

“The Submissive Wife”

Ephesians 5:22-24

Dr. Cliff McManis

September 30, 2007

In Ephesians 5:22-24 Paul lays out the main obligation a Christian wife has toward her husband if she wants to have a healthy, fulfilled, God-blessed marriage—submission!

IN THE BEGINNING

1. God designed all human relationships to function based on authority and submission

*“I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of the woman, and God is the head of Christ”
(1 Corinthians 11:3)*

*“there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God”
(Romans 13:1)*

2. Men and women have equal moral and spiritual value before God

“in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Genesis 1:27)

*“in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman”
(1 Corinthians 11:11)*

*“There is neither...male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28)
“husbands...wives...fellow heir[s] of the grace of life” (1 Peter 3:7)*

3. Men and women have different roles and functions in marriage and the family

*“man is the head of a woman”
(1 Corinthians 11:3)*

“It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper” (Genesis 2:18)

“man does not originate from woman but woman from man, for indeed man was not created for the woman’s sake, but woman for the man’s sake” (1 Corinthians 11:8-9)

“For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve” (1 Timothy 2:14)

4. The first marriage was created in perfection

“it was very good” (Genesis 1:31)

“And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed” (Genesis 2:25)

THE PROBLEM

5. God cursed marriage after the Fall

*"To the woman He said...your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you"
(Genesis 3:16)*

6. The natural sinful human tendency in marriage today for the woman will be her propensity to defy her husband's leadership and to usurp his God-ordained authority

"I don't respect you"

AND

"I won't submit to you"

7. The natural sinful human tendency in marriage today for the man will be either to abandon his leadership role or to abuse his God-ordained authority

"I'm outa' here!"

OR

Might makes right

THE SOLUTION

8. The mandate for submission

*"Wives be subject to your own husbands"
(Ephesians 5:22)*

*"Wives, be subject to your husbands"
(Colossians 3:18)*

"you, wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the Word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior...the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God" (1 Peter 3:1-4)

9. The manner of submission

"as to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22b)

*"as the church is subject to Christ"
(Ephesians 5:24)*

"in everything" (Ephesians 5:24)

10. The motive for submission

*"For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the Church, He Himself being the Savior of the Body"
(Ephesians 5:23)*