

The One Another Life – A Gospel Community

Week 7 – Submit to One Another
(Ephesians 5:15-21)

OPENING QUESTION

What does it look like when reverence for Christ becomes more important to me than getting my own way?

KEY VERSE

“Submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.”
– Ephesians 5:21

THE INSTRUCTION

1. Live carefully and wisely in an evil world that pulls you away from Christ, and understand what the Lord’s will is.

“Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk—not as unwise people but as wise—making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So don’t be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.” - Ephesians 5:15-17

Wise Christians do not simply drift with the world around them; they deliberately order their lives around what the Lord desires.

What is true: God calls His people to live deliberately and wisely because the days are evil. Christian wisdom asks not merely, “*What do I want?*” but “***What does the Lord want?***” And God’s revealed will is always moving His people toward Christlikeness.

What to do: Pay careful attention to the direction of your life, make the most of the opportunities God gives you, and as you live your life, seek to understand from God’s Word what honors the Lord.

2. Live under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

“And don’t get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless living, but be filled by the Spirit.” - Ephesians 5:18

Paul contrasts being controlled by wine with being filled by the Spirit: one leads to reckless living; the other produces a life increasingly shaped by God.

Rather than allowing sinful desires or other influences to control us, believers are to live under the shaping direction of the Holy Spirit. To be filled by the Spirit is to live under His ongoing influence so that He shapes our desires, attitudes, words, and relationships in ways that reflect Christ.

What is true: The Christian life is not meant to be controlled by sinful desires, impulses, or outside influences.

What to do: Yield yourself to the Spirit through His Word. Ask Him to shape your thinking, desires, words, choices, and relationships.

3. Let a Spirit-filled life show itself in worship and gratitude.

“Speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music with your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

-Ephesians 5:19-20

What is true: Spirit-filled believers worship God together and increasingly become thankful people. Gratitude loosens the grip of entitlement because it teaches us to recognize everything we have as a gracious gift of God.

What to do: Worship with God’s people and cultivate gratitude instead of continually focusing on what you think others owe you.

4. Out of reverence for Christ, humble yourself for the good of others.

“Submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.” – Ephesians 5:21

We submit to one another because we are first submitted to Christ; our reverence for Him teaches us when to yield, why to yield, and where submission must stop. When Christ matters more to us than getting our own way, we become willing to lay aside self-interest for the good of others.

What is true: Mutual submission means that Christians do not insist that their own preferences, recognition, or desires must always come first. Reverence for Christ produces a willingness to lay aside selfish ambition for the genuine good of another believer.

What to do: When yielding would not require you to disobey Scripture, participate in sin, violate conscience, or neglect a responsibility God has given you, willingly set aside your own preference and seek the good of others with humility.

THE MAIN IDEA

Main Idea: A Spirit-filled life expresses itself in worship, gratitude, and humble submission to one another out of reverence for Christ.

LOOK TO CHRIST

Jesus did not merely teach humility; **He displayed it perfectly**. He took the form of a servant, stooped to wash His disciples’ feet, patiently served weak people, and ultimately humbled Himself in obedience to the Father by giving His life for sinners. The One before whom every knee will one day bow willingly gave Himself for people who had rebelled against Him. **Our submission to one another reflects the character of the Savior who gave Himself for us.**

APPLICATION

Out of reverence for Christ, lay aside selfish ambition and willingly seek the good of others with humility. Where do I become frustrated when I do not get my way? How do I respond when someone inconveniences or disagrees with me? Do the people closest to me feel free to disagree with me without paying an emotional price? *(Or am I a thorny person to deal with, always like a prickly pear cactus, so to speak)?* Am I willing to serve when nobody notices? Is there a relationship where pride keeps me from apologizing, yielding my preference, or taking the first step toward reconciliation?