

Ephesians 5:21-24

18-21 The Spirit-filled believer is characterized by joyfulness, thankfulness, and lowliness.

21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

- **In general** - Rom 13:1-2; 1 Peter 5:5; John 13:1-5, 12-17; Phil. 2:3
Note: General mutual submission doesn't negate specific roles, responsibilities, and authority structures, since God commands them.
- **In specific relationships:**
 - wives to husbands (5:23)
 - children to parents (6:1)
 - servants to masters (6:5)
- **In the fear of Christ**
- **Not the fear of:**
 - one another
 - the culture
 - losing our rights

22 Wives, *be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*

- Fight the caricatures, distortions, and perversions of this
- But steadfastly resist fighting the God-given reality of it. - Rom. 12:2
- Doesn't say, "husbands, subject your wives..."
- There is a creation order to male and female roles in marriage: 1 Tim. 2:12-13
- Origins of the struggle between husband and wife: Gen. 3:16; 4:7
- *Own husbands* (in the context of a committed relationship)
- As to the Lord (entrusting yourself due to your trust in the Lord)
- The verse is in spite of the understanding that husbands are not Christ - 1 Peter 3:1-2

23 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.

Egalitarianism vs. Complementarianism

Head – signifies authority not source without authority – Eph. 1:20-22

In relationships such as:

- husband and wife
- Christ and the church
- God the Father and Christ

- Based on God-given roles and authority structure, as in the Trinity - 1Cor. 11:3
- The issue is not worth, superiority, inferiority, intelligence, etc. – 1 Peter 3:7b; 1 Cor. 11:11-12
- Husband and wife both created in God's image – Gen. 1:27
- *Savior of the body* – the husband is not this in the ultimate sense, but in terms of being an agent of protection, provision, and edification for his wife.

24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.

- ***Everything* is a strong word and shouldn't be disregarded**
- **But bounded by a Scriptural context:**
 - not when told to sin by omission or commission - Acts 4:19
 - doesn't exclude consultation, input, independent thinking – Abigail and Nabal
 - A believing wife seeking to win her husband: 1 Peter 3:1-2
 - Prov. 31:14-28
- ***“as”* - Wives being subject to their husbands is to be a beautiful, faith-fueled picture of the church being subject to Christ -**
 - To our children
 - To the world
 - To one another

1. Faith-fueled

- Even in our obedience to Christ
- Certainly, in a wife's subjection to her flawed husband – 1 Cor. 13:4-8a

2. Glad and thankful, not grudging and complaining (this is the person God has given you to make you more like Jesus – Rom. 8:28-29)

3. And the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband – 33b

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,
26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,
27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.
28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;
29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church,
30 because we are members of His body.
31 FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.
32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.
33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband.