

God's Gift to Wives

The Transition

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."

- Ephesians 5:21

1. The theme for the next section of Paul's writing is submission and obedience. This verse explains why: It is to give deep respect (reverence) to our Lord.

2. The Greek word for submission has a different meaning than our word. *hupatassomai* — "to lose or surrender one's own rights or will voluntarily."

"Submit yourselves, then, to God..."

- James 4:7

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established."

- Romans 13:1

"...submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and labours at it."

- 1 Corinthians 16:16

Note: Equality is not the purpose of this passage; function is!

God's Directive to Wives

"Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, His body, of which He is the Saviour.

²⁴Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything... ³³However, each one of you must love his wife as he

loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

- Ephesians 5:22-24,33

Various Views on this Passage of Scripture

1. Some interpret this passage as a suggestion.
2. Some interpret this passage as cultural.
What was marriage like in Ephesus in Paul's time?
3. Some interpret this passage as an "ideal".
4. Some interpret this passage as God's design and plan for every Christian home. (Remember "function"?)

What this Passage Doesn't Say

- It doesn't say that women should submit to men.
- It doesn't say that a husband is superior to his wife.
- It doesn't say that husbands and wives can't discuss, debate or even strongly disagree on issues.
- It doesn't say that a husband makes the decisions; not even if they have come to an impasse.

Why is the Wife to Submit to Her Husband?

1. Because of obedience to the Lord. The husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church.

Who made this rule?

"Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."

- 1 Corinthians 11:3

- *What is the problem with following this command?*

"The Lord is perfect in His leadership. My husband is not."

2. Because it follows the example of Jesus submitting to the Father and also the example of the church submitting to Jesus Christ.
3. Because it will create order (and hopefully, peace) in the home.
4. Because it is good for the children in a home.
5. Because you will have a better husband.
6. Because you may reach an unbelieving husband.

"Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives."

- 1 Peter 3:1

Guiding Principles for a Wife

"Out of reverence for Christ." - vs. 21

"As to the Lord." - vs. 22

The Types of Submission

1. Qualifying Submission — "I will respect my husband if..."
2. Grudging Submission — "I will respect my husband, but I don't like it." ... You follow but not happily.
3. Faithless Submission — "I will respect my husband but I'm afraid he will mess things up." You follow but you are not doing it with confidence in the Lord or in your husband.
4. Forced Submission — "I will make you follow me." Husbands, you are never told to force this principle.
5. Biblical Submission — "I willingly and joyfully respect my husband and work alongside of him."

Your Thoughts?

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