

# Lesson 30

Teacher's Manual

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## NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH WIFE

READ & MEDITATE ON: Titus 2:3-5  
I Peter 3:1-5

MEMORIZE: Ephesians 5:22

### INTRODUCTION

In God's kindness to us, He gave definite guidelines of authority and submission. It would be unfair for us to be held responsible for what we could not control. Man is not responsible for Christ. He is responsible to be submissive to Christ as his Head. Therefore, a wife is not responsible for her husband. She is responsible to be submissive to him. When she has done this she has submitted to Christ, who then must assume the responsibility to protect her. This leaves to God the problem of an overbearing, harsh husband. When she submits to her husband, as unto the Lord, then he must answer to God for the exercise of his authority. A woman who is submissive to her husband lives under a double canopy of protection—her husband and Christ.

#### I. TRUE MEANING OF SUBMISSION

Submission is the summation of God's Word and plans. It is the basic premise for godliness. It is the briefest and best summary of the Bible because it is the re-occurring theme of the entire Scriptures. For this reason, submission totally encompasses all those who call themselves Christian; all those who look to the Scriptures for instruction and a standard of conduct. Submission totally encompasses all areas of our lives.

One can obey without being submissive; but one cannot submit without being obedient.

B. Highest Example Of Submission

Only God is free of the command of submission, and yet, He voluntarily entered a submissive relationship as a pattern for us all.

"Let this mind (attitude) be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus...being in the form of God...made himself of no reputation...took upon him the form of a servant...he humbled himself, and became obedient...."

*Philippians 2:5-8*

This is the highest example of submission. The only true sovereign, who was beyond the command of submission, voluntarily submitted. This example has two outstanding truths concerning the scriptural concept of submission.

1. Submission—A Scriptural Command

Submission is a chain of command of authority that touches every relationship. Everyone is commanded to submit to the authority immediately over them and also to the many other authorities that supervise their lives. The woman is commanded to submit to her husband for he is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church. In the same way the church submits to the Headship of Christ, the wife submits to the headship of her husband. It is impossible to submit without obeying; therefore, the wife is commanded to be obedient to her husband (Titus 7:3-5).

Submission to the person or authority in charge is not predicated (declared) on their particular quality, but rather on a scriptural command. All submission, or lack of it, is ultimately directed to God, through a chain of overseers. (Ephesians 5:22-30; Colossians 3:18; I Peter 3:1-6.)

2. Submission—A Voluntary Attitude

No one can make anyone truly submit. It is an expression of a person's will. This is why a submissive spirit is of

men in general, but only those with delegated authority. Love and respect for the husband ("...reverence her husband" Ephesians 5:33) will lead the wife to lovingly adapt herself to fit his leadership. God's wisdom is that when one partner adapts instead of opposing the leading partner, the leading partner then does not have to fight for leadership. The result is they become heirs together with God, and prayers are not hindered by wrong attitudes.

"...and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

*I Peter 3:7*

The wife has a built-in emotional need to lean on her husband and the husband has a built-in need to be respected and admired. These needs are met when the husband loves his wife and she submits to him.

E. Submission—A Christian Testimony

Love can be defined as desiring only what is good and best for the loved one. There is no selfishness in true love. It is replaced with sacrifice when necessary to bring the best to the one loved. Love is sympathetic, courteous, gives blessing for insult, speaks carefully, avoids evil, and pursues a peaceful life-style. Peter, the fiery evangelist of the day of Pentecost, teaches us these things as regulatory for a Christian home and life-style (I Peter 3:3-11). It is interesting to note that the word "conversation" in these verses, in the King James Version of Scripture should be translated "behavior" or "life style," in our modern English.

First Corinthians thirteen is known as the "love" chapter. Too often love is seen in relationships outside the family but neglected at home. This chapter is filled with "love's sacrifice." Love does not keep score on another—never tries to even the score. Love hardly notices when it is wronged, wishes the best for the loved one, is very patient and kind, and is never arrogant or self-seeking.

The writing of the Apostle Peter to wives (I Peter 3) advises that when there is a conflict over submission between husband and wife, her attitude is to become her advocate. Her right attitude makes an unspoken appeal for her to continue to live pleasing to God. The phrase in verse six "not afraid with any

## B. Women's Long Hair—Because Of The Angels

Women should have long hair because of THE ANGELS. Consider the interesting statement made in I Corinthians 11:10, "...because of the angels." The word "power" signifies that the woman is subject to the man, that is, she is to be obedient.

"Therefore she should (be subject to his authority and should) have a covering on her head (as a token, a symbol, of her submission) to authority, (that she may show reverence as do) the angels and not displease them."

*I Corinthians 11:10 (Amplified Bible)*

This is made known by the fact that her head is covered with long hair. Paul says that we see it, and know it, but he affirms that we are not the only ones who discern these things.

The connecting line of thought implies that the angels also see and know these same things. The following Scripture references are revealing and enlightening in regard to this truth: Psalms 34:7; Ecclesiastes 5:6; I Corinthians 4:9; and I Timothy 5:2.

Therefore, consider this: It is clear from the foregoing verses that angels are invisibly present about us always.

Paul's writing "because of the angels" (verse 10) suggests that the subjects of women, long hair, and angels are connected with the subjects of obedience, example, and testimony.

There seems to be only one cause for angels to fall from their high estate, and that is by rebellion! Thus angels, who are always present about us, would see the short hair of women as a sign of rebellion, rather than subjection on their part. In essence, because of regard and respect for the angels, women should have long hair.

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### III. GOD'S BENEVOLENT AUTHORITY

#### A. The Beauty Of Submission

Submission is a thing of beauty given to us by a loving, caring Father. Authority, headship, submission—these words have some-

times been given a negative feeling because of the inherent (inborn) rebellion in mankind as a result of man's fall. Seeing them in their positive sense they imply protection, responsibility, and loving leading; not second-rate people, harshness or tyranny. Submission to God-ordained authority puts the submitted one in the protective custody of that authority. That leadership is then responsible to God for how they exercise their authority. This leaves the submitted one free to trust God to oversee the leadership of their authority.

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."

*Ephesians 5:22*

It is a kind and easy life-style, free from much of the confusion of worldly life-styles. In a submissive spirit one can move freely in their sphere of life.

#### B. The Protection Of Submission

God set up His basic earthly institution, the family, with the head authority to be an extension of Himself. (God has assumed titles of Father, Bridegroom and Husband.) The man is placed, by God, as the head of the woman.

"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."

*I Corinthians 11:3*

It is a chain of command dependent on authority and submission, resulting in protection, freedom, and an opportunity to develop character. The man submitted to Christ is protected by Him and free of responsibility beyond His delegated authority, or control. The woman submitted to the man is placed in a position of protection and free of worry and responsibility beyond her delegated sphere or control.

amazement" can be translated "not giving into hysterical fears." Further advice in this chapter is that, if we must suffer, be sure it is for being completely devoted to Christ in your heart. Be able to give a reasonable answer for your convictions in a gentle, quiet, and respectful way. When this attitude is adhered to in time of conflict, the promise of verse twelve is assured: "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (I Peter 3:12).

Daniel refused to compromise his convictions. His attitude and behavior gave credence to his convictions. It is impossible to take a convincing stand for God and righteousness with an un-Christlike attitude. Daniel was not spared trouble but he had ultimate victory and God was glorified.

The worst rebellion is deceptive rebellion. To use God or the church as an excuse to escape the duties and responsibilities of home and marriage as God has outlined in His Word is hypocritical. Jesus defended righteousness, but never Himself. He is our example in all things.

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## II. A SIGN OF SUBMISSION

A woman who has long hair has a "mark of distinction" that is GOD-GIVEN, and which the Bible says "is a glory (honor) to her."

### A. Women's Long Hair—A Bible Command

There are definite reasons why women should not cut their hair. They should have long hair because it is commanded in THE BIBLE. I Corinthians 11:15 declares three facts:

1. Women have long hair.
2. Women are given long hair.
3. Women's long hair is for a purpose (a covering).

It is therefore scriptural that women should have long hair today. It signifies two things:

1. Long hair is a sign of subjection (I Corinthians 11:3, 5).
2. Long hair is a sign of womanliness (I Corinthians 11:15).

utmost importance. An unsubmitive spirit in any relationship is an offshoot of the original sin (pride). Abasement (humiliation) can be forced, but true humility is a set of the mind, the will, and the spirit. It is not weakness; it is strength. It is mental recognition, willful acceptance, and spiritual understanding of God's order.

"Submission" does not mean that a woman is robbed of her rights. It allows her more freedom as she obeys the law of God and cooperates with His grace.

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C. Submission—A Christian Responsibility

Because of this voluntary prerequisite to true submission, all scriptural commands regarding submission are addressed to the one who is to submit. Everyone is responsible to live in submission. (See Ephesians 5:21.)

Obedience is the outward result of an inner spirit of submission. Again we have the supreme example in Jesus. In Hebrews we are taught that,

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;"

*Hebrews 5:8*

He submitted Himself to His position as the "Son," submissive to the things He allowed in His earthly life. A wife should pattern her submission after Christ's example. As surely as submission is evidenced by obedience to authority, rebellion, in any form, displays an unsubmitive spirit. Titus 2:3-5 plainly tells us that to be a disobedient wife is a serious offense against God.

D. Submission—A Means Of Adapting

There is an interesting essay on the Christian behavior beginning in I Peter 2:11 and extending through I Peter 3:17. The Apostle Peter emphasizes a submissive spirit in all, and the resulting behavioral pattern.

In chapter three, wives are told to be in "subjection" to their own husbands. This can be translated, "wives adapt yourselves to your own husbands." Women are not expected to be subject to

## A. Submission—A Chain Of Command

### 1. A Spiritual Structure

Submission begins with our relationship with God (James 4:7). It extends to the church, which is the spiritual structure of God in the earth (Hebrews 13:17). It then extends to God's physical structure for mankind, the family, giving instructions to husband, wife, children, and even to extended family members (Ephesians 5:21-6:4). It extends further to God's civil law structure for man, government (I Peter 2:13-15).

The "Golden Rule" is simply a rephrasing of an attitude of submission socially (Luke 6:31 and Philippians 2:3). Even the working relationship has a scriptural premise for submission to authority (Ephesians 6:5-6). Even in a material sense we are to be submissive (I John 3:17). It is impossible to live scripturally, godly, without having a spirit of submission.

### 2. Biblical Guidelines

Colossians 3:17-24 is another rich reading of God's Word regarding submission. "Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of Jesus...Wives submit yourselves to your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord...Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, knowing that of the Lord you will receive your reward,...for ye serve the Lord Christ."

When a woman clearly sees God's order of authority, her one clear-cut guideline of limitation to submission and obedience is "as it is fit in the Lord." An awareness of the difference between obedience and submission can help a wife's attitude toward her husband immensely. To merely obey means "to carry out basic responsibilities to the husband out of duty. These can be grueling, mechanical actions with little or no meaning and gratification. To submit, however, involves a greater and more meaningful expression of love. Submission means "to willingly make yourself available to your leadership in any capacity that will aid their well being." This is the attitude the Creator had in mind when He designed a "help meet" for the man. A wife respectfully submits and obeys the leadership of her husband unless it conflicts with the super-imposed Authority and Headship of God. However, the Word places a strong emphasis on her right attitude when there is conflict.