

February 25, 2024

Imagine with me. Families and friends are gathered for a wedding ceremony. The venue is decorated in spring colours: warm greens, yellows, orangey reds. Love is in the air.

As the harpist plays, the groom stands and waits – handsome, endearing. And then the bride enters – gorgeous, stunning. All stand. The bride has never looked more beautiful. She glides down the aisle into the embrace of her husband-to-be.

For a moment, bride and groom embrace. Expectantly, they turn to the pastor and he reads: “Wives, submit to your own husbands.” Submit to whom? Why? End of romance!

In our world of bringing down the patriarchy, decolonization and opposition to any manifestation of authority, the word “submission” just screams power, dominance, and oppression. We live in an age of liberation, not submission!

Is the Christian vision for family still beautiful in the 21st Century? Although the text speaks specifically to husbands and wives, children and parents, there is good instruction for all of us, including single parents and single adults. May God open our eyes to the beauty of his design for marriage and family relationships.

- 1. **Husband: Lay down your life for your wife (v. 25-31).**
- 2. **Wife: Lay down your life for your husband (v. 22-24)**
- 3. **Child: Obey your parents out of love for Jesus.**
- 4. **Parent: Love your child as Jesus has loved you.**

Reflection Questions:

- 1. Husbands and wives, how might God be asking you to lay down your life for your spouse this week?
- 2. Single adults, what does it look like for you to lay down your lives for others (Eph. 5:21)?
- 3. Children, in what areas do you struggle to obey your parents? Where might you find the strength and love to honour your parents?
- 4. Parents, do you sense that you are “exasperating” your children? How might you parent differently?

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