

SUBMISSION IN REVERENCE TO CHRIST

Ephesians 5:21-6:9

WHERE WE LEFT OFF...

In Ephesians 4 and 5, Paul exhorts believers to:

- Walk in a manner worthy of the calling (4:1)
- Walk in unity (4:2-16)
- Walk in purity (4:17-32)
- Walk in love (5:2)
- Walk in light (5:8)
- Walk in wisdom (5:15)

Paul's final command from last week: **BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT** (4:18-21)

- Be worshipful (*to the Lord with your heart*)
- Be prayerfully thankful (*to God in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*)
- Submit to one another (*out of reverence for Christ*)

SUBMISSION

Submit (5:21)

- From the Greek word *hupotasso*. The *hupo* means "under" and the *tasso* means "to arrange."
- Submission: to arrange oneself willingly and voluntarily under the leadership of another
 - Present continuous form of the verb: submitting is a continual attitude
- Submit to one another = submitting to others according to the authority and order established by God

Submission is a display of God's Order

"Submission is not a matter of value or inferiority but a matter of order." – Voddie Baucham

Creation: God establishes order and headship

- **God:** "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Genesis 1:1
 - **Man:** "Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature." Genesis 2:7
 - **Woman:** "I will make him a helper fit for him... And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man." Genesis 2:18, 22
 - **Beast:** "...have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Genesis 1:28

The Fall: Loss of order and headship

- **Beast:** "Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made." Genesis 3:1
 - **Woman:** "...she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate." Genesis 3:6
 - **Man:** "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Genesis 3:12
 - **God:** "...when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:5

Adam's Headship

"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned..." Romans 5:12

Christ's Headship

"For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous." Romans 5:17-19

▪ **The New Redeemed Order of Submission**

- "But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God." 1 Corinthians 11:3
- God, **Christ**, Husband, Wife

Our Submission to God is Revealed in Our Submission to Others
"...out of reverence for Christ."

God's established order of submission

- Citizens to government
- Flock to shepherd
- Wives to husbands
- Children to parents
- Bondservants to masters

1. Wives to husbands

- Submission to the Lord: "Wives submit to your own husbands as to the Lord." (5:22)
- Submission to the Lord's order of headship: "For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church..." (5:23)
- Responsibly of the husband
 - I. Love his wife
 - II. Give himself up for her
 - III. Nourish and cherish her
 - IV. Sanctify her with the Word
 - V. Present her without spot of blemish
- Reference to God's original created order: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." (5:31)

2. Children to parents

- Obey: Greek "hypakouete"
 - I. To listen, to do as ordered by (a person, institution, etc), to act according to the bidding of; following orders, commands or instructions.
- Obedience to the Lord: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." (6:1)

- Responsibility of the parents (6:4)
 - I. Do not provoke the children to anger
 - II. Bring them up in discipline and instruction of the Lord
- Reference to God's established law: "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." (6:2-3)

3. Bondservants to masters

- Obedient service to the Lord: Bondservants obey your earthly masters
 - I. With fear and trembling, with a sincere heart as you would Christ
 - II. As bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart
 - III. Rendering service as to the Lord not to man
- Responsibility of the masters
 - I. Do the same: unto the Lord not to man
 - II. Stop threatening

Rebellion against the Head

- "For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot." Romans 8:7

"Anything with two heads is a monster." -Voddie Baucham

THE HEADSHIP AND SUBMISSION OF CHRIST

Marriage: Christ's Love for His Bride

The responsibility of the husband (Ephesians 5:25-33)

- Love his wife
 - "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you." Jeremiah 31:3
- Give himself up for her
 - "...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8
- Nourish and cherish her
 - Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." John 6:35
 - "He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young." Isaiah 40:11
- Sanctify her with the Word
 - "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you." Ezekiel 36:25
- Present her without spot of blemish

- Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure” — for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.
Revelation 19:7-8

Parents: Christ’s Obedience to the Father

Christ’s Obedience

- “And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him.” John 8:29
- “For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.” John 6:38
- “...but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.” John 14:31
- “And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, ‘My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.’ Matthew 26:39
- “And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” Philippians 2:8

The Discipline of the Father

- “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him.
⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.”
⁷ It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸ If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ⁹ Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. ¹¹ For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” Hebrews 12:5-11

Servants: Christ’s Servant Humility

The Faithful Servant

“But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:26-28

The Servant Master

“If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.” John 13:14-16

ALL THINGS ARE IN SUBMISSION TO HIM, THE HEAD

- “And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.” Ephesians 1:22-23
- “...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him. 1 Peter 3:22
- “For ‘God has put all things in subjection under his feet.’ But when it says, ‘all things are put in subjection,’ it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him.”
1 Corinthians 15:27

Empowered to Submit to others

Reverence for Christ

As to the Lord

In the Lord

As you would Christ

Doing the will of God from the heart

As to the Lord and not to man

He who is their Master and yours is in heaven and there is no partiality with him

This mystery is profound and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. (5:32)

- “But Jesus answered them, ‘You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.’” Matthew 22:29
- “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the heart of man imagined,
what God has prepared for those who love him”—
1 Corinthians 2:9

“As you maintain your different, complementary roles; as you stay committed exclusively to each other for your entire lives (even in the tough times), in obedience to Scripture; as you model both the self-giving love of Christ as a husband and the submissive service of the Church as a wife, you both preach the Gospel.” – Wayne Grudem

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Submitting to one another is result of being filled with the Spirit. Why is this an absolute necessity? Why are we unable to properly submit apart from the Spirit?
2. What effects do we see in society and in our own lives as a result of order and headship being reversed due to the Fall?
3. Where have you seen Biblical submission most clearly within any human relationship?
4. What is most challenging about Biblical submission?
5. What are some examples in your own life where you have seen the fruit of Biblical submission?

HOMEWORK

Submission can feel very difficult when the person placed in the headship or authority over you is not fulfilling their role as directed by God. How can we honor the Lord in those circumstances?

MARRIAGE

“Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, ² when they see your respectful and pure conduct. ³ Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— ⁴ but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. ⁵ For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, ⁶ as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening. ⁷ Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.” 1 Peter 3:1-7

For a wife with a husband who does not obey the Word, what kind of attitude is precious to the Lord?

In what ways can you conduct speak without words?

How can you seek to adorn the hidden person of the heart?

Peter says that the holy women “hoped in God.” Why is hope in God absolutely necessary to be able to respect and submit to your husband?

EMPLOYMENT

¹⁸ Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. ¹⁹ For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

When serving an unjust master, how could it be a gracious thing to endure?

What are some examples of Christ suffering unjustly that we could follow in both word and action?

How do we continue to entrust ourselves to “him who judges justly” amidst hardship at work?

In difficult circumstances, how can we die to sin and live to righteousness?

Jesus is the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls. How does this empower you to be subject to the authority over you with all respect?