

The Submission of Christian Wives In Marriage

RECENTLY TWO WOMEN WERE TALKING TOGETHER. One was married and the other was not.

The unmarried woman suggested to the newly married wife that she go to a certain place for an outing of some sort. It would be an adventure that the bride would have enjoyed. Then the bride said, “Oh, I must ask my husband if it is all right for me to go there.” IMMEDIATELY, the unmarried career woman spoke up! With much emphasis, she scolded the newly married woman with her bitter words, “You do not have to ask your husband if you can go places! Whoever heard of such a thing? You tell him what you are going to do and do it. YOU TELL HIM WHERE YOU ARE GOING AND YOU GO! You do not have to ask him or even tell him! YOU MAKE THE PLANS AND HE FOLLOWS! You must take charge in your marriage!!”

CHILDREN RULING THE ROOST

It is because of that conversation that I was constrained to speak briefly on the subject of WIFELY SUBMISSION IN MARRIAGE when THE DEAN BURGON WOMEN met there in Garland, Texas in July 22, 2015. The Apostle Paul was constrained also to write the church at Ephesus concerning the whole scope of Christian submission in that local church. Evidently, some of the church members were getting out of hand. Perhaps deacons were running the pastor, and slaves were rebellious towards their masters, and the children were talking back to their parents They were sassing them, hitting them, and ruling the roost. It was disgraceful and not at all glorifying to the Lord Jesus Christ.

SUBMISSION: A TWENTY-FOUR HOUR HEART EXERCISE

We read in Ephesians 5:21--6:18 that the Apostle Paul was specific when it came to the subject of submission in the local church. He taught that submission should be a twenty-four hour exercise in the heart of a born-again Christian—male or female--child or adult. He commenced his remarks and discussion with the most important submission-teaching known to families in this world—*A CHRISTIAN WIFE'S SUBMISSION TO HER HUSBAND*. I take it, because he chose to teach FIRST about the order or rank in the Christian home that this submission was and is the pivotal “**submission teaching**” on the whole subject of submission in the life of a Christian. **If the Christian home is in order, the whole of life's order in the church, the home, or at work will be in order.** For some reason, this teaching of “rank” in the Christian home is one of the most difficult teachings in the Bible—especially for women to swallow. The Apostle Paul knew this, and so he, led by the Spirit of God, tackled this subject head-on.

THE ORDER IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

See how the Apostle starts the subject of submission in Ephesians 5:21. “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.” He reminds us that there should be a general submitting to those in our church body. There is an order in the church, among the believers in the congregation—THE PASTOR, THE DEACONS, THE ADULTS, THE CHILDREN. Notice that the church children do not run the church any more than the church women should run the church's pastor or pastors. A woman should not stand up in the congregation and tell the pastor off, any more than she should boss her husband around within the church fellowship or at home. **Nor should she work behind the scenes influencing her way upon the Pastor.** I take it that there was as much need for such a command in that local church in Paul's days as there is in the churches today in our 21st century. Each believer in the church body has his or her place. Sometimes one deacon or all the deacons run the church. Sometimes the member who has the most money runs the church. This brings confusion! There should be an “order” in the local church. The pastor is the leader. If the church teaches “mutual submission” in the church, the church has no leader! Where there is no leader, there is nothing but disorder and confusion. **Those who teach “mutual submission” have no leader!**

IF THE WIFE DOES NOT SUBMIT, THERE IS NO HOPE IN THE MARRIAGE

Then we read in Ephesians 5:21 one of the most important commands found in the Bible. **WIVES SUBMIT YOURSELVES UNTO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS AS UNTO THE LORD** . We must remember that there is a rank in marriage. The husband is the head of the wife. The Bible says so; therefore, women should not fight this command. He is the head of his wife and their family. Without him there would be no marriage or family. He is responsible for the results of all the decisions made in that family. It is an awesome position and responsibility for a newly married man to become the head of his wife and their soon-to-be born family of children. Those children are to be obedient to their father. They will see the respect and obedience that the wife/mother has for that husband/father and they will obey naturally with father & mother leadership. A wife/mother should never run down her husband to her children or vice-versa. **If the wife does not submit to the authority of her husband, the marriage has no chance of success.** I believe this is the cause of many failed marriages. **Failure comes because the wife does not yield her will to the will of God by submitting to her husband.** We find this taught in the Bible.

WITHOUT SUBMISSION A WIFE IS AN UNHAPPY WIFE

The wife, no matter her age or rank in the business world, should submit to her own husband as unto the Lord. Without such submission , she will be an unhappy wife. **IF SHE IS SELF-WILLED, SHE IS NOT ALLOWING HER NEW HUSBAND TO LEARN HOW TO BE A HUSBAND OR HOW HE SHOULD LEAD HER, AND THE FUTURE CHILDREN THEY WILL HAVE, AS A FAMILY UNIT.** A wife should show respect to her husband. This respect is manifested by her love for him and her obedience to him, as her husband.

A LEARNING PROCESS: OBEDIENCE AND SUBMISSION

Learning to be an obedient, submissive wife is a learning process. (Often her husband does not know HOW to be a husband. There is much he has to learn also). If the new wife's mother was a good-example-wife, it will be easier for the new wife to emulate Christ-like behavior as she becomes a new wife to her husband. Learning how to be the wife of her husband will be one of the most difficult tasks in the world for that wife for many years. It is not easy for a married woman to give up her self-will. Eve is a good example of that *self-will* when she ate of the forbidden fruit of the forbidden tree. All this is a learning process!

NOT A SCINTILLA OF "MUTUAL SUBMISSION FOUND IN EPHESIANS 5:24

EPHESIANS 5:24 SAYS IT ALL! It is the secret to submission in marriage; and I suppose in all the other "submissions" that follow in the next Bible verses. AS THE CHURCH IS SUBJECT TO THE CHRIST, A WIFE IS SUPPOSED TO BE IN SUBJECTION TO HER OWN HUSBAND IN EVERYTHING! There is not a scintilla of "mutual submission " in this verse! I don't know HOW this "mutual submission" teaching got a foothold in this passage but it did. Women and many preachers are running with it in some of the present fundamental churches in the world.

WHEN I FIRST HEARD THE WORDS “MUTUAL SUBMISSION”

Years ago I went as a reporter for *THE BIBLE FOR TODAY NEWSREPORT* to a **NEW EVANGELICAL WOMAN’S CONFERENCE IN CALIFORNIA**. Hundreds of NEW EVANGELICAL WOMEN were in attendance. It was there that I first heard the term “*mutual submission*.” It was taught to the women as truth. Many of these women who were in Christian marriages and many were not. It was to these women that this **NEW TRUTH** was proclaimed. It would free those women from obeying their husbands! They were taught by leaders like Letha Scanzoni who referred to this **MUTUAL SUBMISSION IDEA** in regard to the discussion of “*submission in marriage*.” She authored **IS THE HOMOSEXUAL MY NEIGHBOR?**. It was a new truth! **I CHATTED WITH HER. I may have interviewed her—can’t remember. VIRGINIA MOLLENCOTT WAS THERE. In fact, I interviewed her! I remember that well!!** These women were NEW EVANGELICAL WOMEN, at best, who had gathered together from all over the country and probably the world.

“MUTUAL SUBMISSION” IS TAUGHT AS GOSPEL!! I CAN’T BELIEVE IT!

Up until that time, Bible teachers taught Ephesians 5:24 and the surrounding verses as I have in this paper. From then on this “*mutual submission*” teaching has seeped from the pens and pulpits of our evangelical world. And NOW--in what I would call our **FUNDAMENTALIST PAPERS AND MAGAZINES**--we can read that **MUTUAL SUBMISSION IS BEING** is taught as gospel! I could not believe my eyes! Just because such “*mutual submission*” teaching is more palatable to some fundamentalist’ wives does not make it correct teaching! Perhaps when a career woman marries late in life, mutual submission is easier to swallow than the kind that Sara of old practiced with Abraham (I Peter 3:5-6). To obey a husband could be a shock to one who has made all her decisions without consultation to anyone--not alone a husband--for many years. Christian women should study God’s Words--the Bible--and see how to become a good and Godly Christian wife.

I remember being told of a young bride-to-be being counseled by her pastor. When she found out that she was supposed to OBEY HER HUSBAND after marriage, she stood up and left the room. SHE DID NOT WANT TO OBEY ANYONE! I don’t know if she ever married anyone else ever. Had no one ever told her that a wife is to be submissive to her husband? Had she not seen it patterned before her eyes by her mother and father?

I suggest you readers order *HUSBAND LOVING LESSONS* for (BFT #463 @ \$16.00 + \$8.00 S&H) This book is based on Scripture and marriage, not human surmises about marriage. MANY marriages have been saved or improved by this Bible-based teaching.

I WAS SHOCKED THE OTHER DAY TO READ THAT “MARRIAGE’S MUTUAL SUBMISSION” WAS TAUGHT IN A PRESENT-DAY-PUBLISHED MAGAZINE FROM A SO-CALLED CONSERVATIVE ORGANIZATION. I was shocked!—absolutely shocked! I couldn’t believe my eyes!

HUSBAND-LOVE IS VERY UNIQUE & SPECIAL

If it were not for the following verses, newly married women may not have a chance of surviving a marriage. THE KEY TO A HAPPY MARRIAGE IS FOUND IN THE HUSBAND’S LOVE. He is commanded by God to love his wife (Ephesians 5:28). THIS HUSBAND-LOVE IS VERY SPECIAL! It is like the love and care that a man has for himself (verse 33). That love is a strong, protective, enduring love!

A WIFE IS COMMANDED TO SUBMIT, NOT TO LOVE

Contrariwise, a wife is not commanded to love her husband. This is a surprise to most. **She is to SUBMIT to her husband. Why? How? She is to SUBMIT to Him like the CHURCH (the Bride of Christ) submits to Christ (her Groom)!** In this whole Ephesians' passage, the wife is not once told to love her husband! It is to the older women like me (at eighty-eight years of age) who are given the duty TO TEACH THE YOUNGER WOMEN TO LOVE THEIR HUSBANDS! (Titus 2:4) This does not mean that a wife should not love her husband—oh no! Her love comes in response to the love given to her by her husband by the way he treats her. We must remember that many marriages could have been “arranged marriages” in those BIBLE DAYS, as they are all over the world today. **It is the Christian husband's assignment to LOVE his wife as Christ loved the church! It is the woman's emotion to respond to his love with “reverence” and “respect.”** Hopefully, the love will follow!

WHAT ARE WE OLDER WOMEN TO TEACH THE YOUNGER WOMEN?

(Titus 2: 3-5)

Cooking? Sewing? Housekeeping? Clothes washing? Child care? Yard work?

NO!

We are to teach the younger women, among other good things,

TO BE SOBER

TO LOVE THEIR HUSBANDS

TO LOVE THEIR CHILDREN

TO BE DISCREET,

TO BE CHASTE

TO BE KEEPERS AT HOME

TO BE GOOD

TO BE OBEDIENT TO THEIR OWN HUSBANDS

(NOT SOMEONE ELSE'S)

W H Y ?

SO THE WORD OF GOD

BE NOT BLASPHEMED OR CONDEMNED!

READ EPHESIANS 5:25-33

Husband love your wives.

Even as Christ also loved the church,

And gave himself for it . . .

SO OUGHT MEN TO LOVE THEIR WIVES

AS THEIR OWN BODIES.

He That Loveth His Wife, Loveth Himself . . .

For this cause shall a man

leave his father and mother,

and shall be joined unto his wife,

and he two shall be one flesh.

Husband!

IT IS YOUR LOVE THAT WILL WIN HER

NOT YOUR YELLING,

“ I AM THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE!”

SO YOU SEE, THE SECRET TO HAVING A SUBMISSIVE WIFE IS TO TREAT HER IN SUCH A LOVING WAY THAT SHE RESPONDS TO YOU WITH RESPECT AND SUBMISSION AS WELL AS A DEEP LOVE. KEEP LOVING HER WITH RESPECT AND KINDNESS. AND, IN TIME, SHE WILL LOVE YOU AS YOU LOVE HER. The change in a wife does not come overnight necessarily. It may take awhile.

Remember, new husband, “Love” is more than sex. Sex is important. But there is more to being a husband than the physical love. Emotional love is very necessary in a marriage.

Remember this, husband. IT IS YOUR LOVE AND PATIENCE THAT WILL WIN HER!! NOT YOUR BOMBASTIC, “I AM THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE!” WORDS!!

A wife is a responder. If you yell at her, condemn her, order her around, or boss her around, she will respond by closing up in hurt and fear. If you are kind and caring, loving, and dear to her, she will respond in kind! Your honeymoon is over. Now is the time to do some ground work in your marriage. THE FIRST RULE IS “BE KIND!” “LET BROTHERLY (SISTERLY) LOVE CONTINUE” (Hebrews 13:1)!

YOU WILL BE VERY VERY SURPRISED WHAT A DEAR WOMAN SHE COULD BE WHEN YOU ARE KIND TO HER. Her response in love and obedience will surprise you when you treat her like a *treasure* and not a *troll* hiding under a bridge—EVEN THOUGH SHE MAY ACT LIKE ONE. MARRIAGE IS NOT MAGIC! From all the women in the world, you chose her, treat her like a rare jewel. Watch her sparkle! And when you as her husband love her--just as Christ chose and loved the Church--she will become a wife so submissive and in subjection to you that YOU won't be able to believe it. The key is YOUR KIND LOVE. This transformation will not happen in a hurry. Remember she is a responder, a reflection of that love she feels from you. **CHRISTIAN HUSBANDS: LOVE YOUR WIVES AND BE NOT BITTER AGAINST THEM** (Colossians 3:19)!

HUSBANDS: You have the power in your hands to have a wife WHO loves you with all her heart. It is up to you to unfold that love as a flower, into a bloom of precious love that you never dreamed of--if you are patience, kind, and tender--into beautiful relationship. **You must be willing to work at it. Be patience** Remember I John 4:19—**“WE LOVE HIM, BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVE US.”** The same goes with marriage! Recall James 1:4: **But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire [complete] wanting nothing.** BE PATIENT!