

LIVING THE NEW LIFE: *IN MARRIAGE*

Colossians 3:18-19

Our study this week is on the most important relationship in our adult lives. Societies are built upon the foundation of the family. The key to good families is a good marriage. The same is true of churches. *What do the following verses teach about the opportunities for Christians in marriage?*

1 Corinthians 7:14, 16

Ephesians 5:31-33

1 Peter 3:1-2

Malachi 2:15

We want to narrow our focus to Paul's unique emphasis in *Colossians* on the marriage relationship. Double underline all the verbs in the following two verses:

¹⁸Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord.

¹⁹Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly.

Colossians 3:18–19 (NLT)

Now put a box around the nouns.

What three commands are given to the married couples in this church?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What else do you notice about the structure of these two verses?

To understand the context of these two verses, it is important that you review what has been taught already in *Colossians*.

From what has been said in chapter one, who is the most important person in a marriage?

Looking at chapter two, do you think Paul is giving a set of instructions so that we might be pleasing to God? Why or why not?

Now examining the immediate preceding context, what changes in the life of a couple when one or both trust Christ (3:1-4)?

How do the characteristics of the “old nature” sometimes show up in marriages (3:5-11)?

How does a wife relate to her husband in a Christian marriage (3:18)? What does that mean?

How is this different from the obedience required of children (3:20)?

Some versions (KJV, NKJV, YLT) translate verse 18, “submit to your own husbands” instead of “submit to your husbands.” Apparently it was thought important to add the word translated “own” to specify something that seems to be implicit in the original text. This shows up in the *TR (Textus Receptus)*, but which is not in the most ancient manuscript traditions, including the Latin Vulgate.

Does the Bible teach that women are to be subordinate to men?

Why is submitting appropriate for wives? Would a marriage work if the husband submitted to his wife’s leadership?

How does a husband apply Christian living in his relationship with his wife (3:19)?

Why the special instruction to “not be harsh”?