

Series: The Wealth of Christ the Walk of the Christian

SUBMITTING YOURSELVES ONE TO ANOTHER EPHESIANS 5:21

Text: Ephesians 5:21

Ephesians 5:21

²¹ Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Introduction:

A close look at verses 18-21 you'll discover that this is one sentence.

Ephesians 5:18-21

¹⁸ And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; ¹⁹ Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

I want to consider the message this evening the message found in verse 21.

Note:

1. HOW SUBMISSION IS DEMANDED

Ephesians 5:21

²¹ *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*

The verse says, “Submitting yourselves one to another...”

The phrase is a command.

Submission, whatever it is, is a command and not an option.

If this is something the Lord expects us to do, then we need to find out what it is, and we need to do it.

The word submitting means to be in obedience to; to be under; to arrange under.

It’s a military term that refers to keeping ones rank.

This means that we are to consider ourselves the servants of others. It means that in everything others are to come before we do.

When we think of submitting to others, we often think of it as a weakness.

In truth, no one can make you submit to anyone.

But, if you want all the relationships in your life to prosper, a submissive spirit must dominate.

If we walk in selfishness, putting ourselves ahead of others, the fallout can destroy every relationship we value.

When we are submissive we are acting like Jesus. He was submitted to the will of the Father.

John 4:34

³⁴ Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 5:30

³⁰ I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

John 6:38

³⁸ For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

The Lord lived His entire life serving the needs of others.

Mark 10:45

⁴⁵ For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

When we walk with a submissive spirit we walk as the Saviour walked.

When we walk in submission to God and others, we are giving evidence that we are filled with the Holy Spirit. A key component of the Fruit of the Spirit is “temperance”.

Galatians 5:23

²³ *Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

When we walk in the Spirit, we exhibit “temperance,” which refers to “self-control.” When we put others first, we are controlling the impulse to exalt self.

That is a powerful impulse, but yielding to the Spirit of God enables us to keep God and others in their proper place.

Note not only “How Submission Is Demanded” but also:

2. HOW SUBMISSION IS DESCRIBED

Ephesians 5:21

²¹ *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*

Note the words “one to another.”

Obviously, the Lord is referring to our submission to other members of the family of God, but I think it goes far beyond that. Let's explore this phrase for a moment.

One key to what is being said here is found in the verses that follow. Specifically, it refers to what is stated in Eph. 5:22-6:9.

Ephesians 5:22-6:9

²² Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. ²⁴ Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; ²⁶ That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. ²⁹ For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: ³⁰ For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. ³¹ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. ³² This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the

church. ³³ Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband. ¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. ² Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) ³ That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. ⁴ And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. ⁵ Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; ⁶ Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; ⁷ With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: ⁸ Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. ⁹ And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

- Eph. 5:22-32 refers to the relationship between husbands and wives. In marriage there is the common idea that wives are to be in submission to the husbands. That is not a stretch, because that is what the Bible clearly teaches, Eph. 5:22-24.

Ephesians 5:22-24

²² Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. ²⁴ Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

However, before God tells wives to submit to their husbands, He tells both mates to be in submission to the other. This is not a contradiction. God has vested leadership in the home to the husband. The man is the spiritual leader in the home.

These verses in no way give a right to act like a tyrant.

Men seem to forget that they are to be the spiritual leader in that home. They are to do everything they can to see that their wife and children have every opportunity to become the people God saved them to be. He is to help them grow in the Lord. He is to help them develop their spiritual gifts for the glory of God.

- *Ephesians 6:1-4 speaks about relationship between parents and children. There is to be mutual submission in that relationship as well. Children are to submit to the headship and leadership of the parents in the home. They are to honor their parents. They are to obey their parents. Their submission to their parents honors the Lord and brings His blessings into their lives*

Before Paul moves away from the parent-child relationship, he speaks to fathers. The fathers are commanded to raise their children with grace.

They are to raise them with a Christ like spirit. They are to help them to reach their fullest spiritual potential in Jesus Christ. If the commands in these verses are to be carried out, there must be mutual submission. Children have to submit to the authority of the parents. Parents are to serve their children by loving them and by guiding them in the ways of God according to the Word of God.

- Ephesians 6:5-9 deals with the relationship between master and slave. The modern comparison would be to the relationship between employer and employee. In that relationship there must also be mutual submission. The employee is to yield to the demands of his master. He is to do what he is told and give his employer a good days work.

The employer is to respect those who work for him. He is to consider their needs and treat them fairly without favoritism.

The question we should ask ourselves; what kind of submission is found in your life? Is there room for improvement?

Note not only “How Submission Is Demanded” and “How Submission Is Described” but also:

3. HOW SUBMISSION IS DIRECTED

Ephesians 5:21

²¹ *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*

The final phrase in this verse says “in the fear of God.” What does it mean to fear God?

This word fear means to reverence.

It speaks of a reverence for God that respects Him above all other authorities. This reverence to God manifests itself in total obedience to Him and to His will for our lives.

When we “fear” or reverence God we will be in submission to Him.

When we are submitted to Him, we will have no problem submitting to the other authority figures in the home, in society, on the job, or in the church.

When we are submitted to God, we will practice mutual submission to our spouses, our parents, our children, our bosses, our employees, and others.

Our submission to God is not rooted in our fear of Him as a cruel tyrant.

Our fear of God and our submission to Him is rooted in our love for Him. He loved us and gave Himself for us to redeem us from sin, and to adopt us into His family.

He is our Father.

Because He is our Father, we reverence Him. Because we reverence Him, we submit to Him and to His authority over us.

Our submission to others begins with our submission to God. Our submission to others is a window into our relationship with Him.

When we are submitted to the Lord, we will have no trouble submitting to others.

So, our submission, in all the relationships of our life, is a direct result of our love for, and fear of, God.

When He holds the proper place in our lives, others will too.

Close:

Submission it is the will of God for every one of His children.

If you are like me, you sometimes struggle in this area. It isn't always easy to yield to the rights of others. It isn't always easy to put others ahead of self. Yet, it is what we are commanded to do.

Before I close let me also to say; that this does not mean that you are to be a doormat. You are not to allow others to walk all over you, to trample you underfoot, to take advantage of you, or to abuse you. There are times when you have to stand up for yourself.

This verse is simply teaching us that in our relationships with others, we are to strive to be Christ like all the time.

Regardless of how they treat us, we are to treat them with respect.

We are view every relationship as an opportunity to serve the Lord, but serving others.