

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

You Want Me To WHAT?!

Ephesians 5:22-24

1998

How to be your wife's best friend: *Sit beside her on the couch.*

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How to be your husband's best friend: *Clean the garage.*

Introduction

Submission! As a culture, and as individuals, we hate that word!

Even for many Christian women, the very word *submission*, makes them bristle with emotion. If you ever feel like being alone, announce in the average church that you're going to have a women's Bible study on submission. "I don't think so!!"

But according to Paul, submission to one another is one of the evidences of the authentic Christian life and of being filled by the Holy Spirit. Biblical submission is based on our reverence for Jesus Christ and has little to do with the one to whom we are in submission. Ultimately, it is an act of love and surrender to God's chain of command.

Now some of you men are thinking, "You go man! This is going to be good! I love church!" But men, I'm convinced that our wives' reaction to the concept of submission is directly related to our success or failure to be the godly leaders God has called us to be.

It is my goal today to present a biblical view of submission and to inspire men and women alike, to appreciate the great benefits of a life yielded to God.

I Submission: What Is It?

A. What we're not talking about

Hupakouo = Obedience

It is used in Scripture for children, slaves, soldiers, and servants.

It means to line up under someone out of duty

This is not the kind of submission that Paul is exhorting the Christian wife to.

A comment to the men:

Notice, men, what Paul doesn't say. He doesn't say that we are to demand submission of our wives. Nor does it say we have a "right" to have our wife

submit to our leadership. Nor does it say that we can behave in any manner we choose and still expect our wives to submit to our ungodly behavior.

Though the wife is responsible to God for her duty to voluntarily yield herself as to the Lord, the privilege of having a submissive wife is earned by the godliness of our Christ-like leadership.

B. What we are talking about

Hupotasso = (hupo, "under," tasso, "to arrange")

It is used in Scripture of wives and speaks of a voluntary submission.

It means to line up under someone out of devotion

It is a voluntarily yielding of herself to her husband's leadership.

Sub-mission = Voluntarily putting another's mission above my own or yielding and subordinating my mission or objectives in preference for another's mission.

In doing so, the wife puts all of her talents, abilities, resources, energy at her husband's disposal for the good of the team -- her husband and family.

This is not submission because of the fear of man -- that is coercive.

The submission that Paul is talking about is the fruit of a reverence for Christ. It is a beautiful act of love -- a sacrifice that is pleasing to God.

Illustration #2

Hanalei Bridge: Drivers from both directions are requested to give right of way. It is a reasonable and gracious way of preventing a head-on collision. When the Bible commands Christians to "submit to one another" (Eph. 5:21) it is simply a reasonable and gracious command to let the other have the right of way and avoid interpersonal head-on collisions.

C. What it isn't

1. It isn't a concept just for women - Eph 5:21

It is a mandate for all believers

2. It isn't another word for slavery - Prov 31:10-31

The wife is actually freed to become all that God has designed her to be.

3. It doesn't make the wife speechless - Prov 31:26

"She speaks with wisdom and faithful instruction is on her tongue."

4. It doesn't make the wife a wallflower - Prov 31

She is industrious and successful in profiting her household

5. It doesn't mean the wife is inferior - Gal 3:28

Some have suggested that Christianity is a repressive religious system that relegates women to the status of second-class citizens. To the contrary, the New Testament emphasizes the dignity of women, and it is an indisputable fact that the example and teaching of Christ have lifted women in one country and society after another to a position that they did not occupy before. Whereas in many great religions, not least in Judaism and Islam, women have a far lower place than men, the New Testament emphasizes their spiritual equality.

“There is no difference in worth, but the family, for its order and its unity, there must be leadership, and the responsibility of leadership is that of the husband and father.”

II Submission: The Motivation

A. God commands it

1. They are to submit to their husbands in everything ...
 - a. Just as they are to submit to the Lord ("as to the Lord")
 - b. Just as the church is subject to Christ

Col 3:18 “Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.”

Titus 2:4-5 “Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.”

1 Pet 3:1-2 “Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.”

Notice wives:

God doesn't say that your submission is contingent upon your husband's character, integrity, love, or worthiness. You are to submit yourself to your husband because **God** has placed him in a leadership position within the family.

B. It is an act of obedience to God

Heb 5:7-9 "During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ..."

Rom 13:1-2 "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is

rebellious against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves."

C. It is a reflection of Christ and the church

Eph 5:22-24 "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

D. It protects the wife

1 Cor 11:3 "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."

Definition of submission in marriage: "The wife ducking out of the way so that God can hit the husband." K. Hutcherson

This is the irony of submission:

If you are determined to take on the role of:

1. Protecting yourself
2. Controlling the environment of your home
3. Cajoling -- nagging -- humiliating your husband into proper behavior

Then God will step aside and let you bring all your limited and impotent resources to the table. Your husband will be answerable to you. And you will find yourself frustrated, defeated, and exhausted.

On the other hand, if you will yield to your husband's leadership (as to the Lord), God will bring His unlimited and powerful resources to the table. And your husband will be directly answerable to Him. There are numerous examples of this in scripture.

It's your choice!

III Submission: The Limits

A. What if my husband is an unbeliever? Should I still submit? YES!

1 Pet 3:1-6 "Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

a. Win them over without words:

1. By the purity of your life
2. By the reverence of your life

b. Concentrate on your inner beauty and cultivate a gentle and quiet spirit

c. Do what is right and do not give way to fear.

B. What if my husband wants me to sin? Should I still submit? NO!

Ex. 1:15-21 "The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, "When you help the Hebrew women in childbirth and observe them on the delivery stool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live." The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, "Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?" The midwives answered Pharaoh, "Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive." So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own."

Acts 5:27-29 "Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!"

Illustration:

1. "Let's do a threesome or swap partners."
2. "Let's watch pornographic videos to improve our marriage."
3. "Let's increase our income by dealing drugs."
4. "Let's lie to the tax auditor and save a bundle."
5. "If my boss calls him, tell him I'm not here."

Bottom line: The wife is not obligated before her husband or before God or to participate in anything that is a *clear and obvious* violation of scripture. But her opposition to these activities need to be communicated with respect and love.

C. What if my husband is abusive? Should I still submit to him?

a. Adultery? NO!

Matt 5:32 "But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery."

b. Physical violence? NO!

c. Emotional abuse? Depends.

1 Cor 7:20 "Each one should remain in the situation which he was in when God called him.

D. What if my Christian husband is ungodly? What recourse do I have?

Matt 18:15-17 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But

if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

IV Submission: The Benefits

A. It leads to change - 1 Pet 3:1

1 Pet 3:1 "Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives ..."

B. It leads to spiritual and physical beauty - 1 Pet 3:3-5

1 Pet 3:3-5 "Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands ..."

C. It leads to a good testimony

Titus 2:4-5 "Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God."

D. It leads to God's blessing

1 Pet 3:4 "Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight."

Conclusion

1. Men, take responsibility for the part you may have had in creating resistance in your wife to your leadership as a husband.
 1. Confess your sin and disobedience to God and then to your wife.
 2. Ask for your wife's forgiveness.
 3. Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to be a Christ-like husband and father.
 4. Determine today to become an excellent husband and father.
 5. And make sure to be here next week!

2. Wives, if you recognize that you have failed to fulfill your calling as a wife by submitting yourself to your husband, then:
 1. Confess your sin to God and then to your husband
 2. Ask for your husband's forgiveness
 3. Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to yield your life in submission first to God and then to your husband.

4. Determine that today you will bring glory and honor to God through a lifestyle of joyful submission to God and your husband.

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