

Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband ...Ephesians 5:33

Most of us are familiar with Ephesians 5:33... "let the wife see that she reverence her husband", and most of us have been told that scripture means we are to "respect" our husbands. In the NIV translation of the Bible it is even translated "respect". The problem is that the word that was translated "reverence" by the King James Version has a much deeper meaning than "respect" as we know it today.

Since the Greek word used in this verse is phobeo, and it is the same word used to describe the utter awe the disciples felt for Jesus when He commanded the wind and waves to be still, I believe it is much more than just respect, especially as known in our culture today.

In Ephesians 5, the scriptures repeatedly compare the husband and wife relationship in a marriage to the relationship between Christ and the Church: wives are to submit to their husbands as unto the Lord (Eph. 5:22), the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is head of the Church, (Eph. 5:23), the wife is subject to the husband and the Church to Christ (Eph. 5:24), and the husband is to love his wife, cleanse, nourish and cherish her as Christ the Church (Eph. 5:25-29). So it stands to reason that even in reverence we are to look to the Christ/Church relationship as an example.

If the Lord were in the room, would we make belittling jokes about Him? Neither should we do so to our husbands. If Christ were present, would we cut off His words and/or finish His sentences for Him? Somehow I doubt that we would. Why? Because we reverence Him. We'd be in total awe. I think we'd be doing well to still be able to speak in His presence.

Now I know it is unrealistic to have that kind of reverence for another human being, even our husbands, but we can have that kind of reverence for the authority that is given to him by the Lord. We should be careful how we speak to him and how we speak about him, (especially in front of our children), and we should never, ever make him the butt of a joke.

We should listen when he speaks and place great importance on what he says to us. We should let our admiration for him show, especially in public. Since his authority is given to him by the Lord Himself, we should treat our husband with deference and yes... even awe.