

SUBMISSION, THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

EPHESIANS 5:20-21 • TV-035A

A television broadcast sermon delivered

SUNDAY, MARCH 13TH, 1977

By

HENRY T. MAHAN

Transcribed, edited and published

MAY 24TH, 2019

HENRY T. MAHAN TAPE LIBRARY

Zebulon Grace Church

6088 Zebulon Highway

Pikeville, KY 41501

PH: 606-631-9053

Ephesians 5:20-21

“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”

I’m going to speak to you today on the subject: **“SUBMISSION, THE KEY TO HAPPINESS.”**

Now the world is full of books on how to be a useful Christian, how to be filled with the Holy Spirit, how to be happily married, and how to build a Christian home.

But without the fear of oversimplifying this very important area of our relationship to God and our relationship with one another; I boldly state that the key to our spiritual problems is found in two verses of Scripture, **Ephesians 5:20-21.**

Now you listen carefully to these two verses: *“Give thanks always to God for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of the Lord, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of the Lord.”*

Submitting; that’s the key to happiness and that’s the key to salvation. What does it mean to submit to another?

Well the word means this; it means to surrender. It means to yield to the authority or the power or the control of another. That’s what it means to submit. Submission is to yield, to yield to the power, the authority and the control of another.

SUBMISSION, THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

EPHESIANS 5:20-21 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now I know that that word submission is offensive to the flesh. Its offensive to the will of the flesh, to my personal will. We want our wills to be done. Its offensive to the desires of our flesh and its offensive to the pride of the flesh, but it's still the key to happiness and to salvation.

The great sin of the flesh is "I will." If you'll read the **14th chapter of Isaiah**, you'll find that this was the sin of Lucifer. This was the downfall of Satan. In **Isaiah 14:12-15** Satan said, "I will be like God. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." In other words; my will, not God's will be done.

And then Adam and Eve; if you'll read the **3 chapter of Genesis** you'll find that the sin of Adam and Eve was this, "I will be God." Instead of bowing to the will of God, instead of submitting to the authority and power of God it is exerting my will in the place of God's will.

And then at Calvary; what did they say? "*We will not have this man reign over us.*" Submission is offensive to the flesh, to the will of the flesh and to the pride of the flesh. **Romans 8:7** says; "*The carnal mind, (that is the natural mind) is not subject to the law of God. (It is not submissive to the will of God) neither indeed can be.*"

The natural mind, the natural flesh, will not submit to the will of God. The will of God can only be found by the person who is willing to follow God's will. That's what our Lord said in **John 7:17**: "*If any man will do God's will he shall know of the doctrine, whether I speak of myself or whether I speak of God.*"

Now read the text again. I'm saying that the key to our spiritual problems, the key to happiness, and the key to salvation is submission. In **Ephesians 5**; read it again: "*Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of the Lord.*"

Now this is what Paul is saying according to the Amplified version: "Submit yourselves one to another out of reverence for the Lord and submission to the Lord himself."

Now this is the moving cause. This is the motive for submission to any authority, whether it be in the home or whether it be in the church or whether it be in the school, or whether it be "*as unto the Lord.*"

This is the key. This is the moving cause. This is the motive because "*all authority is of God,*" whether it be the policeman on the street, the boss down at the factory, the principal or teacher in the school, the husband in the home, the pastor in the church; wherever this authority is found, "*all authority is of God.*"

Now you check the Word of God on this. In **Romans Chapter 13:1**; listen to the Scripture: "*Let every person be subject unto the higher authority or higher powers for there is no power but of God. There is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God.*"

SUBMISSION, THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

EPHESIANS 5:20-21 • HENRY T. MAHAN

In other words, a wife obeying her husband is obeying the Lord. In other words, children obeying their parents; they are obeying the Lord. Rebelling against their parents is rebelling against God. *“All authority is of God.”*

Submission to the laws of the land is obeying God and rebelling against those laws is rebelling against God. *“All authority is of God.”*

All authority is ordained of God: Employees submitting to their masters or to their bosses is obeying God and rebelling against them is rebelling against God. Submission to pastors and teachers is submission to God.

Now, if you want the key to spiritual life and spiritual happiness you’ll find that key right here in this verse of Scripture, *“Submitting yourselves one to another out of fear of the Lord and reverence for the Lord.”*

And there can be, and I boldly state this and I’m not over simplifying it at all; I boldly state this: “There can be no spiritual happiness; there can be no spiritual blessings in rebellion against God or in rebellion against God’s ordained way of life.”

We use to call it in the Navy, “the chain of command” and that’s what it is. It’s the heavenly chain of command. It’s the spiritual chain of command. And there can be no happiness when we’re rebelling against God’s ordained authority.

Self-will is destruction. Satan found that out when he said: *“I will be like God.”* Adam and Eve found that out when they said *“I will.”* And the people at Calvary, the people of Jerusalem, found that out in 70 AD when Titus came in and destroyed that city, laid it flat, plowed up the ground, sowed salt, when they cried: *“We will not have this man reign over us.”*

Do you know the key to happiness, the key to holiness? When our Lord was in the Garden of Gethsemane; listen to His prayer. It is so different from the boastful statement of Satan or of Adam and Eve or the people at Calvary. Our Lord prayed: *“Not my will but thy will be done.”*

So this is what I’m saying, you can read all your books on how to be a useful Christian, how to be filled with the Spirit, how to be happily married and how to this and how to that. But here’s the key, giving thanks unto God for all things in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and humbly submitting yourselves one to another out of reverence for God, out of submission to God Himself.

Now I’ve got six points in this message and I want you to listen carefully to them. I have something today for everybody. I’m going to speak first of all to all believers and then to wives, husbands, children, employees, and employers, bosses and masters.

Now you listen; listen to the whole message:

SUBMISSION, THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

EPHESIANS 5:20-21 • HENRY T. MAHAN

First of all: To all believers; all believers are to submit themselves, they are to subject themselves to Jesus Christ as Lord.

In **John chapter 1:12**, the Scripture says; *“As many as received Him; to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, (as many as received, and that word is submit to Him, be in subjection to Him, our living Lord) as many as received Him, (as prophet, priest, and king; to them, to those people, in submission to Christ) God gave the right to be children of God.”*

Now I know, first of all, that Christ receives us. We receive Him because He has received us. He has received us from the hand of the Father as our Surety and as our Redeemer and as our Lord.

But we receive Him also as our Prophet. Christ said, *“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. I and my Father are one. No man has seen the Father save the Son and He to whom the Son will reveal Him.”* We receive Him as the Prophet to reveal God to us.

And then we receive Him as our great High Priest. *“He shall save His people, (the angel said to Mary) He shall save His people from their sins”* because He shall be their substitute, their sacrifice, their atonement and *“by His stripes they shall be healed.”*

We receive Him as our great High Priest. *“There’s one God and one Mediator between God and men; that’s the man Christ Jesus.”* And we receive Him as our Advocate, as our Mediator, not only as our Prophet to reveal God to us but our Priest to atone for us and to intercede for us.

And then we receive Him as our Lord, as our Master, as our King, to reign over us. Paul wrote in **Romans 10:9-10**; *“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus (to be what?) Lord, (absolute Lord).”*

And He will not be our Saviour if He’s not our Lord. *“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”*

I believe Paul summed it up on the road to Damascus when he had been smitten and stricken blind and he lifted those sightless eyes to heaven from which came that voice: *“I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.”*

And these are Paul’s words: *“Lord, (Master), what will you have me do?”* That’s submission to authority. That’s bowing to the scepter of Christ. Christ said, *“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me. I’m meek and lowly of heart.”*

If you want life, if you want salvation, if you want forgiveness, if you want redemption, you must bow to Jesus Christ as your Lord and as your Master. And that’s true of every believer.

SUBMISSION, THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

EPHESIANS 5:20-21 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Secondly: Down here in **verse 21** of **Ephesians 5** it says: *“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord”*

Now, contrary to what is taught today, marriage is not according to God’s Word; marriage is not a 50/50 proposition, not a scriptural marriage, not a marriage in which Jesus Christ has preeminence.

A Scriptural home where Jesus Christ has preeminence; in that home there is authority and that authority is the husband. He is the head of that home. He’s not the partner, He’s not the 50/50 partner; he’s the head of that home according to God’s Word.

Now listen to **verse 23**; *“The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.”* And **verse 24** also says; the wife is to be in subjection to her husband even as the church is in subjection to Jesus Christ.

Now no other arrangement can be blessed of God because that’s God’s Word. That is God almighty’s plan for a happy home that the husband be the priest of the home, the voice of authority, and the head of that family. And no other arrangement can be blessed.

This is the way that our Lord Jesus Christ set forth the order in the home. Listen to some more Scriptures, **1 Corinthians 11:3**; *“I would have you to know that the head of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man, (the husband).”*

Listen to **1 Peter 3:5**: *“Holy women who trusted in God, (not self-willed women, not those who wrote their own Bibles, not those who founded their own religious systems but holy women who trusted in God adorned themselves in this way) being in subjection to their own husbands.”*

And then in **1 Timothy 2:11**; listen carefully, *“Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. I suffer not a woman to teach or to use of authority over a man.”*

Now my friends; rebellion against the husband’s authority in the home is rebellion against God because that authority has been placed in that home by the Lord himself. All believers are to be in submission to Christ. You’ll find happiness there.

When we submit to Christ as our Lord, when His purpose and His plan and His will becomes our desire we’ll find happiness. And in a home where the husband has the authority in the Lord; (I’m not talking about submitting to a drunken, evil, hateful, individual, who doesn’t know God). We are to submit in the Lord as unto the Lord.

But where a person, where a woman, is submissive and is in subjection to her husband and gives the reigns of the home and the authority of the home and the headship of the home to him as God ordaineth; she’ll find happiness.

Now, husbands, **verse 25**, the Scripture says; *“Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.”*

SUBMISSION, THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

EPHESIANS 5:20-21 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now, the wife is in submission to the husband and that's the God-ordained way. Though she is in submission, she's not a slave. The Bible does not recognize her as a slave. The church is in subjection to Christ but the church is not a slave; the church is His bride. The church is His favorite choice possessions.

And the church will be blessed as He is blessed. And the husband is to look upon his wife as Christ looks upon the church, in love, as his favorite possession, as his bride and what he has belongs to her.

And though the wife is obedient to her husband she is not to be oppressed. The church is obedient to Christ but also favored each day with His mercies and with His love and with His blessings.

And though the wife is beneath the husband's head (and she is); the head of every man is the Lord. The head of the woman is the man. And though she's beneath his head and in submission to him, she is not to be beneath his feet.

The decisions made by the head will be good for the body and good for those who are in submission to the head. And the husband is to submit to the wife's needs and reasonable desires and reasonable requests in the Lord.

Old doctor John Gill who wrote one of the greatest commentaries on the entire Bible back around 1700 wrote this about this verse; he said; "Husbands; show respect to your wives. Seek their joy and their contentment. Provide for them. Show love to them, affection, both publicly and privately."

"Defend her; defend her before all, including your parents, your children, and your neighbors." In other words, as the wife is to submit to the husband's authority and to his headship; he is to submit to love for her.

Wives; be in subjection and submission to your husband, but husbands love your wives. Love them as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. That's submitting one to another in the fear of the Lord, out of reverence for God.

Do you see why I say that this word is the key to happiness? It's the key to all spiritual problems. It starts with every believer. We submit to Christ as our Prophet to reveal God, as our Priest to intercede for us, and as our King to reign over us.

And we can't find any happiness outside of submission. Rebellion will bring destruction. And the same thing is true in a marriage between a man and a woman. There's got to be a God-ordained way.

SUBMISSION, THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

EPHESIANS 5:20-21 • HENRY T. MAHAN

There's got to be a voice of authority, but that authority is not a rod of law; it's a rule of love. And as the church is submissive to Christ, the wife is to be unto her husband. And as Christ loved the church the husband is to love his wife.

All right, children. Over in **Ephesians 6:1**, just a little further on the same page as your Bible, **Ephesians 6:1** you'll find these words; "*Children, obey your parents, (or submit) in the Lord, for this is right.*"

Now, the Lord is the authority over the man. The man is the authority over the woman. And parents are the authority, the Scriptural, Biblical, authority, over their children. God ordained it that way.

And we're talking about submission to the Lord now. I'm saying this, submission to parents, whose will is the glory of God and the good of their children; submission to those godly parents is submission to the Lord. And it will bring to those children God's blessings.

This is one of the only commandments with a promise. And we have the Commandments: You're not to take God's name in vain. You're not to steal, not to kill, not to commit adultery, not to covet, and not to bear false witness. These are commands.

But watch this one now; "*Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*"

That's a commandment with a promise. And to be in rebellion and to speak with disrespect to your parents, against godly parents, is to be in rebellion against God. And it's to speak with the utmost disrespect for God almighty.

And we're not talking about a slavish servitude out of fear of punishment but we're talking about honoring one's parents and respecting one's parents. And this honor and respect will continue through life, all the way through life.

Even after we're married we still look back to our parents with honor and respect. "*Children, obey your parents, (submit to them, honor them, and respect them).*" "*This is right,*" God said, out of fear and reverence of the Lord himself.

Now then, servants, and anyone who is working for another person is a servant, that's right. The people who work at this TV station have a boss. Everybody's got a boss. There isn't anybody who doesn't have a boss, who doesn't have a master.

Now listen to this Scripture, **Ephesian 6:5**: "*Servants, (employees) be obedient to them who are your masters (or your employers, your bosses) as unto Christ, as unto Jesus Christ.*"

In other words, men who work in the mines, you men who work in the mines, who watch this program, you men who work in the factories, in the steel mills and the oil refineries, you women who work in the stores, you school teachers; everybody's got a boss.

SUBMISSION, THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

EPHESIANS 5:20-21 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Everybody's got someone to whom you are responsible, someone who gives you orders. And God says this, He says; "Wherever you work, and for whomever you work; you are to give a good, honest, days labor, as if you were working for Jesus Christ himself." Now that's plain isn't it?

Now, to be rebellious against your employer, to be rebellious against your master, to that one who is your boss, to take advantage of that person is to dishonor God almighty. And I'm saying this not only to Christians but to non-Christians; I'm saying it to every person listening to my voice.

When you shirk your duties, when you are a poor employee, when you loaf on the job, you're dishonoring God almighty. You're doing that as if you're doing it to God himself. That's what the Scripture says.

To steal from your employer; I've known people to laugh about when they work at the mill or the refinery or somewhere like that and they take something home in their lunch bucket or they take something home in their truck and they laugh about it.

"I picked this up at the mill, you know. I stole this from the mill." You're stealing from God almighty. You might as well go down to the church and rob the treasury next Monday after they take the offering on Sunday night. You're just as guilty as if you were robbing God almighty Himself.

To loaf on the job, to be lazy; I've known men to brag about how little they do on the job. "Why I don't do anything. I go out there and clock in and clock out and draw my salary and draw my check."

You're a crook; that's what you are. You're nothing but a crook. You ought to be in prison. A person who treats an employer that way, who will not work, who is lazy and a loafer, he is sinning against God almighty. That's what the Scripture says.

Laboring men are to work in honesty and dedication and obedience as if they were working for God himself, as if the business belonged to them, as if it were their own business, "*As you would that men should do unto you.*"

How would you like it if somebody was working for you and treating you like you're treating your employer or your boss? Why you'd say, "The rascal!" That's what you are, a rascal.

God's Word says that: "*Servants be obedient unto your masters as unto the Lord.*" Do you see what we are saying, submission, and if you want a happy relationship between you and the people for whom you work; do a good day's work.

Give them an honest day's work. You'd expect to draw your salary on time. Then they have every right to expect you to earn it. That's right!

SUBMISSION, THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

EPHESIANS 5:20-21 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Last of all: **Verse 9 in chapter 6:** You see, submission; it's the key to spiritual problems. You're not just going to walk an aisle and shake a preacher's hand and join the church and call yourself a Christian.

Because you call yourself a Christian doesn't make you one. Because you dress like a Christian doesn't make you one. Because you attend the church where other Christians attend doesn't make you a Christian.

A Christian is one whose heart is right with God and if his heart's right with God his heart will be right with others. And he will put forth every effort to live for the glory of God. *"Whatever you do in word or deed; do it for the glory of God."*

Build your home for the glory of God. Be the kind of child you ought to be for the glory of God. Be the kind of wife or husband or employer or employee you ought to be for the glory of God.

Now listen to this; employers, you masters, you bosses; do the same things unto your servants, your employees, in moderation, knowing you have a Master in heaven. That's what it says; read **verse 9:** *"You masters, (you employers) you do the same thing to your employees, remembering that you've got a Master in heaven."*

If I hire a man I'm to pay him a good wage for I have a Master in glory who is good to me. That's right! And if I withhold from the laborer that which he deserves and that which he earns and I take it all to myself then I'm a thief and I'm not remembering that I have a Master in heaven who's been so gracious and merciful to me in every respect. Do you forget that?

When you try to work somebody cheap as you can work them and give them as little as you can give them while you rake all the profits off the top and the cream off the top; you're a crook, you're not a Christian.

And then if I hire a man I'm to treat him with respect and with dignity. I've known people to get into a place of authority and they begin to step on the people beneath them. They begin to treat them with disrespect and in an undignified manner.

That's not Christian. I have a Master in heaven that honored me, who calls me His son. And when I hire someone to work for me I'm supposed to treat them with respect.

I'll tell you; you'll get the right sense of values when you come to realize that digging a ditch has as much dignity as writing a poem or pulling a tooth or performing surgery or practicing law. Digging a ditch is just as dignified in the eyes of God.

And if I hire a man I ought to be as good to him as my Master is to me. *"As you would; (now this will cover the whole thing) that men should do unto you, you do the same thing to them, giving thanks to God for everything in the name of Christ and submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of the Lord!"*