



## ***“Walking in Submission to Christ-Part 1”***

**Sermon Date: March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

### **Reflections on Sunday’s Sermon**

*Below is a reference to the section of the New City Catechism that we went over on Sunday:*

#### **The New City Catechism—Lord’s Day 13**

#### **Can Anyone Keep the Law of God Perfectly?**

Since the fall, no mere human has been able to keep the law of God perfectly, but consistently breaks it in thought, word, and deed.

### **Prayer**

Praise God who instituted marriage to display the loving union between Christ and His bride. Praise Jesus whose love, pursuit, provision, and preservation of His bride is without reserve and independent of our faithfulness. Praise the Spirit who brings about new life in our hearts, working loving authority into the heart of husbands and willing submission into the heart of wives. As you pray, consider making this prayer your own (this prayer was taken from Everyday Prayers by Scotty Smith).

*Lord Jesus, I’m greatly saddened about the growing number of my friends who are disconnected, despairing, or dying in their marriages. I’m saddened, but not shocked, for two reasons. It makes complete sense that the powers of darkness would assault the one relationship meant to tell the story of your great love for your bride. Of course marriage is going to be a war zone—the front lines of spiritual warfare until the day you return. Satan hates you, he hates the gospel, and therefore he hates your bride and he hates marriage. But knowing my own heart also decreases the shock factor. Like most of us, I came into marriage with little gospel and big naivete. I had no clue about the depths of my brokenness, the degree of my selfishness, or the devices of my sinfulness. I had no clue about what it would take to love one person well the rest of my life—a person who needs the gospel just as much as I do. And I certainly had no clue that your love alone is better than life; that your love alone can slake the deepest thirst of my heart; that your love alone can provide the depths of intimacy I crave and for which I’ve been made; that your love alone can free me to love another sinful spouse the way you love me as your spouse. Jesus, I pray for my friends, and I pray for myself. Protect us from the evil one and rescue us from ourselves. Amen.*

## **Scripture**

### ***Ephesians 5:22-24 (ESV)***

*<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.*

## **Handling the Word**

Let's break down the passage:

1. Given their desire to revere Christ, who do wives submit to (v. 22)?
2. Why is the believing wife to submit to her husband (v.23)?
3. As the head of their wife, what do believing husbands display to the world (v. 23)?
4. In submitting to their husbands, what do believing wives display to the world (v. 24)?

**Submit:** arrange yourself under someone's authority, as soldiers accept the authority of their commanding officers. (Richard Coekin)

## **Understanding and Applying**

1. Tony Merida states, “if the starting point of marriage is me, then I am starting in the wrong place.” According to Paul, what is the purpose of marriage and therefore the responsibilities of spouses, and does this challenge your understanding of a healthy marriage (Ephesians 5:22-33)? Further, how might Paul’s understanding of marriage bring a sense of relief or hope to saints struggling in marriage?
2. Led by the Spirit, wives willingly submit to their own husbands, as to the Lord (v.22). To clarify, what does God mean when He calls believing wives to ‘submit,’ and how does this challenge your understanding of the motivation, purpose, conditions, and goal in wives submitting to their husbands (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:21-22, 33; Titus 2:4-5; 1 Peter 3:1-2)? Have you seen a correlation between readily submitting to your husband, or God (if not a wife), and growing in a knowledge and trust in Christ and if so, why (1 Colossians 1:9-10)?
3. Though there are situations where, “a wife should not obey her husband...it is usually a danger when our *first* reaction to this exhortation is to find ways in which to restrict and limit it” (Ferguson). Have there been situations where your submission to someone would have meant disobedience to God and thus, a genuine reason to resist? Please share. Wives, how has the Lord used your lack of submission to your husband to expose sin in your own heart?
4. Through the work of Christ on the cross, God is restoring the roles and relationship between the believing husband and wife. Based on the passages below, what are some roles or relationships that are being restored between redeemed husbands and wives?
  - Genesis 2:20-25
  - Genesis 3:8-10
  - Genesis 3:16b
5. Desiring to revere Christ, wives willingly submit because of the creation order, ‘for the husband is the head of the wife’ (v. 23). As alluded to in the previous question, God is restoring the divine order in His

good creation. How has sin distorted our reception of various authorities that God has established in His good creation (examples: God himself, husband, parent, employer, government)? Husbands and wives, how has this restored order of loving authority and willing submission been a good thing for you and your marriage (Genesis 1:31)?

6. Walking in the Spirit, spouses give expression to the relationship between Christ and His church, 'Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior' (v. 23). How might a husband's behavior give expression to Christ's love for His bride and therefore encourage joyful submission from his wife? How has the example of a loving husband or more generally, the love of Christ, drawn you to delight in and submit to God?
7. Illustrating the church's obedience to Christ, 'wives should submit in everything to their husbands' (v. 24). Are there areas of your life where you are currently not submitting to your husband, or other authority figures (if you aren't a wife), and what needs to change? Has a wife's willing submission to her husband, or the obedience of other believers, ever exposed areas in your life where you are disobeying Jesus? Please share.
8. Praise God who reworks in our hearts a willingness to submit to those He has placed over us, and thus restores the good order that was established at creation. How has this passage challenged your heart and how does this passage lead you to the praise of Christ and the cross?

*"Paul's point here is that in expressing the mystery of Christ, wives and husbands give expression to different dimensions of the relationship between the Lord and His people. In the case of the husband, as we shall see, his calling is to love, care for, and protect his wife as Christ does the church. But the wife's role in this domestic cameo of grace is to illustrate how the believer responds to Christ's love with deep joy and joyful submission."*

*-Sinclair Ferguson*