

Submission to Elders

(The wisdom of yielding to "1 Tim 3:1-7 spiritual leaders")

1 Peter 2:13-17 NIV

13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, 14 or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. 15 For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. 16 Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. 17 Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.

1 Peter 5:1-6 NIV

1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. 5 Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

1 Thess 5:12-13 NIV

12 Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. 13 Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.

2 Cor 10:1-9 NIV

1 By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you-I, Paul, who am "timid" when face to face with you, but "bold" when away! 2 I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. 3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 6 And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete. 7 You are looking only on the surface of things. If anyone is confident that he belongs to Christ, he should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as he. 8 For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it. 9 I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my letters.

Heb 13:17 NIV

17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Titus 1:5-11 NIV

5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. 6 An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. 7 Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless-not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. 8 Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. 9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. 10 For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. 11 They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach-and that for the sake of dishonest gain.

Biblical Submission in Ephesians 5

What does the word "submit" mean in the Bible and how does it apply in the marriage relationship?

Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words indicates that our word "submit" comes from the Greek word *hupeiko* (NT 5226) and means "to retire, withdraw, yield."

In the context of Ephesians 5:21-33 the Apostle Paul begins by addressing a "mutual submission" vs. 21 that Christ followers owe to one another. We are to be humble, bearing one another's burdens, not advancing ourselves above others, nor domineering over one another. The complete passage is an expression of God's ideal for marriage. He teaches that mature believers must be of a yielding and submissive spirit and ready always to "take up the towel of a servant" and wash the feet of others. From vs. 22 -24 he addresses the duty of a Godly wife to her husband, setting the church as an example of the wife's subjection, and ultimately in vs. 25-33 Christ as an example of love in husbands.

The marriage relationship was designed by God to be symbolic of the spiritual relationship between Christ and the Church. A woman of faith is to honor and obey her husband out of a deep reverence for her Lord Jesus. In all our human relationships we are to "speak the truth in love" (Eph 4:15). Thus, a Godly woman is obligated to provide her husband with gracious counsel. But, ultimately she is to submit to the leadership of her husband in everything that would not be criminal in nature or spiritually detrimental to her or her children.

While submission may appear to be a difficult task, the husband has a much more daunting assignment. He is to *love* his wife (willing for her the highest good) as Jesus loves the Church. As Christ exercises authority over the church to save and protect it, the husband is to exercise his authority over his wife by protecting, comforting, and providing her with every kindness within his power.

While the concept of submission is not popular in a proud and rebellious culture like ours, this is God's ordinance and should not be transgressed. Reverential fear of displeasing Him is the motive for discharging our proper duties as Christian husbands and wives (2 Cor 5:9-10; 1 Peter 2:13). The husband should not be a tyrant, and the wife should not be the governor. An archaic poem may summarize the concepts best:

*"Ill thrives the hapless family that shows
A cock that's silent, and a hen that crows:
I know not which live most unnatural lives,
Obeying husbands or commanding wives."*