

## Wives, Be Subject To Your Husbands

**Colossians 3:18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.**

**Wives.** *Vocative plural* from Greek *gune* plus the *definite article*: The wives---referring to women who are married.

### **Be subject**

- I. The Greek Verb for Subjection: *Present middle imperative* of the Greek verb *hupotasso*.
  - A. Which means to place under in an orderly fashion. This word is so involved it covers four columns in one Greek lexicon and seven columns in another.
  - B. It means ‘to subject to,’ ‘to put into submission to,’ ‘to be or made subject,’ ‘to submit oneself.’
  - C. It is a strong military term noting submission in the ranks.
  - D. The word itself can refer to voluntary or involuntary submission.
  - E. In classical Greek this word or its cognates is found in lists expressing rules on ethical standards and appropriate levels of subordination.
  - F. The *middle voice* reflects the subject acting in some way upon himself and this may be voluntary or involuntary, as one submitting out of fear.

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- G. It is used in this way in both Classical and New Testament Greek.
- H. In the New Testament it is often used of submission to Jesus Christ, the subjection to one another and subjection to authorities recognized by Jesus Christ. Example: God subjects all things unto Jesus Christ.

**Eph. 1:22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,**

This must be understood along with

**1 Cor. 15:28 When (Millennial rule) all things are subjected to Him, (Aorist Passive Subjunctive – all things receive being in subjection to Him) then the Son Himself also will be subjected (future middle) to the One who subjected (Aorist Active Participle) all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.**

A strong principle learned here is that by being in subjection, we glorify Jesus Christ and by His putting all things in subjection to God the Father, He glorifies God the Father.

- I. So, ladies, by putting yourself in subjection to your husband you exalt him, that is, you show others that this man with whom you are married is special and is to be respected by others in the family and outside of the family. You see ladies,

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by subjecting yourselves to your husbands, not only are you subjecting yourselves to Jesus Christ, but you are revealing to others that you are married to a very special and wonderful man. If you do not subject yourselves to your husbands, not only are you rebelling against Jesus Christ, but you are also saying to others, my husband is not to be respected or thought of in an especially good way.

J. You see, people, the way we glorify Jesus Christ in our daily lives is to subject ourselves to His authority over our daily lives.

II. The divine institution of marriage is for both believers and unbelievers. But, taking marriage to its highest level, the union is described in terms of Jesus Christ and the Church. Having said this, the wife of the unbeliever is to submit to her husband. If she desires to understand why, then she is to consult the Word of God. There are three passages using our verb in describing marriage relationships, specifically between the wife and her husband.

A. Ephesians 5:22

**Ephesians 5:22 Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord.** (here the verb is understood from verse 21) **and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.** (Here we have the *present middle participle* of our verb *hupotasso*.) **Be subject to one another in reverence for Christ.**

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The command for the husband will cause a wife to desire to submit to her husband.

**Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body.**

**Ephesians 5:24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.**

Not just when it suits them, not just when it pleases them, not just when they want to submit, not just in sex, not just in economics, not just in social issues or family issues but *in everything!* Both the husband and the wife are to submit to the authority of Jesus Christ over them and to imitate Him in their marriage.

B. Col. 3:18

**Colossians 3:18 wives be subject to your husbands, as is fitting to the Lord (That is as is pleasing or proper for a servant of the Lord.)**

C. 1 Peter 3:1

**1 Peter 3:1 In the same way,** (same way as what or who? Chapter 2:21-25 teaches of the submission of Jesus Christ to the authority of

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God, His Father, even to dying for sinful man...now..) **in the same way** (as Christ submitted even to shame) **you wives, be submissive** (*present middle participle* of our verb) **to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,** (OK, ladies here is a fair warning to you single ladies...even if you marry a tyrant, you are still to submit to him. There is no 'out clause' if you don't love him or if he treats you wrongly. You are under obligation to Jesus Christ, more than to your husband.)

**1 Peter 3:2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.** (You know what 'chaste' is about. In context, your innocence. You are not to blame for the way he is mistreating you, yet you submit to his authority, as your husband.)

**1 Peter 3:3 Your adornment must not be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses;**

**1 Peter 3:4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart,** (Hopefully he will see it and be

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changed by your inner beauty.) **with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.**

**1 Peter 3:5 For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands;**

III. Submission of the wife in marriage.

In consideration of the divine institution of marriage this means that the woman, now the wife, would submit in the sense of voluntarily submitting her love, her soul, and her body to her husband.

- A. When a woman makes a mistake, usually hastily, and marries an abusive man, she still is under the same obligation. This is why it is so important that young girls be taught by their parents what to look for and what to 'look out' for in men. Because of her own free will, she said yes to the tyrant to be her authority in life. She is under his authority, like it or not. She had a choice. Therefore, young ladies, wait until you have some good sense about people and know how to make decisions as unto the Lord.
- B. For the Christian girl, her first priority is her relationship with the Lord.

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- C. Regardless of whether it is a good or bad marriage it is still part of the divine institution.
- D. Under God, the husband is in the authority in the divine institution of marriage, the wife is subordinate good or bad.
- E. Once you are married, you are under the authority of the man. Each woman should ask herself this question before marriage: ‘Do I want to surrender my freedoms to this man for the rest of my life?’ Unfortunately, in our society, a multitude of women, Christians and non-Christians, decide they do not want to surrender their freedom and choose to live in sin out of marriage with some man. Living in this sinful life is just as rebellious against Jesus Christ as a wife not submitting to her husband.
- F. There is an epidemic around the world, not just the USA. That is an epidemic of *loneliness*. And the experts have overlooked the fundamental cause of this epidemic: the breakdown of the institution of marriage: men and women not wanting to commit to marriage. Therefore, they find their lives lonely! No one to confide to, no one who truly knows them or no one they truly know. They may even have children, but they are not joined together as God designed in the institution of marriage. God did not design nor create mankind to be alone, to be hermits. He designed and created mankind to need *meaningful relationships* in the divine institution of marriage and family. *Relationships* that cause us to feel known and understood and loved with that knowledge. In a recent study

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of 20,000 people by the health insurance company Cigna, about 47 percent of respondents reported often feeling alone or left out. Thirteen percent said there were zero people who knew them well. All this *loneliness leads to drug and alcohol addictions*. Again, what the report does not grasp is the decline in marriages in USA.

- G. Always remember when the wife came under the authority of her husband: after she ate of the forbidden tree and convinced her husband to eat of the forbidden tree.

**Gen. 3:16 To the woman He said, “I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you.”**

- H. If you marry the man God has designed for your soul and body and spirit, this is a very wonderful relationship. This is one of the greatest things in the world. He will honor you, love you, protect you, provide for you and be a spiritual leader for you. God designed it to be so! Just because some guy makes all the right noises and asks you to marry him, be on guard! Be sure you are in the plan of God for you.
- I. The Greek word ‘to submit’ refers to the woman responding to the love of the man. Can you submit to the way he loves? Does he submit to the Word of God? Do you like the way he treats you, when you upset him? In this respect ladies,

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deciding on a man is like buying a house. You are wise if you look at the house in the midst of a storm. So, how does he act in adverse circumstances? How does he treat his own mother? How does he treat your mother?

- J. Here is the danger: many wives do not love their husbands, nor do they like the way he loves them and they use this as an excuse to refuse to submit to his authority. You do not have the right before God or your Savior-friend Jesus Christ to refuse to submit to his authority. The Word of God says he is in authority.
  
- K. In our society today, many ladies are independently wealthy or have inherited a wealth of money. Now she wants to marry. This presents all kinds of problems when the wife makes more money than the husband. There are not hard fast rules. Why not? Because the husband does not have authority over the life of his wife. He cannot take her life.

He does not have authority over her liberty. He cannot tell her what her spiritual life must be. Yes, he is the spiritual head of the marriage, but he cannot dictate what she is to believe or not believe, even God gives us that freedom. He is not to dictate how she is to vote, she has liberty before God and in this nation.

He cannot rule over her property. Before they marry, they must decide between themselves and before the Lord is she is going to put her property under his authority and if he is

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going to put his property under her provision. Today in America, ‘pre-nuptial agreements’ are very popular. While I personally do not like them, there is nothing anti-God or anti-biblical. The man and the woman should decide these things before they marry. They should sit quietly, just the two of them in prayer and seeking the will God, talk with each other. For example, she may say something like, I received this wealth from my former husband and this wealth is to go to the children of that marriage. In the final analysis they must seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit. There are no fast rules except the leading of the Holy Spirit.

IV. Termination of submission. (not death).

Here we shall begin with Samuel Rutherford’s book *Lex Rex* (rule by Law).

- A. Defense by protest or legal action,
- B. Flight—in our study this would take us into the biblical teaching on divorce,
- C. Use of force as a last resort, if necessary, to defend oneself or the church today. The Declaration of Independence also recognizes this action against established government.

But Christian beliefs also recognize this stand: that Christians have the moral duty to stand against evil and injustice. The history of Christian martyrs is a history of those who rebelled against established authority, that demanded they renounce their faith in Jesus Christ. The study of the Church of Smyrna in Revelation 2 is a biblical recognition of this right.

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The actions of the midwives who refused to kill baby Moses in Exodus 1. Moses overcoming Pharaoh, Daniel defied King Darius, etc. So, when a wife can stand no longer the authority of her husband, or he is demanding she be involved in sinful acts like joining a ‘swinging group’, there are biblical steps she can take as a last resort, under the doctrine of divorce.

**The wives be subject to your husbands as is fitting in the Lord.** The *present tense* is used with the verb to submit to reveal what is to exist because of the institution of marriage: a life-time action by the wife. So many Christian wives like to deceive themselves in that they will submit if it suits them but find some reasoning for not submitting to their husbands. The *present tense*, ladies, says you are to submit continually.

The *middle voice* emphasizes the agent producing the action. Here, the woman submits to her husband from her own free will. And it is to her advantage. She is benefited by submitting to her husband for her own protection and welfare.

Now we come to the *imperative mood*. This is a command to every wife from God, from Jesus Christ. We have studied the *imperative mood* many times. Every husband needs to remember the *imperative mood*, not as a command but as a warning to him. The *imperative mood* in the Greek is the furthest removed from reality. It is given so that we will all know what the will of God is in our lives in various circumstances, and so that we will rely by faith on His Spirit for the fulfillment of the *imperative*.

**To your husbands.** The Greek word here is in the plural for each wife has her own unique man as her husband. There are two Greek words for

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man. *Anthropos* is the more common word for man, but it is not used here. Here we have *aner* which covers some 14 columns in one Greek Lexicon. We shall simplify it by translating it ‘husbands’ a man unique to you, his wife as to no other woman.

**As is fitting in the Lord.** OK ladies, wives, next time you think about not submitting to the man you have just married or been married to for some 30-40 or more years, think about this all-important phrase.

**as is fitting in the Lord.** this starts out with that all-important Greek adverb – *as, just as*.

**Is.** The *imperfect* here refers to what occurs continually.

**as it continually.** Regardless of the circumstances ladies.

**as is continually fitting or proper in the Lord.** That is *in your relationship with the Lord!* You cannot claim to be in fellowship with the Lord and not be submitting to your husband which is the custom of many wives. The Lord is over here....and their husbands, well, they are over there! Sorry ladies, it does not work that way. If you are in fellowship with the Lord, you will be submissive to your husbands. We don’t go about stealing, or committing adultery etc. and claiming we are in proper relationship with the Lord. Well, neither can a wife be non-submissive to her husband and in proper relationship with the Lord.

So, wives, this is not a decision about your husband.

This is not a decision about submitting to your husband.

This is a decision about your relationship with the Lord.

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This is a decision about submitting to the Lord.

*Summary about marriage and the woman*

1. Your marriage with a man is subordinate to your relationship with your Savior-friend, Jesus the Christ.
2. Before any woman makes a decision about marriage, she should first make a decision about her relationship with the Lord.
3. Whether it is marriage, or some work or some mission field or even the military, every woman (as well as every man) must decide about their relationship with the Lord. Do you desire to serve the Lord in whatever you do? If the answer is affirmative, then she needs to decide about furthering her relationship with the Lord. She should ask, if I marry this man, will I be able to continue in my relationship with the Lord? Will I be able to continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of my Lord Jesus Christ? That is in the study of His Word? In most cases, a wise woman will be able to discern if he is truly interested in the studying of the Word of God, where I enjoy it, or is he just going along to get something else he wants?

If the answer is no, there is your answer to the marriage.

If the answer is questionable, then you need to find out with certainty the answer.

Ladies, there is nothing more wonderful than serving the Lord with someone you love and who loves you. To be married with someone you will pray with daily. Someone you will study His Word with, share what you see in the Scriptures. Be a helpmate corresponding to him and he to you in all things. Will there be difficulties

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throughout this marriage? You can count on it. But, if you have married the right one, when it gets touchy or tough you come together in prayer and with open Bibles and agreeable souls.

4. Having made your decision about your relationship with the Lord, you will have no problem in submitting to the authority of your husband. You will submit as is fitting to your relationship with the Lord.
5. Every lady must be on guard not to be deceived either by their own libido or by the stimulating personality or by the superficial handsomeness of the perspective groom. Age will change all this, and you want to be sure there is still a solid foundation for your love relation. If you are a young lady, maybe a teenager (Lord help you) you must break through all the superficialities of life. Don't be swayed by surface appearance, he is handsome or a muscle type or a stimulating personality. These will not last over the years. Does he love the Lord as you do? Does he desire to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ as you do, from the word of God? When we come to the man's responsibility, we will strongly encourage him to look beyond the glitter, beyond the superficial and know the heart of the woman he plans to ask to marry him.
6. Therefore ladies, make sure you penetrate beyond the surface of the man you intend to marry. You must find out what he is really like, because in marriage he is your marriage commander for life. And Oh, ladies, there are men who can conceal who they really are, but if you walk with the Lord in the power of His Spirit and in His

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Word, He, will cause you to see what this deceitful person is really like. But you have to have your eyes open!

7. If you say yes to the man God has designed for your soul and body and spirit, it will be for a lifetime. You just think you love him at the point of marriage, at the marriage altar, but you will find that after submitting to his authority over a period of years your love and respect for him will only intensify. Your love, your relationship will get better and better, deeper and deeper as life goes on for the two of you. You will go through good times and bad times holding on to each other. You just thought you were in love at the point of marriage, but you are going to discover that was nothing compared to what you have now, to the love and respect you have now. He will have lifted you up before the Lord and before others as the grand lady you are in your soul. And there is nothing more beautiful, more attractive more wonderful than a woman being lifted up by the man she has submitted her life and love to over the years. God has designed marriage for the fulfillment, the protection, the blessings of the woman. Two people, husband and wife, each having an Inherited Sin Nature, each having a human spirit and each growing in their relationship with Jesus Christ in His Word, finding real enjoyment in their marital relationship. Together they glorify Jesus Christ.

Together they encourage others in their married lives.

Next, we will examine what the Word of God has to say about the husband.

Cigna study on loneliness: <https://www.cigna.com/newsroom/news-releases/2018/new-cigna-study-reveals-loneliness-at-epidemic-levels-in-america>