

## Women- Submit!

One of the most disliked, feared, and misunderstood passages in the Bible, by both men but especially women is, "Wives submit; be subject to your husbands". Men like to use it to get their way and women often stop listening to any conversation started with these dreaded words.

When I first heard these words, I understood it to mean that I did not have a voice in my marriage. I thought 'authoritarianism'. For the first several years in my own marriage this whole idea left me angry, restless, discontented, and unsettled. It was such a huge idea that I did not understand, nor did I want to understand, at least I did not think I did. While my marriage was a frustrating mess, this scripture haunted me. However, I still didn't want to dive into it. I felt it would implore me to be nothing more than a cook, a housekeeper, and a mother that acted like a 'bobblehead', nodding at everything my husband said, than an intelligent contributor to the decision-making of our home. I wanted my voice to matter. Yet, in the middle of my mess, I was tired from working endless hours of shift work, then coming home exhausted to care for the needs of my children and my husband. My family was my first priority, yet I wasn't able to give them the attention I felt they deserved.

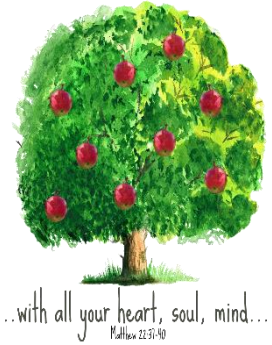
My husband never acted as if he had complete authority or implied I didn't have a voice, I just fought like that, to ensure he never did. I was fighting for the idea to have it all; a successful job, a healthy family, and a remarkable place in society. Now, I realize just how angry and bitter I was, fighting and clawing for an elusive idea. I was fighting no one but myself really, and my own crazy ideas. I was also making sure no one was going to tell me what to do. The 'all' I fought for was really just chaos, frustration, confusion, and anger. I was only fighting myself and against the person God had ordained me to be.

Here is the liberating truth of 1 Corinthians 11, and Ephesians 5:

**1 Corinthians 11:3- "I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman (his wife), and God is the head of Christ."** The Church in Corinth was in complete disarray. While it was one of the richest cities, it was also full of sin and was classified as one of the most wicked cities of its time. Pleasure was worshipped more than principle leading to immorality, incest, and marital problems. Families were in disarray. There was role-confusion and arguing over what food was good to eat and what was not. There were lawsuits all within the church. The "head covering" that Paul speaks of was for a cultural practice and a picture that they could understand. Men at the time uncovered their heads to set them apart from the slaves who had their heads covered. Women covered their heads as a symbol of the protectiveness of their husbands. There it is. Nothing more, nothing less. Women recognized the protections of their husbands and graciously lived under it. Paul was trying to reiterate this message to them and to get them to stop fighting amongst themselves and within their marriages.

So, does it mean I have no voice? No. It's recognizing that this "headship" that my husband has over me and our family, is a God given gift of protection. It takes the heavy load off of me from struggle of provisions and protection within our family. God tells Adam in Genesis 3, as a result of his eating the fruit of the tree of which they were forbidden, "cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it...by the sweat of your brow you shall eat..." Provisions would be hard for man as a result. It also tells

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us the curse to Eve/woman was “in pain you will bring forth children; your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you.” There it is. And so it began. The battle of the sexes. We will think we know better than Him as a result of “I”. We as women are more nurturing and he brings balance. Do we disagree at times? Sure, but he has the ultimate responsibility for provisions and protection for our family. That’s the design. Can we get along? Sure. Mutual communication is key. Men don’t usually care for it, but we do. Their challenge is to learn to hear our thoughts and take them into account when making decisions for his family. But he still is to have the final word when it comes right down to it, and he will be responsible for that final decision before God. When he is honoring God as he should, it leaves little room for chaos.

A husband’s example is Ephesians 5 of Jesus laying down His life for the Church. In there, Paul tries to explain this mystery using a marital relationship. His great master plan was to bring everything together under Christ as the head. And we as Body have a role in that to bring glory to Him out of the chaos of the world systems.

As women, can we enjoy this design? Absolutely. When we willfully (as a change of mind and obediently surrender) and willingly honor our husbands, we reap a harvest of peace and contentment that is worth more than gold or silver. Ladies, we were designed to be a completer of man in a relationship, a helper suitable for, not a competitor with him.

Soon after conception, our hormones start flowing and will determine whether we are male or female. As women we are physically weaker by nature and more emotional. Men are physically stronger, less emotional and more logical by the nature of testosterone. You like lace, sparkly things and things a bit quieter. We snuggle, teach, encourage, build relationships and give life. He likes trucks, cars, noise, challenges, and he is fiercely protective. God made us “women”, created differently for a purpose.

Doormat? I don’t think so, mutual respect and submission, from both sexes, are required for any relationship to work. Servanthood as Jesus exemplified is required for any relationships to thrive. Why would we fight with the most intimate of our relationships? Galatians 3:28 says, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for we are all 1 in the Christ Jesus.” Pretty well sums it up. We are in this together. The world is watching us ladies. Let’s give them a picture of what they desperately crave; peace and contentment. Embrace your femininity *in every way*. Your husband and family will thank you.

“She makes coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them and supplies belts to the tradesmen. Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she smiles at the future. She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying: “Many daughters have done nobly, but you excel them all.” Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her the product of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.” Proverbs31. WOW. So much wrapped up in those verses and not near enough space on this paper.

To sum it up, we have a lot of power to create chaos and disarray within our own homes. Let your husband do what he is wired and called by God to do. We have enough to think about. Encourage him in his role and your family will thank you for it.

There are always difficult circumstances that make this design challenging but it does not exempt us from it. Our head is still Christ and we must honor Him above all. My intent is not guilt or shame. If any of you are struggling in this area, find a godly woman who will talk and pray with you. Living within the realms of a God created *woman* is much more liberating than any woman's movement could ever hope to accomplish.

With Love, Juanita