

Rebellious Wives and Slacker Husbands

By Dr. John R. Rice

This book is a classic. I am not printing the entire book here, but a large portion of it. Originally this book was published in 1971, it is a prophetic clarion call to the rebellious end-time generation that desires to rebel against God's order for the family structure. This incredible man of God has placed his feet firmly upon the word of God and boldly told the truth, even though it may not be a popular message in the wicked days that we live. I want to honor him by putting this teaching in this book. I am thankful to have spiritual fathers in the faith that have blazed a trail for those to come after them. I personally shared this teaching with some under my ministry that needed to read this. It has had a powerful affect on their marriages! I am so thankful for giants of the faith that refused to compromise the word of God to go along with what is "politically correct."

If you want to get copies of this booklet by Dr. John Rice, you can send an email to 102657.3622@compuserve.com or call 615-893-6700. May God bless you as you read this.

"Should a wife obey her husband? Be in subjection to him? Should she submit to him as if he were God? Should a husband have authority over his wife as a master does over a servant? Should women even reverence their husbands, obeying them, and calling them Lord? The Bible does command a woman to do all of this, as we will show from many scriptures! But the modern woman says, "NO!" The feminist movement has insisted on woman's equality with man in every respect. Women have invaded fields of endeavor once given over entirely to men. Women, aided by preachers and reformers, sought and secured the right to vote and hold office. Many religious denominations have women preachers. Church work- from singing in the choir to financing the church and doing the Bible teaching- is done principally by women. Men sit passively in an occasional service, help pay the bills, and are politely indifferent as to whether the world goes to hell or not!

Women Seek Equality with Husbands

In marriage the same spirit prevails. Women expect to have as much to say on nearly any question to be decided as their husbands. And when it comes to the rearing of the children, household problems, discipline, or expenses, they expect to have the deciding voice.

The average modern woman would answer the questions at the beginning of this article with an emphatic "NO!" She would be seconded by the mass of educators, politicians and preachers.

Even the devout church woman these days does not know that the Bible explicitly commands her to obey her husband. On this subject preacher have either remained

silent or have made it a theme of silly jesting from the pulpit, while they either do not believe in or are afraid to preach the unmistakable commands of God's word concerning it. Preachers usually by choice omit 'obey' from the marriage ceremony, with the general approval of women, and the men remaining silent.

Since the authority of the husband and father in the home has been taken away, the sense of responsibility which men had in other days toward the care of their families has rapidly decreased.

If a woman does not expect to obey her husband, it is also true that her husband does not expect to support this wife. There are more cases of wife and child desertion than ever before. Now men do not take authority over their wives nor do women submit to their husbands. Not being heads of their homes, men do not feel responsible to protect and provide for their families.

Failure of modern Homes and Marriage

The modern world has boasted of its wisdom in forsaking the old standards of marriage and the home, yet the modern marriage has failed. In the United States there is one divorce for every two marriages. Hundreds of thousands of children every year are orphaned by divorce. Certainly these homes have failed!

Multitudes of other homes produce boys and girls who are turned into the world without any discipline, any moral or religious training that would make them even good citizens, much less devout and happy Christians.

From these unsuccessful homes, whether broken by divorce or not, come the youthful derelicts who crowd our juvenile courts and reform schools and even our penitentiaries with juvenile and teenage criminals.

Besides these, year after year homes now pour into society a host of young people who are undisciplined, unruly, immoral, irreligious rebels against law and convention. The marriage and home patterned after the modern standard has failed.

Why Marriages Fail

The Bible has definite and detailed instructions concerning marriage and the relationships of husband and wife. God made man, then made woman to be a helpmeet for man. He performed the first marriage ceremony. He placed man as the head of the home. Since that time, no home has been successful and happy which has violated God's plain command.

The failure of modern marriage is caused by failure to follow God's plan for the home. Where a man disobeys God's plain command about his duty as head of the home, and where a woman refuses to obey her husband, as God commanded, and usurps

authority, which God forbade, sin reigns in that home, and sin always brings heartache and trouble.

I. Man to be the Head of the Wife

When God created the world, He put Adam in charge before the woman was created. Eve was created not as an equal partner but as a helpmeet, an assistant, under Adam's authority. "In Genesis 2:18 we read, 'An the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.' In 1 Peter 3:7 the Holy Spirit calls the wife 'the weaker vessel,' though she is heir with the man of the 'grace of life.' It was Eve who was deceived by the Devil, he taking advantage of her weaker nature. The first sin for which God rebuked Adam in Genesis 3:17 was 'because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife.' Concerning this very matter, Paul was inspired to write Timothy in 1 Timothy 2:11-14: 'Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach nor have authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.'

God's plan is that the husband be head of the wife. He even likens that to the authority of Christ over the church, in Ephesians 5:23: 'For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and he is the savior of the body.' There could be no more positive nor emphatic statement than this: the husband is the head of the wife, the head of the home.

The above scripture illustrates the position of the husband as head of the wife by the position of Christ as the head of the church. The husband is head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. Also the man is over the wife as Christ is over the man and as God is the head of Christ, says 1 Corinthians 11:3: 'But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.'

For this reason, the scripture continues, the woman ought to wear long hair as a covering for her head, symbolizing that she is subject to her husband. Verse 15 then says that 'if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her,' while man should not have long hair since there is no one between him and Christ. Verse 7 says, 'A man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.' Woman is the glory of the man, and verse 9 says that the woman was created for man. This is God's plan and good for the happiness and welfare of both men and women. In the very nature of man and woman, God has written that man should be the head of the home and a woman secondary to him in authority and subject to him. God fitted man, body, mind and heart, to have the chief authority and responsibility. He fitted woman, 'the weaker vessel,' to take a place as helpmeet. To change this order violates the laws of nature as well as the command of God. That is why homes today are usually unhappy and cannot have the favor of God.

II. Man's Responsibility to God

The responsibility that goes with man's position in the home is appalling enough to scare any man when he realizes what God expects of him. In every home which is not a Bible kind of home, the husband should be blamed, first of all, since he is accountable before God! If the home is not a success, the husband and father is primarily responsible. After the fall in the Garden of Eden, God made man responsible for the providing of food for his family. It was to Adam, not to Eve that God said in Genesis 3:17-19: 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.'

Wife and children should be what help they can in earning bread and in the duties and labor of the home, as was the good woman of Proverbs 31:10-31. Yet God expects man to take on his broad shoulders the principal care of providing for his own. From 1 Timothy 5:4,8 we see that applies even to the widows of his family.

1. Man Should Lead in Religious Matters

From one end of the Bible to the other it is clear that the husband should be the high priest of the home. When God came to the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day after man's sin, He called, 'Adam, Adam, where art thou?' The Lord properly held man accountable, though the woman took the lead in the sin.

In Numbers, chapter 30, the Lord clearly teaches that even a woman's duty to God is controlled by her father or husband. The father, or husband if she is married, has a right to set aside or to establish any vow a woman may have made to God. Then the husband, not the wife, is accountable for any sin in the matter. In verses 13-15 we read:

'Every vow, and every binding oath to afflict the soul, her husband may establish it, or her husband may make it void. But if her husband altogether hold his peace at her from day to day; then he establisheth all her vows, or all her bonds, which are upon her: he confirmeth them, because he held his peace at her in the day that he heard them, because he held his peace at her in the day that he heard them. But if he shall any ways make them void after that he hath heard them; then he shall bear her iniquity.'

In 1 Peter 3:1 the Lord commands a wife to submit even to her unsaved husband. And in Ephesians 5:22, 24 wives are commanded to submit and to be subject to their own husbands 'as unto the Lord' and 'in everything.' First Corinthians 14:34, 35 clearly states that even in the church women are commanded to be under obedience to their husbands and to ask them concerning religious matters at home.

'Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.'

God has plainly commanded men to lead in matters of religion.

2. Joshua Chose the Religion for His Whole Household

We have a remarkable example of a godly man in Joshua. You will be thrilled to read again his last charge to the men and officers of Israel as recorded in Joshua, chapter 24. Notice that his address was especially to the heads of families and officers: 'And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.' To these Joshua gave a great address showing how God had brought them from Egypt, through the wilderness wanderings, into the land of Canaan, with a mighty hand and great blessings; and he urged them to serve the Lord. In verse 15 he came to the great climax of his address: 'And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom he will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: BUT AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL SERVE THE LORD!'

Joshua spoke for himself: "I will serve the Lord!" For his wife he said 'She will serve the Lord!' For his children he said, "They will serve the Lord!" If there were grandchildren living under his roof, he said, 'They will serve the Lord!' Joshua said in effect: 'You heads of families choose for yourself and your families, and I will choose for mine. I will serve the Lord, and I will see that my family serves the Lord!' God give us today men like Joshua! Men who will serve God themselves, then will take on their shoulders and on their consciences the responsibility before God and man for the religious teaching and guidance of their families! This is what God requires of the head of the family.

3. Abraham Commanded His Household Even in Religion

Abraham was a friend of God, a man whom God could trust. When the Lord started to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, he said: 'And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? FOR I KNOW HIM, THAT HE WILL COMMAND HIS CHILDREN AND HIS HOUSEHOLD AFTER HIM, AND THEY SHALL KEEP THE WAY OF THE LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.'---Gen 18:17-19

Abraham commanded his children and his household after him so that they kept the way of the Lord! And for that, God blessed him and told him what was in his heart. God give us heads of families like Abraham!

4. Eli, an Example of a Slacker Father

The sons of Eli, the priest of God, 'knew not the Lord' (1Sam 2:12). They were covetous and adulterers and Eli knew all about it and rebuked them lightly (Vs. 22-25). However, since Eli did not put a stop to the iniquity of his sons as a father can and ought to do, the Lord pronounced a curse against him and his family: 'In that day I will

perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.' 1Sam 3:12-13

Whether he wishes it so or not, a man is responsible for his family. All the lying excuses will not change the fact that a man can raise his family and teach them, lead them, discipline them so they will serve the Lord. In Proverbs 22:6 the Lord says, 'Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.' The Lord did not say that a child properly reared would come back to this father's way and a righteous life; He says that the child will never leave it even 'when he is old' or grown and out from under the father's care! Fathers are responsible for their children, even responsible for the welfare of their eternal souls. Children are to obey and honor both father and mother, but God certainly holds the father first in responsibility. This responsibility for teaching and rearing children to serve the Lord is so great that God commanded his people to be earnestly diligent about it.

'And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on they gates' Deut 6:6-9 A similar passage is found in Deuteronomy 11:18-21.

5. Fathers to Have Rebellious Sons Stoned Under Moses' Law

So rigid was God's requirement that father should rear their children in strict obedience and righteousness that he commanded that rebellious sons be publically stoned! The father himself, aided by the mother, was to seize the son who would not obey, bring him before the elders of the city and have him stoned to death!

'If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; and they shall say unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elder so his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.' Deut. 21:18-21

We are not now under the strict penalties of the Mosaic law, but this should illustrate how seriously in earnest and how conscientiously diligent a father must be in the rearing of his children.

6. God Wants Strong Men, Not Weaklings, Heads of Families

How much God expects of the head of a family! He is to be like a god in his home, verily a high priest, a prophet of God. The blame for the broken homes, untrained and undisciplined children, immodestly dressed and fashion-mad wives—the whole train of evils which curse our American civilization must be placed upon degenerate, weakling men, slackers, shirkers, quitters, men not willing to take the place of manhood and bear the burdens which God lays on them as heads of families. Man, if your home is wrong, you are wrong. If your daughter turns out to be immoral and your son a criminal, you are to blame in God's sight. If your family does not live within its income, if they do not serve the Lord in sincerity and in truth, the responsibility is yours. If they have missed the blessings of the family altar, prayer in the home, thanks at the table, old-fashioned Bible discipline, God holds you to account. If you have not won your wife and children to the Lord and to follow him in daily life, you have failed your duty.

How great is the honor of a husband a father, and how heavy his responsibilities! Any man not willing to take the place which God assigned to the husband and father is not fit to marry a good woman nor to bring helpless children into this world. If one reads this who is not born again and a successful every day Christian, then for the sake of your family and for Jesus' sake, get right with God today lest you lead your whole family to utter ruin and away from God! Only God can make a man what he must be in order to be a good husband and father; so seek his help now, if that be your lot today.

7. God Commands Wives First, Then Husbands

Every time God gives orders to husbands and wives about their treatment of each other, He speaks to wives first, then to husbands. When He commands fathers and children about their duties to each other, He commands children first, then fathers. He commands the servants first, then their masters; subjects first, then their rulers. God wants no excuses left to a subject who does not want to obey his ruler; a servant, his master, a child, his father, or a wife, her husband. When God speaks to people about their duties to him, he speaks first to men. Where he speaks to people concerning their duties to others, he speaks first to wives, then to husbands. See how this worked out from Ephesians 5:22 to Ephesians 6:9. See the same thing from Colossians 3:18 to Colossians 4:1; likewise in 1 Timothy 6:1-2. That rule if followed every place in the Bible where duties of wives and husbands to each other are discussed. Read carefully Genesis 3:16-17; Ephesians 5:22-25; Colossians 3:18-19, and 1 Peter 3:1-7.

God wants children to obey their parents even if the parents are wicked. Servants are to obey their masters even if they are sometimes unkind. Citizens are to obey the laws of their country even though they be administered by wicked and corrupt men. Likewise, God expects women to obey their husbands, good or bad, saved or unsaved. Nowhere in the Bible is a wife's duty to her husband conditioned on the kind of character he has, or the way he treats her. This divine order in giving commands to men and women could not be an accident; it is evidently meant to leave those who should obey without any excuse for not doing so.

III. WIVES TO 'SUBMIT TO,' 'BE SUBJECT TO,' 'BE IN SUBJECTION TO,' BE OBEDIENT TO', AND EVEN 'REVERENCE' THEIR HUSBANDS

If women knew and cared about what God expects their attitude to be toward their husbands they would be much more careful in accepting him, and marriage would last longer and be happier. God's word uses stronger language than any man would dare use of his own choice on the same subject. In fact, God's language is so strong that most preachers, in their cowardly submission to modern tendencies, ignore it or explain it away as fit only for other times or only under ideal circumstances. We preachers must answer to God for the way we preach his word, so I give you what he says about a wife's duty toward her husband.

1. Wives, Submit 'As Unto the Lord'

Study and scriptures given carefully and remember that the words are God's words, not mine, nor any man's. Ephesians 5:22-25, 28, 33 is one of the clearest passages on the duty of a wife:

'22. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. 24. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;.....28. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.....33. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.'

Wives should submit themselves to their own husbands 'as unto the Lord' (vs. 22). A woman should obey her husband as if it were the Lord she were obeying, for in truth it is. That means a cheerful obedience which comes from a loving and an obedient heart. To obey her husband should be a part of a Christian wife's religion. She submits to him 'as unto the Lord.'

2. Wives to 'Be Subject...in Everything'

Verse 24 quoted above says that 'as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands IN EVERYTHING.' It is true that every man, woman and child, every servant and citizen are to put God first and obey him first. But here the scripture seems to take for granted that there will never be a case where God will call upon a wife to disobey her husband. Women are to be subject to their husbands just as the church is subject to Christ- even in everything! A woman is to be subject to her husband even in church and in religious knowledge, as we learn in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. Wives sometimes think they please God by spending time in routine church work when their husbands want them to attend to duties at home. I have known numerous cases where wives sought to give money to the Lord's cause without the husband's consent, sometimes stealing the money from his clothes to tithe. This was wrong

according to Numbers 30:13-15. If the husband forbids it, he is responsible, not she. Wives are to be subject to their own husbands in everything, says the word of God. In her body the wife is to be subject to her husband, even as she is to have the freedom of his body (1 Cor 7:3-5). A wife is to be subject to her husband in the way she directs the house, spends the money committed to her, controls the children, the way she dresses, the company she keeps- in everything.

3. Wife to 'Reverence Her Husband'

Ephesians 5:33 even commands that 'the wife see that she reverence her husband.' The Bible does not say that men deserve reverence nor are worth of it, but the Lord does teach that wives should give it. In this connection see 1 Peter 3:5-6:

'5. 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: 6. Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.'

Subjection of wife to husband is not a slavish cringing, nor a sullen submission to what one cannot avoid. Sarah loved Abraham, admired him so much that, queenly woman that she was, she was not ashamed to call him 'Lord.' She was in subjection to him with the kind of reverence God commands Christian wives to have; and Sarah is here held up as a great example to wives who would please the Lord and have happy homes. A study of the scriptures will reveal the companionship of Abraham and Sarah as about the most ideal and happy in the entire Bible. No other woman ever came between them; they never differed over their children; they were sweethearts until death. Happy is the woman who feels toward her husband as Sarah did toward hers, and who can obey him with happy reverence. If you, Mrs. Modern Wife, cannot feel so toward your man, then do not be surprised if you never have the love and fellowship which Sarah had with Abraham and the respect and reverence of your children which Sarah had from Isaac.

4. Husbands to 'Rule'; Wives to 'Be Obedient'

Other Bible commands about the wife's duty toward her husband are as follows: 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.' –Col 3:18

Titus 2:4. 'That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, 5. To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.'

Genesis 3: 16. 'Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.'

God uses strong terms here in saying to the wife, 'Your husband shall rule over you.' He says that older women should teach young wives to be obedient to their husbands, instead of encouraging frivolous and spendthrift wives to be rebellious, causing break-up of the home. God's word is explicit, and women who long to be happy, to have the real love of their husbands which will last down to old age, and the respect of their children and neighbors, which are not accorded to modern, pleasure-mad wives, should take to heart these commands from God's word.

5. Excuses of Rebellious Wives

People always have plausible excuses for not doing right. Women give many reasons for not being subject to their husbands as God commands. It is often insisted that, in these modern days of liberty and equality, no woman can keep her self-respect in a home and not be counted equal with her husband in authority. But the same woman who objects to being under the authority of her husband attends clubs of which she is not president. She works in a church of which she is not the pastor. She is a citizen of a government where others rule over her. Even the policeman on the corner can command her to stop or go, turn left or right, or may even hail her to court where she is as helpless as a child before the law.

Neither can men avoid authority over them. Members of a club, the church, the citizens often are as good, or wife, or well-pleasing as the president of the club, the pastor of the church, or the judge of the court. Those who work for salaries or wages must take order from those in authority, and rational people are happy in doing so.

The rebellion of a wife against her husband is exactly the same in spirit as the rebellion of a disobedient child against his father, of an incorrigible pupil against the teacher, or of a criminal against the government; it is lawlessness, pure and simple. In any government, business corporation, or home, there must be those in authority. Even if everybody wanted to do right, as long as people are frail, erring mortals, there will be disagreements as to what is right. Someone must decide. So God has appointed the husband and father as the head, and the wife, the weaker vessel, as his helpmeet.

6. Wives sometimes more Intelligent than Husbands

Sometimes a wife has a better education than her husband. It frequently happens that she has natural abilities which her husband does not have. Sometimes when a girl leaves a good job to marry a man with a smaller salary, naturally she feels superior. She never should have married a man whom she did not love enough to obey. In fact, she should not marry any man if she does not love God enough to do right by him. 'Don't you think women are as good as men?' That is a question often asked. Certainly, they are usually as good, sometimes worse, but many times better than their husbands. But if one who reads this is a good woman, then she will want to do right, for good wives take a wife's proper place. If you are a better Christian than your husband, then the best way to prove it is by obeying God's plain commands concerning him and the home.

7. Christian Wives Are to Obey Unsaved Husbands

The question constantly arises about a Christian wife with an unsaved husband. The Lord plainly answers this question, too, in 1 Peter 3:1-2:

‘1. Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; 2. While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.’

Here is the case of a husband who will not obey the word of God, will not listen to the Gospel and has not been saved. The Lord says for a wife to be in subjection to such a husband and that is the way to win him to Christ.

You wives who weep over your lost husbands and who plead and pray without success for their salvation, it may be that by your disobedient heart you have blocked the answer to your own prayers and made it so God will not listen to your pleading. The kind of religion which will make a wife modest, unselfish, lovely and obedient, which God commands her to be- with that ‘ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price,’ as Sarah had, who obeyed Abraham, calling him lord (1 Pet 3:4-6)—that kind of home religion in a wife has had more to do with the salvation of many a lost man than any amount of public preaching of the Gospel.

People ask foolish, theoretical questions here. “What if a husband should command his wife to get drunk?’ etc., etc.,

We may be sure that will not happen to a truly Christian woman who loves and obeys her husband. Husbands respect such wives and their religion! That is the reason God says such a course will win the husband when the preaching of the word fails. Wives should be in subjection to their husbands, even unsaved husbands. It is God’s responsibility to make the Bible work, and I know he always makes it work if we take it at face value and follow it with a sincere heart. Once a lady wrote asking me, ‘Should a certain wife have told a lie, as her husband had ordered?’ But that is not the place for a wife to begin obeying her husband. If she had begun, as a matter of Christian duty, obeying him before this, then you may be sure God would have brought to pass his promise of 1 Peter 3:1-2: the husband would have been won by the wife. The scripture does not say a wife can suddenly on some matter of sin obey her husband and be blameless, if she had not been obeying him before. And if she had been obeying him before, then he would not have commanded his wife to get drunk, or to lie, or do any other sin.

IV. ‘HUSBANDS LOVE YOUR WIVES, EVEN AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH, AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR IT’

God’s standards are high. In the same scripture where He commands women to be subject to their husbands in everything, he commands the husband to love his wife, even as Christ loved the church! Notice the following verses in Chapter 5 of Ephesians:

Verse 25. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Verse 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

Verse 33. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Colossians 3:19 says the same thing, that husbands are to love their wives, then adds, 'And be not bitter against them.' In 1 Peter 3:7 the husband is exhorted to treat the wife with that kindness and honor Christians should show to weaker ones. Notice the words: 'Likewise, 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.' Husband, your wife is a part of yourself, so love her as you love your own body, love her with the unselfish compassion that Christ has for his church. That standard is so high that it should make everyone of us very humble as we try to be good husbands. If the man is stronger, he should be better. If the man has more authority, he should have more responsibility. As the salvation of a sinner and the security of his saints depends on Christ, not on us, so the Lord places more heavily on man the responsibility for a happy home.

1. Men Can Prevent Broken Homes

The man is to 'cleave unto his wife.' Hear the savior quoting from Genesis in Matthew 19:5, 'For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh.' Husbands are to have a pure and tender love for their wives, and a love that looks over the wife's weakness without bitterness. Husbands should love their wives as special gifts from God, helpmeets to make them happy, for 'whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord' (Prov 18:22), and, 'A prudent wife is from the Lord' (Prov 19:14). A husband is to love his wife as the mother of his children being with him 'heirs together of the grace of life' (1Peter 3:7). When a husband loves his wife even as himself and as Christ loved the church, is not bitter against her, give her honor as the weaker vessel and , leaving father and mother, cleaves unto his wife, that home will very rarely be broken.

2. Evils That Follow Wrong Home Live

Happiness lost, Faith Gone, Love Fails. If your home is not right, 'be sure your sin will find you out!' Nothing is truer in God's word than, 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' Disaster, trouble, heartache and ruin follow the home where the wife is rebellious and husband is a slacker, a shirker of responsibility. Such a home cannot be happy. There must be something more than temporary sex attraction, and there can be no real peace and happiness until the question of authority is settled—and settled right. For a wife to have her own way does not make her happy any more than it does a rebellious child, or a lawless citizen. This is another case where the wages of sin is

death—death to happiness and death to all the blessings which God meant should follow marriage and a home. True happiness in marriage is based on faith. The woman who does not trust her husband's judgment and character enough to submit to his will, will not have the happiness which comes from full confidence. Then the husband will not trust completely such a wife who thinks first, not of what is right or best for the home, but of her own selfish will. The companionship of husband and wife is not worth the name when faith and confidence are gone. When happiness and faith are gone, love soon follows them away. A woman will not long continue to love the man for whom she has no respect.

Here is a strange fact: though the Lord many times commands the wife to be subject to her husband, to submit to him, to be obedient to him, even to reverence him, yet there is only one single command that a woman should love her husband! The reason must be that the highest and best love must always inevitably follow this path of duty. The woman who reveres and obeys her husband will find in her heart a deep-seated love which depends not on mere sex attraction, but blossoms out of her own character and position, and is a gift of God! The highest form of married love is possible only in a Bible kind of home. When a husband's love for his wife is based upon her youth, her charm, her beauty, these alas, all too soon fade away; such frivolous love cannot resist the effects of time, temper, poverty, and age. But the woman who is adorned with that beauty of the heart, which does not fail with age, 'even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit,' attracts and makes sure of her husband's unflinching love. A husband cannot but give such a wife not only the thrill of young love and the passion of maturity, but the steadfastness of real respect and admiration through the years. Men and women who take the places God assigned them may expect that reward of virtue, that blessing of God, a love which does not wither when hair turns white nor when bodily passions pass away! But the rebellious wife and the slacker husband give wings to love and speed it away.

Disobedient Children in Discontented, Ungodly Homes. It is not accident that a generation of rebellious wives and irresponsible husbands and disobedient, lawbreaking children should appear in the world at the same time.

A government which cannot put down gangster rule in the United States may expect a continually growing wave of crime, beginning with traffic violations and ending with murders and rape, year after year throughout the United States. One citizen cannot violate the laws with impunity without cultivating a disrespect for law. So it is in the home. The man who cannot rule his wife as God commanded, cannot long command his children. The man who takes a place as merely a money-maker, a necessary evil with no authority, will find that his children laugh at his opinions, disregard his commands and scorn his white hairs when he is old! And where the wife is lawless the children will be lawless. No scheme man can devise can secure the respect and obedience of children like God's plan for a man to be the head of his home, the head over his wife.

Modern woman wants to have her cake and eat it too. One of the pitiful things about her is her failure with her children, her sense of helplessness. How many such women, with their gray hair bobbed and set in the fashion, their faces overly made up, their dresses of immodest cut, assured of themselves, boasting of their independence and equality, are yet scorned and disobeyed by their children! Put this down as an axiom: children do not obey and respect mothers who themselves are disobedient and disrespectful wives! People reap what they sow. There is something in the character of such a rebellious woman that will make her a thorn in the side of her children. She will interfere with their lives, break up their marriages, and hinder the discipline of their children. They will love her, yet despise her.

Let those who do not agree with God's plan, weigh the matter carefully before breaking his plain commands about the home.

Prayer Hindered by Wrong Home Life. In 1 Peter chapter 3, the word of God warn us that the disobedient wife and the husband who does not love and honor his wife, have their prayers hindered. In the first verse we are told that wives will win their husbands to Christ by obeying them, then verse 7 closing the paragraph says, 'likewise 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.'

You pray for lost children and they are not saved; your prayers are hindered because of wrong home life. A wife prays for her husband to be saved, or the husband prays for his wife's health, but your prayers are blocked; an angry God does not listen because of your sins. If every other consideration fails to move the heart of you who read this, then I beg you to get your home right so God can answer your prayers. All of Christian happiness, the salvation of your children, the true prosperity of a Christian home, and the peace of a Christian life depend on keeping these plain commands of God.

3. Come Back to God's Way

If one reads this whose heart is heavy, whose home is unhappy—one whose dreams and plans concerning loved ones and home come toppling about your ears—then come back to God today and let him fix your heart. After all, a happy home is a matter of religion, a matter of being right with God. Why not make confession to each other in the home, start again with family altar, begin against those old-fashion practices of our forefathers which made their happy homes and happy hearts?

Unsaved man, until you let Christ come into your heart, ho can you have the kind of home that the Lord wants you to have? How can you command your children aright until, first of all, you love the Lord and serve him? Why not say with Joshua, 'as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord?' Trust Christ for forgiveness today, call on God for strength to be a real man, and have the Holy Spirit to guide you in your duties in the home today.

May God help you to have all the joys of a happy home, the peace of a good conscience, and the favor of God who hears your prayers because you please him in these matters.