MARRIAGE

**INTRODUCTION:** Suggest three or four things which today constitute the gravest threats to family life.

Worldly concepts of marriage:

Godlessness in the home?

Changing views concerning sex and morality?

Hurried, frantic pattern of modern-day life?

**ELTON TRUEBLOOD:** "Of all the disintegrating factors the chief is the loss of the sense of meaning of what a family ought to be. Our basic failure isn't the failure to live up to a standard that is accepted, but rather the failure to keep the standard clear."

In this passage (Eph. 5:22-6:4) Paul clearly delineates the standard. Sooner or later the Bible gets around to saying something about everything. Paul begins this Epistle in Heaven and winds up in the Home. **CHRIST TRANSFORMS RELATIONSHIPS ON ORDINARY LEVEL.**

Many believe that the real test of religion is the home situation.

**THREE PRINCIPLES EMERGE FROM THIS PASSAGE:**

### **I. RECIPROCAL OBLIGATIONS**

All duties not on one side - mutual obligations for all members of family.

#### **1. Obligations of Wife to Husband**

- (1) Submit -- "To adapt oneself." Doesn't mean the husband is a domestic dictator, ruling with a rod of iron. But the husband exercises an authority which the wife must forego. In areas where one must yield -- for example, the husband's choice of a profession or of a geographical location for his work -- the primary submission must devolve upon the wife.

God to Eve: "Unto Adams shall thy desire be."

The wife's submission is prompted by and warranted by the husband's unselfish love.

The submission is to be voluntary. The wife's submission isn't something forced upon her by a demanding husband; it is the deference that a loving wife, conscious that the home (just as any other institution) must have a head, gladly shows to a worthy and devoted husband.

The submission of the wife is presented as a part of her Christian duty,

a self-subjection to be rendered "as unto the Lord" (v. 22). THE THOUGHT IS THAT THE DEFERENCE GIVEN TO HER HUSBAND IS A DUTY WHICH SHE OWES TO THE LORD.

To ignore this divine arrangement is to sow seeds of domestic discord and tragedy.

The subordination of the wife to her husband is to be patterned after that of the Church for Christ (v. 24).

(2) Reverence v. 33 "Respect." The Greek word is "fear", in the sense of reverential awe, not slavish fear.

## 2. DUTIES OF HUSBAND TO THE WIFE Vv. 25-33

LOVE is the supreme duty enjoined upon the husband.

Ill. Preacher told secretary his sermon subject was "Husbands, love your Wives." She didn't print it in the bulletin because she thought it was a joke.

The Greek word doesn't denote affection or romantic attachment; it speaks of a higher form of love, a deliberate attitude of mind which concerns itself with the well-being of the one loved. Self-devotion, not self-satisfaction, is its dominant trait. "It is a love which makes it a delight for the wife to subject herself to such a husband."

How the husband is to love his wife is set forth in three significant statements.

1. AS CHRIST LOVED THE CHURCH vv 25-27 The husband is to love the wife in the same unstinted fashion, even to the point of sacrificing himself for her well-being.

2. AS HIS OWN BODY vv 28-30

3. WITH A LOVE TRANSCENDING ALL OTHER HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS vv. 31-33

v. 31 -- "be joined (glued) to his wife." So intimate is this union that the man and woman thus joined together become "one flesh". In a day when divorce is scandalously easy, this precept needs to be held before the public.

"Leaving father and mother" is significant. Problems arise when the parents aren't "left" by either the husband or the wife.

TO SUMMARIZE THE MUTUAL DUTIES: The duty of the wife is to respect; the duty of the husband is to deserve that respect.

## 3. CHILDREN'S DUTIES TO PARENTS. 6:1,2

(1) Obey - Disobedience on part of children is a sign of the last days. Children are not to be judges of what they should or should not do. "Parents do too much asking and not enough telling. Consult less and command more!"

### III. RELIGIOUS TRAINING 6:1-4

It is the father's responsibility:

1. To nurture - Greek "discipline". In the Old Testament, God judged Eli because "his sons did evil in the sight of the Lord and he restrained them not."
2. Admonition -- Greek "counsel, instruction". This is missing in most homes. We've shifted our responsibility onto the shoulders of the church, which is against the teaching of the Bible. Religious instruction begins in the home.

"Children will drift away from a faith the father doesn't care enough about to teach."

"A silent father makes a prodigal son."

### IV. RECOGNITION OF THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST.

Notice the recurring mention of the "Lord" in all these admonitions - "As unto the Lord" is the theme.

Obligations to Christ as Lord transcend all other obligations.