

Flint Hills Bible Church
Biblical Soul Care Sunday School
Colossians 3:19 - Love your wives!

I. Introduction

After spending a week on the wives' call to submit to their husband, we now direct our attention to Paul's teaching to husbands. Once again, Paul is very brief, but clear and helpful. Before we jump in, consider the state of husbanding in our culture.

1. How do people around us view or value the role of a husband?
2. Do unbelievers have a different opinion of Christian husbands? Why or why not?
3. What is the effect of the state of Christian marriage in a culture?

II. What it says

Colossians 3:19

¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

Colossians 3:19 (LSB)

¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.

4. What do you notice about this statement from Paul?
 - Who is he addressing? Who is not addressed?
 - What is the command?
 - What else do you notice about this verse?

III. What it means

- a. Husbands, **love** your wives... (Gk. **agapate** - from *agapao*) this word means to love in a self sacrificing way, cherish, and treat dearly. It also includes an element of faithfulness to the object of love
5. Why does Paul not command wives to love their husbands in this way, but rather to submit to them?
6. Why did the husbands need to be commanded to love their wives in this way?

To help us fill out our understanding of Paul's teaching to husbands let's look at Ephesians 5, where Paul gives more detail in his explanation

Ephesians 5:25–33 (ESV) — ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body.

³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

7. Why do you think Paul had to explain the husband's duty to love his wife? (Why not tell wives to love their husbands?)

8. If Christ is our example as the perfect bride groom to the church, how does that inform our husbanding?

9. What does Paul teach us is Christ's goal for His bride?

10. What is the goal of most husbands in our culture?

11. How should the goal of Christian husbands reflect Christ?

12. What is the biblical motivation for a husband to “leave and cleave”? How is the gospel witness affected in a marriage when one or both spouses rely too heavily on his/her parents? How is a particular marriage impacted?

1 Peter 3:7 (ESV) — ⁷ Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

13. In this one verse, Peter adds to our understanding of how to love our wives in at least two ways – “in an understanding way” (literally “according to knowledge”) and “showing honor” to her. What should this add to our command to love our wives in Col 3:19?

14. What is the warning to husbands who will not obey this command?

Charles Surgeon describes the hindrance of our prayers in three ways - hindrance from praying, hindrance as we are praying, and the hindrance of God not hearing your prayers.

b. ...and do not ***be harsh*** with them. (Gk ***pikrainesthe*** - from *pikraino*) this word means to be or become embittered. This verb is passive and better translated as the NASB and LSB do “...and do not be embittered against them”

15. How does one become embittered and how is this instructive to husbands?

16. If the second command of husbands is not to allow bitterness to take hold (Heb 12:15), what is the biblical antidote to this?

Lou Priolo’s book “The Complete Husband” has a wonderful chapter about this verse. Husbands, I highly recommend this book as a thoroughly biblical and practical resource to help us love our wives as God intends!

IV. Application

Abner and Agnes have been married for 20 years, and they are merely roommates at this point. Their 3 children have grown and are out of the house and Abner is wondering if it is even worth staying married to Agnes. She has her own friends, hobbies, and she doesn’t give him the respect he deserves for working so hard to allow her to stay home and raise the children. Now that they are gone, he wonders why he should continue to pay for her fun!

17. What is your counsel to Abner? What Scriptural commands does he need to consider when thinking about Agnes?

Drake and Elsa are members of their church. They are also in the midst of raising their two children, ages 4 and 9. Both of them are working in successful careers that take a considerable amount of their mental and physical strength. Elsa has been noticing a growing rebellious attitude in their nine year old, and their four year old never did get through what her work friends called “the terrible twos”. When Drake comes home, he spends a lot of his free time in “the man cave” watching sports and playing games. In public Drake tells everyone that their family is doing amazing and often compliments that Elsa is the force that makes their family go. After the home unraveling over the past 2 years, Elsa demands that they both get some marriage and family counseling so that Drake will start pulling his weight around the house.

18. How is Drake failing to meet the biblical command to husbands?

19. How would you counsel him? What Scriptures would you use?