

a duty, as was fitting. TDNT states it denotes “what is fitting or seemly.” Zodhiates defines it as “what is fit, proper or becoming.”

- c) The phrase “*in the Lord*” means in the Lord’s sight or in the Lord’s mind.
- 3) Next, we must examine the grammar.
 - a) The phrase “it is fit” is in the imperfect tense. The imperfect tense refers to continuous or linear action in past time. This is something that was established in the ancient past and has continued to be true.

b. A wife’s submission is not a new idea.

- 1) God had Paul use the imperfect tense to show us that a wife’s submission “has always been **fitting** in the Lord, it has always been **proper** in the Lord, it has always been **right** in the Lord, it has always been her **duty** in the Lord’s sight”.
- 2) God determined this way back in the Garden of Eden. It has been part of the Lord’s plan for wives for 6,000 years.
- 3) Only monsters or mutations have two heads. No marriage can be healthy with two heads. God knew that when he planned for the husband to be the loving leader and the wife to be the submissive completer.
- 4) Following a leader is not humiliating; it is honourable. It is not enslaving; it is liberating. It is not man’s dominant idea; it is God’s all-wise plan.

Conclusion: If you are a wife or hope to be a wife someday, make it your passion to be a Word-filled / Spirit-filled submissive wife. By doing so, you will be set free from many of the pressures of life. You will add abundant blessing to your home. Your humble submission will convict your husband when he becomes overbearing. One day God will reward you for your obedience to His command. You will be eternally grateful that you humbled yourself and obeyed God in this area.

Song: Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord – 337 (Stanzas 3-4)

Word-filled Wives

26 February 2017 PM – Colossians 3:18 – Col16 – Scott Childs

Introduction: God just had Paul explain to us the Word-filled life that occurs when a Christian lets the Word of Christ dwell in him richly. We learned that this will result in teaching, admonishing, singing, and giving thanks. These are evidence of a Word-filled (Spirit-filled) life. Now God has Paul list practical applications of the Word-filled life as it relates to our relationships with others. As He does, He begins with wives, then husbands, then children and on to servants and masters. In each scenario, God identifies a task that the flesh finds difficult but is made possible in the Word-filled / Spirit-filled life.

Remember, these applications are not negative but positive. These are very beneficial duties which God will enable the Christian who is Word-filled to perform.

The Lord begins with the obligations of a Word-filled wife. God tells us that she is to submit to her own husband. The word “submit” simply means to arrange one’s self under another. It is letting another take the lead and willingly following his leadership.

Transition: With that foundation, let’s jump right into the text and discover three obligations of the Word-filled wife.

1. Submission is a wife's personal obligation.

a. The first word in the verse is “wives”

- 1) Marriage was ordained by God in the Garden of Eden about 6,000 years ago. God created the male and the female with the ability and desire to have children. God did not make this possible for either male or female on their own. He did not make it possible for two men or two women to have children. God ordained that a man and a woman leave their parents and join together in marriage to begin their own family (Genesis 2:24) “*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*” God planned for one man and one woman to marry for life. Jesus said, (Matthew 19:5) “*And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?*” (Matthew 19:6) “*Wherefore they*

are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." This has always been God's plan for humans. God has always condemned any perversion of His plan.

- 2) Perhaps the wife is addressed first because God told Eve after she sinned that submission to the leadership of her husband would be a struggle. (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.*"

b. Submission is a wife's own duty

- 1) We said that *submission* is arranging one's self under another. The word can also be defined as to subordinate, to subject, to obey, to submit to one's control, to yield to one's admonition or advice.
- 2) In this verse, the verb is in the present middle voice. The present voice indicates continual action. And you may recall that the middle voice show that the subject is acting upon themselves. Each wife must continually submit herself. **Ladies, if you are Word-filled, God will enable you continually to arrange yourself under your husband's leadership.**
- 3) It is not the husband's duty to force his wife to submit. It is the wife's God-given command to arrange herself under her husband's leadership.
- 4) **Men, before you shout "Amen!" Think about what God's command to your wife means.** It means she is to follow YOUR leadership and YOUR example. It means that YOU are responsible for making the intimate decisions in your home. YOU will give account to God for the way you lead your wife and children. If you lead in the wrong way, YOU will answer to God for it. This sets your wife free from those pressures and it places the load on YOU. A good leader never treats those under him as slaves. Good leaders lead by humble example. **Men, beware that you do not abuse your wife's submission.**

2. Submission is a wife's unilateral obligation.

a. You must submit even if your husband fails

- 1) If a married woman gets saved and her husband does not, she still must submit to him.
- 2) If a Christian woman foolishly marries an unbelieving husband, she still must arrange herself under him.
- 3) If your husband becomes selfish and unreasonable you still must follow his leadership. **You answer to God for being submissive.** (1 Peter 3:1-2) "*Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the [lit. a] word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.*" Your selfish unreasonable husband will answer to God for his sinful leadership.

b. Are there ever any exceptions?

- 1) A wife must obey God if her husband tries to get her to sin (e.g., help him commit a crime, be immoral or to lie). When commanded to disobey God here is what the apostles did. (Acts 5:29) "*Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.*" If the husband forbids the wife's baptism or church attendance, those are not moral crimes and I believe she should let God deal with him on those issues.
- 2) There may be times when a sinful husband becomes dangerous to the wife or children and for safety she must separate for a time from her husband. Even then, her **heart** must remain submissive to her husband. Divorce is never a biblical option.
- 3) I do not find any Bible exceptions for a submissive heart attitude in a wife.

3. Submission is a wife's ancient obligation.

a. Now let's examine the last phrase of the verse

- 1) What does "*as it is fit in the Lord*" really mean?
- 2) First we must be sure we define all the words.
 - a) The word "*as*" literally means as or even as.
 - b) The phrase "*it is fit*" is just one word in the original. Thayer defines the word as to pertain to what is due.