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LIFE AT HOME



What do you like best about your home?

QUESTION #1

#BSFLidentity

THE POINT

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



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Home. For most people, that single word can generate a good feeling—a sense of comfort, security, and 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 let our hair down and be, well, at home. It’s when we’re at home that we reveal who we really are and demonstrate what really matters to us. We might pretend to be a Christian 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 situation looks like at this stage of life, Jesus wants you to be the best member of your family that you can possibly be. Thankfully, He hasn’t left you alone to figure out what that looks like. As disciples of Jesus, our identity is in Christ—and that identity can be seen in a home environment of Christ-centered love, submission, and obedience.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Ephesians 5:22-24

²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Paul began with these words: “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.” Contemporary culture laughs at such wisdom, calling it ancient and out of touch. You may even cringe as you read this passage. Our society has gone to great lengths to paint a negative stereotype on any submissive person.

Yet God intended these verses as an invitation to a blessing.

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—or none.

Let’s first look at submission in a broader context. As Christians, we’re all called to submit to Christ. To be a Christian is to be someone who has submitted to and acknowledged the lordship of Jesus. Therefore, a wife who submits to her husband has simply submitted her marriage to Christ. That’s why Paul said wives are to submit to their husbands “as you do to the Lord.”

Submission isn’t a natural behavior for us. It’s never easy, but it is expected. Wives who willingly submit to their husbands are entrusting their marriage to God. That doesn’t mean the wife places her faith in her husband; rather, she places her faith in Jesus to lead her husband.

What’s your initial reaction to these verses?

QUESTION #2

In the same way, submission does not 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 should submit to their husbands in everything.” To submit “in everything” doesn’t 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.

In this way, submission is never a passive action. It’s a choice to live a life of obedience to Christ. As we’ll see, Jesus is the leader and supreme Head over all—especially husbands.

Ephesians 5:25-28

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought 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. And I’ll be clear up front: I haven’t always been a godly husband. My wife has endured my selfishness and has seen the very worst of me.

Even so, we’ve celebrated over 20 years of marriage. How did that happen? Our marriage has not only survived, but it has thrived because of one simple truth: I learned to die to myself.

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

QUESTION #3

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 husbands to “love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” Jesus loves us and desires the very best for us. For Christ, 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 stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.” What an incredible sacrifice for us! In the same way, the husband is to sacrifice himself to ensure that his wife can become everything God means her to be. When husbands love their wives they way Christ loves, they surrender their own desires in favor of what’s 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 for his family. 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 demonstrate themselves. As I submit to Christ, my wife trusts me. By leading out in submission, I encourage her submission.

The love and submission Paul lifts up in verses 22-28 not only benefit the couple, they also influence others who see their 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 watching what their parents do.

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

QUESTION #4



Ephesians 6:1-3

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— ³ “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

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’ commands and 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 what their parents say. 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 men and women who live independent and responsible lives. When we reach that point and we’re out on our own, our relationship to them changes—but our charge to honor them does not. Honor never goes out of style.

The decision to honor our parents isn’t without its benefits: “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” Paul reminded us that God will bless us when we honor our parents.

What does such honor look like? It’s more than a Mother’s Day or Father’s Day card. It’s more than flowers on their graves. Rather, we show honor in our attitude toward our parents. It’s seen in what we do when we’re with them—how we talk to them or respond to their advice, and how we talk *about* them.

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

How do these verses apply to your current situation?

QUESTION #5

SAY THANKS

Use the following template to express your thanks to someone (or to a couple) who has modeled for you what it means to be a biblical spouse.

Dear _____ ,

I'd like to thank you for the different ways you've modeled what it means to be a biblical spouse. I've noticed many wonderful characteristics in your approach to marriage, including these: _____

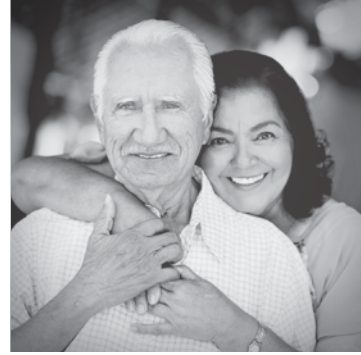
One of my favorite memories of your dedication to your spouse is when you _____

I am deeply grateful for your example, and I hope to use what I've learned from you as I _____

LIVE IT OUT

How will you live out your identity in Christ at home in the days to come? Consider these suggestions to get started:

- ▶ **Submission.** Begin each morning by actively and intentionally submitting to Christ. Verbally acknowledge Him as your Lord and Master.
- ▶ **Love.** Be on the lookout for an opportunity to demonstrate self-sacrificial love to someone important in your life—your spouse, your friend, your neighbor, and so on. Express your love both verbally and through action.
- ▶ **Honor.** Even as adults, we're still called to honor our parents. Identify a practical way you can express that honor to one of your parents this week.



There certainly is no place like home. It's likely the place where you feel most comfortable—most like your true self. For that reason, make sure your home reflects your identity as a disciple of Jesus.

My thoughts

Share with others how you will live out this study: **#BSFLidentity**