

Colossians Series

[Sun. Sep. 27, 2015] Colossians Series, Col. 3.19 – Craig A. Thurman

<p>Eph.5.23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.</p> <p>Eph. 5.25 Husbands, love ἀγαπάτε your wives,</p> <p>ἐαυτῶν, acc., sing., masc of ἐαυτού; KJV, <i>their, them, you, themselves, yourselves, your own selves, their own, one another, your own, ourselves, his own, our own,</i></p> <p>even as Christ also loved (ἠγάπησε, aor. 1, ind., act.) the church, and gave himself for it (ὑπέρ, in her behalf); 26 That he <i>might sanctify</i></p> <p>ἀγιάσει, 3rd ps, aor. 1, subj., act. of ἀγιάζω, <i>might or should sanctify.</i></p> <p>and <i>cleanse</i> it (referring to His church)</p> <p>καθαρίσας, nom., sing., masc., part., aor.1, act. of καθαρίζω, Or, <i>cleansing.</i></p> <p>with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, (his own body) even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 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.</p>	<p>Col 3:19 Husbands, love ἀγαπάτε [your] wives,</p> <p>and be not bitter against them.</p> <p>So, meaning <i>in this way</i>. An husband <i>ought</i></p> <p>ὀφείλουσιν, 3rd p., pl., pres., ind. of ὀφείλω; KJV, <i>owe, debt, duty, ought, due, must needs, and bound.</i></p> <p>to love his own wife, in this way, as his own body. He is to give himself to provide for all of her welfare.</p> <p>There are some husbands that are disobedient in this respect, in that they have a greater love for father and mother than their own wives. That is neglectful and wrong.</p>	<p>1Pe 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with (house with)</p> <p>συνικοῦντες, nom., pl., masc., part., pres. of συνοικέω, with + dwell, or with housing; cohabitating.</p> <p>[them] according κατά to knowledge,</p> <p>γνώσιν, acc. sing. of γνώσις, mostly, we ought to know how to treat a woman. If we don't know we need to learn.</p> <p>giving (distributing)</p> <p>ἀπονέμοντας, nom., pl., masc., part., pres., act. of ἀπονέμω, ἀπό forth, since + νέμω LXX, Ge. 36.24, <i>tended;</i> Ge. 41.3, <i>fed;</i> 1Ki.(1Sa.)21.8, <i>tending;</i> Hos. 4.16, <i>feed;</i> LXX, ἀπονέμειν, Deu.4.19, <i>distributed.</i></p> <p>honour</p> <p>τιμήν, acc., sing., KJV, <i>price (Mt.27.9), honour (Ro.13.7).</i></p> <p>unto the wife, as unto the weaker (more feeble, 1Co.12.22) vessel,</p> <p>She might be actually be the weaker vessel in this relationship, but be sure to distribute to her her price as you would to a more feeble vessel ... <i>being heirs together</i> ...</p> <p>and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.</p> <p>ἐκκόπτεσθαι, pres., infin., pass. of ἐκκόπτω, ἐκ of, out, from + κόπτω, Mt.11.17, have ... lamented; Mt.21.8, <i>shall mourn;</i> Mk. 11.8, <i>cut down;</i> Lk.8.52; 23.27, <i>bewailed;</i> ἐκκόπτω, KJV, Mt3.10, <i>hewn down;</i> Mt. 5.30, <i>cut down;</i> Mt. 18.8, <i>cut off;</i> Ro.11.24, <i>wert cut down;</i> 2Co.11.12, <i>may cut off.</i></p>
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In our last session the lesson covered the 18th verse of Colossians chapter 3. We shared our present understanding of this topic of the wife's subjection to her own husband. The Scriptures are as clear to show that the wives' subjection is to their own husbands, as it is that they are not subjected to any other man. Also, the role of wives was not only so for the Christian home, but it was for all *human* society. As a result of all of the confusion that is in the world on this point, the witness of Christian wives is all the more important. How effective this can be even to those who are without the Lord, and especially helpful to younger, believing wives.

Now, this is one of six social orders given in Ephesians and Colossians. It is my opinion that these six orders, wives, husbands, children, fathers, servants, and masters, has ebbed and flowed through history.

The instruction given from 3.18 – 4.1 is thought to be the order of the house in that day. Husbands, wives, children, fathers, slave and master relationships all in one house. What we should notice is that those things that are commanded are not limited to time or place, but can be applied at all times and in all places. We are not receiving Jewish tradition or pagan influences. This is fit instruction for every saint whether they lived in A.D. 30 or A.D. 2020.

If just these six arrangements were duly considered by the world it would certainly be a better place to live in than it is now. That being said, it is the duty of the Christian to maintain this order in their lives, in their families, and in their work places because it is commanded, and it is right. We began our lesson with the wives first because that is the sequence in which they are presented in Scripture. The wives subjection is fit, proper, or becoming in the Lord, and through their obedience the Word of the Lord is not blasphemed or reproached. (Eph. 5.22; Col. 3.18; Tit. 2.5; 1Ti.5.14) We find, in addition to this, that wives, whose husbands are said to be disobedient (also translated as unbelieving) to the Word (the implication is that they have *heard* the Word), even these may without the word be won by their quiet subjection to them for the Lord's sake. (1Pe.3.1)

may be won, κερδηθήσονται, 3rd p pl, fut, ind, pass of κερδαίνω, KJV, *gain, win*.

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So, the power of an obedient, subjected, quiet wife is oftentimes overlooked. Perhaps we need to remember women like Jael, wife of Heber who killed the captain of Hazor's host, Sisera; or Esther who became queen and delivered the Israelites from great destruction in Persia; or, Ruth's quiet subjection as an handmaid and stranger in Israel, how she was brought into the lineage of woman whose children led to the birth of some of the greatest kings the earth have ever known, and even to our precious Savior, Jesus Christ; or, John the Baptist's mother Elizabeth; or, Mary, mother to our Lord, etc.

Today, the Lord willing, our purpose is to consider this 19th verse.

πρὸς

19 *Husbands, love [your] wives, and be not bitter against them.*

Οἱ ἄνδρες ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ μὴ πικραίνεσθε πρὸς αὐτάς

The Interpreter's Bible, vol. 11, 'There is indeed a curious implication that discipline in the household tends to be unduly severe: men are warned, as **husbands**, against harshness to their **wives**; and as **fathers**, against provoking" their children by a severity which would cause them to **become discouraged.**'

John Trapp, *A Commentary on the New Testament*, p.619, 'He said not, rule over them, subdue them if they will not submit, but love them, and so win them to your will; make their yoke as easy as may be, for they stand on even ground with you, as yoke-fellows, though they draw on the left side. "Yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant." Mal. ii.14. He therefore that is free may frame his choice to his mind; but he that hath chosen must frame his heart to his choice.

A brother in Christ you should *never*, if you are not married yet, take a woman for a wife who does not know the Lord. This admonition is first derived from a number of Old Testament passages. (Ge.24.3, 4; 28.1; Jud.14.3) The N.T. approaches the subject assuming that the man and woman are fellow believers. (1Co.1-5, fasting and praying together; 1Co.9.5, *a sister, a wife*; Eph.5.22-33; Col.3.18, 19; 1Pe. 3.1-7). 1Co.7.10-16 assumes that the Lord had saved one of the spouses, and gives instruction

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about continuing in that marriage as long as the unbelieving spouse is willing. The Scriptures do not condone a believer marrying an unbeliever.

Husbands:

husbands, ἄνδρες, nominative and vocative plural, root ἀνήρ; ἄνδρες is translated in the KJV as *men* (53), *sirs* (6), *husbands* (4, ἄνδρες, Eph.5.25; Col.3.19; 1Ti.3.12; 1Pe.3.7); context determines the use of the word *husbands*. The English word *husband/s* is found 52 times in the N.T. **There is absolutely no doubt that this is in reference to the male gender.**

ἄνδρας, accusative plural, *fellows* (1), *men* (21)

Love:

The Ephesian text reads

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it ... It does not say ‘Husbands, love your wives, even as your wives loves you,’ though no doubt love should be reciprocated. (1Jn.4.19; 5.1, as we have reciprocated to Him who first loved us.) In this Ephesian text, the greater emphasis is Christ’s love for His church, although that is introduced through the admonition to husbands to love their wives. These two have become one, Christ to His church, and husbands to their wives. She is an extension of him, though they are two discernable persons.

The church, by the grace of God is an extension of Christ’s own body by union to Him.

Eph.5.30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. (We members, together, are the Lord’s heritage. We are His children. This relationship, or love, or union is especially noted because we have identified as the true children of God by faith, baptism and membership in one of the Lord’s churches.)

The church is not the Lord Himself, but certainly stands *as* the Lord in this world.

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Paul had been persecuting the church at Jerusalem:

Acts 9.5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest ...

The church is a weaker vessel or feeble in comparison to her Lord. (As 1Pe.3.7 indicates of the wife of a husband, we believe the type would be applicable to the church.) Yet the Lord has taken her to Himself and committed to her the stewardship of the things that are His. (Lk.12.42; 1Ti.5.14 steward of the house; Tit.2.5 house keeper) In this He loves her and provides all that she should ever need to fulfil her task, which no one would deny is a great and oftentimes difficult work, with joy.

And this would be the sense of the love that an husband should have for his wife. He is to provide and care for her, and to love her as he loves his own person/body. It must be that husbands, being sinners, are particularly prone to neglect their wives for failing to understand her connection to him. She is an extension of his own body, a merging of her life into his. And so to him, **not her**, belongs this reminder:

Eph 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church ...

Husbands are to nourish and cherish their wives. It is doubtless that they do less for themselves, unless there is some sort of an emotional or mental disorder.

love, ἀγαπᾶτε, 2nd p pl, pres, imper of ἀγαπάω; will be defined below.

We read some interesting phrases in our last lesson. It was in Tit. 2.4 that we read how the aged women should impress upon the minds of these young wives to *love their husbands*, and to *love their children*. This love is built from the Greek, φιλέω. It is generally the reciprocal love between friends. It speaks of relational affections.

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Now we read that the husbands are to love their wives. Understand this. This is in the imperative mood; it is a command. He is to love her. **For what it is worth, the wife is never commanded to love, ἀγαπάω, her husband.** If we are going to marry the woman we ought to love her. She should become more than just a friend, though who would doubt she should be our best friend. But love will take us further than we would with any friend.

On the phrase, *Husbands love your wives* ...

In a sense, this sounds like an unusual request. This helps us grasp the significant depth to which a marriage relationship should grow, especially in this regard, to him. Those who have been married for some time, we ask, Did we *love* our wives in the beginning as much as we love her now? Those of you just starting out in marriage, if the Lord will, and you obey this commandment you shall grow into a deeper love for your wives in time. Those preparing to enter into marriage need to know these things.

I thought that when I saw that girl, when she walked into my life, that moment when my heart jumped and skipped, and shortly thereafter when I proposed to her, that I loved her? And now the Word of God tells me, after 10, 20, 40, 60 years of marriage, *Husbands love your wives*? The commandment takes into account no element of time. Whether the husband has been married for two months or six decades, whether we married as barely a man or as an aged man, it says that we are to *love our wives*. We are to always love our wives (the sense of the present, imperative verb). It is my opinion that we grow into or are perfected in love for our wives; that as our love is tested with all of the struggles of life it is proved and increased. Our commitment of love will be far more in the end than it was in the beginning. Perhaps we only had a great friendship at first, a love that is generally referred to in the Greek φιλέω, love. Peter is an excellent example of growing in love with the Lord.

The Lord Jesus knew the love that Peter had for Him was not yet what it could be. And Peter was put to the test in order that his love be perfected.

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1Jo 2:5 *But whoso keepeth (τηρηῆ, 3rd ps, pres, subj, act. would keep) his word, in him verily **is** the love ἀγάπη of God **perfected**:*

τετελείωται, 3rd ps, perf, ind, pass of τελειόω, KJV to finish, perfect. The apostle John is the only one who uses this verb (1Jn.2.5; 4.17, 18).

*1Jo 4:17 ¶ Herein **is** our love **made perfect**, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.*

*1Jo 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect τελεία love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth **is not made perfect** in love.*

Obedience is the only way to demonstrate a perfected love. For example, the issue of *fear*, which most of us struggle with, reveals that we have not matured as we can in the Lord. Our love *is not made perfect ...* in the beginning, but it can be in the end.

hereby know we that we are in him.

Peter, having only recently gone through a great *fiery* trial, denying that he knew the Lord (Mt.26.25; Lk.22.31, 32), is dealt with by the resurrected Lord concerning his love and service to Him.

In Jn.21.15-17, Jesus asked him, *Peter ... lovest ἀγαπάω thou me more than these? Peter's response was, Lord; thou knowest that I love φιλέω thee.* This question is asked of the Lord again, to which Peter gives the same response. But the third time the Lord asks, *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest φιλέω thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest φιλέω thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love φιλέω you. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*

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The truth is, he had to face the reality of his lack of love for the Lord. He who was the most forward, most outspoken of the disciples during our Lord's earthly ministry.

Martyrs Mirror, Thieleman J. van Braght, Herald Press, p. 80, '[H]e became the spokesman of all the apostles, being generally the most frank in asking and answering, as well as the most zealous for Christ, in order to prove to Him his love and fidelity, although at times he manifested a certain rashness therein ...'

But we can identify with Peter. It isn't very easy to gaze upon our own heart and see the truth of what really lies within is it? And it is very unlikely that we will willingly go there except the Lord bring to us some great trial which opens up those dark things which we have *tucked away* from men's view. Now, let's fast forward some 66 years later, just three years from the time that Peter is said to have been martyred. (cf. Jn.21. 18, 19; history records that he was 70 years of age at his death.) (Barnes Notes, Acts chronology, 1Peter written A.D.66) Peter wrote the following words to encourage the Jewish saints scattered all over the greater northern and middle section of present day Turkey.

1Pe.1.8 Whom [Jesus Christ] having not seen, ye love ἀγαπᾶτε; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory ...

Now, after almost 40 years since that day when the Lord spoke to him concerning love and service, he writes confidently of love for the Lord. He wrote of a love for the Lord, even though He was not as He was before in bodily presence. Husbands should grow in love for their wives, and that love will have to be proved through trial. In the most renowned love chapter in the Bible, 1Corinthians chapter 13, we note that the first characteristic of love is that it *suffers long*, which is also translated in the KJV, *longsuffering*, and *patient*. How do husbands know that they love as they should? Well, let's ask ourselves whether we bear patiently with our wives. Not meaning that the wives are evil or to imply that they are always in the wrong.

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'A good wife always forgives her husband when she's wrong.'
(anon.)

'Marriage is a relationship in which one person is always right, and the other is usually the husband.' (anon.)

Well; we are exaggerating things a bit. But seriously, the most of the trouble is that many husbands are impatient, act rashly, are headstrong, and inconsiderate. Husbands notoriously only hear their wives when they say what it is that they want to hear.

To the newly weds and those about to become married. Disagreements are a fact of life. Some of them are easy to resolve; others are very difficult to bear. Among the first disagreements will likely involve the handling of the purse. Generally, young men are not renowned for being frugal; along with that will be learning to share *the apartment, or house, or the car*. Some men have to grow into the idea 'us', not 'me.' In marriage, everything is now *ours*. After a little while, generally, most of these details are worked out and everyone is happy. But that not the half of it. As the bills start coming in and the paycheck seems to be getting a little smaller every month, and the baby is crying, and another one is on the way, and momma doesn't look like Barbie any more, and she certainly doesn't act like she used to, especially after a long day of chasing a two year old around all day long; the nights you come home and supper isn't ready, or supper just didn't work at all. Perhaps, like someone that I know, she tried her best to make our Deutsche Marks last longer by baking two dishes at one time in the oven. Well, the process you get chocolate flavored tuna casserole, and tuna flavored chocolate brownies. Now, we laugh about it, but then it might have been a tough time. All that I remember about it then was that it was gross.

Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

The facts of life. Add to this that our beloved wife been up all night long, and all through the day, tending to the seemingly non-stop poop diapers, and this one teething, the beloved is not feeling well herself, or the whole clan is sick, she's been cleaning up mess after mess after mess. And now

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you come through the door having waged your own battles in the workplace and you've got the *grumpy all-overs*. And you think this is the time to unload on the her. She turn's to tears and you hopefully feel lower than the lowest worm. That's how it is sometimes. Not everyday is like this, but when they are ... It can be a long day ... day turns into days. (Personal experience with our first child. This child cried, it seemed to be non-stop for the first few months of his life. It still isn't funny looking back at it. But we learned something vital as a husband and wife. We're in this together and we need each other, and we can be a help to one another.) Guess what? Husbands can wash dishes, vacuum the carpet, take the trash out, wash the dishes, do some laundry. Husbands, take note: mamma never clocks out like we do.

Love starts out mostly with the head over heels *eros* love, an instinctive, natural, strong, carnal, possessive love, a love that very closely mimics ἀγάπη love, but it is developing. It is becoming stronger, well-rounded, resolved, committed, and sacrificial for the good of its object.

αγαπάω, agapao, the verb for the noun that we are mostly familiar with, ἀγάπη, agape, is misunderstood in many Christian circles. Biblically, it is improper to limit αγαπάω to that fruit which the Spirit of God produces in His children. αγαπάω can be a naturally produced affection. It is a devoted and distinguishing love. It manifests as a reciprocal love, much like φιλέω: a love between friends. (Pay attention to the Greek for love in these references: Lk.6.32, ἀγαπάω, functions as φιλέω; 11.43, ἀγαπάω, manifests in love of causes like religious or political;; Jn.3.19, ἀγαπάω, as a love for the world; Jn.12.42, ἀγαπάω, and for praise of men.)

All men should love their wives, whether or not they know Jesus Christ. This love can be both natural and spiritual. You and I know some men who do not know the Lord Jesus, yet they truly love their wives. Men, who know not the Lord, have given real meaning to loving their wives. Such a love is no evidence that a work of grace has been wrought in the heart by regeneration. But if all husbands should love their wives so, let it be especially said of those who profess to know Christ. Why? Because, though some men without Christ have shown great love for their wives,

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their love fails to give glory to our Lord Jesus Christ. Only Christian husbands, through their subjection to Christ, can show the love of Christ for His church by loving their wives. It is in the Christian marriage, the union of a loving husband and a quiet, subjected wife, that the mystery of the union of Christ and the church is best seen. (Eph. 5.23, 24, 32, 33)

Eph 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence (φοβῆται, pres., subj., mid., should fear, reverence; the attitude of her subjection) her husband.

In the world, this beautiful truth is confused and all but lost.

Wives:

wives, γυναῖκας, acc, pl of γυνή, ; γυναῖκας, women (5), wives (6); Robert Young's Concordance to the KJV states that γυνή is translated wife (92, margin, women [1]), woman (129). Again, like husband the context would determine whether the text should be translated either wife or women.

There is absolutely no doubt that this is in reference to the female gender.

Marriage is God's order for humankind, not only Christians. It is the only God-ordained, legitimate union of one male and one female. All other unions are a distortion of the truth, and most fall into overt sin, such as: fornication, adultery, or sodomy, (O.T.: sodomy appears to include both the male with male (Deu.23.17), and female with the female (Ez.16.46, 53, 55, 56).

Be not Bitter:

be ... bitter, πικραίνεσθε, 2nd p pl, pres, **imper**, pass of πικραίνω; always translated with the English word *bitter* (4); every related Greek word is also translated with the English *bitter*, πικρία, Acts 8.23, *gall of bitterness*; Ro.3.14, *cursing and bitterness*; Eph.4.31, *Let all bitterness*, [in light of LXX usage, shown directly below, *provocation* could be some of the sense of bitterness, especially as it is tied to the following ...] *and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking*; He.12.15, *lest any root of bitterness*

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springing up trouble (mob, vex) you, and thereby many be defiled (or polluted). Bitterness, can have an ill affect on those that are touched by it; *πικρός, Ja.3.11, sweet water and bitter; πικρῶς, Mt. 26.75; Lk.22.62, wept bitterly;* Robert Young's Analytical Concordance, defines this as pointed or sharpness; J.B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and Philemon*, p.227, interprets this, 'show no bitterness, behave not harshly.'

LXX, *πικραίνειν*, Ru.1.13 *I am grieved*; vs. 20, *bitter, very bitterly*; job 27.2 *has embittered*; *Is. 14.9 is provoked*; Jer.40.9 *be provoked*; Jer.44.15 *very angry*; Lam.1.4 *in bitterness*.

O.E.D. bitter:

6. Characterized by intense animosity or virulence of feeling or action: virulent.

b. Construed *to, against*.

7. Of words (or the person who utters them): Stinging, cutting, harsh, keenly or cruelly reproachful, virulent.

cf. Job 13:26 For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.

virulent: objectionably harsh or strong

'bitterness' is in the passive voice, *be [not] bitter*. Two other verses which are in the passive voice:

Re 8:11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter επικρανθησαν, pl, aor, ind, pass.

Re 10:10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter επικρανθη, sing, aor, ind, pass.

J-F-B, vol. 3, p. 453, '**be not bitter**—ill-tempered, provoking. Many polite abroad are rude at home, because they are not afraid there.'

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There is neither indication of the cause for his bitterness, nor whether it was the result of a single act or what might have been caused through a series of acts over a period of time. We have nothing else to help us define more of the sense of this verse. Therefore we take the admonishment as meaning, *Husbands ... be not bitter against them ... ever; without limitation.* Impatience is probably the greatest contributor to bitterness. We would wait for any other person but her. Am I right?

John Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 9, 'turning love into hatred of their persons; ruling with rigour, and in a tyrannical manner; behaving towards them in a morose, churlish, and ill-natured way; giving them either bitter words, or blows, and denying them their affection, care, provision, protection, and assistance, but using them as servants, or worse. All which is barbarous, brutish, and unchristian, and utterly unbecoming the Gospel.'

As plain as we can say this, as it is the duty of the wife to obey him (1Co.14.35, *they are commanded to be under obedience*), but it is the duty of the husband to love her.

Barnes' Notes, vol. 12, p.109, 110, at Eph. 5.25, 'The duty of the wife is to obey; the right of the husband is to command. But the apostle would guard against the abuse of that right by enjoining the manifestation of such a spirit on the husband as would secure obedience on the part of the wife. ... [T]he husband ... should manifest the same spirit which the Lord Jesus did towards the church ... If a husband wished a rule that would be short, simple, clear, and efficacious, about the manner in which he should regard and treat his wife, he could not find a better one than that here suggested.'

Col.3.19 is a judgment, a sentence from the Lord. He knows what is best and right:

Ps.19.9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

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10 More to be desired are they (his judgments) than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

*11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and **in keeping of them there is great reward.***

Barnes' Notes, vol. 12, p.111, at Eph. 5.28, 'A man's kindness to his wife will be more than repaid by the happiness which she imparts ...'

Doubtless, husbands are not the only ones who might forecast *bitterness* upon others. However, the mention of this with particular reference to the husband points to the likelihood that **she is the most vulnerable to receive what he would not necessarily show to others: bitterness.** Consider what I say and you judge for yourselves whether it is true or not. What if we communicated to another the way that we communicated to our wives? Think about the tone, the bitter words, the manner of speech; what would happen if we directed that to any other person than her? What if we had talked to our employer that way? What if we talked to our friends in such a tone? The Lord commands us not to be bitter against our wives. Some of us might need to repent, and agree with God.

Nabal is one man who gives us an example of the meaning of dealing cruel severity to others. In 1Sa. 25.3 he is defined as,

*1Sa 25:3 Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man **was churlish** חָשֵׁב **and evil in his doings**; and he was of the house of Caleb. (Could read 1Sa.25.4-12)*

was churlish, חָשֵׁב is an adjective defined in the KJV as hardhearted, hard bondage, stubborn way, grievous service, heavy tidings, sore battle, cruel, obstinate, stiffnecked, and rough speech. The LXX further defines Nabal with the Greek word σκληρός (English LXX

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translation, *harsh*), from which we have our English word sclerosis (KJV N.T., *hard* (5), *fierce* (1).

O.E.D.

Churl

6. One who is sordid, 'hard', or stingy in money-matters; a niggard; a miser. [The application of *churlish* to Nabal in the Bible has apparently done much to make this the prevalent modern sense.]

The superior role of the husband brings upon him a greater judgment. The rule is, 'to whom much is given, much is required. (Lk.12.20, 48; 1Co.4.2) This is manifest in the judgment that Adam and Eve received in the day that they sinned. The Lord had called unto Adam, not to Eve, when He came to walk in His garden in the cool of the day.

Ge.3.9 ¶ And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

Then when we compare the judgments of the Lord we find Adam's curse is more extensive than Eve's.

Notice the judgments for sin against Adam and Eve:

Adam: Ground is cursed Shall eat of its fruit all the days of your life in sorrow Ground brings forth thorns & thistles	Eve: Sorrow in child birth is multiplied Conception is multiplied Desire shall be to your husband
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In the sweat of your face you eat bread until you die	He shall rule over you
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Adam's curse appears to be a general curse upon, not men, but mankind. I've seen my wife labor in the garden with the weeds and overgrowth, thorns more than I have. The ground does not produce for a woman any more than it does for a man. There might be a personal issue concerning men in that by the sweat of their brow they eat their bread. I'm not sure but that men bear more of the stresses for providing for the home more than the woman. That is not to say she doesn't bear some as well. But it is an increased sense in men. Most men that are in their right mind, who, for whatever reason, that have not provided for their home sufficiently, seem to bear the greater burden for of guilt and failure than women. (In the millennial reign of Christ, this curse might be lifted or eased. Labor will be sweeter and the earth will yield great abundance [Le.26.4-6; Ps.67.6; 85.12, 13; Is.11.6-9; 30.19-24?; 55.12, 13; 65.18-25; Ez.34.23-27].)

Of the deceitful couple that were slain by the Spirit of the Lord, Ananias was judged first, then Saphira. (Acts 5.1-10)

The LORD knew how that Abraham took his responsibility as head of the home most seriously:

Ge.18.17 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

*19 For I know him, that **he will command***

פִּי יָדָע, Piel future, intensive act.; J.P. Green's, King James II Version, reads, 'For I have known him in order that he may command ...'

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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.

The genealogies of mankind were always counted according to men, husbands/fathers:

Ge 6:9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. (cf. i.e. Gen.11)

Sarah confessed that her sin came upon her husband as her head, and that he needed to make a decision concerning it:

*Ge 16:5 And Sarai said unto Abram, **My wrong be upon thee**: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee.*

6 But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

I know that what I did was wrong and this falls to you bring about a resolution: solve this problem with Hagar's despire toward me. So Abraham gives his wife, Sarah, leave to do what she deems best with Hagar.

When Sarah laughed, the LORD asked Abraham why she laughed:

Ge 18:9 And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

10 And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

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12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

*13 And **the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?***

The calling of the families before the Lord by heads is seen often. (Achan, for judgment [Jos.7.1, 13, 14]; Saul for king. [1Sa.10. 20, 21]; of David [1Sa.16.5-12])

Our Lord Jesus honored this natural order in humanity as a child. (Lk.2.48, 51)

Here are a few attributes of some of the famous husbands of the Bible that we should mimic: Noah was just and perfect; Abraham was faithful, diligent, and valiant; Isaac was quiet; Moses was meek or gentle; Job was patient; Solomon was wise; Peter was bold; Paul was direct; and John was loving.

The husband is to consider his wife as weaker, due honor. He is provide for her out of the sweat and toil of his work. He is to give himself for her to make sure she is equipped with those things that she needs. She should be treated as an equal in the grace of life. He is to distribute to her honor. He should not be hard, cruel, bitter in his treatment of his wife. He is to love her as he does his own body. He should see to it that his house is ordered or arranged as the Lord would have it.

Finally, husbands should take their places as the spiritual leaders in their homes.

1Co 14:35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

Husbands ... *Pr 31:10 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.* Love your wives.