

*D GROUP – Life on Life Discipleship for Women of FBC

OUTLINE

Titus 2 for Women, The Spiritual Quality of Submission, Part 1

THE ROLE OF WOMEN - OPENING DISCUSSION:

#1 Why do people in general have trouble submitting in our society?

#2 Why do women in particular have difficulty with submission in our society?

#3 What happens in the home when a wife shows submission to her husband?

Today, Christian families are being torn apart because cultural values and preferences are being taught as truth, while truth is offered as preference. The danger of this can be clearly seen in the people's attitudes toward the biblical role of the wife and mother. Even if churches don't bother anymore and pastors don't preach it anymore and church goers don't believe it anymore, **the goal of every true Christian is to determine God's will and obey it.** What's important is not what the newspapers say, but what the Bible says; not what the psychologists say, but what the Bible says. Man in rebellion disagrees with God, but the Christian says, "Yes, Lord!" As we wrap up this study of Titus 2:4-5, it is important that we recognize the difference between preferences, opinions of the majority, cultural leanings, and current trends in light of the truth of God's Word. Mentoring healthy doctrine to the family of God is the focus of chapter 2. Healthy doctrine is accurate Bible interpretation, applied in people's lives, producing godliness and Christ-likeness. Verse 2 of chapter 2 applies to older men; verse 3 applies to older women; verses 4-5 apply to younger women; verses 6-8 apply to younger men; and verses 9-10 apply to household slaves.

Let's review what we have seen for the godly woman as Paul teaches in Titus 2:4-5. Titus 2 gives us a picture of the way the family of God is to live, through the power of the Holy Spirit. And Titus 2:4-5 shows us God's perfect blueprint for women under 60 years old: **Maritally** - she loves her husband; **Maternally** - she loves her children; **Mentally** - she is sensible; **Morally** - she is pure; **Domestically** - she is a worker at home; **Socially** - she is kind; In this lesson we come to the final part of the picture of a godly woman: **Spiritually** - she is subject to her own husband, as Paul writes in verse 5, *being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.*

Why do Christians have to submit? Titus 2 shows us several reasons: verse 5, "that the word of God may not be dishonored;" verse 8, "that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us;" verse 10, "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect." When Christians submit their lives to God's Word, our lives witness to the world that the Bible is honorable and completely true.

Submission! The average woman develops a bit of paranoia at the mere mention of this word. I don't blame her, when you consider the many abuses and erroneous ideas concerning the submission of women. I don't blame women for struggling with submission in view of how many men fail to live out their God-designed role as a spiritual servant-leader. But keep in mind that biblical submission is a good quality and a godly quality. **Submission is a Christ-pleasing, Christ-like attribute.** We need to ask ourselves if we are willing to submit in obedience to Christ.

The Reason for Submission The first reason we should be willing to submit is because **submission is an attribute found in the Godhead.** The Trinity is a mystery that gives us evidence of how great our God is. He is one God, and yet He is manifested in three distinct persons. 1 John 4:10 says the Father sent the Son. John 14:26 says the Father sends the Holy Spirit. John 15:26 says the Son and the Father send the Spirit. The prayer of Jesus in John 17 demonstrates the submission of the Jesus the Son, to God the Father. In the Trinity there is both a plurality and a perfect unity, a perfect oneness. Yet, there is authority and submission. All three persons of the Trinity are equal; all three are God, yet there is submission and authority within three equal and perfect beings. Father-Son-Holy Spirit—not inferiority, not dominance, not dictatorship, but true authority and submission. It is this very design of the Trinity God uses to teach us how marriage is to work. This is the truth of 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 and God is the head of Christ.* As God is about to discuss the role of women, He makes this statement about the Trinity as the reason for different roles in marriage. The principle of authority and submission in marriage is not archaic, cultural or an outdated first century rule. Authority and submission are qualities found in the very person and character of the unchanging God of the universe. The submission of a woman to her own husband in marriage is not something men dreamed up. The principle and practice of submission has been around as long as God has existed—an eternity. When we submit, **we are giving glory to God by displaying His character.**

The second reason for submitting is that **submission is necessary in order to come to Christ for salvation.** Christians come by faith to Christ and continue to walk in faith. Believers come in repentance to Christ and continue to walk with a repentant heart. Christians come confessing their sinfulness and continue confessing their sin to Christ. And a Christian comes to Christ with a willing heart of submission to Christ's Lordship and continues in submission to His Lordship. We do this progressively, not perfectly, but nonetheless we have a willing heart. **Read Matthew 7:20-23.** Jesus tells us here that the one who submits to God's will is the one who is saved and the one who practices lawlessness by doing their own will, is not saved.

The third reason for submitting is that **submission is the heart of a genuine Christian.** Do you have to clean up your act to come to Christ? No, you just have to be willing—willing to follow God's will over your will. God gives all true Christians a new heart that allows them to become submissive to Christ and continue with a willing heart to submit to God's Word. Romans 6:17 *But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed.*

The Nature of Submission What does submission look like? When looking at submission in the Bible we see several principles that help us answer that question. **First, Biblical submission is really about submitting to God.** God instructs a wife to submit to her own husband. If a wife wants to be in God's will, she will submit to her husband. What does "be subject" mean? The Greek word from which it is translated from, *hupotasso*, is primarily used as a military term. It comes from two words: *hupo*, meaning under and *tasso*, meaning to arrange. When combined, it means to rank or arrange under. The picture is one of a soldier who is under the authority of his commander, following his lead. Submission has nothing to do with the evaluation of a person, but only with authority and obedience. A private may be more patient and kind than his general, but he does not have the authority of the general. A child may be more moral than his father, but he does not have the God-given authority of his father. A wife may be more godly than her husband, but she does not have the authority God assigned to her husband. Submission simply means to **follow the lead of another person.**

Second, submission is the action of a wife upon herself. Five times in the New Testament women are told to submit to their husbands. In all five passages, submission of wives to their husbands is in the middle voice. That means the action of submission is self-imposed. **The wife submits herself; no one submits her.** Literally it means to subject oneself to another or rank yourself under another in obedience. Submission is an act a woman does to herself; she chooses to pursue submission. Submission is her obligation in the Lord. She should not wait for submissive feelings. She should not think that her husband has to be worthy of her submission or that she can submit only to what she wants. A godly woman actively pursues submitting to her husband, because her heart of submission is as unto the Lord. Husbands are commanded to love their wives, as Ephesians 5 says...*just as Christ also loves the church and gave Himself up for her.* The husband is instructed to be the initiator of love, the initiator of sharing God's perspective, the initiator of seeking to obey God's Word. His wife is to submit herself to his leadership. Her submission is a decision she makes, according to God's design, in dependence upon the Holy Spirit of God. Do you realize what this does for a marriage? The husband dies to his will to serve his wife, and the wife dies to her will to submit to her husband. God's plan does not define what either of you should expect to get from marriage. Rather, God's plan is for **both the husband and wife to commit to give selflessly to their spouse.**

Third, and most importantly, submission is what brings God's order to life and to relationships. Notice that Paul tells Titus to call the Cretan Christians to submit three different times. The first usage of be subject or submit in Titus is in chapter 2, verse 5 *being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.* "Being subject " means for a wife to continually act upon herself in such a way as to subordinate herself to her husband's authority, to bring order to the home. The second usage in Titus is in chapter 2, verse 9. Paul calls slaves to subject themselves to their masters. This verse can apply to employees and employers in our culture. Verse 9, *Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative.* The third usage is found in chapter 3, verse 1, *Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed.* Paul reminds all the citizens of Crete to subject themselves to all the governing authorities to bring order in their society. Paul's letter to Titus addresses issues that suggest Cretans had a problem applying their beliefs in their behavior. According to Titus 1:12-14, Cretans actually were lazy, liars and wild in their behavior. It seems that the Cretan people lacked sensibility and discernment. Their lives lacked order. There is considerable objective evidence in Titus about the Cretan culture. It is a fair assumption the Cretans lived as an independent people, and because of this, Paul exhorts the Cretan Christians to be rightly dependent—wives to their husbands, slaves to their masters and all the citizens to their governmental rulers. This teaches us the freedom Christ brings is not to be independent from institutions. Becoming a Christian obligates us to obey God's ordained authorities, rather than freeing us to disobey or disregard rules imposed by authorities. A wife should not strive to live independently, but rather **submit to her husband, since God ordained the institution of marriage for our good.** It is God who established earthly authorities, for our good, to bring order to our lives.

In our next lesson we will continue to look at submission as we consider its importance, its process, and finally the response of the godly woman to be submissive to her husband.

QUESTIONS for Discipleship Groups

1. Each person, briefly discuss how the kindness projects have been going. How has your kindness made an impact?
2. What will happen in the home when the husband and wife are fulfilling their God-given roles of giving selflessly to one another (husband loving his wife, wife submitting to her husband)?
3. What problems exist in the home when you **don't** have the order that God planned through wives being submissive to their husbands?
4. **KEY: How can you improve your submissive role to your husband as a godly wife? Be specific.**

D group project: Talk to your husband this week about this lesson. Tell him where your struggle with being a submissive wife and ask him to help you by lovingly reminding you what you have learned.