

**Marriage – Part 3 – The Laws of Your Marriage for Women**

. . . *Let the wife see that she respects her husband.* —Ephesians 5:33 NKJV

Wives face a tremendous challenge in marriage: to respect their husbands and to submit to their authority in the home (Eph. 5:24). This is not always an easy task, but the Scriptures give quite a bit of practical help in living up to this challenge. In this lesson, we are going to look at five “laws” that will teach us how to show respect, honor, and love to our husbands.

**The law of the shepherd (John 10:11)**—The husband is the shepherd of the home, and in that role, he provides direction and protection for the family. As shepherd, he is the acknowledged head of the home, and as wife, you are called to recognize and honor that position. When you willingly submit to him in this way, he perceives this as respect.

**The law of companionship (Mal. 2:14)**—You are called to be your husband’s companion, even though that may mean doing things you don’t particularly enjoy doing from time to time. Your husband derives great pleasure from just having you sit beside him as he watches a football game or as you stroll with him through the aisles of a boat exhibition. In the same way that you want him to talk to you and pay attention to your needs, he wants your company in the things that interest him.

**The law of silence (1 Pet. 3:1)**—This is probably one of the hardest things for women to do! To keep silent when everything in you wants to “let him have it” requires great restraint. But when you hold your tongue and refuse to lash out at your husband in a hurtful way, he knows that you respect him, even if you disagree with him.

**The law of beauty (1 Pet. 3:3–4)**—It is true that inward beauty is more important than outward beauty, but that does not mean that you should let yourself go after you marry and pay no attention to your appearance. Men are visually stimulated, and your husband needs to know that you respect him enough to make the effort to look good for him. However, your attire in public should always reflect modesty, decency, and simplicity. Your outward appearance should not draw undue attention to your body and should never be a source of temptation to other men.

**The law of mercy (John 4:10)**—You should always be ready to act as a godly woman of grace by extending mercy to others, especially your husband. If you are constantly critical and judgmental, expecting him to live up to your standard of perfection, you will drive him away. James 2:13 tells us that “mercy triumphs over judgment,” and when you treat your husband with mercy, he knows you respect him.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. What does true godly submission to your husband entail? What does it *not* include? How is true submission a blessing and protection?
2. Which of the five laws discussed in this lesson do you think is the most important? Which laws are the easiest for you? Which do you struggle with? Pray for one another in areas of weakness. Make a fresh commitment to love and respect your husband in every way!

## Family – Resolving Conflicts

*A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them . . . a time to tear and a time to mend . . . —Ecclesiastes 3:5, 7 NIV*

Proverbs 27:17 says, “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” In other words, our relationships are intended by God to perfect us. He will send people into our lives that we need to smooth out our rough edges. If we can view relationships this way, then we will be able to stop resenting conflict and use it as a means of receiving correction.

All of us have character weaknesses, and conflict will reveal them! This conflict will lead to crisis, and the resolving of the crisis leads to covenant. God wants to bring us to a point of “gathering stones.” The stones represent all the hurts we want to inflict on those who have hurt us. When we “gather stones,” we make a decision to “build an altar” with them, like Jacob and Laban did (Gen. 31:45–46) and not throw them at people.

In our families, there are three main sources of conflict:

**First are expectations.** The roles of husband, wife, in-laws, friends, and children should always be carefully defined so as to limit false expectations. Just because we are in a family does not mean there are no privacy boundaries. Even in a family each person needs to have their own boundaries.

Q – What are some boundaries that often get broken in families?

Q – How good are you at sharing your expectations with your family members?

**Second are arguments.** When we live in close proximity to others, disagreements are inevitable. Many times these arguments are very petty and can be resolved with a minimum of effort, but other times they highlight deep rooted conflicts that are continually swept under the rug.

Q – Why do people often ignore problems and sweep them under the rug?

Q – How practical is this verse: (*Ephesians 4:26 KJV*) *Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:*

**Third are outside relationships.** The husband and wife must protect their family from interfering in-laws, must establish clear boundaries in blended families, and must respect each other by having no relationships with the opposite sex.

Q – What are some things you have done to keep appropriate boundaries with in-laws?

When there is crisis, the goal is to end it with covenant. When covenant occurs, boundaries are established and forgiveness is extended. Relationship is restored, and the character of both parties has been changed for the good. We must believe God for each and every character flaw in our lives to be healed, and then for every conflict to be resolved with covenant.

### **Additional Questions for Discussion**

1. What are some character flaws that are often exposed in a family setting? What are some ways of reacting when these flaws are revealed? Which ways are beneficial, and which ways are not?

2. What are some ways you can defuse arguments? Is everything worth arguing about? How can you know when to let something go and when to make an issue of it?