

THE GETTING EQUIPPED™ SERIES

The Christian Family

Lesson- 6



EQUIPPERS GROUP INTERNATIONAL

GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Equipping for the Christian Journey



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

OBJECTIVES OF THE LESSON

1. To understand the basic responsibilities of a wife
2. To learn the needs of the husband
3. To discover the meaning of honor, respect, and submission

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AT END

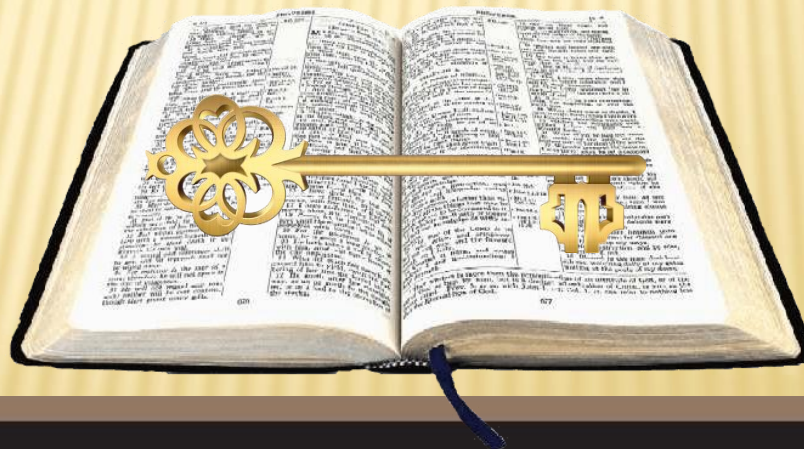


GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

KEY VERSE

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Ephesians 5:33



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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

A successful marriage: The wife's part

A successful and fulfilling marriage takes both the husband's and the wife's participation. They are BOTH responsible to discover and obey God's instructions concerning their relationship.

The focus of this lesson is to give wives an understanding of how they can help create a godly, successful marriage by following God's instruction.

Just as the husband has responsibilities, the wife also has specific duties as well.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives

Checklist of the wife's responsibilities

Responsibility 1	Commit to meet your husband's needs
Responsibility 2	Honor your husband's divine calling as head of the home
Responsibility 3	Follow your husband's leadership
Responsibility 4	Demonstrate admiration and respect to your husband





GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

Commit to meet your husband's needs



Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

Titus 2:3-5



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

Commit to meet your husband's needs



The command for women “*to be subject to their husbands*” was difficult for the time. In the culture of the time, women were seen as lesser beings, almost slaves. Sadly, these attitudes still exist in many places around the world.

Wives are told to love their husbands and to train younger women to love their husbands too. However, this can be a hard command to obey when the prevailing attitude is that women are just there to fulfill the whims of the man.

But on a practical level, a wife is to do all she can to meet her husband's needs.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

Commit to meet your husband's needs

Through Biblical insight and scholarly study, the following needs of a man have been determined:

- A wife who helps around the home
- Sexual fulfillment from his wife
- A wife who cares about her appearance





GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

A wife who helps around the home

In traditional households this means the wife should be the main caretaker of the home chores (cooking, cleaning, and care of children) while the husband is out working.

In many cultures, women have also begun working outside the home. In this case, the husband should share the duties for care of the home.

The more traditional roles are usually seen as more beneficial to the children in their younger years, and to help relieve stress from the husband as he can return from work to an organized home.





GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

A wife who helps around the home



A traditional setting does not excuse the husband from helping in the home. A man's wife is not meant to be his workhorse. When he is home, he should help with children and any other tasks that need attention.

In summary, when a wife strives to have an orderly home, it meets a deep need of her husband bringing peace, rest, and renewal.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

Sexual fulfillment from his wife



One of the most basic needs of a man is his need for sexual fulfillment. Many times, a wife does not understand this God-given need in a man's life. All his basic needs can be met legitimately in other ways EXCEPT this one. Part of the marriage vow is to only have this need satisfied by your covenant partner.

This means the wife needs to be very sensitive to her husband in this area.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1



Sexual fulfillment from his wife

The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

1 Corinthians 7:3-5



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

Sexual fulfillment from his wife



This passage is talking about sexual responsibilities of married couples. Paul says that depriving your spouse can lead to sin (seeking sexual fulfillment outside of the marriage) which can then lead to marital problems. So, a couple should seek to fulfill these needs for each other, unless they have both agreed to abstain in order to seek the Lord for a specific time.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

Sexual fulfillment from his wife

There are times, however, a husband should be sensitive to a wife in this area. After childbirth, a woman needs time to heal, or during menstruation she may feel unclean. Sometimes loving your wife means waiting until she feels proper about having sex.





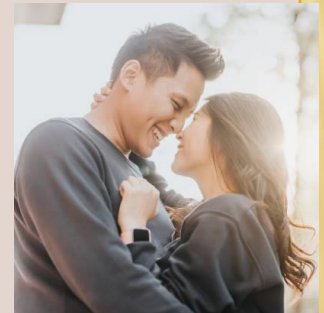
GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

Sexual fulfillment from his wife

Women should never use sex to control or manipulate their husbands. Do not withhold sex for revenge or to punish them for something they did. Sex should be a beautiful, intimate connection for the couple as seen in *Proverbs 5:15-21*.

Wives should respond with great sensitivity to their husbands regarding this issue.





GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

A wife who cares about her appearance

This can be a sensitive issue for many women. Men are more visually oriented than women. Husbands want to be proud of their wives. Lack of care for your appearance could result in a husband who looks at other women in unhealthy and ungodly ways.



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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

A wife who cares about her appearance



There are some things a woman cannot change, and a husband should be understanding of this. True love will always love regardless of physical appearance.

There are some things that women can change or improve if they desire. Making some changes can help the husband's heart because outward beauty moves inward to develop a deep love.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

A wife who cares about her appearance



The wife should desire to look her best for her husband. Remember that attractiveness is both outward AND inward. So only focusing on the outward with out addressing the inner person will not have a lasting impression.

Your beauty should not come from outward adornment such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. (1 Peter 3:3-4)



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

A wife who cares about her appearance

It is a woman's character that will ultimately draw a man to his wife.

However, most men do not want their wife to be critical, negative, loud, undisciplined and bossy. Instead, a wife should be controlled in speech and expressing an attitude of gratefulness. She should be gentle with her children and patient with her husband.





GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 1

A wife who cares about her appearance

All this means, a wife should try her best to be outwardly appealing to her husband and at the same time practice beauty of character.



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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 2

Honor your husband's divine calling as head of the home

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 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.

(Ephesians 5:22-23)

Wives are instructed to acknowledge their husband's call from God to leadership in the home. She should honor this calling. His actions may not always deserve respect, but his position demands it.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 2

Honor your husband's divine calling as head of the home

In 1 Peter 2:18, we see that slaves are to submit whether their master is good or harsh. Peter is not talking to wives, but his point can be applied in that showing respect can reveal God's character and love. Light shines brightest in the darkness (John 1:5).

This principle holds true in marriage as well. When a wife shows respect—even if he is acting unkind—this will release God to draw the man to himself.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 2

Honor your husband's divine calling as head of the home

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. (Ephesians 5:33)

- For a woman to feel secure in the marriage relationship, **she must know that her husband loves her.**
- Likewise, for a husband to feel secure with his wife, **he must feel he is respected.**



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 2

Honor your husband's divine calling as head of the home

Questions a wife should ask herself

- Do I criticize, assault, or embarrass my husband in front of other people or our children?
- Do I guard my husband's reputation before others, or do I tear it down?
- Do I undermine my husband's authority in our home? When he makes a decision regarding the home or children, do I support him or go against his authority?
- Am I consistently critical and negative about how my husband conducts himself?
- Do I see my husband's weaknesses as a point for prayer or a point of attack?



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

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

Ephesians 5:22-24



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

Submission



This word can be scary for many women because it sometimes brings negative thoughts to mind (*I must be a slave, I must lose my individuality, I must be inferior*).

“*Submission*” means to yield to another’s authority. It does mean giving up some rights and self-assertiveness but does not imply blind obedience.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

Submission



Submission is important for following God's intended roles in a family. It is important for two reasons:

- A wife shows reverence to the Lord by submitting to her husband
- Submission is God's way of protecting the wife

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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

Submission



Submission has nothing to do with a woman's worth or value. Women are equal in intellectual abilities, spirituality and creativity, but submission is a practical matter of order in everyday living.

Life calls for functional authority and we see this in many societal practices. When this authority is not followed it leads to disorder. To avoid marital problems a wife should submit to her husband's authority in her life.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

Struggle to submit



The struggle to submit goes back to the Garden of Eden. (See *Genesis 1-3*) The story reveals the violation of God's order of authority. When Adam and Eve chose to rebel and assert their own authority, God had to uncover their sin and pronounce judgement.

To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." (Genesis 3:16)

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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

Struggle to submit



According to this verse, the husband is “*to rule*” over his wife. The word “*rule*” means to govern, have dominion or manage. Simply put, the man is the leader. Just as women struggle to submit, some men struggle to lead. Not living up to these responsibilities can cause division in a household. All of these struggles are a direct consequence of sin in the world.

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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

Struggle to submit



This verse also says a woman's "*desire will be for [her] husband.*" The word "*desire*" is only used three times in the Old Testament—two of these in Genesis 3 and 4. It comes from a Hebrew word that means "*to run after or run over.*" It carries the idea of conquering something with a need to control it in the same way an animal hunts prey.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

Struggle to submit



Eve acted independently of Adam when confronted by Satan (Genesis 3:1-7). As a result of not involving her husband, she submitted to temptation.

God was also angry with Adam because he submitted to his wife's choice instead of the will of God. Adam was present but was complacent in his leadership and did not intervene.

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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

Struggle to submit



These two acts opened the door for sin to bring its curse into their lives. Adam would struggle against the earth and his own responsibility to lead, and Eve would struggle in childbirth and to follow her husband's leadership.

The couple needs to be aware of these tendencies and understand that it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we can fulfill God's design.

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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

Mutual submission



It is important to give balance to this teaching on submission.

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. (Ephesians 5:21)

There must be a joint effort from both husband and wife to submit to their respective roles. The husband should listen to his wife as God uses her to speak truth into their lives. The wife must understand that her husband is ultimately held responsible to God for the decisions made in the home.

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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 3

Follow your husband's leadership

Mutual submission



When both spouses understand the power of submission, headship, authority, and covering, their relationship will be improved in wonderful and incredible ways.

These character qualities in a marriage will always bless and never curse their relationship.

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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

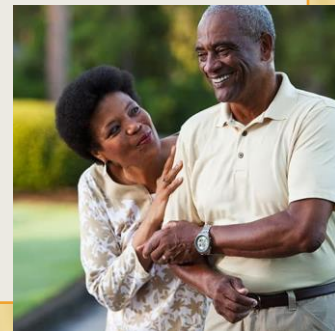
Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 4

Demonstrate admiration and respect for your husband

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. (Ephesians 5:33)

The word “respect” used here is also used in the following contexts:

- Children are to respect their parents (*Leviticus 19:3*)
- Subjects are to respect their rulers (*Joshua 4:14*)
- Servants are to respect their masters (*1 Peter 2:18*)





GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Guidelines for wives: Responsibility 4

Demonstrate admiration and respect for your husband

When a wife respects her husband, she is not just acknowledging his position, she is also showing respect for him in that position. The opposite of respect is “criticism.” Criticism results in resentment and resistance.

Men have a basic need for approval and respect. A woman’s admiration for her husband will create motivation for him to lead responsibly and follow God’s will for his life and their family.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

A Brief Summary

- Both the husband and wife have some very challenging responsibilities to each other before God
- When basic needs are met, blessing and fulfillment follow

More than anything else, God intends for the marriage relationship to be enjoyed and not simply endured. He wants the husband and wife to express their love in a way that can show the love Christ has for the Church.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



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GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Discuss how women are valued in your culture

- Read Titus 2:3-5. Discuss why older women are instructed to teach younger women. How is this helpful both to the older woman and to the younger woman?
- How do the roles of older women and younger women in your community compare with what you have learned in this lesson?



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Why is it important for the wife to support the position of the husband as head of the home?

- Review “Questions a wife should ask herself”
- Discuss the fact that the answers to each of these questions reflect how the wife “honors” her husband as head of the home. Why is this so?



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

Responsibility 3 is instructing the wife to follow her husband's leadership. Read Ephesians 5:21-24.

- Discuss what it means for the wife to “submit” to her husband's leadership
- Why does a marriage relationship need only one leader?
- What does it practically mean for a wife to submit to her own husband?
- To whom is the husband instructed to submit? How does the headship of Christ over the church relate to the marriage relationship?
- Discuss the command to submit to one another (Ephesians 5:21). How will the marriage be strengthened if the husband and wife do this?



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

The fourth responsibility of the wife is to demonstrate her admiration and respect for her husband

- Discuss why it is important that a wife “demonstrate” her respect for her husband
- How does this relate to a successful marriage relationship?
- How does a man react when he “feels” respected?
- In what ways can a wife be sure to show respect and admiration to her husband?



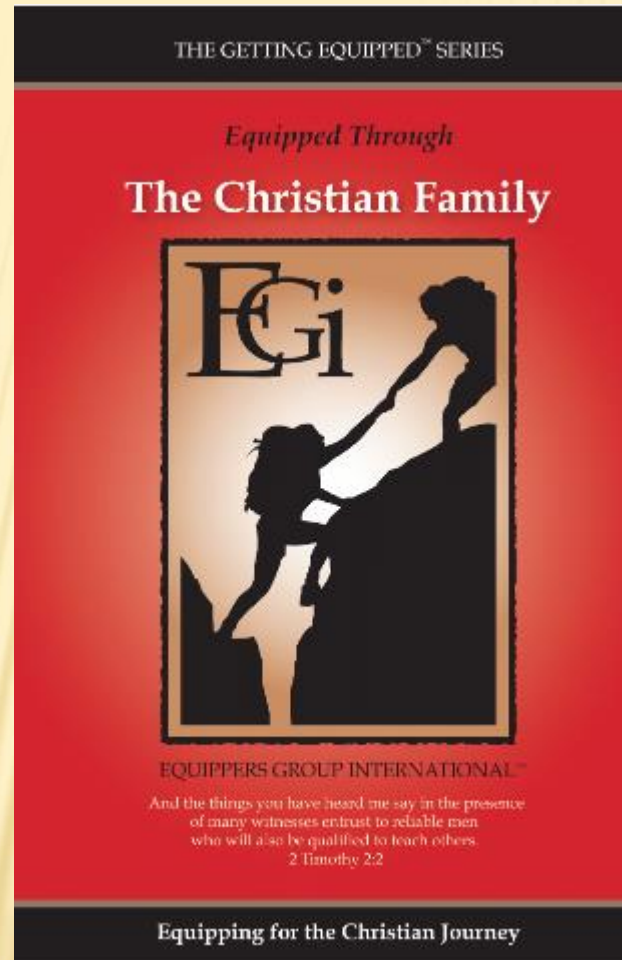
GUIDELINES FOR WIVES

APPLICATION

1. Prayerfully consider the basic needs of a husband. With which of these needs do you struggle in your marriage? Write how you could better resolve that need. If you are married, do this activity with your spouse.
2. Read Ephesians 5-6 with your spouse. Prayerfully consider the command to “submit” as it relates to all walks of life. What areas outside of the home do you find it necessary to submit? What about the laws of your city/country? Discuss your attitude toward submission.



GUIDELINES FOR WIVES



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