

Reference: VARIOUS
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Perfect Submission

Purpose: To indicate that the Christian life is a life of submission and to show to whom the believer is to submit and what this means practically

1. Introduction

Wedding – pastor mentioned the submission of the wife

A woman was overheard talking to her husband later:

“I am not submitting to you, anyway!”

Calvin: *Nothing is more adverse to the disposition of man than subjection. For it was formerly very truly said, that every one has within him the soul of a king. Until, then, the high spirits, with which the nature of man swells, are subdued, no man will give way to another; but, on the contrary, each one, despising others, will claim all things for himself*

Yet God’s order is built upon the principle of submission

For society to work, there must be submission

To authorities, in the workplace, in marriage.

And God’s presence in a land can be measured by submission

More of God, more submission

For the church to work, there must be submission

To God, to the Elders, to one another

And God’s presence in a church can be measured by submission

More of God, more submission

This is clearly a very important subject for us to consider

Where are we as individuals, as a church, as a society?

We will look at:

- 1) To whom we should submit
- 2) What this does not mean
- 3) What this does mean in practice
- 4) The example of Christ

2. To whom should we submit?

One root word used in many places in NT

Means **1** to place under, to subordinate. **2** to subject, put in subjection. **3** to subject one’s self, obey. **4** to submit to one’s control. **5** to yield to one’s admonition or advice. **6** to obey, be subject. *Additional Information:* A Greek military term meaning “to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader”. In non-military use, it was “**a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden**”.

This principle is everywhere in Scripture

To whom should we submit as believers?

2.1. To God

James 4:6 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore *it* says, “GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.” **7** Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

James has been talking about proud and worldly behavior
 How these are enmity with God. Then comes the command
 Submit to God! Scripture is very clear

We are to place ourselves under Him, obey Him, yield to His admonition, be subject to Him

Have you submitted to Him?

The world (and our old nature) tells us not to:

To rebel – to live our own life, reject His rules

But this is the way of death and destruction

Only in Christ is there life, but we must submit to Him

He must be our Lord, we must become His willing slaves

Are you still submitting to Him?

Eager to obey His word, to abase yourself before Him?

2.2. To the leaders of the church

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

We are to place ourselves under them, obey them, yield to their admonition, be subject to them

In so far as they rule according to God’s Word

Members, you have vowed to do this – are you?

Are you seeking to make their work a joy and not a grief?

The world tells us these men have no right to interfere
 We are masters of our affairs – in temporal and spiritual matters
 But this is not how God has ordered the church
 One reason we are to be church members is to be under authority
 We are prone to wander and our souls are too precious
 God will have us under the care of His under-shepherds
 Watered down in many churches to suit the temper of the age
 As we look for men to fill this office
 These must be men to whom we are willing to submit

2.3. To elders

1 Peter 5:5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

Peter had been talking of elders in the church
 Then he contrasts younger in age with elder
 But in the world, the elderly are often an inconvenience
 Killjoys – always spoiling our fun with their counsel
 God would have us humbly to submit to those who are older
 We are to place ourselves under them, obey them, yield to their admonition, be subject to them
 In so far as they are godly examples to us
 You young people – are you?
 Children – do you submit to your parents?

2.4. To one another

Ephesians 5:15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, **16** making the most of your time, because the days are evil. **17** So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. **18** And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, **19** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; **20** always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; **21** and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

We are to submit to one another!
 We are to place ourselves under one another, obey, yield to the admonition and be subject to one another - In the fear of Christ

Do you submit to your brothers and sisters in Christ?
 Do we more often look for faults to accuse
 Than for Christ-likeness to imitate?
 Christ has died for them – He has accepted them
 To be great in His kingdom, we must place ourselves last of all
 Do you do this?

2.5. Wives to husbands

Colossians 3:18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
Titus 2:3-5. Ephesians 5:22-24. 1 Peter 2:21-3:6.

God's order in marriage is for the man to be head of the woman
 Wives are to obey them, yield to admonition, be subject to them
 The world tells us that women should not subject themselves
 They should strike out on their own
 Rival their husbands, contend for the place of leadership
 Wives, are you submitting to your husbands?
 The world praises men who take a back seat while this happens
 Husbands, have you abrogated your position?

2.6. To human authorities

1 Peter 2:13-15 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.
Titus 2:15-3:2. Romans 13:1-5.

We are to place ourselves under them, obey them, yield to their admonition, be subject to them
 In so far as they do not lead counter to God's ways
 But the world tells us to despise all authority except me
 Are we submitting to the authorities God has instituted?
 Local, State, Federal Laws and officials?

2.7. To employers

1 Peter 2:18-19 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this *finds* favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.
Titus 2:9

We are to place ourselves under them, obey them, yield to their admonition, be subject to them
 In so far as they do not lead counter to God's ways
 But the world tells us to short change the employer
 To give as little as we can get away with
 To take as much as we can prize out – “perks”
 Are you submitting to your employer out of reverence for Christ?

So we are to be submissive in many aspects of our lives
 Need to qualify this submission somewhat
 Avoid misconceptions

3. What does this not mean?

We are not to compromise the truth

We cannot, as some, lay the Truth on the altar to achieve unity
 We must defend the Truth at all costs
 Not, by submission, surrender it

We are not to be led into sin

We are not to submit to anyone who would cause us to sin

We are not to violate our consciences

Some people can do things and not sin; others are not convinced
 We should not go along with others if we are not sure – it is sin

We are not to be weak and woolly

We are not to thoughtlessly agree because it's the easy way
 Blown here and there by every wind of doctrine

4. What does it mean?

Some scriptures expand on this concept for us

We are to be humble

Micah 6:8 He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?

Humility underlies all the passages we have looked at
 It is at the very heart of this submission

We are rightly to assess ourselves

Romans 12:3 For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

We are to consider others better than ourselves

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; **4** do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

We are not to offend the weaker brother

Romans 14:14 I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. **15** For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died.

We are to crucify self and all its appetites

Ephesians 4:20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, **21** if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, **22** that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, **23** and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

We are to have no Party Spirit (Corinth)

Submission to all is contrary to any idea of party spirit
 Cannot have factions in the body of Christ
 Where all parts are in submission to all others

5. The example of Christ

Has Christ given us an example of submission? Yes!!

He doesn't ask us to do more than He did

Went to the cross in submission to God

Matthew 26:39 And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."

Was subject to the rulers of the church

Matthew 23:1 Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, **2** saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; **3** therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say *things* and do not do *them*.

Washed His disciples feet

John 13:12 So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined *at the table* again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? **13** "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. **14** "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. **15** "For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. **16** "Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor *is* one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. **17** "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

Was subject to His parents (same word)

Luke 2:51 And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all *these* things in her heart.

Was subject to the civil authorities

John 19:10 So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" **11** Jesus answered, " You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above ; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has *the* greater sin ."

His wife is subject to him

Ephesians 5:24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.

6. Conclusions

Submission a hallmark of Godly people

We submit – resign our rights and claims

Put others forward ahead of ourselves

And in so doing we are like Christ

Where are you in this matter of submission?

Where is our fellowship?

How much is God in our midst?

Let us renew our vows and submit to one another

Humble ourselves – place ourselves last of all

Seeking to be like Christ and to bring glory to Him