

“Wives...Husbands”

Sermon Notes

Ask not what your spouse can do for you, but ask what you can do for your spouse.

How so?

(1) Wives, focus on submitting to your husband (18)

(2) Husbands, focus on loving your wife (19)

Next Sunday: Colossians 3:20-21 - “Children...Fathers”

Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of February 20th - 26th

Introduction: For reflection

Family: we all know it by experience. We all have had a dad and a mom (some unmarried, some married, some married and then divorced; some from blended families; some present, others absent). Describe their relationship: What was good? What was bent and broken? How was suffering involved? Also, you may have been or still are in a relationship with someone (dating, marriage, divorce, etc.). If it applies, reflect on what that relationship has been like: What has been good? Bad? Hard? As you are able, share some of your reflections with others.

Context

This section of the letter, from 3:18 through 4:1, is commonly referred to as the “household code”. In what ways does this section connect to what came before in 3:1-17? [Hint: Think about words and theological themes that carryover.] Also, recall, what’s the big picture of Col 2:6-7 and 3:1-17?

In 3:18-19, Paul speaks to husbands, even though he was not married. Further, Paul exhorted women about their wifely duties. Many today would immediately malign Paul as a misogynist for even thinking to speak on these matters. Yet Paul did speak to husbands and wives. What does this say about his culture? What does this say about the Bible? What does this mean for us today?

Observation and Meaning

In our day and age, it’s worth reviewing the basic biblical understanding of marriage, as presented by Paul as he exhorts “wives” and “husbands”. Who can be married? [Note: How do texts like Genesis 2, Matthew 19, 1 Corinthians 7 support this view]

What ideas are repeated in 3:18-19 from elsewhere in the letter (hint: consider especially the repetition of one phrase across 3:17-4:1)?

What does Paul say about “love” in Colossians. Consider Colossians 1:4, 8; 2:2; 3:12, 14.

Whom does Paul want spouses to focus on - themselves or their spouse? Support your answer from the text. Why does Paul say this? What does he understand about the human

heart? What have you seen in marriages that go bad that speaks to this need to focus our attention elsewhere (see Gen 3:16-17)?

Summarize Paul's main idea in a single sentence of your own.

Biblical theology: Read Genesis 1:27-29 and 2:18-25; Ephesians 5:22-33 and 1 Peter 3:1-7; 1 Timothy 1:11-13; 1 Corinthians 7 and 11:2-16. How do these other texts fill out Paul's concise teaching in Colossians?

Application

What have you learned or been reminded about in this study, with regard to God's design for marriage?

You may be single, married, divorced, or widowed. Take your relationship status into account as you consider the following questions and adapt them to your current situation, if not married.

What is hard for you about these spousal duties? What gets in your way of fulfilling them?

Envision how your relationship will change or could have changed when these marital duties are put on. What is one actionable way you can commit to submitting / loving this week?