

Title: Under (Ephesians 5:21-33)

Pride: Pride is as natural as our next breath.

The nature of things is to grow or to swell or blow up... like children, everything is designed to grow/swell and so does our pride. The word pride literally means to swell. It conveys the idea of being filled and inflated with ourselves and having little to no room to be filled with the presence and promises of Jesus. And whatever fills us is what influences and comes out of our lives from day to day.

And it's neat to understand that when we're filled with God, His wisdom and His love that influence our thought life and actions. And we are taught and have been looking at the very things, that both wisdom and love are never boastful nor do they ever parade themselves.

Think about like this... How many of us enjoy a delicious plate of bacon? Man, the smell and taste of a savory slab of bacon can do wonders to a mediocre dish. Bacon is so good. And what makes it so good is the mixture of smoke, seasonings, meat and fat ratio.

But have you ever noticed? The fatter the meat... the more it draws up when heat is applied. Like our beloved bacon... because of all the fat each piece will draw up to hardly nothing in a hot hot skillet. But a heavy #castiron bacon press, like mine, will make that fat kiss the heat and keep more of its form. Same applies for a heart full of greasy pride. It wants to get away from the heat of God's word... but I'm so glad, and ever grateful, the Lord knows exactly how to press us out... and render that greasy pride out of our stubborn hearts. Every time you want to run from the reading, teaching and preaching of God's word... keep in mind, like our fatty bacon, our hearts will want to get away from the heat, too. It's a pride thing... therefore, may we welcome the pressure from above, and let Him render the pride out of our lives, He's knows exactly what He's doing. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

And when we apply these things to life, marriage and the family we start to see the importance of dealing with this inflated pride in our own lives so we can raise arrows that can be used to bring glory to Jesus.

Rebellion is an inherited trait... submission must be taught again and again.

Raising rebels is easy and simple... any fool can do it.

But it takes submissive servants with heart, love, compassion, wisdom, diligence, patience, discipline, strength and courage, to name a few, to raise champions of grace and truth.

Contention breeds contention... rebels mislead rebels but meek and humble servant leaders encourage and equip future servant leaders. There must be a balance of liberty and order, freedom and submission and love and law.

Therefore, it will take Jesus working in and through dads, moms, grandparents and a community of likeminded family and friends to raise well rounded•warm hearted•wise warriors who are tough and tender•gritty and gracious•pleasant and

passionate•courageous•courteous•confident and compassionate champions of grace and truth that love and lead well.

And keep in mind, Jesus didn't work THEN and He will not work in us, NOW, WITHOUT the presence and power of the Spirit of God and His Scriptures, actively working in and through us, TODAY. There are no short cuts in the kingdom, only surrendered servants trusting the Master knows best.

For whatever reason, too many of us are missing out on the wonder and beauty of seeing our marriages as being a vital part of our divine assignment. And when we fail to recognize this, we'll also neglect to come under the power of His orders to successfully fulfill that calling and mission.

Take for example the word submission... it's one of the most misunderstood and misapplied words of our day, and for that reason most of us want to avoid like a plague. But neglecting or avoiding the truth only leads to more misinformation of God's design and the rich blessings that comes with knowing and understanding His ways.

So what does this word mean?

First off it's a compound word that has tremendous value to Jesus and His people. The two words used to make up this word are "sub" and "mission" and when put together they mean "under assignment." Think about it like this: to be under an assignment, one must also under orders. Why? Every MISSION comes with a set of ORDERS from the one who gave them the ASSIGNMENT. Think about it, if we're not under orders and on mission, we're off the assignment.

Therefore, submission, as Ephesians 5 teaches us to be submissive to one another and let the wives be submissive to their on husbands, just as the church is subject to Christ, is more about being under ORDERS and on MISSION to the specific ASSIGNMENT we've been given. It's not about being UNDER a man or a pastor or a boss or anyone else, as much as it means to be under and on the assignment given to us by the Lord. Now those orders often and faithfully place us under the leadership of those mentioned above that we may fulfill the calling upon our lives and finish the MISSION He's given to us.

Your marriage is more than a relationship... it's a vital part of your mission and He will use you to glorify Himself through it and display the love and beauty of His gospel in it. Submission has never been about being subservient to people but being subject to Jesus, being a part of something bigger than yourselves, honoring the Lord, obeying His design and being fruitful, while living life on mission for Him.

A God size assignment... requires a God size anointing. Heaven's purpose... requires Heaven's power. God's salvation... requires God's Son.

Let's illustrate what God's Son can do in our situation: in our marriage, family, church, community, job, and country.

Remember, the first miracle Jesus ever publicly performed was turning undrinkable water into wine. The water He turned to wine was similar to our bath water. It was for washing... how many of you would want to drink your bath water? Your life today may

be like bath water. The best way to describe it would be simply undrinkable or unsharable. You wouldn't want people drinking from your life. The "joy" of your life, like what wine delivers, is simply out. What's left is not suited to share as drinkable water.

But Jesus is the best at turning the undrinkable things of this life into something full of joy and He's still taking things that seem undrinkable and making them taste ever so good.

Whether it's water or skepticism or unbelief or rebellion or self-centeredness or frigid hearts or whatever [it] might be... when we "do as He says" He transforms the "undrinkables" into something extraordinary.

What's the key? Let's reiterate it again, trusting and doing what He says. Glory... that's Him! (John 2)

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