

Sermon Notes for July 31, 2011

A Biblical View Of The Home Sermon Series
“You’ve Got To Be Kidding About Submission”
Ephesians 5:15-24

A bride was very nervous. It was right before the service. She wasn’t sure she could even walk down the aisle. Her mother gave her some words of calming wisdom. She said to her, “Honey, there’s **only three things you need to focus on**. If you focus on these three things, you’ll be fine. The first is walking down the **aisle**. Just focus on walking down the aisle of the church. I know its rather long, but just concentrate on that. Don’t get caught up with those on either side of the aisle. Just focus on getting to the end of the aisle. Next, focus on the **altar**. It is your destination today. Make your way down the aisle to the altar. There you will stand before God with the man you love and will make vows to God and him. Last, focus on the **hymn** that the soloist will sing. If you’ll just focus on these three things you won’t be so nervous: Walking down the aisle, standing before the altar and listening to the hymn.”

The bride was very thankful to her mom for her words of advice. The family and friends gathered and watched as she walked down the aisle and noticed a look of calm determination on her face. But as she passed them, they began to chuckle quietly. For along with the look of calm determination, she was mumbling three words over and over again. As she passed them they heard her saying, “**Aisle, Altar, Hymn. . . Aisle, Altar, Hymn. . . Aisle, Altar, Hymn.**”

Introduction

A. You Have Got To BE KIDDING ABOUT SUBMISSION!

1. A Preacher must be nuts to get up and preach about a woman’s call to submit to her husband in this day and age.
 - a. On **June 10, 1998**, the Southern Baptist Convention, for the first time, amended the 1963 Southern Baptist statement of faith known as the **Baptist Faith and Message**, adding a brand new section (18) entitled the “**Family Amendment**” that states in part, “**A wife is to submit herself graciously** to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him (spiritually), has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and **to serve as his helper** in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.
 1. one person’s response to this statement:

“Of course, Southern Baptists believe their amendment concerning the necessity of wifely “submission” and the wife’s duty to “respect, serve and help” her husband, is what the Holy Scriptures demand. **But Southern Baptist slave-owners once believed the same thing regarding the “submission” of slaves and the slave’s duty to “respect, serve and help” their masters.**”
 2. as a result, the Southern Baptist Convention was greatly criticized for its “apparent archaic” position on women

b. reactions to submission

1. “For their weddings, most people choose a nice text in Corinthians about love. Unfortunately at my brother’s wedding they chose **Ephesians 5:22** instead. I watched with gritted teeth as my brother was told that **he was the head of the marriage** and my new sister-in-law was to “**bite her tongue**” if she ever disagreed with him! **This is my worst verse because it takes the campaign for women’s rights back about 100 years.**”
2. “I find the idea of “obeying” a partner and a peer in a non-reciprocal way because I have a different chromosome. It is irrational, unnecessary and downright dysfunctional. My household works just fine with two competent adults engaging in consensus decision-making and shared responsibilities.”
2. haven’t we gotten beyond “putting” women in their place in the church?

B. PLEASE BE PATIENT AS WE LOOK AT THIS MOST CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE

1. what does God’s Word teach us about submission?
2. and, are we practicing “Biblical submission” in our homes?.

I. The PROBLEM WITH SUBMISSION.

A. The WORLD’S REACTION With Submission.

1. If you want to start a **fight** among men and women, simply use the “**submission word.**”
 - a. “**tell**” a woman that she is “**supposed**” to be in submission to her husband
 - b. “**tell**” a woman “**that’s what the Bible says and that settles it**”
 - c. some of you women are starting to get very, very uncomfortable with the topic of this message today
2. Most will say: “**Do you want to lose all of the strides that we have made with women’s equality?**”
 - a. don’t you realize that women are **EQUAL TO MEN!**
 - b. don’t you realize that women have been **ALLOWED TO VOTE!**
 - c. do you want to go back to the **DARK AGES!**
 1. men controlling women
 2. women having no life or ideas of their own
3. Before you attack me or the Bible, let me make a few statements:
 - a. first of all, you must realize the advancement that God gave to women in the Scriptures
 1. in a typical Jewish world, women were seen as inferior to their husbands and equal to the children
 2. a Jew would often pray this prayer: “**God, I thank You that I am not a Gentile, that I am not a woman and that I am not a dog.**”
 3. a Roman believed that a woman was just “one step above” a slave and many steps below a man

4. if anything, look at how Jesus treated women in His earthly ministry
 - a. He was constantly ministering to women
 - b. what was so amazing about Jesus dealing with “a Samaritan woman” in John 4.
John 4:7-9 – “When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, “**You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?**” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)
 - c. who did Jesus take care of while He was dying on the cross? – His mother
John 19:26-27 – “When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Dear woman, here is your son,”²⁷ and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.”

- b. Paul says in the book of **Galatians 3:28** – “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, **male nor female**, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
- c. **Kent Hughes** – “I have seen ‘**couch potatoes**’ who order their wives and children around like the grand sultan of Morocco. With the domestic ethics of ‘**Jabba the Hut**’ who drag their wives around with Bible verses about submission insecure men whose wives do not dare go to the grocery without permission, who even tell their wives how to dress! But the fact that evil, disordered men have perverted God’s Word is no reason to throw it out.”

B. The WORD’S REVELATION About Submission.

1. But, we must recognize that while husbands and wives are equal spiritually . . .
2. Men and women, husbands and wives have **different roles** in the family
 - a. **AND THAT IS NOT A BAD THING**
 1. because men and women have different roles, it does not mean that one is better than another
 2. **IT IS SIMPLY THEIR ROLES**
 - b. Let us look at how husbands and wives are to begin a relationship with one another

II. The PATTERN Of SUBMISSION.

A. The Need Of SPIRITUALITY Of The Husband

1. The SPIRITUALITY Of The Husband

- a. we must first look at the **context** of these verses on submission
- b. for, before Paul speaks of the submission of the wife, he talks about the **SPIRITUALITY** of the husband

- c. look at **verses 18-19a** – “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. **Instead, be filled with the Spirit.** Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.”
 - 1. Paul is telling the Ephesian church how they are to deal with one another as they relate in the church.
 - 2. Paul calls the husband and all men to be “filled with the spirit”
- 2. THIS IS A HUGE STATEMENT OF THE “KIND” OF HUSBAND HE SHOULD BE**
 - a. Paul is not asking husbands to be “just any kind of husband”
 - b. Paul is calling all men, and husbands, to be full of the Holy Spirit
 - c. let me explain what being full of the Spirit is:
 - 1. when a person becomes a Christian, God’s Holy Spirit enters their life
 - 2. **HOWEVER**, despite the fact that a person becomes a believer, it does not mean that they will always be “full of the Spirit”
 - 3. being “full of the Spirit” requires:
 - a. a total death of self; giving your life to Jesus Christ
 - b. making a concerted effort to meet daily with Jesus by reading His Word
 - c. confessing your sin as soon as you sin
 - d. reconciling with others you have offended
 - 4. God will not fill a believer unless He can freely “move within that person’s life.”
- 3. BEFORE A HUSBAND CAN TRULY LEAD HIS WIFE, HE MUST FIRST BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT!**
 - a. being filled with the Spirit will “cause” the husband to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23 – “But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.**”
 - b. being filled with the Spirit will “cause” the husband to express himself to his wife and others in a gracious, loving way

I Corinthians 13:4-7 – “Love is **patient**, love is **kind**. It does **not envy**, it does **not boast**, it is **not proud**. It is **not rude**, it is **not self-seeking**, it is **not easily angered**, **it keeps no record of wrongs.**”
 - c. **WIVES, MAY I ASK YOU A QUESTION?**
 - 1. would you mind submitting to a man who is full of the Holy Spirit and exhibits the fruit of the Spirit?
 - 2. would you mind submitting to a man who loves you with the unconditional, love of God?

B. The Need Of SUBMISSION Of The Husband

- 1. **In addition** to the need of the husband to be Spirit-filled, the husband **MUST BE SUBMISSIVE HIMSELF!**

Ephesians 5:21 – “**Submit to one another** out of reverence for Christ.”

- a. please note that BEFORE Paul calls a wife to submit to her husband, that Paul asks the husband to SUBMIT TO EVERYONE IN THE CHURCH!
- b. this text clearly teaches that the husband HIMSELF is to have a submissive spirit.
 - 1. there is no arrogance, or lording it over others
 - 2. after all, LOOK AT THE SUBMISSIVE LIFE OF JESUS!
 - a. Jesus “submitted” to His Heavenly Father and came to this earth
 - b. Jesus “submitted” to His earthly family by obeying his earthly father
Luke 2:51a – “Then He went down to Nazareth with them and **was obedient to them.**”
 - c. Jesus “submitted” to His Heavenly Father as He “submitted” to the cross
Luke 22:42 – “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; **yet not my will, but yours be done.**”

2. A SUBMISSIVE SPIRIT SHOULD BE THE ATTITUDE OF THE HUSBAND!

- a. **Philippians 2:3-8** – Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, **but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:** Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, **but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant**, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself** and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!”
- b. **Writer, Kathi Macias**, tells a story about working on a book with the late **Chaplain of the United States Senate, Dr. Richard Halverson**. This required a lot of phone conversations, much of the time with Dr. Halverson’s assistant. We were closing in on a very tight deadline over the Christmas holidays, and I had decided to work through Christmas-Eve day. Mid-morning, I hit a snag and couldn’t move forward without an answer. I knEw the chances of catching Dr. Halverson’s assistant in the office on Christmas Eve were pretty slim, but I decided to give it a shot. Imagine my surprise when **Dr. Halverson himself answered the phone!** He quickly explained that though there were a few last-minute details that needed to be done in his office that day, he had insisted his staff take the day off, and then he came in to take care of things himself. **When I recovered from my shock, I told him what I needed. He promised to track down the required information and get back to me. Sure enough, an hour later the phone rang, and Dr. Halverson gave me the information I needed to complete my day’s work and still make it to the Christmas Eve service on time.**

What did I learn from that exchange? The **beauty of servant leadership—true humility and genuine greatness. That one life-example taught me more than all the books I could ever read or all the conferences and classes I could ever attend.**

- c. **Tim Timmons – “A husband’s submission to God is the best example your wife has to observe. Any lack of submission on her part may have been learned from the husband’s lack of submission.”**
3. Do you realize that if the husband is to be submissive to all members of the church, **THAT INCLUDES HIS WIFE!**
- a. here is a man who is being filled with the Spirit, filled with the unconditional love of God, showing graciousness to his wife
 - b. not being her boss, her controller, but submitting to her in a gracious way
- C. ONCE AGAIN, WIVES, DO YOU MIND SUBMITTING TO A HUSBAND “LIKE THAT?”**

III. The PROBLEM WITH SUBMISSION.

A. The PLACE OF SUBMISSION FOR THE HUSBAND AND WIFE

1. Please know that there is no doubt in Scripture that the husband is called to be the spiritual leader of the home
Ephesians 5:22-24 – “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.”
 - a. there is no other way to look at these verses
 - b. no matter how you read them, the Bible teaches that the husband is the head of the home
2. a word to husbands and wives
 - a. husbands, God’s Word calls you to lead your wife
 - b. wives, God’s Word calls you to submit to your husband

B. The PROBLEM OF SUBMISSION WITH THE WIFE

1. **HOWEVER, despite God’s call for wives to submit to the husbands, THERE IS A PROBLEM**
Genesis 3:16 – “To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”
 - a. **THIS IS WHAT THIS VERSE MEANS. . .**
 1. **DESPITE** the fact that the husband is the head of the wife
 2. **THE WIFE WILL WANT TO CONTROL THE HUSBAND!**
 - b. when the Christian wife is not graciously led by her Spirit-filled husband, her “spring-loaded mechanism” will explode and she will want to take over the leadership of the home
2. **PART OF THE CURSE BETWEEN HUSBANDS AND WIVES IS THIS WORD SUBMISSION!**
 - a. if you grew up in a house with a controlling father, you rebel against submission

- b. if you are married to either a controlling or a detached husband, you will rebel against submission

IV. CONCLUSION

A. A WORD TO THE WIVES

1. The Bible does teach that the husband **IS** the head of the home
 - a. wives, this may be a struggle for you, especially if your husband is not spiritually leading you
 - b. you need to realize that God will hold **your husband** accountable, NOT you, about the leadership of your home
2. **Pray for** your husband's leadership
 - a. do not nag him; instead, use prayer as the main instrument to affect and change your husband
 - b. pray that God fills your husband with His Spirit and His Word
3. If your husband has failed you or hurt you, **FORGIVE HIM**
 - a. your husband will fail you; get used to it
 - b. but, no matter what he had done to you, forgive him
 1. your lack of forgiveness will manifest itself in not supporting him
 2. your lack of forgiveness will affect the intimacy in your marriage
4. Finally, **do not feel that you must submit to your husband if he asks you to sin**
 - a. some believe that a wife must submit to her husband "in everything," including sin
 - b. if your husband asks you to violate God's Word in your life, you are called **not** to submit
 1. perhaps your husband wants you to lie on your income tax
 2. perhaps your husband wants you to not go to church
 - c. your **FIRST ALLEGIANCE** is the Lord Jesus and His Word

B. A WORD TO THE HUSBANDS

1. **FIRST, DO YOU REALIZE THAT, DESPITE YOUR WIFE'S UNDERLYING TENDENCY TO CONTROL YOU, SHE WANTS YOU TO BE HER SPIRITUAL LEADER!**
 - a. it is in the "DNA" of wives to be led by their husbands
 - b. it is a woman's greatest desire to follow the leadership of her husband
 - d. **James Boice** – "We hear much today, particularly from women's liberation spokespersons, and we might therefore think that women want to dominate their husbands—and should, if they have the brains and will to do it. But this is the devil's lie. **No good woman wants a man she can boss around. She wants a man she can look up to, whose judgment she can respect, and whose leadership she can respond to.** If she does not get this in her man, she feels cheated. True, wives are sinners like their husbands. Wives will press their husbands on the question of mastery. They will fight for their own way. But deep inside, what wives really want is a man who will rule them and their home—gently and with love, to be sure—but rule them nevertheless."

2. **SECOND, DO NOT FORGET THAT YOUR WIFE WANTS TO BE YOUR HELPMEEET**

- a. the word submit in the Greek is NOT the word obey
 1. your wife is **not** your child
 2. she is **not** your servant
 3. the word submit refers to one of “equal power” who places themselves under the leadership of another
 - a. Jesus was the creator of this world, yet He submitted to the leadership of His parents
 - b. if your wife is like mine, she is smarter, more gifted and more competent than I am, and yet she submits to my leadership because God calls her to do so
 - c. **SO, HUSBANDS, DON’T TREAT YOUR WIFE AS ONE OF YOUR CHILDREN!**
- b. instead, treat her as your helpmeet
 1. God made her to be by your side, to live together, to serve together, **TO MAKE DECISIONS TOGETHER.**
 - a. I was listening to Dr. R. C. Sproul talk about his relationship with his wife and her submission to him
 1. in his entire marriage, he could remember only 2 or 3 times that he had to make a decision without her help
 2. other than that, they made all of their decisions together!
 - b. my wife and I make decisions together
 1. **BECAUSE SHE HELPS ME MAKE DECISIONS**
 2. decisions about:
 - a. our children
 - b. where we would live
 - c. which house to buy
 - d. how to handle our money
 2. husbands, your wife will never have a problem with your leadership if you treat her as the most important person in your life
 - a. you should never make a decision without discussing it, praying about it and seeking her counsel
 - b. **SHE IS YOUR CHIEF CONFIDANT!**

3. **THIRD, HUSBANDS THINK LESS OF LEADING YOUR WIFE AND MORE ABOUT “LOVING” YOUR WIFE**

- a. the story of **Pat Williams**
 1. **Pat Williams** was, at one time, the General Manager of the Philadelphia 76’rs.
 2. Pat was:
 - a. a committed Christian
 - b. a member of 10th Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia
 - c. a devoted father and husband

3.. his wife Jill, after 10 years of marriage, said:

“I give up,”

“Jill, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to upset you with what I said this morning. I apologize for that.” But he could tell, as she waved that off with a flick of her hand, that it went much deeper.

“I don’t even know if I love you anymore. I don’t even know if I ever loved you.”

Pat felt as if his heart had stopped. “Really, Jill?” he said, his throat tight. “What can I do? What can we do?”

Jill began a **soft litany of the countless complaints** she had registered for so many years, never having felt she had really gotten his attention long enough to get any response. He looked at her sadly and she wondered if he was finally hearing her for the first time.

If he had only been listening all those years, the charges echoing in his mind wouldn’t have come as revelations now:

You don’t really care about this marriage.

Why should I try to be a good wife? You never notice anything anyway.

We never do anything together unless it’s something you want to do.

You never share anything with me, your work, your Bible study, your dreams, your goals.

Why can’t you remember the little things, the special days unless I circle them in red on the calendar?

You talk to me like I’m a Philadelphia sportswriter.

Couldn’t you ever come home a little early just to be with me? Or come and pick me up and take me to the game instead of leaving me to find my own way there with friends?

You never hold my hand anymore. You never touch me unless you want something more.

You never say nice things to me in front of people.

You’re okay with the kids only after I’ve asked you five or six times.

You never act as if my words are important. You never really listen. You either interrupt or don’t let me talk at all when we’re with other people.

I don’t want things. I want you. Don’t give me crumbs. I want the real thing. You’ve never made a one hundred percent commitment to me. You’ve never really given me you.

Pat was listening now.

4. Pat was counseled by a counselor by the name of **Dr. Ed Wheat**. Dr. Wheat encouraged Pat to love his wife in these four ways:
 - a. **BLESSING**
 1. speak well of her
 2. do kind things for her
 3. thank her verbally
 4. pray for her
 - b. **EDIFYING**
 1. praise her frequently
 2. get to know her; study her; understand her
 - c. **SHARING**
 1. tell her everything: goals, desires, problems, pains, fears
 2. go to bed together and get up together
 3. cleave unto your wife
 - d. **TOUCHING**
 1. touching in non-sexual ways; holding hands, hugging
 2. this may be the most critical of all
5. After 10 years of neglect, these new steps began to take hold:

Pat later said, “Dr. Wheat, I have to ask you. **Why did it take me ten years to discover this?** Why ten years? I’m just now finding out about this.”

“Three basic reasons,” Dr. Wheat said in a slow and deliberate manner. “We men are very, very slow learners, very stubborn, and very selfish. Be grateful you found out. Most men never do, or if they do, it’s too late.

“Well, sir, I’ve got one more problem. The way I feel now, the way I’m going, I am in such an intense love relationship with my wife that **I’m afraid I’m going to burn out.** Sometimes I wonder if I can last the weekend. When’s all this going to end?”

“Listen, young man, God never intended it to end. God’s design for every Christian marriage is that this intense romantic relationship will increase in intensity every day for the rest of your life. It’s never going to end as long as you bless, edify, share with, and touch her.”

 - b. husbands, you will never see your wife submit when “you tell her to” submit

C. A WORD TO BOTH WIVES AND HUSBANDS

1. **Wives**, do you have any problem submitting to the Lord Jesus Christ?
 - a. no, because He loves you unconditionally
 - b. no, because you know that no matter what you have done, He will forgive you

- c. no, because He is constantly pursuing you, loving you and being a positive agent of change in your life
 - d. no, because He has physically and spiritually **PROVEN** that He loves you by His death on the cross.
2. **Husbands**, if your wife has a difficult time submitting to you, ask yourself the question: “**Am I more like Jesus, or am I more like me?**”
- a. husbands, more than likely, your wife’s lack of submission has more to do with **YOU** than it has to do with her
 - b. confess your lack of love to her and watch her life change before your very eyes.