

(Godly Home) Part 21 - the Hidden Women

by Denny Kenaston

A godly woman is a supportive wife who helps her husband and stands beside him in times of need, and her role is a paradox that requires her to be a servant leader.

Duration: 1:20:28

Scripture: Ephesians 5:33

Topics: "Godly Home Series"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher addresses the struggles that men face in a confused and mixed-up world. He talks about how men often get beaten down and criticized by their wives, leading them to lose their way. The preacher emphasizes the importance of looking to God as the ultimate authority and seeking His guidance in all aspects of life. He also highlights the role of a supportive and believing wife in the life of a missionary, using the example of a missionary couple who endured hardships together. The sermon concludes with the preacher expressing gratitude for the support he receives from his own support unit during times of spiritual battle.

Transcript

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Greetings, my sisters.

In Jesus Christ's name, I'm so glad the Lord led me early this morning to ask you to come and sit up here in the front. Somehow I sense by the Spirit of God in my heart that I'm talking to the most important group in this whole thing that we're talking about all week long. I know I've been talking to the men all week, and that's because I've been going by what the Bible says.

But somehow I think this morning that I'm talking to the most important group that makes this whole thing happen right. God bless you, sisters. I want to speak this morning about the hidden woman.

I'm sure you expected that. It will be both sessions, so there won't be a change in the title. Proverbs 31, verse 10 says, Who can find a virtuous woman? Her price is far above rubies.

There is a warfare that is raging for God and His kingdom, for the souls of men and for our families. There are strategies in this war, dear sisters, that Satan does not want us to find out. He knows if we find them, they will be his doom.

This powerful woman mentioned in Proverbs 31 is one of those strategies. There's no doubt about it. Her effect on the outcome of this war is staggering.

Satan knows that, and he also knows woman in her own weaknesses. He knows very well how to deceive her, just like he did in the garden. It seems that he has again come to her with a questioning spirit, a seducing spirit, saying, yea, hath God said? Today's modern woman, like Eve of old, has again been convinced to take a bite out of the new fruit, not realizing that it is the old fruit with the same old curse hidden in it.

The way it looked pleasant to her eyes, she was assured of an exalted position and wisdom she never knew before. And she took the bite. Oh, the confusion that has come by the choices that she has made to leave her supportive role as a wife and a mother and seek a career in this world, the devastating results only eternity will know.

My desire this morning, dear sisters, is to enlighten you and inspire you and activate you in such a way that you will never feel again like you are just a woman. You are a very important part of God's plan. In many ways, it could be you are more powerful even than man's place in this whole thing.

With greater rewards, we cannot figure out God's economy. We can understand how God works. We just do what he says.

Amen. We are not supposed to try to figure it all out. We just do what he says.

I was thinking about all that the fathers have heard all this week. And I'm sure that many of them feel overwhelmed by all that I have given to them. And I've given it to them because God gave it to them out of this book.

If ever that man needed a dear wife, just stand beside him and say, I'm here. I'm with you. I'm behind you.

I'll help you make it all happen. It's now, dear sisters. Come, you hidden women.

Come, you virtuous woman. Come, you supportive wife. Come, you powerful woman.

Come out of the shadows and stand beside your man. He needs your help like never before. Put your hand in his hand and say, I'm with you.

The role of a godly woman is a paradox. It doesn't make sense. That's the way paradoxes are, by the way, you know.

The way up is down. That doesn't make any sense. You want to be great? Be a servant.

That doesn't make sense in our natural mind. The role of a woman is a paradox. The role of a Christian woman is supportive.

It's hidden. And many times unknown to others. Yet, her power and her influence often exceeds that of a man who is in public.

Remember, dear Susanna Wesley, consider this morning, dear sisters, the New Testament path to greatness that Jesus taught. Greatness comes as we live the life of a servant and give ourselves away in hidden ways. Jesus gave the example of washing someone's feet and said, this is greatness.

Sisters, this morning, did you ever consider the life of an angel? Their life is hidden. Most of the time, they never are seen. Most of the time, people don't even know that they did anything.

God gets all the glory from these magnificent heavenly creatures. Others, they are concealed from human view. Yet, they do a myriad of different tasks.

Think about them for a moment, sisters. An accident is about to happen. They are on the scene, yet invisible.

They grab the steering wheel and guide the car to safety. When the car stops and we know that we have been spared, we bow our heads and thank God for caring for us. Not a word to the angel.

Yet, he was the one who did it all. O, purify our motives, dear Lord, and give us eternal eyes that serve as under the Lord, like the angels do. Someday, it will all come clear, I'm telling you.

What about the life of Joshua in the Bible? Forty-two years he served Moses faithfully. Very little is mentioned about him until Moses died. Do you think Moses could have served God the way he did if he didn't have Joshua to serve him and support him? No way.

He couldn't have done it. Yet, there he was, Joshua, the servant of Moses. That was his name.

Every military man knows that if you don't have a solid support unit working behind the scenes, you will not be able to win the war. This is a good way to describe the role of a sister. In fact, in a battle, if a soldier doesn't have a secluded unit of support in place, he won't even go out on the battlefield.

He won't do it. He would be a fool. God's ordained purpose for women, dear sisters, is for the man.

You are the warrior's support unit. That is God's ordained place for you. This purpose is clearly revealed in Genesis chapter 2, verse 18 and verse 22.

God said, it is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him and help her meet for him just exactly what he needs. One who will come alongside and help him.

Consider Eve's perspective this morning, my sisters. She was not. And then she was.

Put yourself in Eve's place for just a moment. All of a sudden, you are. And I imagine when she opened up her eyes, she looked into the face of the God who made her.

And there was probably a question on her face. What is this? Who am I? What am I? What am I for? And God instructed her probably before he took her to the man. The Bible says God made her and then took her to the man.

Eve, I am your God, Eve. I made you. I took you out of that man over there that's asleep.

And I made you because he needs you. I made you for him, Eve. You understand? You be his helper.

Then God took her and brought her to the man. Do you think Eve had any question in her mind what she was about? What she is here for? I don't think so. It is all very clear when we look at scriptures like this, what your purpose is, dear sisters.

It's very clear. Reading in Proverbs 31 again, verse 10, 11 and 12. God says, who can find a virtuous woman for her price is far above rubies.

The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. When we read these verses above, we see a picture of a beautiful woman whose life is all wrapped up in being a helpmate to her husband.

His heart safely trusts in her. He doesn't have a worry. He knows she will never leave him.

Her commitment to him is sure. He has confidence in her. He knows she will be his loving, supportive wife all the days of her life.

The scripture says she will be the mother of the children all the days of her life. The scripture says we see a woman whose heart's desire is to live for her husband and please him. She will do him good and not evil.

How long till death do us part? He can count on her and trust her with his money. He knows what her responses will be in the thick and thin of life. He knows she will guide the home according to his heart when he's away.

This is one valuable woman pictured here in these verses. A priceless jewel and a crown placed on the top of her husband's head according to Proverbs chapter 12. Dear sisters, this is the foundation stone that must be laid if you're going to have a godly home.

This foundation stone must be laid if you're going to have a godly home. This is God's revealed purpose for woman, plain and simple and to the point. You will never see godly children that you are longing for if you cannot or will not nestle down and hide yourself in this beautiful purpose for which you were made.

You will never see it. There is a hidden source of strength that charges the mental and emotional batteries of a man when he has a woman like this. I promise you.

I guarantee you. It may surprise some, this statement that I'm going to make. Your primary purpose is not to raise children.

Now I know that may be hard to understand because you're very busy raising children. But if we go back to God's hearts and God's original intent, God did not say out of his mouth, I'm going to make a woman so we can have children upon the earth. God did not say that.

God said it is not good for the man to be alone. I'm going to make a helper meet for him. Your primary purpose is for your husband not to raise the children.

Although you are busy about doing that, I want to encourage you. Do not lose sight of your husband. He is the reason you are here.

If you're going to slack, slack a bit on the children. Don't slack on your husband. Many wives lose their focus as time goes on through busy demands of motherhood.

Sometimes through strained relationship with a husband. Sometimes by listening to the seducing spirits that are in this world, a woman loses sight of what she's really here for. And she will easily just throw her whole life into her children.

You know, it's like, OK, I can't figure this husband out. I can't quite get along with him. Forget about him.

I'm going to go raise my children. It won't come out right, my dear sister. It won't come out right, I promise you.

You are here for your husband. Imagine just for a moment with me, sisters. Just for a moment.

You are on your deathbed. You are dying. You know you're dying.

It's all over. Maybe you said goodbye to your children. You said goodbye to your husband.

And you know this is it. And you're gone. Off you go.

As you enter into the glories of heaven, God stops you along the way and says, Wait a minute, my sister, my child. Your work is not finished on earth. You need to go back.

Your husband, he needs you. He needs your love. He needs your support.

He needs you to stand beside him. He needs you. You must go back and serve your husband.

I'm not going to let you into heaven right now. And all of a sudden, you wake up again. And you hear, first of all, the faint voice of your husband beside the bed, crying, saying, Oh, God, please, please, God, give me my wife.

I need my wife. I don't know if I'm going to make it without her. And you hear the voice of your husband saying those words.

And you remember the voice of God as you were entering into the portals of heaven, saying, My child, go back and serve your husband. What will you do? What will you do? My sister, you will arise. You will love and serve your husband all the days of your life, like never you did before.

Why? Because God spoke to you face to face and gave you your commission all over again and said, This is what I want you to do. There is an American proverb which is often made in the context of history. It goes like this.

Behind every great man is a great woman. This is a true statement. However, I feel it needs to be sanctified a bit.

But it is a true statement. Woman is a powerful creature. I'm not sure if you realize how powerful you are for the good or for the bad.

But you are a powerful creature. And I believe that Satan has been lying to you. Even to you.

With all the light that you have from the Word of God at your disposal, Satan has been lying to you. In the secular sense, this statement, this little proverb, often refers to a strong woman motivating and pushing her husband to achieve. And, yea, many times in history, you can track the great men in history, secular history, and you can find one of those strong kind of women behind them.

It shows the power of a woman. But there is, in the biblical sense, a more powerful, influential woman than these that we find in secular history who push their husbands to greatness. God, who made man, knows the best way to stir him on to achieve.

The biblical pattern in this is reverence, support, prayer, and encouragement. This is the biblical pattern for greatness. When a woman does this, oh my, who knows what a man can do.

So I would like to sanctify this proverb Behind every great man is a great woman. And say it this way, behind every great man is a hidden woman. She's there.

She's like the angel. She's not out front. She's not there pushing him out the door.

But she's there. Her influence is powerful. It's behind the scenes.

She's an encourager. She's a blessing. She's the one who strengthens him and gives him courage in so many situations.

There are things that happen inside of a man when his wife believes in him and honors him. When I think of a hidden woman, I think of the illustration of J. Frank Norris, who was a Baptist preacher who lived back in, I think, 1930. Something like that.

He was a powerful man. A powerful, influential Baptist preacher. He pastored two churches at the same time.

One in Fort Worth, Texas, and one in Detroit, Michigan. Flew back and forth. One week in this church.

The next week in this church. Flew back and forth. That was in the 50's.

But in the 30's, he was just a young preacher. Failing. Struggling.

Had many, many needs in his life. No power in his life. No unction upon him.

No souls were getting saved. His church wasn't growing. And he was a discouraged man.

And in his heart he was saying, I'm going to quit. Somehow his dear wife sensed that he was struggling. She sensed that there was need there.

And instead of sitting him down and telling him what a dud he was, and instead of sitting him down and saying, you know, your sermon was pretty dry this morning. Maybe you need to spend some more time in prayer. This dear lady, J. Frank Norris' wife, instead she decided, I'm going to fast and pray for my husband.

She set aside three days. And that dear lady sought the face of God for three days for her husband in fasting and prayer. He was away at meetings.

She didn't know that in his heart these were the last meetings that he was ever going to preach. He said in his heart, this is it. I'm a flop.

I can't do this thing. So I'm just going to quit. I'll do these meetings because I said I would.

And after that, I'm done. Well, on the last night of those meetings, that man got up into the pulpit. And all of a sudden, something came over him that he had never sensed before.

And the unction of the Holy Ghost came upon that man. And he began to preach like he never preached before. And the most hardened sinner in the whole community was sitting in the back row of that church that night.

And he came down the aisle weeping and repented and got right with God. And somebody else was there and saw it. And they came.

And before he knew what was happening, pandemonium broke out in the whole place and revival broke out. And everybody was thrilled. And this man was absolutely transformed.

He got on the telephone the next day and called his wife and said, Honey, you won't believe what's going on. What happened last night? And he begins to tell the story. And the dear lady, like one of those hidden angels, just stood there on the phone and said, Oh, praise God.

Isn't God good? Isn't God good? And he hung up the phone. Behind every great man, there is a hidden woman. Sisters, a hidden woman who knows her place, who knows the power of her place, is not intimidated by the position of her place because she understands the hidden mysteries of the Word of God.

Behind every great man, there is a hidden woman. D.L. Moody had his Emma, who traveled with him, teaching the children on the road and setting up housekeeping dozens and dozens of times in his evangelistic ministry. According to him, she was one of the most stabilizing influences in his life.

She was so full of grace and kindness, her example slowly turned the great evangelist into a compassionate winner of many souls. Who's going to get the glory someday? Robert Moffat had his Mary, who sacrificially established his household in a mud hut surrounded by a jungle. Her faith in God and her confidence in Robert became a continual source of encouragement to him.

This was in 1820, and pioneer missionary life was very difficult. But it didn't matter to her. She aided her husband, and together they established one of the most prosperous mission stations for hundreds of miles around.

John Bunyan had his Elizabeth, who stood beside him in loyal support while he was locked up in jail for 12 years. She cared for his five children, one of them being blind. Visited him in jail faithfully.

She never tempted him to compromise so that he could come home. Only eternity revealed the place that she played in rising pilgrims' progress. Adoniram Judson had his Anne, the first of his three missionary wives and the most famous one.

They were pioneer missionaries in Burma. Together they endured many hardships to plant the first church in Burma. Wife, mother, translator, and servant to her husband while he lied in prison for about two years.

It is hard for us to imagine the role of a missionary wife. Their husbands faced so many hardships in the work that the smiling face of a believing wife is priceless! It's priceless! Oh, the power of a support unit in the midst of the war! I think about this Godly Home series and how the war is absolutely raging over the giving of these sermons. I tell you what, oh, the power of my support unit! I cannot explain all the ways in which that powerful support unit is holding me up.

The other evening, the battle was raging. And people don't know this except a few that we've been praying with through these days. But the battle was raging and I was in the middle of a hot prayer meeting.

And I mean, men and women were crying out to God with fervency. The place was hot in prayer! But my wife couldn't get in the room for the press of the crowd. And she wasn't there.

And God said to me, get up. Go find your wife. And have your wife pray for you.

And I went and found my dear wife. And I got on my knees in my little study. And my dear wife laid her hands on me.

And heaven came down upon me. God cleared my voice so I could preach that night. I broke and wept like a baby.

And the heaven just opened up over me when my wife prayed for me. All those prayer warriors down there couldn't break through the clouds that were over me. But one sweet wife's prayer opened heaven over my heart.

Many times, women write me letters. You know, they hear the tapes and they say, oh, Brother Denny, I want this. I hear what you're saying.

I want this. How can I help my husband? He's not tuned in to the responsibilities of all these things. I want to take some time and answer that question.

How can you help your husband? He's not tuned in like he ought to be. And I want to quickly say, before we go any further, if you want to change your husband, that's probably a selfish motive. And sometimes, ladies do write me letters and I can sense I read between the lines.

That's really what they're after. They're just sick of this guy and the way he is. And could you please tell me how I can get him changed? No, I cannot tell you how you can get him changed.

But if you want to know how you can be an encouragement to that man in the way that he needs to go, that I can tell you. God does not bless sanctified manipulation, sisters. Mark that one down.

He will not bless sanctified manipulation. I want to show you how you can encourage your husband that God will make him a godly man. Let's look at the power of reverence.

Reverence is one of the most powerful, most motivating, most effectual qualities in human relationships there are that flows from a woman to a man or even from a man to a man. Let's look at the word reverence. I want to give you a shocking definition out of Webster's 1828 Dictionary, which is a bit shocking to the modern mind.

The first word, which is always the most definitive when you look in a dictionary. The first word for reverence is this word, fear. Fear.

Why? That causes the modern woman to cry out in opposition. Fear? I'm not going to fear my husband. That's the first word in Webster's 1828 Dictionary.

Fear mingled with respect and affection. There it is. Now I'm going to go down through a list here and look at some of the definitions of the word reverence.

What I've done is drawn out words out of the amplified paraphrase of the Bible. And then I went to the Webster's 1828 Dictionary and looked up each one of those words. So we're going to get the pure stuff this morning, sisters.

How can I reverence my husband? Ephesians 5.22 says, and see that the wife reverence her husband. How can I reverence my husband? This is what the word reverence means, sisters. Number one, it means to submit to Him.

That word means to yield or surrender to the power, will, or authority of another. The word is deeper than the word obey. The command to obey can be done as an outward thing.

The word submit requires an inward attitude of surrender with obedience. And that's what God is after. Submit to Him.

Next, notice Him. It means to observe with the eye and consider with the mind the act by which we gain knowledge of somebody. In other words, real interested focus.

Dear sisters, turn your eyes upon your husband with attentive interest in what he is doing. He should feel your interested eyes looking at him when he is around. Notice him.

Regard him. It means to give a focused attention to consider seriously that view of mind that springs from high value. Regard him.

This is so important, sisters, in reference to when your husband speaks. You want him to be a leader? Quiet down. Look attentively with a genuine value in what he says.

He will talk more. He will lead more. He will rise up to his responsibilities and do.

The next one, honor him. To honor is any expression of respect or high estimation by words or actions. To adorn, ornament or decorate.

It is the same word used when referring to honoring the king. Dear sisters, adorn your husbands with expressions of respect by word and action. You will never be sorry that you did.

Prefer him. The word prefer means to bear or carry in advance. To consider one to be better than you are.

In practical language, it means to place his desires and his opinions and his ideas ahead of yours. You can't imagine the confidence that this builds in a man when he senses from the depth of your heart that you are more interested in what he thinks than what you think. Man! Let him go! He'll be so fired up to do what he's supposed to do if he senses that coming out of your heart.

Prefer him. Venerate him. To give him much worth.

To respect and to worship. And I know we're not supposed to worship our husbands. Only God deserves this.

But when a man senses that his wife values him and what he does and what he says, this affects his leadership ability tremendously. Tremendously, you can't imagine. Esteem him.

To prize. To set a high value on someone. To have a high opinion of someone.

To give a high place of honor. That's esteem. Defer to him.

It means to yield to another's opinion or judgment because of respect and honor. This is a most beautiful quality of character for a wife to have. She can display this confidence builder often as there are lots of opinions in marriage, aren't there? Lots of them.

The next one. Praise him. To prize or value with words.

To lift or raise another with words of value and gratitude. This word is a good practical outward expression of many of the attitudes that I've already listed here. Praise is fuel on the fire of your husband's heart.

Don't doubt it, sisters. That guy will do things you never dreamed he would do. Love him.

It means to love him. This word means a prompt, free, willing desire for somebody. A desire for somebody to be pleased with and regard with strong affection.

Ardent fellowship springing from high esteem. A word of endearment. The love of a woman is without question the strongest motivation in a man's life.

It will cause him to do and be way beyond what you ever thought he would do or be. If you question that, you just look at the love of a man for a woman who he's seeking her. He is desiring to marry her.

Look what that fellow will go through. He'll go through anything. Don't forget that, dear sisters.

He'll go through anything for her. And lastly, admire him exceedingly. Reverence means to admire him exceedingly.

To hold up, to stop and behold with wonder. To regard with strong affections. A pleasant respect with wonder.

That's what that word means. Ephesians 5:33 says, And see that the wife reverence her husband. Beloved sisters, in Jesus Christ, this is quite a list of words to consider.

There are three ways that you can respond to this list that you've just been given. Let me give them to you. Number one, you can be careless and indifferent and just pass it off with little interest.

Number two, you can be overwhelmed by it and just give up in discouragement. And lastly, number three, you can be stirred and motivated and convicted by it and rise up in faith with a will to do as God has said. And I pray that you will do the latter with a vision and with purpose in your heart and your life from this day forward.

All Bible principles are effectual. And by that I mean, they have an effect. They're just like taking a rock and dropping it into a pond full of water.

Out goes the ripples from the rock that goes in. All Bible principles are effectual. They have an influence.

It is the law of sowing and reaping. We cannot cancel this process. If you choose to sow reverence upon your husband's life, you will receive a bountiful harvest, I guarantee it, sisters.

The opposite is also true. We cannot get away from this principle. You either do or you don't.

And you will get the fruit of your do or your don't either way. God Almighty, the Creator, has set these laws in motion and they do move according to our choices. When we choose to follow a Bible principle, we will reap the benefits from it.

Now, many times, because of laws of sowing and reaping, you may not reap the benefit tomorrow. But that's how God's principles are. And all the beautiful things that will come.

Let's look just for a moment here at the negative side. Your husband can be known in the gates, as out of Proverbs 31, or sitting in the corner. Which kind of a husband do you want? Let me tell you how you can make your husband a weak and a timid man.

One who just sits in the corner and doesn't talk very much. One who is afraid to lead out in conversation or afraid to make decisions. One who will always look to you to see what you think before he speaks.

God help us. Here's what you do. You set yourself to disregard what he says.

Don't notice him when he's around. When he comes home from work, don't greet him. Disregard what he says when he is talking.

Look the other way or bring up some other subject when he's speaking his words. Dishonor him. Belittle him as you walk through life together.

Don't fulfill his desires that he has for his home. Push him away. Tell him to get out of your way.

Find fault with him. Let him feel your silent disapproval all the time. And I guarantee you in five years, you'll have a husband who'll sit in the corner or you'll have a fight on your hands, one or the other.

Let's bow for prayer. God our Father, we love you, Lord. Oh, how beautiful are the principles of your word, Lord.

Oh, how powerful are these dear ladies that are sitting in the front of this auditorium today. God, I pray, will you hover over this meeting with tender care. Oh, God, with tender care, I pray in Jesus Christ's name.

Amen. Alright. God bless you, sisters.

I want to continue on in this subject, but I just want to say, I want to say it again. I'm telling you, the devil's a liar. He's a liar.

He's pulling one over on millions of women. And I'm afraid millions of Christian women. He's pulling one over on them.

And he's devastating and debilitating a whole generation of men by it. And I want to say this, dear sisters. I know we make a lot of mistakes.

We are a generation of men who didn't have leaders. We are trying to be leaders, and we didn't have leaders. But we want to do what is right.

And oh, as I stand up here even this morning and I share these things with you, dear sisters, I cannot help but remember all the shouts and all the amens and all the men at the altar all through the week. These men want to do right. They may stumble around sometimes.

We don't know what we're doing. Nobody showed us. But we want to.

We want to. So I just want to encourage you, dear sisters. You are dear sisters also.

I'd like to just bring back something that we thought of a couple of days ago. I guess I was encouraging you sisters to sit in family devotions with a supportive smile on your face, and I just reminded you that's what we do with a new elder. You know? Well, let me just pull that new elder back out here just for a moment and consider him again.

All this list of reverence, all that list there, you look down through that list and you'll find that a supportive congregation will surround their new elder with all those kind of attitudes. I mean, he gets notes. He gets encouragement.

He gets amen faces. When he makes a mistake, he gets a pat on the back anyway. And all of those things is what happens to an elder that emerges two years later as an effective minister of the gospel.

But just think with me. What if you didn't listen to him? You turned your head the other way. You frowned at him while he was preaching.

You wrote him a note and told him he didn't do too well. What kind of an elder do you think he'd be in two years' time? I tell you what, either he'd be a puppet, which is no elder at all, or he'd just quit, which is no elder at all. Either way, you'll get the same thing.

We know, when we take it out of the realm of our home, we understand these principles and how they work. May God help us to make them operate properly in our homes. And let me give you some counsel, you wives and you daughters.

If I were you, I would take this list, that list of definitions of reverence, and memorize it and internalize it into the very fiber of your heart and your being. I would encourage you to do that. You'll never go wrong.

If you treat your husband this way, how do you think this will affect him? Will it make him a better man, or will it make him a worse man? Will it encourage him, or will it discourage him? Will he feel good about himself, or will he think he's no good if you treat him the way that I've been encouraging you? Do you think he'll be more hard on you, or do you think he'll be more kind to you? Which one do you think it is? Let me tell you, in case you wonder. Many times, when I preach a message like this, in a mixed group like this, and I'm telling you this morning, when I get done, if I gave an invitation to the men, they'd be weeping at the altar. They would say, I don't deserve one like that! Bless your husbands, dear sisters.

Bless your husbands. Let's go on now, and look at the power of a submissive spirit. Turning to 1 Peter 3, the power of a submissive spirit.

There is in these verses a powerful secret that a discontented woman will never know. She will never know. But it is hidden within these verses right here that we're going to read.

A powerful secret. The power of a submissive spirit. God says to sisters, Likewise, ye wives, and that likewise is referring to the example of Christ's suffering quietly and dying on the cross that comes just

before these verses.

In like manner, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation or the life of the wives, while they behold your chaste conversation or life coupled with fear. There's that word fear again. And by the way, it means reverence.

It doesn't mean that you're afraid of your husband. It means reverence. Who's adorning? Let it not be that outward adorning of the plating of the hair or the wearing of gold or the putting on of apparel, but instead, let it be the adorning of the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price.

For after this manner, in the old time, the holy women also who trusted in God adorned themselves being in subjection unto their own husbands, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord, whose daughters ye are as long as ye do well and are not afraid with any amazement. Now here we see God's instruction, may I say, God's instruction to a wife who has a husband who does not obey the word. There may be a few who might fall into this category, but let me just encourage you this morning, dear sisters, the power of these words which God has given to the wife who has a husband who will not obey the word, that power is just as much power, yea, how much more influence shall you have on your husband if he does love the Lord and he wants to obey the word, if you will also take the same posture as this one here is admonished to take.

I'm telling you, you are a powerhouse of influence in your home when you get in that place that God gives here. The power of a meek and quiet spirit. The power of a submissive spirit that just desires to adapt itself to the desires and the direction of the husband.

And as I have studied this portion of Scripture, I am absolutely and totally convinced that the hidden man of the heart that this husband sees is Jesus. It's Jesus. He doesn't see a lady anymore.

That meekness, that quietness, that reverence, that bowed heart, that submission, that honor, that respect that that lady comes up with and he sees and he is affected by it and convicted by it and inspired by it and broken by it. He's seeing Jesus. Jesus is the hidden man of the heart.

And I'll tell you what, Jesus is powerful. Amen? He can turn the heart as heart. Jesus can do that.

I think of the illustration of Charles Spurgeon's wife. She had a special name that she called him that I really like. Her and her husband Charles, they had a beautiful relationship.

She was a multi-talented lady. I mean, this lady, she could outshine her husband. She knew Greek and Hebrew.

I mean, she was a very intelligent lady. She called her husband Tershatha. Tershatha.

You'll find that word, I believe it's in the book of Nehemiah, where it speaks about Nehemiah and it says that he was the Tershatha. It's a word which means my reverence. So if you could just imagine each and every morning when Mrs. Spurgeon greeted Charles Spurgeon, she greeted him with these words, Good morning, my reverence.

How did you sleep last night? That's the way that Sarah related to Abraham, calling him Lord. The spirit behind the name is what we're after here. When she greeted her husband in the morning with those words

and the spirit of those words, she had all the power of all those words of reverence that I just gave you behind her when she met her husband.

She was saying to her husband in the morning, I love you. I highly esteem you. I care about what you say.

I'm glad to be under your authority. I belong to you. I'm here for you.

And you are all I ever want. And I'll tell you what, that fueled Charles Spurgeon's fire like you can't imagine. Most people have no idea the battles that Charles faced in his ministry.

But he battled with discouragement all the time. He was so oppressed by so many things in his ministry, but somehow the powerful relationship that he had with his wife was a continual encouragement to him to get up and keep going. Many times she would sit on Saturday evening and read commentaries to him while he prepared for the Sunday morning service.

What a nice thing for a husband and a wife to do. Let's consider just for a moment, sisters, the sad predicament of a fish that is out of water. You know, you can take a fish out of water and by that I mean you take it out of its element, out of its environment, and as soon as you take a fish out of water, you will know right away something is wrong with the fish.

Because as soon as you take it out of the water, guess what? It can't breathe anymore. It can't get air out of air. It has to get air out of water.

That's the way that God designed it. And when you take it out of the water, guess what? It can't breathe. So it starts to flop and flip this way and that way.

You look at it. Their gills start gasping in and out like this trying to get some air, but no air. You know why? Because it's a fish out of water.

You understand the illustration? Well, many ladies are just like that. Many ladies who have set their sights on other things besides this beautiful place which God hath ordained from the creation of man and woman. When woman says, I will not stand in that place which God made for woman.

I'm going to go do my own thing somewhere else. I'm going to be a career woman. I'm going to make the money.

I'm going to make a name for myself. I'm not going to stay home and take care of these babies and just be a support to my husband. Let him stay home and wash the dishes.

When women take a position like that, I'm telling you, they are a fish out of water. They don't realize how much out of sorts they really are. In fact, dear sisters, do you have any idea how many new sicknesses, female sicknesses are on the charts and newer ones are coming out all the time? I mean, you can't track them.

The doctors can't figure them out. Why these ladies are sick? Why they hurt here? Why this isn't working right? Why this isn't working right? And I tell you what's wrong. They're a fish out of water.

And their gills are pushing and gasping for some air. But you can't get in the air until you get back in the water. And as soon as you drop that fish back in the water, everything is okay again.

And the oxygen starts coming through the water and into the body and into the lungs and the gills and the fish is fine and it swims away and everything is fine. Oh, my dear ladies, my dear ladies, are you a fish out of water? Are you gasping for every little bit of air that you can get? Are you wondering why everything is so upside down in your life? Maybe you need to jump back in the water. The water of God's plan and purpose and position for you as a woman.

Hallelujah. Many years ago now, I knew a dear sister when I was in Bible school. She was a single sister in the Bible school.

And there were a lot of single sisters in the Bible school. They went there to study. They went there to study to be school teacher in a Christian school.

Well, in the Bible school, you had to work in the bus ministry. And I'm glad for that. It changed my whole life.

As I was working in the bus ministry, there was this one young lady that just stood out, head and shoulders above the rest. Her name was Sister Jane. This dear girl, she had this whole thing down.

I mean, she was a pro at it. She would write notes and let me know that she's praying for me. Now, I'm just the leader.

That's all. She did the same thing to the pastor of the church. That's the kind of support unit she was.

She would write the pastor of the church a note. I'm praying for you today. I'm behind you.

God bless you today. I thought about you this morning. And I prayed for you.

I get notes like this from this girl all the time. And I thought, man, somebody better open up his eyes and latch ahold of that girl. She's going to make some man a beautiful wife someday.

But you know, a lot of the fellows there passed her by. She wasn't the most pretty lady in all the school, although she was a very attractive girl. But they passed her by for the flip-flop ones, you know.

And they got the flip-flop too, by the way. They got just what they asked for. But anyway, this was the kind of girl she was.

One day, she came to me for counsel. And she said, Brother Denny, I need your help. I have a young man who is asking to court me.

And in our Bible school, if somebody wanted to court you, it also meant they were very strongly considering marrying you. And I thought, whoa, okay. And she gave me the name of the young man.

And she said, I want to know what you think. Well, I did my investigation and I checked into this fellow. And he was a fine young man, no doubt about it.

But, you know, I thought about him and I thought, you know, you know, he was just so. You know, he wasn't a dynamic leader. He wasn't a powerful preacher.

He wasn't any of those things. But he was just a fine boy. And I thought, oh, Gene, you could do much better than this guy.

You know, but I didn't tell her that. I found out who he was and I felt he's a fine young man. Hey, what can I say? I told her, he seems to be a nice young man.

If you feel like God is leading you, you go that way. Well, they did. They courted.

They married. And guess what she did? All those notes and all those prayers and all those encouraging words and all that ability that that dear lady had, she turned them all loose on that guy that was just so-so. And in two years time, he was one of the finest leaders in the Bible college.

Ha! How about that? Now, some might have looked on and said, what happened to him? But I knew what happened to him. I knew exactly what happened to that fella. He got ahold of this dear lady who got underneath him and believed in him and dreamed visions for him and saw him to be what he wasn't yet and encouraged him and blessed him and loved him and admired him and all of a sudden, something started burning inside of that so-so kind of a guy and the fire started burning in him and bless God, he turned into a man of God! Yes.

Praise the Lord. My dear ladies, you have as much power available to you to bless and influence your husbands as that sister had and did use to bless and influence that man. You have just as much.

I want to encourage you to practice it. In Ephesians chapter 5 and verse 22, it says these words, Wise, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. That, to me, is a powerful statement in the Word of God.

Submit yourselves. It doesn't just say, submit to Him. It says, submit yourselves to your own husband as unto the Lord.

Or may I say, just as if you were submitting to the Lord is what that verse means. I want to use an imaginary situation to illustrate verse 22 to you sisters. Almost every one of your homes has a chair or two in it that your husband sits in.

It's his chair. I have one that I sit in at my house. In fact, I think I have two of them.

We call it Papa's chair. And if Papa's around or if Papa walks into the room, they all scatter out of that chair. That's Papa's chair.

See? It's Papa's chair. Everyone else knows it. So I want you to imagine the chair that your husband sits in when he comes into your home in the evening.

Just picture it there. You know the scene. It happens all the time.

It is very easy for you to imagine it because it happens all the time in every one of your homes. He comes in. Maybe he comes home from work or whatever.

And he goes and he sits in that chair. Now to help you understand the meaning of the verse at hand, I want to change this imaginary scene a bit. Instead of your husband walking through the door, greeting everyone, and sitting down in his chair to visit, I want you to picture that this time, instead of your husband walking through the door, the Lord Jesus Christ just walked through the door of your house.

It is the evening time. And suddenly the door opens. And the Lord Himself walks into your house instead of your husband.

He gives everyone a kind, warm greeting and tells you that He is taking your husband's place for the evening. He feels right at home and walks right over to that special chair and sits down as if He sat there many, many times. Wow! What an exciting experience! The Lord Jesus Christ just walked into your house and sat down in your chair.

What are you going to do next, my dear sisters? What will be your response? We can easily imagine what is going on inside of your heart by this time. Thoughts of reverence spring up in your mind. You think, the Lord walked into my house today.

He is sitting in the chair where my husband usually sits. How can I serve Him? Think about it for a moment. The Lord is sitting in your house.

What are you going to do? How are you going to respond? Just imagine what would be going on through your mind. You, the wife, you say to the Lord, Lord, is there anything that I can... Can I get you something tonight? And the Lord says, Well, yes, I'd like a cup of tea. And you, the wife, you say, Well, Lord, what kind of tea would you like? What kind of tea would you like? And He will give it.

And I think I'll take some mint tea. And you'll say, But Lord, I'll make it right away. And do you want some honey in it? And how much honey would you like in it? And all those things are going on in your mind.

You go back into the kitchen thinking, Oh, Lord, the Lord is in my house. My! The Lord is sitting in my husband's chair. And He wants a cup of tea.

And I get to make it for Him. What a privilege I have. Oh, you will be so excited to make that cup of tea.

You will get the best water you can find. Amen? You'll choose the best tea that you can find in your house. You will make a cup of tea for the Lord like you never made a cup of tea before.

Why? This cup of tea is for the Lord. It's for the Lord. All the while you're making it, you'll be thinking, The Lord is in my house.

My! The Lord is in my house. I can't believe it. I get to make a cup of tea for the Lord.

Let's go on with the illustration. When the tea is ready, you will joyfully serve it to Him. And I don't think you would quickly walk away like many times you would, you know.

Here's your tea. I got things to do. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

The Lord is sitting in that chair. You will place the tea in His hand and you will sit down and look His way. Remember? Remember those words, those definitions? You will be looking His way to see how the tea is.

You will watch while He takes the first sip. Is it too hot? I can get an ice cube to put in there. Does it taste all right? Is there enough honey in it? Oh, yes.

It's fine. Okay. Okay.

Will you walk away? Will you now walk away? No, you won't walk away. The Lord is sitting in that chair. You want to know what comes out of His mouth.

You're hanging on the edge of your seat to see what He's going to say next. The Lord is sitting in that chair. Amen? Think about it again.

As you're walking back into the kitchen, you say, well, Lord, I have supper on the table. Would you like to eat? And the Lord will say, oh, yes, I'm very hungry, but I'm sorry. I need to make a phone call first.

Could you hold the supper just a little while and till I get done with my phone call? What do you think your response would be? Would you say to the Lord? Now, wait a minute, Lord. That stuff's already on the table. You know, it's already in the table.

It's already hot. You eat now. Make your phone call later.

How many would say that to the Lord? Not one taker. No, not one taker. No.

You'd say, that's fine, Lord. Let me just quickly put it back into the oven, keep it warm. You make your phone call, and then I'll put it out on the table for you.

I mean, anything you want, Lord, anything you want. Right? That is what you would say, isn't it? I wonder if we would even think some of the thoughts that go through our mind when our husband asks such a request of us. I don't think we would do it because it is the Lord that is sitting in my house.

And we wouldn't do that. Beloved sisters, this is the picture of what God is saying in Ephesians chapter 5 and verse 22. And when you take that verse and couple it with all those definitions of reverence, I'm telling you, that is exactly what God is saying.

You shall relate to your husband. And this is what makes the men hit the altar and say, I'm not worth that. You're right, fellas, you're not worth it.

That's for you to think. Not for you to think. You understand? That's how it always works.

You know? Yeah, let him think he's not worth it. In fact, you lay out the red carpet, he'll think more he's not worth it. But you think he's worth it.

He's the Lord in my house. Amen? Maybe you're thinking by now, this guy is crazy. I mean, my husband isn't the Lord and he sure doesn't act like the Lord.

Let me encourage you to be careful not to react. You may miss a very important life changing principle if you get too reactive here. Remember, Paul is giving his vision of a spirit filled marriage.

Don't react so quick. Dream a while. You may get something good out of it.

My mind also goes to John Rice's wife. Some of you may not know him. I knew him when he was an old man, a dear old man.

My. But he was an evangelist. He was an editor.

He was an author. He was a preacher. He was a pastor and he was well known as a family man.

I think he raised six daughters, him and his dear wife. Well, this man raised six daughters and those six daughters never felt neglected. Even though, as I evaluate Dr. Rice's life in light of the principles that I've been preaching all week long, I think he failed at it.

He was on the road all the time. He was gone two or three weeks at a time. Sometimes he's gone for a month before he came back to his dear wife and his six lovely daughters.

As I look at it all, I think he didn't do right in that. He should have focused more on his family. However, even though I feel he made a mistake there, his daughters grew up and they never felt rejected or neglected by their father.

Do you know why? Because Mrs. Rice revered her husband. She revered her husband. She would get down on her knees day by day as daddy was away with all those six little girls.

They would get down on their knees and she would pray. And she prayed with all the sincerity of her heart. Oh God, we thank you that our daddy is a preacher.

We thank you God that he's out winning souls. We thank you Lord that he's on the front lines of the battle for you God. We pray for him.

We pray that you'll bless our daddy. We pray that you'll use him tonight while he's preaching. We pray that you'll bring him home to us safely Lord.

And we long for the day when he comes through the door again. When he came through the door again, that dear lady had done her homework so well, preaching daddy to those six daughters all those days while he was gone. They hit him with all the joy and enthusiasm that they could.

And they received him with joy and reverence into the household when he came back in again. Now I think he made a mistake. I think he should have been home more often.

But you would never know it by the way those six girls turned out. Because mama revered her husband. May I ask you this question? Is honor based on perfection? Do we just honor when somebody is worthy of honor? No.

We know the answer. Honor is based on position. I mean, if you're on your way to this meeting and you're going down the road and all of a sudden you see those lights going on behind you and you realize a policeman is pulling you over, it doesn't matter if that guy was a drunk last night and beat his wife.

When he gets out of that car with his uniform on, you are going to roll down your window and say, yes officer, aren't you? That's honor based on position. Dear ladies, you're going to have to do some of that in your home. Some of you have this thing turned around in your mind and you think, yeah, well, my husband and he does that and you should see what he does here.

Listen, if honor was based on performance, not a one of us could get any of it. But God has designed the family unit to function with honor. So we better figure out how we can honor, even though they don't do it all the way they ought to do it.

Amen? Because listen, it is that system of honor that lets that policeman keep law and order in the land. If everybody rolls up and said, that fella is a drunk. I'm not going to do what he says.

Guess what? We would have chaos and anarchy in this land very quickly. And you know what? We'd all be begging that the principle of honor would come running back as quick as it can get here so we can all have order in our world. Dear friends, what about the honor and the order in our home where the precious little ones are being raised? It's more important to have honor there than even it is in all around us here.

May the Lord help us and guide us in these things. Let's talk about the sad story of generational sin for just a minute. This happens all the time, by the way.

You know, I live in Lancaster County. And in Lancaster County, they know the genealogies around here. They know the genealogies.

I mean, they can tell you, yeah, I remember so-and-so and their mom and dad. I remember their dad and I remember their dad's dad. And I heard stories about their dad's dad's dad.

I mean, they got their genealogies straight around here. That can be good. That can be bad also.

There once was a nagging woman who dishonored her husband continually. She told him how dumb he was. She told him that he can't do anything right.

She told him that he's a bum. And she nagged at him because he wouldn't take all the responsibilities that she thought that he ought to take in the home. That nagging woman had little girls who also lived in the home.

Those little girls were wide open with open hearts as they lived in the home and sat in the atmosphere of this nagging woman who degraded her husband day by day. One day, those little girls became teenagers. And guess what? All of a sudden, their sweet daddy that they thought was so great, all of a sudden, daddy was wrong.

They began to complain about their dad. They began to agree with their mom. When mom started picking on dad, they joined right in with mom and continued to beat him down and tell him what a bad job he's doing and how poor it is.

One day, that young lady got old enough to get married. And a young man came along. And he was a foolish, undiscerning young man.

He just looked at the outside and she looked pretty. He liked the dress she wore and all those kind of things. And she seemed fun to him.

So they courted a while and then they got married. And after they got married, guess what happened? All of a sudden, this little girl, who now has become a woman, began to turn loose on him and tell him how dumb he was and how wrong he was and all the things that he's doing wrong in the house and how come you can't fulfill your responsibilities. And there he was, slowly, slowly, slowly being beat down and created into the same image that her father was.

And now she's married to the same kind of a guy and spits it in his face and says, You're just like my dad! But guess what? Little children come along. And there's little girls in the house. And the little girls are in the house listening to all these words.

And those little girls are receiving all those things into their hearts. And someday they grow up and become teenagers. And when they become teenagers, all of a sudden, Daddy isn't such a great daddy anymore.

And they start picking on him. And they join in with Mom to let him have it and tell him how dumb he is and why he didn't do this the way he should have and why don't you pay the bills on time and on and on it went and on and on the story goes. It's a sad, sad story.

And dear, dear sisters, that story in some families has gone on for generations and generations. Would somebody please pull the cord and stop that thing. Because I'm telling you, it's passing on from generation

to generation.

And by the way, it's not fair to give your daughter away to that poor guy who thinks she's pretty. Let him know what he's getting. Tell him.

By the way, you think she's pretty now, but you wait until you do something that she doesn't like. She will give you a piece of her mind real fast. So at least he knows what he's getting into when he marries her pretty face.

Amen? Please let him know. It's not right to not tell him. Agreed? Great-grandmother had it.

Grandmother had it. Mother had it. Daughter had it.

And the little girls are gonna have it too if we don't break the chain now. And I'm making the plea to you, dear sisters, if you are caught in this trap, break the chain for the sake of your daughters. Break the chain.

Or don't get married, girls. Don't get married. Let me leave you with these challenging questions.

If your husband, dear sisters, was lost, would your life win him or drive him away from the Lord? It's a good question for us to ask ourselves because sometimes we kind of take things for granted, you know? What if he was lost? What if he was gonna die and go to hell someday? Would your life win him or drive him away? This is a good question. Turn to Jeremiah in closing. Does your husband have problems? I'm sure he does.

Are there needs in his life? I'm sure there are. What are we gonna do about it? What shall we do? God says to you, dear ladies, through the prophet Jeremiah, who was living in a situation where it was a very sad state of affairs everywhere. The men of Israel were way, way worse than anything that we could even imagine.

They had turned away from their responsibilities. They had turned away from the burden of the Lord. They had turned away from the Lord.

They had turned away from all kinds of things that they should have been doing. Here's what God said through Jeremiah to the ladies of the land. Jeremiah 9, verse 17, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider ye and call.

Call for the mourning women that they may come. Send for cunning women that they may come. Let them make haste and take up a wailing for us.

For the men, what are you gonna wail about? That our eyes may run down with tears. That our eyelids may gush out with waters. What are they praying for? God, would You break the heart of our men till their eyes gush forth with tears.

That's the prayer. Verse 19, For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion. Oh, for a voice of wailing to be heard out of Zion again.

How are we spoiled! We are greatly confounded because we have forsaken the land, because our dwellings have cast us out. Yet hear the word of the Lord, all ye women, and let your ear receive the word at God's mouth. Teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbor lamentations.

What a powerful verse we have here. God tells us through the prophet Jeremiah what the ladies are supposed to do when everything is falling apart. God doesn't say, rise up and be the one that teaches family devotions.

God doesn't say, rise up and take the lead and tell your husband what he ought to be doing. God doesn't say, rise up and control the house and make it go the way you think it ought to go. God says, rise up, cry out in the night, weep before God, take up a wailing, get your daughters, instead of criticizing your husband, get your daughters on their knees and take up a wailing for the dear husbands, for the men who have fallen, who don't know what they're doing, who have lost their way because of a mixed up confused world that they grew up in.

That's what God is saying to us. And I would just encourage you sisters that you would take that path rather than the other path. And while you're praying, and while you're wailing, respect Him, honor Him, trust Him, believe in Him, and encourage Him.

And I guarantee you, He may not be perfect when all this is done. Ten years from now, He may not be all that you dreamed that He would be, but I guarantee you, He'll be a lot further down the right road than He is right now, than He is right now. Let's bow our heads and close our eyes.

God bless all you sincere ladies. I know you are drinking this morning and receiving. I know that.

From the moment that I stood up here, your longing hungry hearts said to me, you want what I'm going to say. I believe that. God bless you, every one of you.

We're going to give a little invitation here this morning and give you an opportunity to just come and get on your knees before the Lord. If you need to pray about these things, I want you to come. If you need to break your heart about your failures, you'll do much better in your heart if you will just turn and cry out to God and deal with the issues that are there and let God cleanse your heart and make it clean and pure again.

I just want to give you that opportunity to come before we dismiss the meeting here this morning.

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