
Series: Living Life as the New People of God—A Study in Ephesians
Walking in Submission as the New People of God

Ephesians 5:21-33 (NIV)

²¹Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

²²Wives, 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 Savior. ²⁴Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church-- ³⁰for we are members of his body. ³¹"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." ³²This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

1. MUTUAL SUBMISSION SETS THE TONE FOR MARRIAGE.

v. 21 "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."

- Mutual submission underlines our equality before God.

Galatians 3:38 (NIV)

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

- Mutual submission highlights the value we bring to the relationship.

2. WIVES SUBMITTING TO THEIR HUSBANDS CREATE ORDER IN THE MARRIAGE.

vv. 22-23 "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 Savior."

- We are all equal before God, but we have different roles.
- Wives submitting to their husbands establish clear order in the marriage.

3. HUSBANDS LOVING THEIR WIVES PROMOTE AN UNBREAKABLE BOND IN MARRIAGE.

v. 25 "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her..."

- Husbands demonstrating sacrificial love for their wives build the foundation for a strong marriage.
- Very few wives have a problem submitting to a husband that demonstrates Christ's love for her.

4. THE ILLUSTRATION OF MARRIAGE GIVES A GLIMPSE OF THE CHURCH.

vv. 31-33 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." ³²This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

- A) We should submit to one another.
- B) We need to recognize and submit to God's plan of order and authority.
- C) We should exercise sacrificial love for God and one another.

The illustration of marriage not only provides the framework of how husbands and wives should relate to one another, but provides a context for understanding the church and how it relates to one another and God.