

**Ephesians 5:21-6:4 (NLT)**

<sup>21</sup>And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

- This is the overarching principle. It is mutual submission.

<sup>22</sup>For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup>For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church. <sup>24</sup>As the church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything.

- The verb “submit” is not present in the Greek. It is implied from the previous verse.
- A wife’s submission to her husband should be the same as her submission to the Lord. In verse 24 it is equated to the submission of the church to Christ. What is this submission? It is one of love, not of power.
- “For a husband is the head of his wife”. What does “head” mean? We often see it as a higher hierarchical position. But the more popular meaning in Paul’s time was “the source” as in the head waters. But does that mean this here?
  - “as Christ is the head of the church.” He is the Savior of his body, the church.” In other words, He is the source of the Church.
  - Ephesians 1:22. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, (ESV)
  - Ephesians 4:15. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, (ESV)
  - 1 Corinthians 11:3. But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. (ESV)
  - 1 Corinthians 11: 11-12. Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God. (ESV)
- “in everything” – Paul was sensitive to women exerting their independence. One, it was a problem in the early Christian church. Two, he considered it to be a condition in how Eve was deceived. Three, it is still to be mutual submission.

<sup>25</sup>For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her <sup>26</sup>to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God’s word. <sup>27</sup>He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. <sup>28</sup>In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. <sup>29</sup>No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church. <sup>30</sup>And we are members of his body.

- Husbands are to show love to their wives
  - As Christ loved the church, giving up his life for her to make her all she can be.
  - As they love their own bodies, and caring for them as they care for themselves.
- 1 Peter 3:7. In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God’s gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered.
- 1 Corinthians 7:3,4. <sup>3</sup>The husband should fulfill his wife’s sexual needs, and the wife should fulfill her husband’s needs. <sup>4</sup>The wife gives authority over her body to her husband, and the husband gives authority over his body to his wife.

<sup>31</sup>As the Scriptures say, “A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.”<sup>32</sup>This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. <sup>33</sup>So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

- “This is a great mystery”. We don’t fully understand this.
- “love his wife”. The word here is “agape” love, much love, divine love.
- “respect her husband”. The word used here described reverential fear. It is the same Greek word from which we get the word “phobia”. But what is interesting is that the verb is in the subjunctive mood which means “The action described may or may not occur, depending upon circumstances.” The Greek word for “love” is in the imperative mood which “expresses a command to the hearer to perform a certain action by the order and authority of the one commanding.”

<sup>1</sup>Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do.

<sup>2</sup>“Honor your father and mother.” This is the first commandment with a promise: <sup>3</sup>If you honor your father and mother, “things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth.”

- “obey”. The Greek word used here means “to listen, to harken”. It is not the same word that is used when obedience to authority is implied. Instead this is obedience out of relationship.
- “in the Lord”. “Or *Children, obey your parents who belong to the Lord*; some manuscripts read simply *Children, obey your parents*.” There is some disagreement on the exact meaning of this.
- “honor”. “To estimate or fix the value of”. It means to place a high value on, to give weight and meaning to. This is more than strict obedience. Children are to set a high value on their parents and what they desire.
- Colossians 3:20 tells us that obedience to parents “pleases the Lord.”

<sup>4</sup>Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.

- “provoke ... to anger”. This is all one word in the Greek. It means “to stir up, excite, stimulate” anger or wrath. It is translated in Colossians 3:21 as “to aggravate”.
- “by the way you treat them”. It is the actions that matter, not the position. Parents’ actions are to be submitted to the welfare of the child and to the instructions of the Lord.
- “bring them up”. The literal translation means “to nourish up to maturity”. The word “to nourish” means “to train” and “to provide the necessary nutrients”.
- “discipline (KJV: nurture)”. The meaning of this Greek word was often used to convey the idea of “the whole training and education of children (which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment). It also includes the training and care of the body.”
- “instruction (KJV: admonition)”. This is the use of instruction to exhort or encourage, as well as to reprove or change behavior.
- “from the Lord”. Not what you believe is right or desirable, not necessarily the way you were raised, but what God has deemed as right or desirable through His Scriptures and His Holy Spirit.