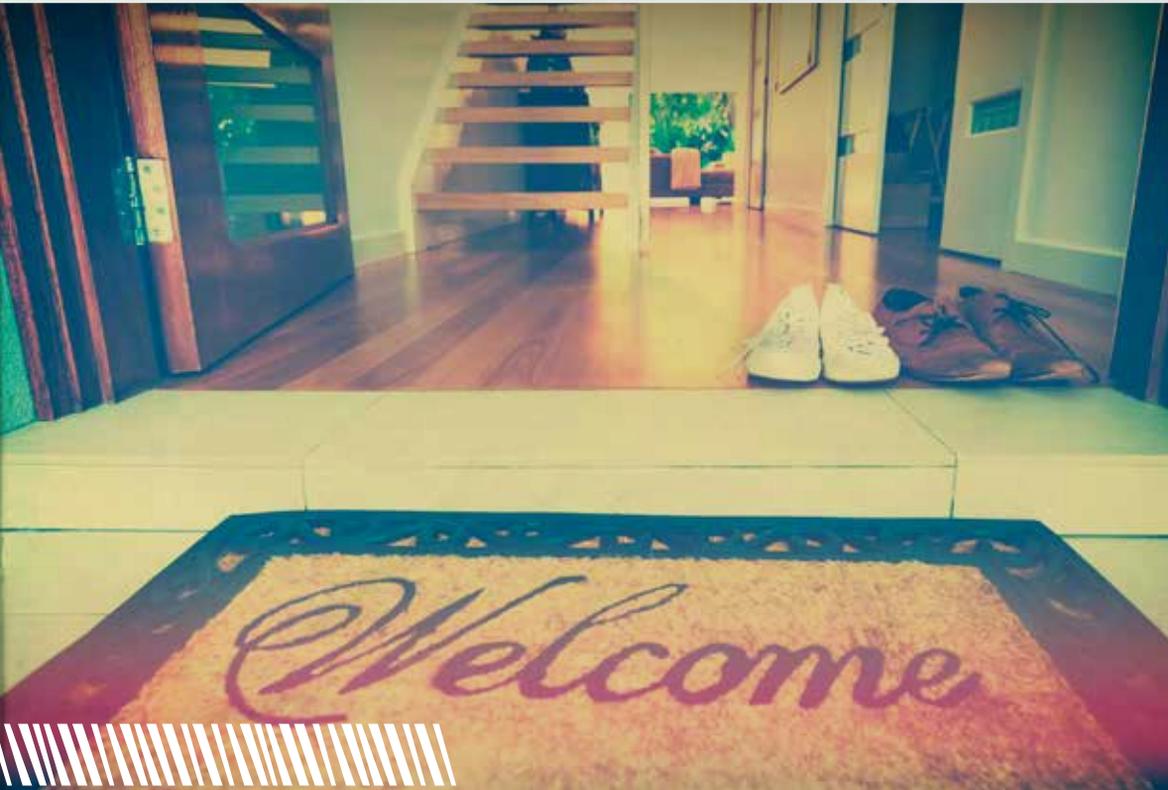


# 3

## *Life at Home*



*When have you thought to yourself,  
“It’s so good to be home”?*

**QUESTION 1**

#BSFLIdentity

*Home is where our identity in Christ is clearly lived out.*



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## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

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Home. For most people, that single word generates good feelings. We feel the warmth of comfort, security, even longing. After all, “there’s no place like home.”

No matter where we live or in what season of life we currently find ourselves, home is that place where we can relax and be, well, at home. When we’re at home we reveal who we really are and demonstrate what really matters to us. We might be able to pretend to be Christ-followers around friends or at church, but it’s impossible to fake it at home. Home is the place where the people we love the most have a front-row seat to our lives.

Whatever your family looks like at this stage of life, Jesus wants you to be the best member of your family that you can possibly be. He has not left you alone to figure out what that looks like. As a Christ-follower, your identity is in Christ. And that identity is displayed in a home environment of Christ-centered love, submission, and obedience.

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# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

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## ***Ephesians 5:22-24 (CSB)***

**<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord, <sup>23</sup> because the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives are to submit to their husbands in everything.**

Paul began with these words: “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord” (v. 22). Contemporary culture laughs at this wisdom, calling it ancient and out of touch. Even some of you may cringe as you read this verse. While some people paint a negative stereotype of any submissive person, God meant it as an invitation to blessing.

Let’s first look at submission in a broader context. As Christ-followers, we’re all called to submit to Christ. To be a Christ-follower is to be someone who has submitted to and acknowledged the lordship of Christ. A wife who submits to her husband, therefore, simply has submitted her marriage to Christ. This is why Paul said wives are to submit to their husbands “as to the Lord” (v. 22).

Just as God has blessed the church with Christ as its Leader, God wants to bless every family with a leader. For families with a husband in the home, God has assigned him to be the leader. The text is as clear as our culture is confused. God’s design for the family has always been and will always be to have only two hands on the wheel. It would be disastrous to have four hands on the wheel and two people trying to drive the car.

***What’s your initial reaction to this passage?***

**QUESTION 2**

Since submission is not a natural behavior for us, this is far from easy. But, it is expected. Submission is entrusting the marriage to God. It doesn't mean the wife places her faith in her husband, but it is placing her faith in Jesus to lead her husband. Nor does submission mean silence. I rely on my wife as a source of wisdom and a sounding board for what I am thinking. I look forward to her opinion and greatly value her thoughts and insights. I married an amazing woman, and I would be a fool not to listen to her advice.

As the church submits to Christ, so too "wives are to submit to their husbands in everything" (v. 24). It's important to note that the phrase "in everything" does not include things that are wrong. God never expects a wife to be complicit in sin. If the husband's desires, choices, or demands are wrong, it's the wife's duty first and foremost to be obedient to Christ. Submission is not a passive action. It is a choice to live a life in submission to Christ. Jesus is the leader and supreme Head over all—especially husbands.

### ***Ephesians 5:25-28 (CSB)***

**<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her <sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing her with the washing of water by the word. <sup>27</sup> He did this to present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and blameless. <sup>28</sup> In the same way, husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.**

For me, becoming a husband was easy. However, becoming a *godly* husband has been the greatest challenge of my life. I've not always been a godly husband. My wife has endured my selfishness and has seen the very worst of me. But we've celebrated over 20 years of marriage. How did that happen? Our marriage has not only survived, but it has thrived because I learned to die to myself.

I learned about dying to self by studying the life and death of Jesus. Any man who desires to become the husband God wants him to be needs to study and imitate the life of Jesus. The apostle Paul commanded

***How do these verses compare and contrast with the husbands we see today in movies and TV?***

### QUESTION 3

***Who's been a positive role model for biblical submission and sacrifice in your life?***

#### QUESTION 4

husbands to “love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her” (v. 25). Jesus loves us and desires the very best for us. The very best for us meant His death on the cross, because through that sacrifice we gained forgiveness and eternal life.

Christ submitted Himself to the Father and to death for our benefit, to bring us back to Himself and make us “without spot or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and blameless” (v. 27). In the same way, the husband is to sacrifice himself to see that his wife can become everything God has meant her to be. When husbands love their wives like Christ loves the church, they will surrender their own desires for what is best for their wives. Ultimately, this is submission to Christ, because the husband is placing the needs of another before his own.

When a husband loves his wife as Christ loves the church, he models submission. Husbands are to submit to Christ, and wives are to submit to their husbands. Husbands cannot lead their wives to a Christ-honoring behavior they are unwilling to do themselves. As I submit to Christ, my wife trusts me. By leading out in submission, I encourage her submission.

The love and submission Paul notes in verses 22-28 not only benefit the couple, they influence others who see the couple's relationship and actions. And no one is more impacted than their children. After all, children don't just learn to do what parents say; they learn by what their parents do.



"Your best shot at having a beautiful marriage is if both of you make it your goal to become more like Jesus."

FRANCIS CHAN

## BUILDING BLOCKS

**Using Ephesians 5:22-28; 6:1-3 as a guide, identify three or four things that form the foundation blocks of a strong family. These can be things already present in your family or things you'd like to nurture. List these things on the blocks below. One example has been given.**

Continual Prayer



## **Ephesians 6:1-3** (CSB)

**<sup>1</sup> Children, obey your parents in the Lord, because this is right. <sup>2</sup> Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise, <sup>3</sup> so that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life in the land.**

As a child, I didn't understand many of the rules set down by my parents. I responded to virtually every one of my parents' requests with one word: "Why?" My parents often responded with, "Because I said so!"

It's natural for children to ask the "Why?" question, and good communication is a big part of effective parenting. In the end, though, children have a responsibility to obey their parents. The command is not to obey because parents are perfect, but because Christ is.

Sure, obedience to parents is commanded for the children at home, but what does that have to do with us? We're adults now! Our parents' desire was to help us grow into mature adults who live independent and responsible lives. When we reach that point and we're out on our own, our relationship with them changes, but our honor of them does not.

The decision to honor our parents is not without its benefits: "so that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life in the land" (v. 3). Paul reminded us that God will bless us when we honor our parents. What does such honor look like?

- » Honor is seen in our attitude toward them.
- » Honor is seen in how we talk to them or respond to their advice.
- » Honor is seen in how we talk about them.

As we seek to live out our identity in Christ, we cannot do it simply in being a husband, wife, parent, or child. We do it as followers of Jesus—and how we live out our submission to Christ is best seen in how we live when we're at home.



***How can you apply Ephesians 6:1-3 to your current situation?***

### **QUESTION 5**

## LIVE IT OUT

How will you live out your identity in Christ at home?

- » **Prioritize your relationship with God.** Since our relationship with God impacts all of our other relationships, make it your goal to spend time in His Word daily. Whether you're married or single, ask Him to help you reflect His character in your interactions with close friends and family members this week.
- » **Choose to honor your parents in a special way.** Think of one way you can express honor to a parent and set aside time this week to do so. A brief note, a phone call, or a visit can express your love and appreciation for them.
- » **Identify an older Christian couple and invite them to coffee or dinner.** Ask them what they've learned about living out a Christ-centered marriage.

God calls each of us to love each other in a sacrificial way. **Sometimes we'll get it right, and sometimes we make huge mistakes. But, through it all, we're still family.**



My thoughts