

# *The Ministry of Womanhood*

*Encouraging women to find their purpose & significance through serving God in their biblical roles*

Volume One, Issue Eleven

*Every woman  
has been  
born into the  
ministry  
of God.  
It is spelled  
out for her  
in Scripture,  
lived out  
before others  
in her home,  
church, and  
community,  
and recorded  
by God  
in the pages  
of eternity.*



## *The Ministry of a Wife's Submission to Her Husband*

Today we are going to talk about something that many people in the church consider to be controversial ~ a wife's submission to her husband. In the recent years there have been many great debates between people that call themselves Christians over whether God really expects a wife to submit to the authority of her husband and do the things that he says.

As I have studied this subject over the years as it applied to my own life, and over the past few weeks as I have prepared this Bible study for you, I have to be honest with you . . . I'm not sure what all the controversy is all about. Aside from the doctrine of salvation, I don't think there is a clearer doctrine in the Bible than the headship of the man in the home and the duty of his wife to submit herself to him.

But I have something better to share with you today than just clear doctrine on this matter. Today I will be bringing you the good news of how God will use your submission as a ministry to a lost world and the local church.

Every woman that I know wants to make an impact in this world in some significant way. Some want to impact this world through the wonderful job that they do at work. Some want to impact this world through the wonderful job that they do in their home. Some want to impact the world through their wonderful testimony as a mother. And some want to impact it with their many talents and flawless beauty.

But God has His own ideas about how He wants women to impact the world around Him . . . And His ideas all center themselves around obeying His Word so that He can use their lives to picture His spiritual truths to a dark and needy world. And that is what the ministry of a wife's submission is really about ~ it is about doing what God says so that He can use our testimony to demonstrate a very important spiritual truth to the world that exists around us.

Turn with me to Ephesians 5 and let's read the whole chapter together.

In this passage we see that God is exhorting the born again believer to live a holy life. We are reminded to be followers of God, to walk in love, and to avoid all sorts of evil behavior. Then we are further challenged to walk as children of the light of God's Word.

The Ladies of Grace Bible Study is written and taught by Mrs. Julie Fink and is a ministry of the Grace Baptist Church, 501 N. State St., Lockport, IL 60441; David M. Fink, Pastor  
Mrs. Fink can be reached by writing her at the church or by e-mailing her at: [ladiesofgrace@cleaninter.net](mailto:ladiesofgrace@cleaninter.net)



# The Ministry of Womanhood



How do we do this? By following the “five-step plan” that He gives to us in verses 18-21:

1. Be filled with the Spirit
2. Speak to yourself with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
3. Sing these songs so that you will make a melody in your heart
4. Give thanks to God in the name of Jesus Christ for all things
5. Submit yourselves to others in the fear of God

This is the way that we, as Christian women, can keep ourselves living a holy life and doing the things that God wants us to do ~ one of those holy things being to submit to some significant other person in the fear of God.

Who is that significant other person that Ephesians 5:22 is telling the Christian wife to submit to? It is her own husband.

Now, I’m not going to talk about what the carnal wife should be doing or not doing in her marriage. Until she gets saved, nothing that she does or doesn’t do matters for eternity anyway. But I do want to talk to you about what YOU should be doing in your marriage, because as a Christian, God wants to use your testimony to picture something very important ~ and that is the way that the local church is supposed to be responding to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Did you know that the marriage relationship was designed by God to picture the relationship between Christ and the church? Did you know that the husband is supposed to represent Christ in the relationship and the wife is supposed to represent the local church? I never want you to forget that EVERYTHING in this world that God has created has been designed to picture some kind of spiritual truth that He wants the world to know about. Day and Night represent Christ and Satan. The seasons of the year represent the stages of the Christian life. The physical process of giving birth reminds us of the salvation process. And the mystery of marriage itself: the process of a man leaving his parents and cleaving unto his wife and becoming one flesh pictures exactly what is supposed to happen to our own lives after we get saved ~ Christ left the glory of being with His Father in Heaven so that He could come to earth, join His Spirit with us after we get saved, and cause us to become a spiritual being as well as a physical being. It’s called a great mystery because it doesn’t make a bit of earthly sense. And if you think about it, the physical process of marriage doesn’t really make a bit of sense either. Think about it, a man marries a woman that he has only known for a handful of years at best, joins his body to hers on their wedding night, and they become one flesh through the children that are born to them because of their physical union. It’s a mystery and I don’t understand it. But even though I don’t understand it, I am willing to accept it.

And that is what God wants us to do with the whole concept of this duty that He has given to us in regards to submitting to our husbands ~ He wants us to just accept it. Accept the fact that this is the way He has designed our role and accept the fact that this is something that He needs us to do.

Now, having said all of that, let’s reread Ephesians 5:22-23 and 5:33 and talk about what submitting to a husband is all about.

**1. It is about understanding the headship of your husband in your marriage.** In the marriage, your husband represents Christ, and just like Christ is the head of the church, your husband is the head of you (who represents the church). This is God’s created order of things, and it is something that should not be transgressed against. What would you think about a church that wanted to have the authority over Christ? You would think it was a dysfunctional church, wouldn’t you? Well, this same thought goes for a wife that wants to rule over her husband. There is an old saying that goes like this:

“Ill thrives the hapless family that shows a cock that silent, and a hen that crows:  
I know not which live most unnatural lives, obeying husbands or commanding wives.”

*“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8*



# The Ministry of Womanhood



2. **It is about being subject unto him in every thing.** And when the Bible says every thing, *it means every thing that would be lawful for a wife to do.* Your husband has no right to forbid you from going to church on Sunday, training your children in the faith, or reading your Bible. And he certainly has no right to require you to commit some sort of act of dishonesty or immorality. But aside from these kinds of things, wives are supposed to be subject to their husbands in every thing else. What does this mean to us? It means that we are to follow his decisions in regards to where we live, where we go, how the kids are raised, where they go to school, what we eat, how we dress, where we shop, what we drive, how we spend our money, who our friends are, and what we do in general. For those of us that like to make our own decisions about things and do our own things, this is very bad news. I think the hardest thing for a woman to do in our day and age is be subject to her husband in every thing. Why? Because it goes against her very nature to be controlling and independent.
3. **It is about seeing that you reverence your husband.** This basically means that a wife is to see to it that she stands in awe of her husband. The word reverence is translated from a word that literally means “fear”. Biblically speaking, the wife is to fear (or honor, respect, and obey) the will of her husband. This means no usurping of his authority and no mocking of his decisions. It also means making it her special duty to see that her husband is respected in the home as the head of the family.

Now, I know what some of you are thinking . . . This all sounds fine and good for someone that is married to a good husband: one that loves his wife like Christ loved the Church . . . But what about those of us that are married to difficult and disobedient ones? How does God want us to respond to them?

**In the same way.** Turn with me to I Peter 3:1-2 and I will show you this. *“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.”* The word fear in this verse is from the same root word that reverence is derived from. God wants the Christian wife to always behave in a manner of subjection to her husband, even if her husband isn’t worthy of it. Why? Because her submission to him is a portrait of something far greater than her feelings ~ it is a picture of the way that the local church should respond to Christ.

Let me ask you something, do you think the Christians in the local church are ever disappointed with Christ? Do you think they ever doubt that He genuinely cares for them and knows what is best for them? Sure they do. But just because they feel this way, does it make it true? No, it doesn’t. The truth is that because God chose to send Jesus Christ to be the head of the church, we can trust in who He is and everything that he does. The same goes for our submission to our husbands. We can submit to them, not because we trust in them, but because we trust in the God who has placed His authority over them. I Corinthians 3:3 says, *“But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of every woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.”*

As we close this study, I want to encourage you to submit yourselves unto the authority of your own husband for Christ’s sake. Don’t do it because he is a good man, because he is respectable, or because he does everything that you think he should. **Do it because it is something that God called you to do.** If you don’t, your act of submission will waver and your opportunity to be used by God in a very important way will be blurred. God wants to use your testimony as a good wife, a wife that understands the headship of her husband, that is willing to be subject to him in every thing, and one that is respectful of his position, to illustrate something that is very near and dear to His heart . . . the relationship between Christ and the local church.

*“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8*

# “Reverence For A Husband”

**O**n the day before my husband was due to leave for an unaccompanied tour to Okinawa in July of 1993, my husband stood in the kitchen with an open book in his hand and a puzzled look on his face. “Come here Julie,” he said to me on that day, “I want to show you something.” And then he proceeded to show me something from a part of the Bible that I was not really that familiar with.

“See all of this Julie, I would be willing to give you all of this if you would just give me this one thing . . . reverence.”

After he said that to me, I just stood there and looked at him with a blank stare. I didn’t know what to say. I honestly didn’t understand what he was getting at, and I didn’t have a clue about what the word “reverence” meant. I knew it had something to do with being a good wife, but I thought I was already being a good wife. After all, I kept my house clean, I was active in my church, I homeschooled my children, I was attractive and physically fit, our private times were enjoyable, what more could he be looking for?

“Well, Julie, what do you think? Would you be willing to give it to me or not?”

“I’m not quite sure what that word means,” I said to him in response.

“Never mind. I should have known you wouldn’t understand.” And then he closed his Bible and went back to packing for his trip.

The next day I took him to the airport, and as I kissed him good bye, I knew that our marriage was in trouble. I could see it in his eyes and I could feel it in his touch. My husband was looking for something that he didn’t think that I wanted to give to him and that made him a very frustrated and unhappy man.

The year that followed was a very difficult year for me as well as our marriage. It was hard for me to raise my children alone and it was hard for me to know that my husband’s heart didn’t rest safely in the wife of his home. I did a lot of soul searching that year, and a lot of reading about biblical things as well. One book in particular that helped me was a book entitled, “Me, Obey Him?”. It was a little book that explained the biblical definition of a wife’s submission and illustrated the various ways that it is demonstrated. I learned a lot of things from that book and God used it to help me better understand what my husband was really looking for when he asked for my reverence.

What was he looking for? Well, the first thing he was looking for was genuine respect as the head of our house. This is something that I thought I did, but after reading the book, I realized that I under minded my husband’s authority in a variety of subtle ways.

How would I do this? By questioning the decisions that he made and by doing what I thought was best instead of

exactly what he wanted me to do. As a matter of fact, I was so bad at it that our children would come to me for the final answer for just about everything.

The second thing that I learned was that God wanted me to be submissive to my husband’s leadership in every thing. Even things like what my husband wanted our family to eat, how he wanted us to dress, and how we were supposed to spend our money. Now, I have to be honest with you, at the time, my husband was not a very good man, and I felt

like it wasn’t very fair of God to expect me to submit to what I thought was his unstable leadership.

The third thing that this little book taught me was that I was supposed to look up to my husband in a way that demonstrated that I genuinely respected him. When I first read this, I said to the Lord that this would be impossible. After all, God knew what a difficult man my husband had been, and He knew that although I was willing to love him and stay with him, that there

was no way I could respect him.

That was when God showed me the last thing that I learned through this little book: that I am responsible to do what God calls me to do no matter what any one else is doing. Oh, this was a tough lesson to embrace! It just didn’t seem fair to me that God would want me to submit myself to someone that didn’t really love me like he should or care for me like he should.

But I kept reminding myself that the reason I read the little book was because my marriage was in trouble and I wanted to do whatever I could to help fix it. And by God’s grace, and through His amazing strength, God gave me the desire and the power to submit to my own husband and show him the kind of reverence that his position in my life deserved.

And you know what? After a few years of doing it, an amazing thing happened. The Lord began to deal with my own husband’s heart and lifestyle and he turned from his wicked ways and committed himself to obeying God, living a holy and separated life, genuinely loving me as his wife.

And you know what I got out of the whole reverence and submitting deal? A husband that now serves God with his whole life as a Pastor of a local church and a marriage that is out of this world!

