

and follow Him step by step.

Before anyone feels that the instructions are too harsh, it is well to read on. The army officer would conclude his remarks by saying, "And now, is anyone afraid? If you are, go home before you frighten the rest of us!" Hence, the passage beautifully presents the concept of God's sovereignty intertwined with human responsibilities.

The instructions for the soldiers are also good advice for us today. Having a similar attitude in our prayer will help us to enter our promised land. 

Solving Marital Problems (IV)

Anthony So

1 Petr 3:7, and Ephesians 5:25 make a demand for husbands to sacrifice unconditionally for their wife. In these verses husband is called the "head" of the family, however, we need to understand that the word used here is not the same as we would understand in our western culture male dominated society, that man is to have authority over woman. The Greek usage of this word is not signifying "ruler" but rather it carries the connotation of the "source of origin."

There is no indication that Christ wants to dominate the church but He just wants to make sure that the body is growing properly and healthy. He gave all that the church needs in order to grow to its maturity. He provides the necessary strength to His bride--the church.

In the same manner, the husband should nurture his wife, care for her as she is "the weaker vessel" 1 Peter 3:7

"Weak" is not the same as inferior; weak is "fragile" which needs to be handled with care. Experts tell us that most women look for tender loving care (T.L.C.) from a man. Feelings are like valuable crystal, they cannot be handled roughly. The husband needs to understand the feelings of his spouse and affirm to her that her feelings are totally accepted. The Husband is to love his wife with the love of God. It is not just built on feelings only, but it goes further to the extent that the wife senses the sacrificial love from her husband.

Submission is not a type of oppression, rather it implies that husband and wife each has a different role in the family. To submit to one's husband is to honor his special qualities. There is no intention for the scriptures to discriminate against wives. If one needs to use an example to demonstrate the relationship, the appropriate one would

be the brain and the body. The brain is not any more important than the body. In fact God is fair to have put the heart in the body, so that the brain cannot claim to be more important than the body. Without the pumping of blood, there would not be any brain movement. Though the brain gives commands to the various parts of the body to carry out different functions, if the body refused to function properly, the brain cannot do a thing about it. Therefore when it comes to submission, we are saying to overlook the weaknesses of one's husband and to seek to cooperate with him inasmuch as it would honor God. Thus mutual submission is the intended Biblical pattern for the couple in relation to each other. The husband should not feel threatened if situation demands the wife to take the lead.

There is always a misinterpretation of Ephesians 5:22, "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord." It does not mean that the way the wife treats her husband should be as good as how she treats the Lord. The New Testament teaches us that we cannot serve two masters, so we cannot serve two people with the same intensity. The Lord Jesus deserves the number one place in our life. What this verse means is that the motivation of submitting oneself to leadership comes from obedience to the word of the Lord. It is the Lord's command for wives to submit themselves to leadership of their hus-

bands; therefore by obeying this command, command, wives are pleasing first to the Lord, then to their husband. 1 Peter 3:1 tells how a submissive wife can win over a non-believing husband. The word "to win over" signifies overpowerment. To submit is not a demonstration of weakness on the part of the wife, but rather it is a way to demonstrate the power of the wife. She could win over (in the Chinese translation-inspire) the husband. This is really the wisdom of God, for the greatest complaint that men have against their wives is "she nags too much." Submission is a more effective persuasion than confrontations and arguments.

"Christ who, being in the very nature of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, by making Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness; being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death even death on the cross" (Philippians 2:5-8.) That was a total submission to the will of the Father. Notice that He was not weak at all, but for the sake of mankind, He was really to give of His total self. Again the concept of empowerment appears. It is the same idea as the "have" giving to the "have nots." Whether it is love, forgiveness, patience, understanding, grace or humility that the husband is lacking, by submission, the wife is empowering the husband with what he needs. 