

MAKING SENSE OF MARRIAGE

COLOSSIANS 3:18-19

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – MARCH 23, 2025

SCRIPTURE READING

Colossians 3:18-19

Rules for Christian Households

18 Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

What does it mean for Jesus to be supreme and sufficient in all of your relationships?

SERMON RECAP

Jesus came to usher in an upside-down Kingdom – He challenged societal norms and confronted power structures.

- Instead of domination, He modeled servanthood.
- Instead of status and rank for self-gain, He exemplified humility.
- Instead of grasping for power, He gave Himself in self-sacrificial love.

God's Word reframes marriage, parenting, and servitude through the lens of the Good News of Jesus Christ, through the lens of the Kingdom, not of this world, but of God.

Submission is a principled choice, freely made by one's own will, in response to the Lord Jesus. It literally means to arrange or place oneself under the leadership of another, in an orderly way.

- It does NOT mean a wife is unqualified or incapable of leading.
- It is NOT forced.
- It is NOT about a division of labor.

Agape love isn't based on feelings or attraction, but on commitment and sacrifice.

- It is a love that chooses to give, not for what it can receive in return, but for the flourishing and well-being of the other person.
- It is the sacrificial love that husbands are called to live.
- Sacrificial love pursues and serves.
- Sanctifying love is burden-bearing – it chooses mercy over resentment, grace over grudges, and reconciliation in all things.
- Satisfying love fills, nourishes, and leaves no emptiness behind. It is present, intentional, and deeply fulfilling.

Love that submits coupled with love that sacrifices puts on display Jesus' love for the world.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

1. Read Colossians 3:18-19 aloud as a group. Let group members share observations. Try not to move into interpretation of the passage or application of what you read quite yet. Simply share what you observe.
 - How does verse 18 qualify a wife's submission?
 - What are husbands commanded in verse 19?
 - What would be "harsh" in the context of verses 18-19?
 - How would you summarize Colossians 3:18-19 in your own words?

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. Read Colossians 3:18

- The Greek word for “submit” used here is *hupotasso* (hoop-ot-AS-so). Using a Bible Concordance, what does submit mean ‘military’ and ‘voluntarily’ in this passage?
 - What does it mean that wives should submit to their husbands, as is fitting in the Lord?
 - What is biblical submission as exemplified by Jesus?
 - Why does God call wives to submit to their husbands?
2. Read Colossians 3:19
- The Greek word for “sacrificial love” used here is the verb form of the root word *agape* (ag-AH-pay). Using a Bible Concordance, what does love mean in this passage?
 - What does it mean that husbands should love their wives and not be harsh?
 - What is biblical love as exemplified by Jesus?
 - Why does God call husbands to love their wives?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. Questions for women:
- What does it feel like when God tells women to submit in this way?
 - How is submission a principled choice for women?
 - Whether married or single, why do you think that God calls women to submit in this way?
 - How might submission make women live more like Jesus?
 - How can your Church Group support you as you do what is “fitting in the Lord?”
2. Questions for men:
- What does it feel like when God tells men to love in this way?
 - Whether married or single, how is your love committed and sacrificial?
 - How are you pursuing and serving your wife or others?
 - How are you burden-bearing, nourishing, and fulfilling your wife – How might loving this way make men live more like Jesus?
 - How can your Church Group support you as you love without being harsh?
3. Questions for everyone:
- How are you modeling servanthood to the world?
 - How are you setting an example of humility?
 - How are you demonstrating self-sacrificial love?
 - In light of this teaching, what one step of obedience could you take today?
 - Take time in your Church Group to pray for marriages and that Jesus would be supreme and sufficient in all of your relationships.