

Ephesians 5:21
SUBMITTING ONE TO ANOTHER

- I. What required.
 - A. Our text is the last of five parallel present participles (speaking, singing, making melody, giving thanks, and now submitting yourselves) all of which modify and are governed by “be filled with the Spirit” (18).
 - B. To “submit” is to put oneself under another, as choir members under a director.
 - C. This calls for humility and love, a willingness to cooperate on the part of every member.
 1. First, the Spirit in us enables us to see the Spirit in another: they belong to Jesus and their value is His precious blood.
 2. Second, it is to be thoughtful of others rather than only or primarily of ourselves (Phil. 2:3).
- II. The reasons for mutual submission.
 - A. Submission one to another recognizes the finiteness of every human.
 - B. Submitting one to another also emphasizes our fallenness, so we know that depravity clings to our best works.
 - C. Third, mutual submission recognizes an equality in Christ’s body.
 - D. Fourth, we are saved into an organism, that of the one body of Jesus (4:11-16; I Cor. 12:27).
- III. The spiritual ability to appreciate and comply with this unnatural duty arises only out of the fear of God.
 - A. Submit to each other, not because this is good in and of itself, but because you fear God.
 - B. Fearing God we will submit first to Him, and to His will to esteem highly His other children.
 - C. With conscious regard for God’s clearly revealed will, every member of the body wants to obey Him.
 - D. Only in mutual submission presents a united front to the world, promotes true Christian fellowship and glorifies God.