

Love, Submission, and Reverence
Ephesians 5:21-33
Al Gascon | June 23, 2024

Genesis 3: 16-20

(The fall of man) is where the battle of the sexes began, where women's liberation and male chauvinism came into existence. Women might have a sinful inclination to usurp man's authority, and men have a sinful inclination to put women under their feet. – John MacArthur

Ephesians 5:21-33

It was not news to wives that they should be submissive to their husbands. The "news" was that such submission now was to be done for the sake of the Lord and was balanced by the love of the husband, even to the point of self-sacrifice. – Walter Liefeld

⇒ Mutual spousal submission is a byproduct of Christ being highly esteemed.

Submission does not mean inferiority. As well, submission does not mean silence. Submission means "sub-mission." There is a mission for the Christian marriage, and that mission is obeying and glorifying God. The wife says, "I'm going to put myself under that mission. That mission is more important than my individual desires. I'm not putting myself below my husband, I'm putting myself below the mission God has for our marriage and for my life." —David Guzik

A husband is not commanded to love his wife because of what she is or isn't. He is commanded to love her because it is God's will for him to love her. It is certainly intended for a husband to admire and be attracted to his wife's beauty, winsomeness, kindness, gentleness, or any other positive quality or virtue. But though such things bring great blessing and enjoyment, they are not the bond of marriage. If every appealing characteristic and every virtue of his wife disappears, a husband is still under just as great an obligation to love her. If anything, he is under greater obligation, because her need for the healing and restorative power of his selfless love is greater. That is the kind of love Christ has for his church and is therefore the kind of love every Christian husband is to have for his wife. – John MacArthur

To follow God's plan for the family is not only pleasing to him, but is the only way to godlier, happier, and more secure homes. His plan is neither for the exaltation of man and suppression of women nor the exaltation of women and suppression of man, but for the perfection and fulfillment of both men and women as He has ordained them to be. Such perfection and fulfillment is made possible by the filling of the Holy Spirit. —John MacArthur

Discussion Questions

- a. Which curse in Genesis 3 seems more harsh to you? Did women or men receive the harsher punishment in the fall?
- b. Are there any circumstances where you would tell a female friend/loved one to not submit to her husband? Is there any circumstance where you'd tell a husband to stop loving his wife?
- c. Women, what does/did/will submission look like in your marriage? Men, how does/did/will headship and sacrificial love come to pass in your marriage?
- d. If marriage is a reflection between Christ and the church, do you believe we'd still experience the depths of God's love if marriage didn't exist?
- e. What was/will be the hardest thing to overcome/accept when you began/begin living with your spouse?