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The Steps Down to Submission **Ephesians 5:1-21**

- The word **Submission** is right up there in popularity with:
- Higher Taxes and the IRS
- Root Canals
- The Raiders
- Getting routine car service and then they tell you 'that will be \$500!
- With the teenage word: 'Whatever!'
- Or your boss says to you when called into his or her office: 'We have an opportunity!'

The Greek word hupotasso: is a military term, a compound verb

- hupo-'under' and tasso- 'to arrange', to arrange for a purpose', to lift others up by getting into a lower position.
- To 'arrange' under someone else for their benefit, not yours
- By faith the one submitting understands he or she will be lifted up, exalted by our Heavenly Father in His time, in His way
- In this message, we are not talking so much about submission to the Godhead, which is assumed
- Nor submission to the Word of God which we also take as a given
- Did you know that the Name of God is submitted or ranked under the Word of God? Check out Ps. 138:2

As With the steps in our house, there are twelve steps down to submission here in Eph. 5:1-21

Introduction

- Verses 31-32 serve as a great summary of chapter 4 ... that lead up to our **Therefore** of 5:1...
 - 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away or executed from you, with all evil intended malice.**
 - 32 And in its place you must be kind to one another, tenderhearted, be constantly in a frame of mind to be forgiving of one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.**
- The basis of forgiveness, and 'the how' of forgiveness are given to us next '**even as God in Christ forgave you**'
- The inculcation of those verses should create as always ready to be kind and forgiving mindset
- The bookends of our study are labeled 'One Another'
- On the left: 4:32 ... **forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.**
- The Right bookend is **5:21 submitting to one another in the fear of God** (*corrupt Grk. Texts have, Christ*).
- We start with the left bookend: **forgiving one another...** How? **Even as God in Christ has Forgiven us ...** and we end this message with **submission ... to one another in the fear of God** (*respect, reverence that is compatible and mixes well with Love*)
- The Fuller Picture Beyond our Right Bookend: Submission to One Another, is 5:23-6:9 ...
- There are a minimum of four key life areas where we find commands to be in submission to one another

The Submitters Titles Are:

- Wives in 5:22
- Husbands in 5:25
- Children in 6:1 (Jesus in Luke 2:51 was submitted to His earthly parents)
- Bondservants ... employees in 6:5
- Masters or Bosses in 6:9

In General we find in the negative that

- We are not naturally submissive, but proud and self-absorbed and self-centric- **Romans 8:7**, says **the carnally determined mind is enmity or hostile against God; for it is not subject (same as submitted) to the law of God, nor indeed can it be.**
- Rom. 10:3 says we are not submitted to the righteousness of God when we seek to establish our own righteousness
- We resist imputed righteousness by faith alone, because pride wants to work for a righteous standing before God
- Or we have imputed righteousness but we don't want to work-out what that righteousness looks like in everyday life because it is work and at times hard work
- 'God-ordained-'submissions' are designed at a minimum to restrain or control natural sinful tendencies
- Whether submission is found towards the government, whether in the work place, whether in the family or the local church, correct submissions restrain sinful behavior
- In our culture submission is looked upon as inequality
- The submitter is looked upon as less equal than the one submitted to
- a refusal to recognize the sinful human behavior from birth on and to teach proper submissions will result in chaos and anarchy
- Not so in the Scriptures, all are equal yet we have different roles and we are asked to place ourselves under different people to fulfill those roles and maintain order.
- This, as we shall see, was first demonstrated and lived in the Godhead: Equals yet the Son Submitted to the Father and the Holy Spirit..
- And the Holy Spirit submitting to the Father and the Son, promoting them and not Himself

Outside of our core relationships we are to submit in these areas as well:

- Rom. 13:1 We are to Submit to the Government over us, for it is of God, and we are to pay taxes....
- 1Pet. 2:13 We are to submit to every ordinance of man, with this added caveat: **'for the Lord's sake'**
- Titus 2:9, adds this to Boss-Employee relationship: **Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, in order that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.**
- 1Cor. 14:34 Our spirits are to be 'submitted' to our self-control
- 1Cor. 15:27-28, all of creation is 'subject' or 'submitted' to Him, nothing happens outside of His sovereign will in nature
- 1Cor. 16:16, We are 'Submit' to those who have served you faithfully
- 1Pet. 5:5, The younger to 'submit' to the older
- 1 Thes. 5:12
12 And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are 'over you' (the other side of submitted) in the Lord and admonish you, 13 and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.
- with Heb. 13:17 **Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.**

-We are not going to get into any of these many areas of submission

-What we are concerned with today are the steps DOWN to the heart position of submission

-James 4:10 says: **Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up.**

-The steps down are the same no matter who you are to submit to on the horizontal plane

-How do we, who so often think naturally, take a downward, humble, submitted position?

-There are Twelve Downward Steps to humility and thus submission

-Not all Twelve will apply to you

-But if you are having submission issues some or all of these steps are for you and me ...

-Mine is the Let's rebel against the Establishment Generation, until we became the establishment!

-So I know all about Pride and hating submission to anyone

Here we go

Step #1 V.1a: Begin to Be a Genuine Imitation

-**5:1a Therefore ...** looking back on 4:31-32 and having mastered the three-fold forgivenesses:

1-Mastering: God in Christ forgiving us and we receiving that forgiveness

2-Mastering: Approaching all people with a forgiving attitude, because we have been forgiven

-What is that approach or mindset?

-The first part of **4:32 And be kind (towards the undeserving) to one another, tenderhearted**

-That is to be our approach to all people.

-It does not mean we have to trust or like them, certainly not what they may be doing or saying that is offensive

3-Mastering: the fact that we may forgive, but they may not repent or receive your offer of forgiveness

-Don't withdraw it, leave there and move on, maintain the forgiveness mindset

Our ultimate example of the Genuine Imitation of course is the Lord Jesus

-Turn to **Philippians 2:5-9** for this example:

5 Let this mind-set be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

6 who, being in the form or spirit essence of God, did not consider it robbery (or something to be grasped and clung to in His preincarnate SPIRIT state) to be equal with God,

7 but made Himself of no reputation or made Himself common, (how?) by taking on the form of a bondservant (though He never had a sinner's debt), and coming (He wasn't created, He came) in the likeness of men.

8 And being found in appearance or the same schematic as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient (humble + obedient = submitted) to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,

Which leads to

-The rest of step 1 in verse 1 which reads: **(v.1 cont.) be imitators (μιμέομαι, 'be mimics') of God**

This is the first way we are to mimic God

-Jesus stepped down, took on humanity and 'mimicked' the Father fully

-He said: he that has seen me has seen the Father

-We are to 'mimic', imitate God the Father as Jesus Christ did

-We are to 'mimic' the moral, transferable core attributes of God

-We are to be Spirit oriented, Light lovers and haters of darkness, and Lovers like God to the core of our being

-We are to be holy or separated unto Him:

-To first learn from Him and then to be sent forth into darkness by Him

- We often need to come back to Him to be refreshed, further enlightened, evaluations occur and we go out again
- We do this personally every day; corporately perhaps 2 or 3 times a week.
- Jesus said **My sheep go in** (to be refreshed, renewed) **and out** (out as lights into the dark world) ...

Therefore: We Mimic God by looking at the cross and submitting to forgiveness and to forgiving

in what kind of relationship to God are we to mimic or imitate Him?

Step #2 V.1b: Mimic as Heaven's Love Child

v1b. ...as dear (*agapaytos*) **children**, (*'teknon'*, those born, from above, from Heaven, born from Him.)

Therefore: Children that Mimic God are Submitters Like the Son from Heaven

In what areas of my life am I to be a Genuine Imitator?

Step #3 V. 2: We Need to Count Our Love Steps

v.2 And (*Not just a visual or sound imitation, but a*) **walking in** the sphere of God's love, imitator. How so? **as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us,**

- God is love** and the life that is like the life of God will be a life of love.
- If love is a core essence of God's nature, it must be the essential characteristic of the Christian
- Remember He does not confine His blessings to the good and the just. Not at all!
- He gives them to the evil and the unjust also.
- What then am I to do? Our Lord Himself supplies the answer: 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you'....

... v.2 cont. He gave himself as an offering and a sacrifice to God for or that sacrifice was a sweet-smelling aroma to Him.

- The metaphor suggests that our Lord's self-sacrifice was pleasing to His Father and was thus accepted as a means of reconciliation to the world.
- “Sacrifice” indicates that the victim was slain and is now the peace-offering.
- His giving of Himself has three great characteristics that we are in this step to take on:
 - 1-A free will offering
 - 2-A sacrifice to God
 - 3-The sacrifice was a sweet-smelling aroma to God the Father

Therefore: Walking in Love smells like a sweet savor sacrifice to God in Heaven and should Yield Submission on Earth

It is true that God is Love but He is also Light. How do I know when God's Sinless Light has been violated?

Step #4 Vs. 3-5: Evaluate the Inventory of Our Lives and Our Mouths and Those We Hang With

v.3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, stop letting it (*first of 6 Neg. commands in the present tense*) **not even be named among you, as is fitting** (*'prepo', our word 'proper' comes from it*) **for saints;**

v.4 neither filthiness (obscenities), nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting or proper, ... but, rather replace it with giving of thanks.

- Paul has already warned against “unwholesome talk” in Eph. 4:29, because of the harm it does to those who are compelled to hear it.

-Now he attacks it from another angle, because it is unseemly for Christians and it usurps the place of praise.

v.5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

-No one of this sort has any place reserved in the coming kingdom. The word inheritance is a present title to a future position (Eph. 1:14, 18). This cannot be acquired by unsubmitted disobedient.

Therefore: Mixing Light with Darkness leaves true submission in a grey area!

How do these characteristics get practiced and named amongst the saints, and how does God feel about them?

Step #5 V.6: Stop Letting Christendom's Members Deceive You

v.6 Stop ~~letting~~ **no** anyone deceive you with empty words (without Godly purpose),

Wiersbe: "You were saved by grace!" they argue. "Therefore, go ahead and sin that God's grace might abound!" Paul answered that foolish argument in Romans 6. "Sin in the life of a believer is different from sin in the life of an unsaved person!" Yes—it's worse! God judges sin no matter where He finds it, and He does not want to find it in the life of one of His own children.

v.6 cont. for because of these things (sins of v.5) the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

-Sons of Disobedience' is defined for us in **Ephesians 2:1-3** -Turn there ...

2:1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the 'sons of disobedience',

3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature 'children of wrath', just as the others.

Therefore: Godly Submission is not found where deception has darkened the mind!

So, what is our relationship with Christendom's sons of disobedience?

Step #6 Vs.7-8: Realize that Deception Leads to Dark Walking

v.7 Therefore do not or stop being partakers (joint participants) with them, Christendom's sons of disobedience.

-Sons of disobedience, Sons of Christendom, the Scribes and Pharisees were the Sons of Judaism were called the children of the devil, by Jesus

-turn to: **1Corinthians 6:9-13** and let's see what Paul means when we say 'sons of Christendom'

9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.

10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.

11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?

13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."

Back to Eph. 5:8 where He reminds Christians

.... For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

-For God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all, including walking in Him and with Him

-John Calvin said this: "Apart from those in Christ, Satan occupies everything" and everything he occupies is dark!

Therefore: Partaking With Darkness Always Dims the Light of Submission

Walking as children of light looks like what?

Step #7 Vs. 9-10: Evaluate the Soil of Your Heart

v.9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is or grows in a heart soil of all goodness (moral excellence), righteousness (appropriated righteousness by faith and living out that righteousness by faith), and truth (heart soils fertilized by the Word of God-My Word is truth!)),

-Some would interpret: The fruit of the Spirit is found in all goodness, righteousness, and truth

-But I like the former: the fruit of the Spirit is or grows in a heart soil of all goodness, righteousness, and truth),

-We talk about the four soils in the Parable of the Sower, only one of which is deep enough and unencumbered and that soil bears fruit

-But here we are talking about soil enrichments that will yield the fruit of the Spirit abundantly

-The key in Matt. 13:23 is that they received the Word, understood it and bore fruit.

-What if over time, this heart-soil becomes deceived?

-What if the soil has started participating in dark acts?

-The yield goes down, because the soil, the heart has been going bad, subtly, gradually.

-It is no longer a soil of goodness, moral excellence, and pure truth

-Righteousness imputed and lived out is no longer happening

-And Truth has been mixed with lies

-And the soil produces less of the fruit of the Spirit, as it did in days past

-Ever wonder why fruit of the Spirit has diminished in your life?

-Could it be that your heart soil needs to be re-conditioned, because we have a vertical and horizontal submission issue?

And prevention of heart-soil corruption is found by

v.10 continuously finding out (thru testing) what is acceptable or pleasing to the Lord.

-The phrase: 'fruit of the Spirit' is only used here and in Gal. 5:22

-This 'soil of light' continuously seeks to find out the will of God is for its fruit bearing life

Therefore: Soil Testing in the Light of God's Word is a Big Step Towards Continuous Submission

And Unfruitful soil is the soil of darkness, which leads us to

Step #8 Vs. 11-14: Expose Darkness By Waking Up Your Light From Sleep Mode

v.11 And stop having ~~no~~ fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

-the deeds of darkness are naturally exposed supernaturally by the Children of Light

-Paul is not advocating pharisaical separatism.

-The follower of Christ will go where his master went and meet those His master met.

-But though he does not withdraw from the world, he refuses to adopt its standards or fall in with its ways, be deceived by its philosophies

-He is concerned to produce "the fruit of the light" (v. 9), and realize that darkness is sterile.

v.12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

v.13 But all things that are exposed (*often convince/convicted*) are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

v.14 Therefore He says (*built around Is. 60:1*)

“Awake (*‘believers awake’, as in Rom. 13:11*), you who sleep,
Arise stand out from among the dead,”

And Christ will give you enlightenment.

-Jesus said of Christendom’s darkness this: **Matt. 6:23**

23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Therefore: Submission Requires Not Fellowship with but Exposing Darkness

Enlightenment in a world with ‘light’ and ‘darkness’ soils looks like what?

Step #9 Vs. 15-16: After Waking Up Start Walking Carefully

v.15 See to it then that you walk circumspectly (*carefully, accurately*), not as fools (*a-sophoi, unwise*) but as wise,

v.16 redeeming (*sell something to buy*) the time (*kairos: daily seasons of time*), because the days are evil.

-You start with this: the day is evil I need to redeem the time and that means selling something I like to do in order to equip myself to walk in the evil day!

-What do you need to sell in order to grow in wisdom and not be unwise and be equipped for the everyday evils??

Therefore: Walking Carefully Requires Time for Wisdom Bought by Selling Something Else

Where did this uncircumspect walk come from?

Step #10 V. 17: Walk in Wisdom with Those Without

v.17 Therefore do not or stop being unwise, but understand what the will or desire of the Lord is.

-I say desire because the Lord does not force us to submit to Him, His Word and to each other

-Ours is a compelling by love relationship, not a legal relationship or a prisoner warden relationship

-How’s your love life with Jesus and the Father thru the Holy Spirit?

Understanding the Wisdom-Walk Leads Us to Free Will Submission

Does not understanding, enlightenment, come from the Holy Spirit? Yes see

Step #11 Vs. 18-20: Constant Spirit Filling Leads to an Overflow of Thankful Singing

v.18 And do not or stop being drunk with wine, in which is dissipation or no restraint, as with the Prodigal; but continuously be filled with the Spirit,

-Abstinence or the stopping of drinking alone will not fill the void, but being filled with the Spirit completes the stopping-filling process

What does the continuously filled Spirit life sound like?

v.19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart (*that is when I’m alone*) to the Lord,

v.20 giving thanks (*how often?*) always, for (*what?*) all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Therefore: An Always singing and thankful heart is a Heart prepared for Submission

With the Godward sounds in place what is my relationship with my Brothers and Sisters?

Step #12 V.21: The Submitter Is Now Thankful Up ↑ while Submitting Down ↓

v.21 all of you, all of the time submitting to one another in the fear of God.

Therefore: Submission to Each Other Must be Important to God for It Is Associated with the Fear of Him

Let's Quickly review the Twelve Steps to Submission

(Media: Show one at a time and cumulatively)

Step #1 V.1a: Begin to Be a Genuine Imitation

Step #2 V.1b: Mimic as Heaven's Love Child

Step #3 V.2: We Need to Count Our Love Steps

Step #4 Vs. 3-5: Evaluate the Inventory of Our Lives and Our Mouths and Those We Hang With

Step #5 V.6: Stop Letting Christendom's Members Deceive You

Step #6 Vs.7-8: Realize Deception Leads to Dark Walking

Step #7 Vs. 9-10: Evaluate the Soil of Your Heart

Step #8 Vs. 11-14: Expose Darkness By Waking Up Your Light From Sleep Mode

Step #9 Vs.15-16: After Waking Up Start Walking Carefully

Step #10 V.17: Walk in Wisdom with Those Without

Step #11 Vs.18-20: Constant Spirit Filling Leads to an Overflow of Thankful Singing

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Let Us Pray

Communion