

REVIVAL

in the

FAMILY

Redefining Submission With Jesus as the Author

Ephesians 5:18b - 22

- *How can we let Jesus's relationship to the Father define "submission" rather than our culture? Do we need to reframe the way we see it so we line up with the way Paul describes it? If God designed the model, how can we not embrace it wholeheartedly?*

A. Culture's criticism of the biblical view:

- Casts husband as superior, dominant, authoritarian: "toxic masculinity." Husbands who lead are cast as abusers or misogynists (against women)
- Casts wives who submit – weak, passive, no independence.
- Seen as patriarchal, narrow-minded, denying female autonomy.

1. Notice how a husband/wife relationship follows naturally from the light of Christ shining on us. Is the Spirit calling you to rewrite the story your marriage is telling?

Ep 5:14, 18f ... *Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. ...*

¹⁶ [1] look carefully then how you walk, ¹⁸ And [2] do not get drunk..., but [3] be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ [3¹] addressing one another in psalms ..., ²⁰ [3²] giving thanks always ..., ²¹ [3³] *submitting to one another* out of *reverence for Christ*, ²² [3³] wives *submit* to your own husbands *as to the Lord*, ... 25 [3³] Husbands, love your wives, *as Christ loved* the church and gave himself up ...



V18 ... *but* be filled with the Spirit,. . . [3²] singing and *making melody to the Lord with your heart*, [3³] submitting to one another *out of reverence for Christ*...

2. *Paul changed the societal “norm” for wives when he sourced submission as a spiritual act of worshipping Jesus, rather than a wifely-duty.*

A. As Christ submitted to the Father, so we are to submit to one another.

- To reverence, honor Christ, by doing what he did. V21.
- *We are instruments of redemption in our marriage!*

B. What does it look like?

- **Phi 2:3** Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with ***humility of mind*** let each of you *regard one another as more important* than himself;

C. Paul changes the meaning of the word when *Jesus and his loving service to humanity is the model of submission.*

Ps 139:16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. (ESV)

Genesis 2:24, “For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” And the man and his wife were both naked and felt no shame.

“The curse disfigured God’s gift of marriage. Fallen men misused their strength, not to protect their wives but to turn it against them. Women sought to control their husbands, while men lost interest in becoming the sensitive servant-leaders God intended them to be.” **Alcorn “If God is Good”**



3. The “*Jesus*” *model* of submission (and leadership) is *beautifully* defined by the relationship of Jesus, the Son, to God, the Father. *My marriage is to be an act of worship to God in function.*

A. *Co-equals.* Phil 2:6, John 1:2-3, 14; John 5:18.

- No inferiority. Humility for the benefit of others.

B. *Voluntary wo compulsion.* John 10:18

- Not a sign of weakness or loss of independence.

C. *Divine roles to be agreed upon* (v5:21).

- John 5:19, John 5:26, John 1:3, John 5:30,

D. *Interdependent, one to the other.*

- Mutual drawing upon each other’s strengths to compensate for weaknesses.
- Eccl 4:9-12, John 17:21; John 6:33
- Submission and leadership are the functions of one Divine system. You cannot have one wo the other. 5:22 & 5:25
- The wisdom of God.

4. *Out of His wisdom, God made submission mutual (v 21 “to one another”). Mutual submission does not change the roles God has assigned – but it does change how we relate to one another in those roles.*

A. *Wife allows the husband to lead (AS TO THE LORD).*

- She *helps* him lead, *gives him* space to lead. Together they seek, find, and follow the will of God for their marriage.

B. *Husband submits to the Lord by accepting his role.*

- He is responsible for the first step. He *takes up the role of leading as an act of His will just as he has chosen to follow Christ*. Then, he leads like Christ led, fully committed unto death for his wife and children.

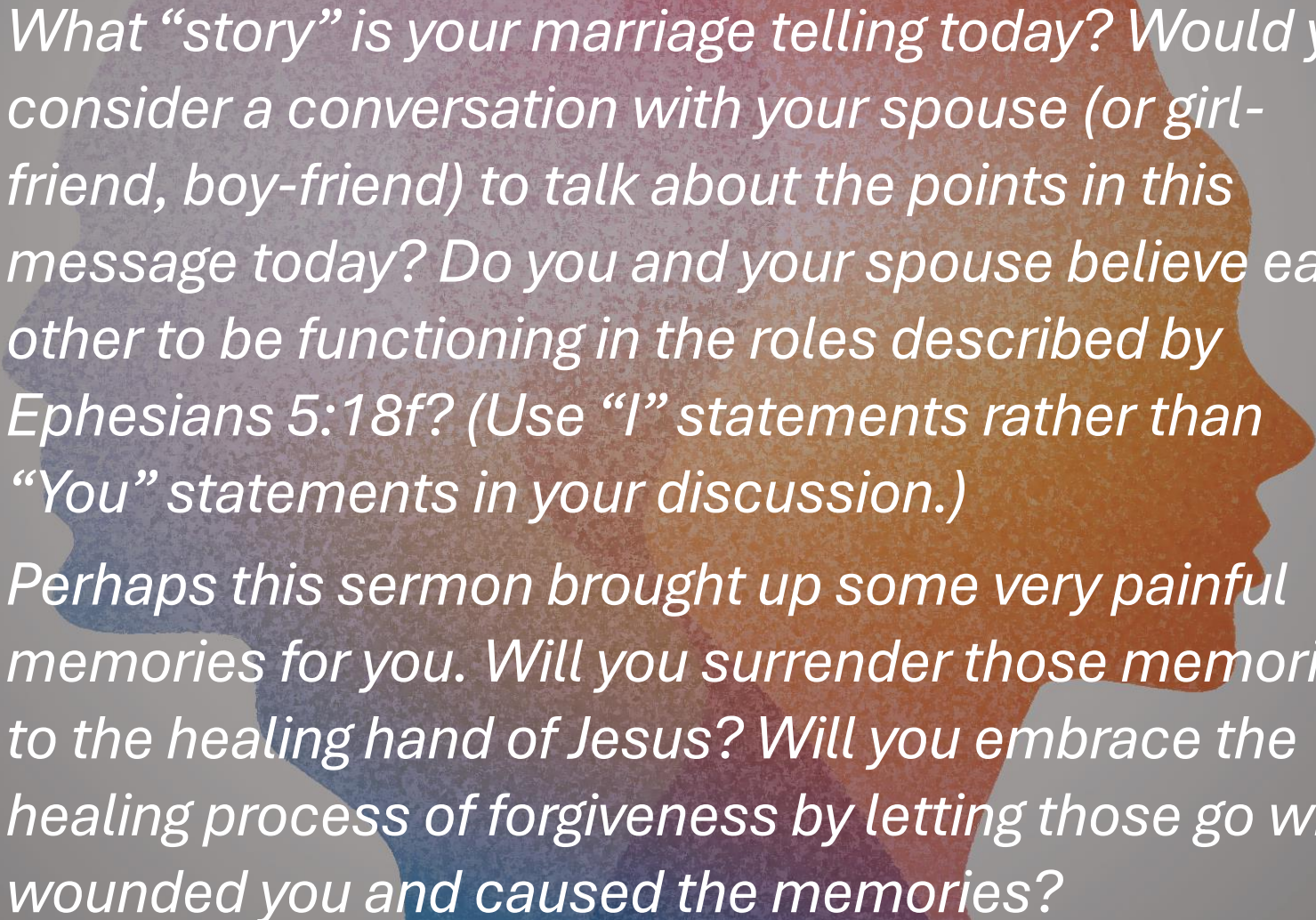
C. *Mutual submission is spirit-empowered.* It is a beautiful expression of God’s plan to save the world! The family is his invention. Who better to design the roles than God?

◦ Later, in Acts 4:31, the same *believers* are again “filled with the Spirit” and spoke the word

5. Some hard questions to ponder. How can you begin the discussion?

- A. *What if my husband is an unbeliever or living in unrepentant sin? Am I still to follow him?*
- B. *What if my husband refuses to lead? What if he seems uninterested in my needs, or unwilling to help me in the home? What if I don't trust him leading?*
- C. *My past marriage ended in divorce. I am afraid of a new relationship bc of my wounded heart. How can I ever “follow” a man again?*

Call to Action:

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- A. *What “story” is your marriage telling today? Would you consider a conversation with your spouse (or girl-friend, boy-friend) to talk about the points in this message today? Do you and your spouse believe each other to be functioning in the roles described by Ephesians 5:18f? (Use “I” statements rather than “You” statements in your discussion.)*
- B. *Perhaps this sermon brought up some very painful memories for you. Will you surrender those memories to the healing hand of Jesus? Will you embrace the healing process of forgiveness by letting those go who wounded you and caused the memories?*

A wife submitting to her husband may seem foolish or “just wrong” for someone who: 1) does not belong to Christ; 2) who sees Paul’s instruction as culture-specific only; or 3) just doesn’t understand what the scripture is really saying.

- A. A result of “*being filled with the Holy Spirit*” but motivated by *doing what Jesus did*. Eph 5:14, 21, 22
- B. 1 Cor. 2:14 The person *without the Spirit* does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them *foolishness*, and *cannot understand* them because they are discerned *only through the Spirit*. (NIV)
- C. 2 Cor. 6:14 Do not be *unequally yoked with unbelievers*. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? (ESV)