

090 - Submitting to One Another - Ephesians 5:21 - 2016-05-01

Call to Worship: 1 Chronicles 29:10-13

Scripture Reading: Matthew 8:5-13

Sermon: "Submitting to One Another" Ephesians 5:21

Benediction: Psalm 22:27-28

Ephesians 5:21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.

## INTRODUCTION

Review with me what we have learned about what it means to "be filled with the Spirit."

1. From the form of the verb "be filled," we learn that to be filled with the Spirit is to have something being done in us, and not once, but constantly.
2. From its parallel to being drunk with wine, we learn that to be filled with the Spirit is to have taken in so much of the Word of God that by the power of the Spirit your flesh is deadened, and you act freely according to the Lord's commands.
3. From what comes right before it in these verses, we learn that to be filled with the Spirit is to be not unwise, but wise, understanding what the will of the Lord is
4. From what comes right after it in these verses, which is what it produces, we learn that to be filled with the Spirit is to be in obedience to what God's word commands us
5. From the other expressions of this concept in Ephesians, we learn that to be filled with the Spirit is for God the Father to grant that Jesus Christ the Son will strengthen us by His Holy Spirit to know, to comprehend what the gifted teachers of the Word teach us about Him
6. From the parallel verse in Colossians, we learn that to be filled with the Spirit is to have the Word of Christ dwelling in you richly, abundantly
7. From accounts of people who were filled with the Spirit, we learn that to be filled with the Spirit is to have power to obey the commands of God's word, even in times when they are difficult.

To summarize we have learned that to be filled with the Spirit is to have the Holy Spirit so powerfully working in us by the Word of God that we are mortifying our sinful flesh and walking in obedience to the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Can you imagine, though, what it would be like for the math teacher to teach you geometry without ever drawing the shapes up on the board? She could tell you the formulas for finding the sides, the angles, the area, the volume, of various shapes. But isn't it much easier to understand and remember those formulas when you can see the shapes drawn on the board and labeled?

The apostle of Jesus Christ has told us, “be filled with the Holy Spirit,” and we have studied into what that means. But aren’t we left, then, thinking, “I guess I understand, but what does that look like?”

Thankfully, after commanding us, “be filled with the Spirit,” the Word of God goes on to describe what it looks like for Christians to be filled with the Spirit. The bible paints three word pictures, showing us what it looks like to be filled with the Spirit. We have looked together at the three pictures:

The first picture showing people speaking, singing, making melody with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, both toward one another and in their hearts to the Lord.

The second picture shows people giving thanks, all the time for all things, to God the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The third picture shows people submitting, submitting to one another in the fear of God, in reverence for Christ. Looking closer, you see wives submitting to their husbands; you see children obeying their parents; you see servants obeying their masters.

Interestingly, when you examine the picture, you find it very beautiful. It is a lovely picture. It is an excellent work of art. Not that the other pictures, of singing and of giving thanks, are not also lovely. They are very nice. But this picture is much more detailed. It has been painted with many more brush strokes. It has a very moving quality to it. Really you have to say that it is a masterpiece.

You didn’t realize before that submission was something so beautiful. You never thought before of submitting as something so powerfully good. It had hardly ever occurred to you that to submit was to do something so excellent.

Today we reach the last lesson in this study of the biblical doctrine of being filled with the Spirit, as we look at the last of the three pictures, to see what that looks like.

But this last lesson in being filled with the Spirit turns out also to be the first lesson in the next subject. Submitting is indeed one of the things that shows what being filled with the Spirit looks like. But it is so rich a thing, so excellent a thing, so important a thing, that the Lord’s apostle takes up submission as a subject in itself to teach the church, for God’s glory and our good.

## TEXT

Ephesians 5:18-21 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, (19) speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, (20) giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, (21) submitting to one another in the fear of God.

## BODY

- I. We can see the excellence of submitting in that it is characteristic of Spirit-filled Christians (Eph 5:18, 21)
  - A. we are tempted to think of submitting as characteristic of people who have something wrong with them
    1. they are weak
    2. they don't know how to stand up for themselves
    3. they are primitive
    4. they are old-fashioned
    5. they are unenlightened
  - B. yet see in this text that submitting is actually characteristic of people who are filled with the Holy Spirit
  - C. non-submission certainly does not take a filling with the Spirit
    1. the devil himself does not willingly submit
    2. he teaches the world not to submit
    3. the world then calls to every individual not to submit
    4. our sinful flesh tells us not to submit
    5. so not submitting is characteristic of those who are NOT filled with the Spirit
  - D. but submitting is such an excellent thing that it is what the Holy Spirit himself produces in those who are filled with the Spirit
  - E. APPLICATION: One of the things I know you have come to desire is to keep yourself and your family from being polluted by the world. That is a good thing, of course, and is even mentioned in the Word of God as being part of the essence of true religion: to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. Come out from them and be separate. Be holy as I am holy.
    1. When we come to realize the importance of not being swept away with the world in the same flood of dissipation, we have a tendency to do things like
      - a) stop going to the movies
      - b) stop watching TV
      - c) have women and girls wear only dresses
      - d) stay away from university education
      - e) don't eat GMO food
      - f) don't read Harry Potter

2. Now certainly some of those measures to some degree may be useful, but there is a measure you can take that is sure to be useful in keeping oneself from being polluted by the world: submitting as the Lord teaches you to submit.
  3. Those following the world, which is following the devil, will not be submitting as God teaches us to submit; but those filled with the Spirit will be submitting to one another in fear of the Lord
- II. We can see the excellence of submitting in that it is in keeping with God's perfect law of love (Eph 6:1-3)
- A. Many would say that the removal of the Ten Commandments from our culture is an evil that the church should resist; that Christians should promote the public acknowledgment of the Ten Commandments
  - B. That might be a good thing for Christians to prioritize at certain times
  - C. Whatever your view is on the public posting of the Ten Commandments, understand this: to submit, to practice submission, is to make a much more powerful display of the Ten Commandments than can be made by any monument at the courthouse or school
  - D. APPLICATION: So, if it is important to you for our society to know and keep the Ten Commandments, then show it by obeying the 5th commandment, submitting to one another in the fear of the Lord.
- III. We can see the excellence of submitting in that it is an important part of keeping Christians and the church safe from attacks by the world
- A. As our society has been changing over the past several decades, it has gone from praising and respecting Christ's church to condemning and hating and attacking Christ's church
  - B. It is getting to be, these days, that . . .
  - C. 1 Peter 2:13-15 Therefore **submit** yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, (14) or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. (15) For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men
    1. see that to "submit" to every government ordinance in verse 13 is then described as "doing good" in verse 15
    2. see that to "submit" to every government ordinance, which is "doing good" puts to silence the ignorance of foolish men
- IV. We can see the excellence of submitting in that it is an integral part of winning the lost to faith Jesus Christ
- A. 1 Peter 3:1-2 Wives, likewise, **be submissive** to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, (2) when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.
- V. We can see the excellence of submitting in that it is a sure way to re-gain good traditions of the past that are being lost in our generation

- A. 1 Peter 3:5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being **submissive** to their own husbands,
- VI. We can see the excellence of submitting in that it is characteristic of God the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in relationship with His human parents
- A. In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons
  - B. The Holy Spirit came upon that virgin, Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her. The virgin conceived, and brought forth a son, and He is the Son of God.
  - C. When the Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth, was twelve years old, already He understood the bible better than the master teachers in the temple at Jerusalem, and He knew what He was doing better than His parents did. Yet the bible says that Jesus submitted to His father Joseph, and His mother, Mary.
    - Luke 2:51-52 Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and **was subject** to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart.
    - (52) And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.
  - D. And the boy Jesus was not submitting because forced to submit; not having been forcibly made to submit, but willingly submitting to His parents.
  - E. And of course He submitted to His parents---doesn't the fifth commandment say, "Honor thy father and thy mother"? And would the sinless, perfect man disobey the commandments of God? Would the very Word of God in human form disobey the commandments of God? Would the Lord Jesus fail to love God and love other people?
  - F. The Son of God always submits to God the Father; and when He took on true humanity, becoming Jesus of Nazareth, as long as He was a boy in His parents home, He submitted Himself to His human parents.
  - G. APPLICATION: When you form in your mind a picture of someone submitting, do not picture weak people, with strong people abusing them, running all over them. Instead, picture the strongest person ever to live, submitting, and nothing ever happening to Him that was not God's will to happen.
- VII. We can see the excellence of submitting in that it is characteristic of our Lord Jesus in relationship with God the Father
- A. In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God, and the Word was God
    - 1. In one sense He is WITH God, in that He is the Son with the Father
    - 2. In another sense He IS God, in that Father, Son, and Spirit are the three persons of the one true God
  - B. Though He is God, the Son submits Himself to the Father, allowing Himself to be sent by the Father, not to do His own will, but to do the Father's will
    - 1. God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son (John 3:16)

2. O, My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.” (Matthew 26:42)
- C. Though God the Father has put all the Son’s enemies under His feet, it is evident that God Himself is not put under the Son’s feet. All things are made subject to the Son, but the Son Himself is subject to God the Father, is always in submission to the Father. (paraphrase of 1 Cor 15:27-28)
- D. So, although God the Son is of one substance, power, and eternity with the Father, each having the whole divine essence undivided, yet the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, and eternally and perfectly submissive to the Father.
- E. Not submitting because forced to submit; not having been forcibly made subject, but willingly submitting to God the Father

## CONCLUSION

Submitting, as God has ordained, is a beautiful thing, a powerful thing, an altogether excellent thing. It is the picture of Christians filled with the Spirit, and the God-given means to accomplish many of the best things we hope for. Let your mind be filled with those thoughts, and use that truth to make yourself ready to rejoice in the more detailed instructions to come in the next verses.

The need for submission.

The lack of submission.

Misconceptions, suggesting to our consciences that submitting is somehow wrong:

submitting is the equivalent of being taken advantage of

only through not submitting can I have any happiness or safety

known examples of resistance to tyranny cancel out the principle of submission

submitting is characteristic of an immature or defective Christian life

submitting is to be done only when the one submitted to inspires it with good leadership

Misconceptions about what submitting is

Sometimes we do what I want; sometimes we do what you want

G5293 *hupotasso*

from G5259 *hupo*

and G5021 *tasso*

1 Chronicles 29:23-25 Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him. (24) All the leaders and the mighty men, and also all the sons of King David, submitted themselves to King Solomon. (25) So the LORD exalted Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed on him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

Luke 2:51-52 Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. (52) And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

1 Corinthians 15:28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

1 Peter 5:1-6 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: (2) Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; (3) nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; (4) and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. (5) Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." (6) Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

### **submitting**

G5293 *hupotasso*  
from G5259 *hupo*  
and G5021 *tasso*

Trapp:  
the fifth commandment for order and obedience

### **to one another**

1 Peter 5:5-6

NKJV (5) Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." (6) Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time

ESV (5) Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

JFB

"be subject" omitted in the oldest manuscripts and versions, but Tischendorf quotes the Vatican manuscript for it.

Ellicott:

Here the true text strikes out the words "be subject and," so that the clause will run, Yea, all of you be clothed with humility one to another.

Calvin:

He shews the reason why the younger ought to submit to the elder, even that there might be an equable state of things and due order among them. For, when authority is granted to the elders, there is not given them the right or the liberty of throwing off the bridle, but they are also themselves to be under due restraint, so that there may be a mutual subjection. So the husband is the head of the wife, and yet he in his turn is to be



in some things subject to her. So the father has authority over his children, and still he is not exempt from all subjection, but something is due to them. The same thing, also, is to be thought of others. In short, all ranks in society have to defend the whole body, which cannot be done, except all the members are joined together by the bond of mutual subjection. Nothing is more adverse to the disposition of man than subjection. For it was formerly very truly said, that every one has within him the soul of a king. Until, then, the high spirits, with which the nature of men swells, are subdued, no man will give way to another; but, on the contrary, each one, despising others, will claim all things for himself.

Gill:

all the members of the churches should not only submit themselves to their pastors, but to their fellow members, as in Eph\_5:21, they should submit to the superior judgments of one another, esteeming each other better than themselves, and not be tenacious of their own way of thinking and judging of things; yea, condescend to men of low estates and weaker minds, bear the infirmities of the weak, and take all admonitions and reproofs given in a friendly manner kindly; and cheerfully perform all offices of love, and by it serve one another in things temporal and spiritual; doing the meanest services for the good of each other, such as washing the feet of one another, in imitation of their Lord and master.

Clarke:

Strive all to serve each other; let the pastors strive to serve the people, and the people the pastors; and let there be no contention, but who shall do most to oblige and profit all the rest.

Wesley:

Let every one be ready, upon all occasions, to give up his own will.

Pattison:

a mutual duty, and is here taught as a general principle, introductory to the subsequent injunction of specific duties. We comply with the injunction

1. when we acknowledge the authority of a superior, and cheerfully acquiesce in it
2. it is that meek, yielding spirit which, through benevolence and lowliness of mind, defers to the wishes of others, whether superiors or inferiors

Poole:

viz. in those mutual duties which they owe to each other, as husbands to wives, parents to children, &c. Those that are superior to others, yet are not so exempt from subjection as not to owe some duty: see Phi\_2:3

Trapp:

In regard of love and modesty, not of change and confusion of offices.

Barnes:

In your proper ranks and relations.

Stephen B. Clark:

let there be sub-ordination among you, i.e. let each of you subordinate himself or herself to the one he or she should be subordinate to.

Harold Hoehner:

its application to one another in mutual submission to one another would imply that one is willing to submit to those who have authority, whether it be in the home, church, or in society.

### **in the fear of God Christ**

Pattison:

meaning with a deep sense of our accountability to Him

Calvin:

Some Greek manuscripts read, "the fear of God." The change may have been introduced by some person, who thought that the other phrase, "the fear of Christ," though by far the most appropriate, sounded a little harsh.