

Granted, we do not always understand why God said some of the things He said, but we must recognise His sovereignty and wisdom and let Him be God. Lack of submission to the Bible will make marital submission difficult, if not impossible.

**d. You may have a secular definition of love.**

- 1) A typical web definition of love is **“Love is complex. A mix of emotions, behaviours, and beliefs associated with strong feelings of affection.”** Evaluate that definition. It is ME focussed: emotions, behaviours, feelings.
- 2) Biblical love is the sacrificial giving of one’s self to meet the needs of another, expecting nothing in return. Biblical love delights in submission.
- 3) If your definition of love focuses on yourself rather than on meeting the needs of your spouse, submission will be difficult.

**Conclusion:** It is difficult to submit. No question about it. You **inherited rebellion**. You had no say in that. You may not have been disciplined biblically as a child. You cannot change that, either. However, if your **foundation for submission is unstable**, you can overcome that by submitting to Christ’s salvation, put off sinful attitudes, put on virtues, and let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly by developing a quality daily Bible time. If an **internal problem** hinders your submission, admit it and ask God to help you change.

God’s command for a wife to submit to her own husband is not a cruel command, but a loving command that will lead to a harmonious and happy marriage.

**Song:** I Surrender All - 394

# Why is Submission so Difficult?

3 September 2023 PM – Colossians 3:18 – Col23 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** In our present-day culture, women bristle at the thought of submission to men. As a result, they often choose live-in relationships over marriage. Often, those who do marry, rule the home and keep their husbands under their thumbs through manipulation.

Thus, it is common for women to get upset when they read God’s command in Colossians 3:18, **“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.”** This Bible word “submit” literally means **“to arrange one’s self under another; to yield to one’s admonition or advice.”** God was not suggesting that He created women inferior to men, nor was God condoning the abusive activities of some men. God simply ordained that for a happy home, the husband must be the leader, and that the wife must submit to his leadership.

**Transition:** If submission is God’s will for every wife, then why is submission so difficult? As I pondered that question, the Lord brought three reasons to my mind that I believe can be a help to us.

*The first reason that submission is so difficult is . . .*

## 1. You have an Inherited Rebellion

### a. Rebellion began long ago

- 1) Eve sinned and sin’s curse left her unsubmitive. (Genesis 3:16) **“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”**
- 2) Some claim that the phrase *“thy desire shall be to thy husband”* means that she will long for her husband, but that is not a curse. I believe the phrase speaks of her desire to dominate her husband. Thus, it follows that he will rule over her.
- 3) Sadly, sin’s curse has passed on to every human (other than Christ) since that time.

### b. We were born rebels

- 1) Note Solomon’s wise words in (Proverbs 22:15) **“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”**

- 2) Many adults never received the rod of correction as children, at least not sufficiently to drive the foolish (i.e., the lack of wisdom) from their hearts. As a result, submission to others is difficult.
- 3) We see this reflected in women's attitudes today (e.g., no marriage, no submission, male hairstyles, male dress, etc.). Many Christian wives struggle with this same unsubmitive attitude.
- 4) Far too many Christian women who claim to be submissive use manipulation to get what they want.
  - a) Winston T. Smith, in his book "Marriage Matters", states, *"Sometimes even when we think we're loving our spouses, we're manipulating them. We treat them like objects whose sole purpose is to give us what we want. We reward them if they give us what we want and punish them if they don't."*<sup>75</sup> *"When you bring to marriage the agenda of giving to get, you break your commitment to love."*<sup>78</sup>
  - b) Methods of manipulation include control, limiting, overpowering, bullying, restraining, dominating, nit-picking, giving-to-get, offering help to create indebtedness, saying "If you don't, I won't," or "I did ... so you ought to do ...", or "I need you!"<sup>Gleaned from Marriage Matters.</sup> Manipulation is NOT submission!

*The second reason that submission is so difficult is ...*

## 2. You may have an Unstable Foundation

Did you know that some skyscrapers have foundations that go down 85 m? Without an adequate foundation, they will not be able to withstand the weight and wind. God's command for wives to submit also needs a solid foundation. Without it, submission is very difficult. Here is what I mean.

### a. Paul laid the foundation in this chapter.

- 1) Risen with Christ (v.1) > Seek things above (v.1-2) > Mortify and put off (v.5, 8-10) > Put on (v.12-15) > Let the Word of Christ dwell richly (v.16 ~ Eph 5:18-19) > Do all in the name of Christ (v.17).
- 2) **Illustrate** by using wooden blocks to build a tower.

### b. Without God's foundation, you will struggle to submit.

- 1) Salvation is the only thing that can break the chains of sin's curse.
- 2) Putting off corrupt attitudes and actions and putting on godly virtues will lessen submission's difficulty.
- 3) Letting the Word of Christ dwell richly in your heart will empower you to obey God. If you do not have a daily, personal Bible time that truly feeds your soul, you cannot expect to maintain a biblical submissive attitude. You need the power of the Holy Spirit to be submissive.
- 4) *"The form of the verb (middle voice) shows that the submission is to be voluntary. The wife's submission is never to be forced on her by a demanding husband; it is the deference that a loving wife, conscious that her home (just as any other institution) must have a head, gladly shows."* Vaughn, PreceptAustin.org

*The third reason that submission is so difficult is ...*

## 3. You may have an Internal Problem

### a. You may be selfish or self-willed.

- 1) Sadly, most of us are selfish, self-willed people deep down inside, some more than others. We want what **WE** want.
- 2) Our selfishness repels the idea of submission. We think, "Why should I do what he wants me to do? I have a mind of my own. He just thinks he is better than I am."
- 3) Selfishness is so shortsighted that it cannot see the benefits of the submission God ordained. **Remember, God makes no mistakes!**

### b. You may be stubborn.

- 1) The adulterous woman in Proverbs 7:11 is called "stubborn". She was both unfaithful and unsubmitive to her husband.
- 2) Stubborn people do not want to yield to anyone.

### c. You may lack submission in other areas.

- 1) Before you will truly submit to your husband, you must first submit to God. God gave the command to submit. Any refusal to submit to a husband is a refusal to submit to God.
- 2) If you say, *"I just do not agree with such-and-such a verse."*