



JANUARY 22, 2024 MONDAY - DAY 15

# PRAY THAT WE WOULD SUBMIT TO ONE ANOTHER

EPHESIANS 5:21; 1 PETER 5:5

## SUBMISSION AS OBEDIENCE

Ask most Christians what they think of when they hear the word "submission," and they will respond with something about marriage. One reason for this response is that the Bible does speak of wifely submission (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:1). However, the word has a larger meaning. "Submission" is a synonym for "obedience." It means to yield to another's admonition and advice.

- Young men were to be submissive to older men (1 Pet. 5:5).
- All members of the body were to submit to authority (Heb. 13:17).
- Servants were to submit to masters (Titus 2:9; Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22; 1 Pet. 2:18).
- Children were to submit to parents (Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20).
- Citizens were to submit to government leaders (Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:13). Paul is simply echoing Jesus' words in Matthew 20:25 - 28 and matching the description of Jesus in Philippians 2:6 - 7.

The word originally arose from military usage in the Apostle Paul's day. It literally meant "to rank under," to be subordinate to someone. The concept of submission is central to Christianity. One enters the kingdom by faith in and submission to Jesus Christ. Jesus himself was astounded that anyone would dare to call him "Lord" and refuse to obey his word (Luke 6:46). Later, when Roman persecution came, everyone was called to publicly confess, "Kurios Jesu!" ("Caesar is Lord!"). True believers refused, proclaiming instead, "Kurios Jesu!" ("Jesus is Lord!"), and they paid for their submission to Christ with their very lives.

## MUTUAL SUBMISSION

Mutual submission is uniquely Christian. Others operate out of selfish motives. When mutual submission is lacking in a church look out. Fights and spills occur because both sides of a disagreement want their own way and neither will submit.

Submission is the ability to lay down the burden of always needing to get our own way. To borrow a phrase from the game of poker, you've got to know when to hold 'em and know when to fold 'em. Early in the fifth century, a controversy over the nature of Christ was tearing the church apart. The two main opponents were Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, and Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople. The division grew so sharp that the Emperor was led to call the Third Ecumenical Council in AD 431 to settle the issue. Cyril and his supporters arrived first and, without waiting for the others to arrive, they convened, elected Cyril president, denounced Nestorius as a heretic, and stirred up the populace against him and his followers. Forced to reconvene, Nestorius and his followers claimed to be the legitimate council and condemned Cyril and his disciples as heretics. When they both appealed to the Emperor, he condemned them all, the result was a divided, broken, embittered church. This sad story has been repeated again and again abroad as well as on a local scale. It is well known that the main factor in church starts is division in existing churches.

When New Harmony Church sets up shop just down the road from Old Harmony Church, one can be sure there has been precious little harmony among the brethren. What is needed is a fresh understanding of what it means to "submit to one another." Submission does not mean inequality between persons.



JANUARY 22, 2024 MONDAY - DAY 15

# PRAY THAT WE WOULD SUBMIT TO ONE ANOTHER

EPHESIANS 5:21; 1 PETER 5:5

Galatians 3:28 clearly tells us that all of us Jews and Greeks, males and females, slave and free man are equal as persons in the eyes of Christ. Someone has well said, "The ground is level at the foot of the cross." Nor does submission mean inferiority of role. Wives are just as critical to a godly home as are their husbands; the President's vote counts no more than the average citizen's. Jesus said, "I do always the will of my Father," yet he, as the second person of the Trinity, is no less God than the Father himself. Submission is merely the subjugation of one's will for the sake of the whole. A young man decided to muster out of the Marine Corps after ten years of service.

A few weeks later he came back and re enlisted. As he explained, "Sarge, no one is in charge out there!" God, give us churches where Christ is in charge and people are in the habit of submitting to one another.

Pray that we would submit to one another.

**... Submitting to one another  
In the fear of God.  
Eph. 5:21**

## PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

1. Pray that God will reveal to you which issues in your faith and practice are negotiable and which are not.
2. Pray that a spirit of mutual submission would spread in your congregation.
3. Pray that your family members would come to know the joy of submitting to one another.

4. Pray that our homes and churches become crucibles for mutual submission rather than battlegrounds of egos.

**The most deadly lies of all,  
However, are the lies we live.**