

## Submission and Love

Ephesians 5:21-24

submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

### **Wives and Husbands**

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 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.

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

Martyn Lloyd-Jones was a tremendously influential expository preacher from Wales in the middle of the last century.

His nickname was “The Doctor” because he left an elite career as the personal physician to the King of England to become a “doctor of souls.” He believed that the Word of God was medicine for sickened lives and the only way to bring people healing that would last for eternity.

If you have time in the car or on a run this week, I highly encourage you to listen to some of the many sermons that Dr. Lloyd-Jones preached on Ephesians 5:22-33. They have been of particular help to Austin and me in our understanding of this passage. You can stream his sermons online at MLJTrust.org.

<https://www.mljtrust.org/search/?q=Ephesians+5%3A22-33>

MLJ asserts that the basic reason marriages are a mess is because of our own understanding of the church. If we don't understand who God called us to be as his people, we will never understand how God wants us to function in a Biblical marriage.

Ephesians 5:21-24 is a short passage jam-packed with Biblical truth. The issue of submission, applied here to the marriage relationship, is one of the central components of living a Christian life. We all are called to live lives of total and complete submission to Jesus. But very few of us have fully submitted every area of our hearts and lives to Him.

I will be the first to admit that I don't have a lot of practical advice on the best way for wives to submit. Ephesians 5 simply says to submit to your husbands as you do to the Lord.

The things I have learned mostly come from watching Godly women and men. Their marriages are blessed when they love and cherish their spouses as they love and cherish Christ.

I know the way my parents and grandparents lived. I see the way my wife lives with me. And I love to read biographies of Godly wives of influential Christian leaders.

Women like Katherina Von Bora Luther, Sarah Pierpont Edwards, and Bethan Phillips

Lloyd-Jones are truly worth learning about. They were all well-educated and strong women from good families. They had notable personalities, high intelligence, and lots of talent in their own rights. The fact that these capable women can be best known to history by the ways that they supported their husbands gives us a practical display of Biblical submission. They found a greater joy in the willingness to submit personal ambitions and happiness to the success that comes from shared goals.

Lloyd-Jones speaks of women who zealously guard their husband's masculinity. I can see that trait in every Christian wife whom I admire.

It's interesting to note that wives are not called to submit on account of the worthiness of their husbands, but on account of Christ. As we talk about how to attain a Godly marriage, it should be abundantly clear that Jesus is the way for marriage.

If your motivation for a Godly marriage is anything other than the fact that Jesus has loved and transformed you, then your efforts will ultimately be for nothing.

The other thing to notice is that Ephesian does not give us is a real-life practical example of wives who submitted. Biographies of Godly wives can be found sprinkled throughout other sections of Scripture. In writing to the church, however, I believe that Paul knows that the best examples for Godly marriage sit right beside us in church.

Our marriages are perfect, but the details of our own success and failure can warn, teach, and encourage those around us. Allow this type of transparent education to influence your Life Group this week.

### Questions for Husbands and Wives:

- **Wives:** How does your submission to your husband reflect the submission Christ had to the Father in the Gospels?
- **Husbands:** How does your love for your wife reflect the love that Christ has for the Church?
- **Wives:** How does your role as your husband's "helper" resemble how the Holy Spirit fills us and completes us to live out all God made us to be?
- **Husbands:** How does your leadership of your wife resemble the leadership of Christ in our own lives?
- **Wives:** How is your submission to your husband empowering his love for you and how is it inhibiting it?
- **Husbands:** How is your love for your wife making her submission a joy? How is your love for your wife leading her to love and submit to Christ?
- **Wives:** How is your submission to your husband inspiring Biblical masculinity in him? How are you guarding his masculinity?
- **Husbands:** How is your love for your wife leading her to be the woman God intended for her to be? How are you guarding her femininity?

## Life Group Discussion Guide

- **Wives:** What does your submission to your husband demonstrate about the level of confidence and joy you are experiencing in your relationship with God?
- **Husbands:** What does your love for your wife demonstrate about the level of confidence and joy you are experiencing in your relationship with God?
- **All:** Who are women you personally know who have practiced Godly submission in their own marriages? Who are some men who love their wives sacrificially and unconditionally?
- **Singles:** How does all of this affect what you think about marriage? How does a single woman avoid marrying a man she cannot submit to? How does a single man find a woman he can love for his entire life? What should you be looking for in a potential mate?