

**MONDAY 6/8/20**

**SERIES: FAMILY DONE GOD'S WAY**

**Speaker: Nat Crawford** (w/*Arnie & Cara*)

**Title: Family Done God's Way: A Word to the Wives pt. 1**

About 13 years ago, I was driving with a friend to Durham, North Carolina for some work. It was supposed to be about a 19-hour drive, and we were determined to make it in one straight shot. I wouldn't attempt that today, but we were young and dumb.

We headed out around 6am and had our MapQuest map printed off. Smart phones weren't a thing back then. So we drove, and around the 16 hour mark, we came to a place where we could go right or left on the interstate. We were exhausted and guessed. We went right. After 3 hours, we began to realize we were heading further away from Durham. In fact we were in northern Virginia. We needed to get back on track because we were off course.

That's what we do in many of areas of life – we get off course, and we need to get back on track. Marriage is one of those areas. Husbands get off course. Wives get off course. Families get off course. We all need help.

Today, we want to talk about some Biblical solutions on how to stay on course as a godly wife. We'll look at 4 ways to be a godly wife. They're very practical and convicting. But remember, God wants the best for your life and He can provide it. They come directly from the Bible, so if you don't like them, take them up with God; don't come after the preacher.

Oh, and a quick word to husbands: during this message, if you are listening with your wife, you are not allowed to continually look at her and elbow her. Let the Word of God do the work.

If you're listening today, and you're not a wife, that's okay. I pray you'll be open to what God says through His word. There's good insight here into the heart and mind of a man.

So let's begin. According to God's Word, **the first way to be a godly wife is to be your husband's teammate.** God created Adam out of the dust of the ground, according to Genesis. He created him and then put him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and to maintain it. And then listen to what God says in [Genesis 2:18b](#), "**It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.**" (NIV) You are his suitable helper. A better way of putting it

is, you are his opposite partner. You are his co-equal teammate. You are strong, valuable, and necessary. You are his teammate.

God matched you up with your spouse for a reason. It was not to give you a clone of yourself. It was to provide someone who can fill in the gaps – to complement your strengths and your weaknesses, just like two puzzle pieces that are not the same, but are equally important to make the whole.

But here is what usually what happens in marriage. Boy meets girl. They date, get engaged and get married, and about a year later, they come into a pastor's office and say this: "They fooled me! They are not the same person I married!"

What do they mean? They mean that the honeymoon is over, and they recognize that the things that attracted them to their spouse are now the things that drive them nuts.

Often the introvert marries the extrovert. The planner marries the spontaneous person. The spender marries the saver. Why? Because there is balance when opposites attract. Honestly, it creates a power couple. But this help – this balance - can create a rub. This rub can cause competition, and can cause a desire to "fix" the other person. This shouldn't be your goal, to "fix" the other person. They are different to complete you. You should lean into their strengths and they into yours.

I saw this in my own marriage. Tiffany and I have been married for 17 years. And it's funny how much we recognize that we are different, and it's positive, but those differences can come as a surprise or as a disappointment. For example, I'm a timekeeper. If I know I have 8 things to get done and I have 2 hours to complete them, I say, "No problem. I'll just get each done in 15 minutes." My wife has two things to get done in 4 hours and she says, "I don't know how I'll ever get these done." And then a neighbor comes over and she'll talk on the front porch for 2 hours. She has no concept of time, and I am by the minute. We create great balance.

Another example, a couple of years ago, I was watching basketball with my boys. Tiffany came into the room and she said, "You never used to like sports." In other words, "You hid this from me. I wish I would have known this. I don't really care for sports." You see, we both love musicals and the theater. That was a major reason we connected so well. So, sports wasn't a big part of our relationship. I enjoyed sports back then, but it wasn't a priority. But our kids enjoy sports, so my level of interest has increased. There's nothing wrong with it, but it might seem to her like I fooled her in my interests and passions.

So friends, if you're feeling this tension today. If you're feeling like, my spouse fooled me, or God made a mistake because my spouse is so different, that's no mistake. God put you and your husband together for a reason: To be teammates. To be partners. You complement him. You are to be his helper, his teammate in all areas of his life.

So the first way to be a godly wife is to be your husband's teammate.

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**The second way to be a godly wife is to be an affectionate friend.** Be an affectionate friend to your husband.

Look at what [Titus 2:3-5](#) says, “Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, <sup>4</sup>so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, <sup>5</sup>to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.” (NASB) Paul says, “*Wives you are to be loving.*”

What does that mean? Whenever we read the word love in the New Testament, we need to ask the question, “What kind of love are we talking about?” You find two Greek words for love in the New Testament: *agape* and *phileo*. Agape love is what is in Ephesians 5. Agape love is sacrificial love. It is a love that is willing to give it all away.

Phileo love is different. Phileo love is brotherly love. Phileo love has the idea of unconditional affection and friendship for life.

When you see your husband, do you think affectionately of him? Do you look at him with pride and thankfulness to God that he is your husband? It may be harder if you've got baggage. I get that. And, yet, God is commanding you still to show him love by your affection and your friendship.

I'm not perfect. I've got sin issues. I've done the most grievous things to Tiffany in our past, but she doesn't see those things when she sees me today. She communicates her pride for me. She lets me know that she's proud that I'm a spiritual leader at the home. She lets me know she's proud that I am pursuing my calling as a pastor. She lets me know having a beard makes me look handsome, because it covers up my ugly mug. Just kidding.

You as a wife are to show your husband affection. Tell him you are proud. And tell him why. And you are also to be his friend. Your husband is your friend for life – a best friend. And wives

and women, I'm going to tell you a secret: To be his friend, from a man's perspective, this friendship isn't built upon sharing his feelings and talking a lot. A husband wants to share his life – his experiences - with his wife.

Listen to what Dr. Emerson Eggerichs says in his book, *Love and Respect* : “**This is how men communicate, by sharing experiences. Women share experiences by talking about them to each other, examining and infusing the experiences with their impressions and emotions. Men are different. They share their experiences by sharing an activity.**”

Love and respect is a must have for your marriage. It has been instrumental in my marriage and thousands of others. Just being there is not natural for most women. It's not natural for Tiffany to just sit in the living room next to me while I play a video game and just sit there. It's not natural for her to go to a coffee shop and play a board game, and not carry on an in-depth conversation. But for me, I just want her there. Now, I'll engage in meaningful conversation at some point, but it always helps when there's just that time of togetherness with no agenda.

And here's the reality: Interests change. You and your husband may have been attracted to each other because of certain common interests. That was true for Tiffany and I, but some interests take a back seat and some disappear.

When we started dating, Tiffany and I we were big into musicals and plays. We still are, but other things have crept into a higher place of interest. About a year ago, I got into shooting. Tiffany wasn't a big fan of guns, but I wanted her to experience it, and so she came along. Now she's hooked and a better shot than me. It's the experience together that means so much. She's my friend and we just enjoy being together.

You may not have to stretch and flex in interests. You will have to flex in needing to talk so much. But don't worry. As a loving husband, he'll want to flex too, and engage in those much needed conversations.

As a godly wife, you are your husband's teammate and his affectionate friend. But your role goes on from there . **According to Ephesians 5 you'll be selfless with your husband.** Listen to what Paul says in Ephesians 5, beginning in verse 21. “**and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.**” (NASB)

Yes, I went there. Recognize when we talk about headship and submission, it has negative baggage, due to abuse and misunderstanding. Let's correct this: let me start by making a comment on headship. Verse 23, Paul [says the husband is the head of the wife](#). This should not be understood as one who rules as a dictator, or one who dominates. It is one who is taking a posture of *servant leadership*. If you turned to Ephesians 5, circle the word *subject* and right next to it, write the words, "servant leader." It's all about thinking about the good of your spouse and the family.

It's about modeling what Christ did. In Philippians 2, Paul tells us that Christ emptied Himself of his glory and took on the role of a servant. Jesus restrained His divine privileges, and yet remained divine. He was willing to take His submissiveness to the cross. Why? Because He loved us. Jesus is fully God, yet He was able and willing to take the form of a servant. That's what real headship is: servanthood - servant leadership - putting the needs of the family above your own agenda.

Headship is also about taking responsibility for the good of the household. Headship is not about domination, it's about responsibility. Very few people would want to be the CEO of a company, because at the end of the day, the CEO is responsible for the success or failure of a company. It's a lot of pressure. A lot is riding on it. God has placed that responsibility on the husband. So headship is about servant leadership and responsibility.

Now specifically regarding submission, don't miss that in verse 21, *both* husband and wife are to be submissive. Both parties are to be selfless. So now when you read the word submissive, think of it as selfless.

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N: All right, now let's go to Arnie and Cara to talk more about the word selfless. Arnie, give us guys an idea of how to balance headship with selflessness.

A: Yeah. You know, that is a great question that I've thought a lot about. I even had to talk to my wife about it, and she said one of the things that always has inspired her about me as the family leader, is I never give up, and I'm always doing for the good of the family. So no matter what, she's always known that I would never quit. I would never give up, whether it's leading an organization or leading our family, she could always count on me.

N: Cara, how about you? You're a woman with a strong personality and great energy and drive for life. How does this idea of submission or deferment to your husband work for you? And how

about for your husband?

C: I value my husband's wisdom, just like Shar said about Arnie. He just seems to keep us all together and he doesn't give up. Speaking of my husband, he tells me when I'm off my rocker. Every time he's had to do that, I've been in agreement with him. Although when I hear it, I don't want to hear it; he's right, and so he can tell me that I'm being unreasonable. You know, I've heard claims from women, Nat, that say that they can't be a Christian, because of that word *submission*. So I spent a lot of time asking questions about that and researching that topic of submission, just that so that I would have a better understanding when I evangelize to those gals. And it turns out, that in my marriage, I've been submissive the whole time, and didn't even notice, because it has to do more with an equal amount of respect. I want to cook and clean, and I want to wash my husband's clothes, and do all those things; not because I'm made to, or that's part of the job description, but it's because I want to do it. It's an act of love for me. So in return, my husband makes me feel safe. He protects me, and then where I am weak, he is strong.

N: Right. And I think you nail it right there, that it really is about being selfless, and doing things because you cherish a person, because you care about that person, because you love that person. But it still is remembering that you are both, as you said, co-equal. That's so key. So why do you guys think it's so important for your kids, or your even your grandkids, to see the principle of submitting to each other, and it played out in the lives of parents, or even a grandparent's marriage?

C: Well, with any relationship, good communication skills are key. So if I can communicate well with my husband, and my kids can see us working life out together in a partnership, I mean that just benefits them all around, I think in in their own marriages, and also with work colleagues and in other things.

A: Yeah, I agree with Cara. Your relationship shows to everyone else, whether you like it or not, you're demonstrating for the next generation how it is good, bad, indifferent. That's something that we all live with as a daily challenge, I think.

N: They are always watching. So it's important that we are very cognizant of what we're saying and what we're doing. And I think something else that's really important for us in our modeling, is how we package things. You know, we, as spouses, we can disagree, and there's a great way to

do it with respect, and with dignity, and with care, and even in just how we convey our mutual submission. Packaging goes a long way, that it's truly an enjoyment for us to do so, rather than out of burden or anything else.

Let me close with this question. Let's think back to the topic of being teammates in a relationship or in a marriage. How have you become better teammates over the years?

A: So I'll take this one, because I had to run upstairs and ask Shar that too. You know, because, I mean I used to do the rounds at men's ministry retreats and conferences and all of that. I came to the conclusion that men are pretty stupid when it comes to their wives, and judging how awesome they are, and not their wives, but themselves. So I wanted to check in with Shar, make sure that, you know what I'm saying has some merit to it. And so I asked her, how have I become a better teammate over the years? And she said, by far, you're more inclusive. You listen to me and you try to include me in everything you do. And yes, I would agree, that through her diligence as well, in reminding me when I forget to include her, and also to tell me to stop talking and start listening. You kind of work a balance out, and pretty soon it just becomes natural to include the other person. But it sure didn't happen overnight.

N: Well, and I think what you did there is a great demonstration of rightful humility, to actually go to your wife and ask, how am I doing? In fact, that's something that I've often taught men, and even women, to do in marriage, is go to your spouse on occasion, in the right context, and ask the question, how am I doing as your husband, or as your wife, even on a scale of one to 10; you know, how am I doing as your husband, and what could I do to raise that by one number? And what's neat is, you get the opportunity to learn about how you're doing, but also, it creates a great environment for some constructive criticism to grow. Be prepared though, when you open that door, hopefully they will be prepared to share and be prepared to receive it. Cara, what about you on the topic of teammates?

C: Keeping in mind that I didn't get married until I was 29; I already knew who I was, what I wanted to do with my life, because I was doing it. I knew what my interests were. So when Dan and I got married, there wasn't really any put-ons. I wasn't trying to change him. I liked who he was at the time. Since then, we both came to know the Lord, so we've become better versions of ourselves. So I would say, we've always been great teammates right off the bat, and of course we've had some things that we worked through together, that actually were hard, but made our marriage strong. But I'll tell you, you know, after listening to you speak here, you know I could

probably golf more with him. I mean, [I remember Tiff and you talking about that very topic]. I do it on occasion, and I actually enjoy it, and so I should probably just do it more. In fact, I'll probably go down on the golf simulator with him later today, so I appreciate it. [It's a better place than being outside]. Exactly.

N: Absolutely. That's good.