

Hard cases make for bad law.

Wives submit to your husbands – Part 2

Ephesians 5:22-24

What is submission in a
Christian marriage and why
does Scripture call for it?

Four Observations about the Context

1

Paul is giving specific relational examples of what it means to submit to one another.

Eph 5:21

2

Christian submission is
compelled by
our reverence for Christ.

Eph 5:21

3

The specific relationships he is addressing submission within is that of the household.

Eph 5:22, 25; 6:1, 4, 5, 9

4

The context of all these relationships is within a Christian home.

Eph 5:22, 25; 6:1, 4, 5, 9

Submit = To Order + Under

1

Submission is a choice.

2

The motivation for submission has to be determined to understand why you would submit.

The Contour of the Passage

The Command

Wives submit to your own
husbands.

Eph 5:22a

How

As to the Lord

Eph 5:22b

Why

For the husband is head of the
wife

Eph 5:23a

In What Way

even as Christ is head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior

Eph 5:23b

Summary

Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

Eph 5:24

What submission in marriage
does NOT mean.

The Command

Wives submit to your own
husbands.

Eph 5:22a



It does NOT mean that the husband is always right.

Abigail & Nabal – 1 Sam 25

Sapphira & Ananias – Acts 5:1-11

2

It does NOT mean
that the wife must do whatever
the husband wants.

Example: Submission to Government

Rom 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13-17

3

It does NOT mean that the husband is more qualified to make the decision.

Proverbs 31 Wife

4

It does NOT mean that the wife should support the husband even when he is sinning.

Abigail & Nabal – 1 Sam 25

Sapphira & Ananias – Acts 5:1-11

5

It does NOT mean that the husband is more intelligent.

Proverbs 31 Wife

6

It does NOT mean that the husband is to be domineering over his wife.

Matt 20:25-28



It does NOT mean the husband can demand and have his wife do whatever he wants.

Matt 20:25-28; 1 Pet 3:7



It does NOT mean that the wife
is to “just take it.”

Col 3:19

1 Tim 3:2-3; Titus 1:7-8

9

It does NOT mean that the wife cannot speak up and disagree with her husband.

Abigail & Sapphira

Proverbs 31:10,11,26

10

It does NOT mean that the wife cannot make more money than her husband.

Lydia – Acts 16:14

Proverbs 31:16, 18, 24, 31

What submission in marriage
DOES mean.

1

There is no area of the marriage
the wife should not look to
submit to her husband in.

Eph 5:23, 24

Marriage in the context of the Creation, the Fall, and Judgment

Genesis 2-3

The man is given primary
responsibility.
(Gen 2:16)

A helper is given.
(Gen 2:20)

They act are to be (and act)
as one.
(Gen 2:24)

The man is called to account.
(Gen 3:9)

The judgment of God against
the woman.
(Gen 3:16)

The principle of headship
(leadership) of the husband in
marriage is grounded in the
created design.

The curse of the Fall is what brings contention about headship (leadership) of the husband.

2

The wife should diligently and intentionally seek to show her husband respect.

Eph 5:33

3

The wife should be kind to her
husband.

Eph 4:32

4

The wife should live sacrificially
within her marriage.

Eph 5:2

5

The wife must love (and treat)
her husband as herself.

Mark 12:31

“Marriage is not
a human invention;
it is a divine revelation.”

Ray Ortlund

Wives submitting to their husbands within the context of a Christian marriage reveals the glory of Christ and His bride, the Church.
