

Submission Involves Service

Scripture Reading — Ephesians 5:21-33

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. — Ephesians 5:21

There's more to being a Christ follower than talking about Jesus or rejoicing in being "saved." Too often we emphasize our personal, "vertical" relationship with Jesus without thinking how that should affect our "horizontal" relationships with others, where life can be very complicated. Ephesians has some close-to-home application here, teaching that the reason for submitting to one another is "out of reverence for Christ."

Explaining Jesus' command that we "love one another," John Calvin stated, "Where love reigns, there is mutual servitude," adding that this applies even to kings and rulers. They must serve their people, as must pastors and politicians. So must husbands and wives.

Applying Jesus' example to the marriage relationship, Paul mentions the "profound mystery" of Christ and his church. Jesus is the head of the church, and yet he sacrificed himself for it. He's the model of service and submission for both the husband and the wife. It's a love relationship of serving and sacrificing for one another.

Loving and submitting means subordinating our "rights" and emphasizing how we can serve and build up one another. Our commitment to Christ leads to acts of surrendering self and submitting "out of reverence for Christ." Doing so will attract new believers. Have you tried it?

Prayer

Lord, you submitted your will to your Father's. Help us to submit ours to you and to find ways of expressing love and respect in all our relationships. In your name, Amen.

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