



HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES,
AND DO NOT BE HARSH WITH THEM.
(COLOSSIANS 3:19 ESV)

HOME IMPROVEMENT

EPISODE 2: "HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES"

HUSBANDS, **LOVE YOUR WIVES,**
AS CHRIST LOVED THE CHURCH
AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR HER.
(EPHESIANS 5:25 ESV)

HOWEVER, **LET EACH ONE**
OF YOU LOVE HIS WIFE AS
HIMSELF, AND LET THE
WIFE SEE THAT SHE
RESPECTS HER HUSBAND.
(EPHESIANS 5:33 ESV)

IN THE SAME WAY **HUSBANDS**
SHOULD LOVE THEIR WIVES AS
THEIR OWN BODIES. HE WHO
LOVES HIS WIFE LOVES HIMSELF.
(EPHESIANS 5:28 ESV)



If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

(1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-7 ESV)

GOD AT WORK



I. THE HUSBAND WHO OBEYS GOD AND LOVES HIS WIFE ACCORDING TO THE HOME BUILDING CODE OF THE SCRIPTURES EXHIBITS AN AUTHENTIC, SINCERE FAITH.

A. The husband who loves his wife profits from the teaching of God's building code as he believes God and trusts in him—enabling him to walk in a manner worthy of the lordship of Jesus Christ.

... it is better to view the injunctions of the household code as integral to Paul's ethical exhortation. **They make clear that the creation of a new humanity in Christ does not mean an erasure of existing social relationships but their transformation as they are lived out under the Lordship of Christ.** [Moo, D. J. (2008). *The letters to the Colossians and to Philemon* (pp. 298–299). Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.]

As the relationship between wife and husband is an aspect of the couple's relationship with the Lord, **the harmony of the marriage depends on the harmony of each spouse with Christ.** Christ is both the model for their behavior and the true authority behind all they do. [Osborne, G. R. (2016). *Colossians & Philemon: Verse by Verse* (p. 117). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.]

- (2 Timothy 3:16–17 ESV) All Scripture is breathed out by God and **profitable for teaching**, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
- (Colossians 1:9–10 ESV) And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be **filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord**, fully

pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

- (Colossians 2:6–7 ESV) Therefore, **as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him**, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

B. The Bible gives husbands specific teaching—"love your wives"—that the Holy Spirit will use to reprove, correct and train them in righteousness so that they will be equipped to relate to their wives in a way pleasing to the Lord..

- (Colossians 3:19 ESV) Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

1. "Husbands love your wives" was a new "code of conduct"—a revolutionary concept—for the Christians in the first century.

Verse 19 gives us the counterpart injunction: "Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them." Here the commandment to men is just as radical as that to women. As Eduard Lohse has shown, such a command does not appear in any of the extra-Biblical household rules of the day. ... The Christian ethic for a husband's love for his wife was light-years beyond the formal domestic ethics of the day. [Hughes, R. K. (1989). *Colossians and Philemon: the supremacy of Christ* (p. 117). Westchester, IL: Crossway Books.]

3:19—As is fitting for such a list of "rules" for the household, Paul turns quickly and somewhat abruptly from wives to husbands. Requiring wives to submit to husbands, as we have noted, matches widespread Greek and Jewish teaching about marriage. Requiring husbands to love their wives does not. The concern in the secular codes was usually effective household management—especially since the household was typically viewed as a key building block

of society and of the state. [Moo, D. J. (2008). *The letters to the Colossians and to Philemon* (pp. 302–303). Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.]

2. Husbands spiritually profit their families by obeying the biblical teaching—the new code—to love their wives.

Husbands are presented with a much more demanding task. (1) They are told to love their wives. This command reveals that Paul is not writing to prop up the authority and rights of husbands, which everyone took for granted. Instead, he reminds husbands of their obligations “in the Lord.” Most in the ancient world did not expect a marriage to be grounded in love. It was considered to be an accord, albeit an unequal one, between a man and a woman to produce legitimate heirs. [Garland, D. E. (1998). *Colossians and Philemon* (pp. 244–245). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.]

3. Husbands are not to be harsh with their wives.

“Do not be harsh with them” ... rules out any overbearing, tyrannical, or intimidating behavior toward the wife. ... Anyone can refrain from harsh treatment of others; Christians must do more, however. They must refrain from becoming flushed with rage or petulant when others treat them or respond to them in ways that irritate them. This directive addresses the eventuality that the wife might not always be properly submissive, which in turn would likely trigger bitterness in her husband. ... Any defiance or insolence on the wife’s part does not cancel the husband’s absolute obligation to love her. Sulking, fuming, grumbling, or worse, lashing out in verbal or physical violence, regardless of the provocation, real or imagined, is strictly forbidden. [Ibid (p. 245).]

*****This love acts as a moderating influence upon the husband’s exercise of authority. It is true that the primary responsibility for the final decision with respect to a matter rests with the husband, but the method of reaching that decision leaves ample room for mutual deliberation and gentle persuasion, in the course of which, perhaps, at times the

husband’s tentative conclusion may finally prevail, at other times the wife’s, her partner having come to see that she was right. Thus, the husband, having fully committed himself to the principle that his love for his wife must be a true reflection of the deep, sacrificial love of Christ for the church (Ephesians 5:25, 32), acts toward her as a man of understanding, is never “harsh” or “cross,” but is considerate toward her, and honors her in every way (1 Peter 3:7).

[Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). *Exposition of Colossians and Philemon* (Vol. 6, p. 170). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.]

*****3:19 The simple, positive command is to love. The term *agapē*, used here, never occurred in secular household tables.⁷⁵ The command, therefore, appears to be a distinctively Christian element of the marriage relationship. [Melick, R. R. (1991). *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon* (Vol. 32, p. 313). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.]

II. THE HUSBAND WHO OBEYS GOD AND LOVES HIS WIFE ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES—THE HOLY BUILDING CODE—WILL BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF HIS MIND AND WILL BE ABLE TO DIRECT HIS FAMILY IN THE TRUTH OF GOD AND THE WILL OF GOD.

HE WILL HAVE THIS MIND ...

- **A mind that loves God foremost ...** (Matthew 22:37 ESV) And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and **with all your mind.**”
- **A mind that knows the will of God ...** (Romans 12:1–2 ESV) I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewal of your mind**, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
- **A mind set on the Spirit ...** (Romans 8:5–8 ESV) For those who live

according to the flesh set their **minds** on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit **set their minds on the things of the Spirit**. 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but **to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace**. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

- **The mind of Christ ...**
(1 Corinthians 2:14–16 ESV) The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. 15 The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. 16 “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” **But we have the mind of Christ.**
- **The mind of Christ in humility and service ...**
(Philippians 2:4–5 ESV) Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 **Have this mind** among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.
- **A secure and fearless mind ...**
(2 Thessalonians 2:2 ESV) **Not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed**, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.
- **A humble mind ...**
(1 Peter 3:8 ESV) Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and **a humble mind**.

HE WILL NOT HAVE THIS MIND ...

- **An immoral, degraded mind ...**
(Romans 1:28 ESV) And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.
- **A mind that follows the course of this world ...**
(Ephesians 2:2–3 ESV) In which you once

walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

- **A mind that is alienated and hostile toward God ...**
(Colossians 1:21 ESV) And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds.
- **An arrogant, sensuous mind ...**
(Colossians 2:18 ESV) Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind.
- **A morally corrupt mind that is entirely lacking the truth ...**
(1 Timothy 6:4–5 ESV) He is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, 5 and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.
- **A corrupted mind that keeps you in your foolishness and apart from salvation ...**
(2 Timothy 3:7–9 ESV) Always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. 8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. 9 But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.