

Series on marriage and the family – sermon 5 - 25/04/10 (am)

# **Submission in Everything?**

**Ephesians 5:24;  
Proverbs 31:10-31**

***Theme: Wives are to submit to their husbands in everything.***

In essence the wife's submission to her husband in marriage is:

- as to the Lord (**motive**, *cf.* 5:22);
- for **reasons** drawn from the Created Order and Redemption (*cf.* 5:23);
- free from undertones of inferiority.

Some may have objections:

1. A wife is told to submit to her husband in *everything* (5:24)
2. The Bible gives no authority at all to a wife in the marriage relationship.

*We will show that these objections have no Biblical basis.*

## **A. Submission in *Everything*** (Eph. 5:24)

What does *everything* (5:24) mean?

Consider the submission of the Church to Jesus Christ (5:24a).

The Church submits to Christ in everything because Jesus will not require the Church to be sinful.

Now think about this instruction for wives as to their husbands.

A wife is to submit to her husband's leadership as long as he does not require her to do anything sinful.

- 1. A wife must not sin on the instruction of her husband.**
- 2. A wife is not to let her husband interfere with her relationship to the Lord.** Wives married to unsaved husbands must remember  
1 Peter 3:1-6.

Ephesians 5:24 is not speaking about unconditional submission!

## **B. The Wife of Noble Character** (Proverbs 31:10-31)

In Proverbs 31:10-31 we see the exalted role of a godly wife which shows *independence and authority* within marriage *under the leadership of her husband.*

The verses begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

In this Scripture we see the spirituality, energy, capability, initiative and love of the wife of *noble character*.

**Note:**

- ① 31:10 - *rarity* is the emphasis here, not *impossibility*.

② 31:11-12, 28 - she has the full confidence of her husband and children.

[The word translated *trust* or *full confidence* is almost exclusively used of trust in the Lord. It is only used twice in the Old Testament to refer to trust in another human - here and Judges 20:36.]

③ 31:13-15, 21-22, 27 - she provides for her household.

④ 31:16-19, 24 - she is a businesswoman.

⑤ 31:20 - she is filled with social concern.

⑥ 31:26 - she is wise. *Faithful instruction* brings together two significant Old Testament words: *hesed* [covenant faithfulness] and *torah* [teaching or law]. This woman lovingly and faithfully speaks the wisdom of God's law.

⑦ 31:30 - she fears God. Outward charm may cover foolish character but this woman has inner beauty.

Does this describe a menial role?  
Debased? Inferior?

This is as far as you can get from  
the stereotypical interpretation of  
*wives submit to your husbands in  
everything!*

It is a picture of a Godly wife  
fulfilling her God-given role in  
marriage.

# Conclusion

*Young men (and older men who are not married), these are characteristics you should look for in any wife-to-be ...*

*... and you had better make sure you walk close with the Lord and are worthy of such a woman if you find her!*

*May God give those who are wives  
grace to fulfil your role in marriage:  
you can become the wife/mother of  
Proverbs 31 by walking close to the  
Lord.*

*May God give us all grace to  
understand His ways in the family  
and to submit to them for His glory.*