

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – November 21, 2021

Theme: Love: A More Excellent Way Topic: Love and submission

Main Texts: John 13:1-17; 34-35; Ephesians 5:21-33

Key verse: Ephesians 5:21– *‘Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.’* (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: We often pick and choose and decide how we want to show and express love, and many times we want to be recognized for our good deeds; but it is clear and evident throughout scripture that true love - that is God’s type of love is selfless and pure. Scripture also clearly states, *“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ”* (Ephesians 5:21 NLT). So why does submission usually carry with it a negative reaction? Have you ever wondered why? If Jesus modeled it and commended it, if Paul instructed us to do it, shouldn’t we desire it? Is there a relationship between love and submission?

1. Read John 13:1-17 (a) “Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under His power, and that He had come from God and was returning to God” how does this show submission? (b) Which other verse(s) in this passage show examples of submission? Explain. (c). Is it possible to love someone without submitting to that person? Why or why not? See John 14:15, 21, 23.

The Bible speaks of submitting ourselves to God (Joshua 4:7), submitting to Christ, the head of the Church (Ephesians 5:24), submitting ourselves to the elders (Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 5:5a), submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. Jesus submitted Himself for others (Philippians 2:5-8). Submission must come willingly; it must not be demanded by someone because they are superior or higher in the hierarchy. This is not true submission. True submission exemplifies wisdom, it is a free response to love. Demanded submission is domination. We can submit to God’s authorities and His will only through the power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

2. (a) Read John 13:34-35. Why do you think Jesus referred to the commandment as new? (b) Consider your relationships. What are ways to demonstrate love and submission in a manner that portrays Jesus Christ to the world around you?

Love and submission are intertwined, one cannot be isolated from the other. Ephesians 5 opens with these words, *‘Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us...’* (Ephesians 5:1-2 NKJV). The chapter goes on to enumerate different scenarios of the outworking of this life of love, including the whole business of mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21); the wife’s submission to her husband (Ephesians 5:22), and the husband’s giving of himself for the wife like Christ did for the Church (Ephesians 5:25). *‘Hupotasso’* is the Greek word translated in the New Testament as ‘submit’. According to Forerunner Bible Commentary, *‘Hupotasso’* is a military term which means *“to arrange in order under.”* In the military there is a strong sense of submitting to someone of higher rank: A soldier arranges himself in order under his sergeant; likewise, the sergeant arranges himself in order under the master-sergeant; the master-sergeant under the lieutenants; the lieutenant to the captain, the captain to the major, and right on up to the general, who himself must submit to the Commander-in-Chief. Everything is “arranged in order under.” Simply put, *‘hupotasso’* means that one must arrange himself systematically, under another. Other renditions of *‘hupotasso’* in various English Bible translations include *“subordinate,” “obey,” “subject to,” “surrender,” “be weak,” “put under.”*

3. (a) Read Matthew 26:39; John 13:1. What can we learn from Jesus Christ about love and submission in action? (b). Ephesians 5:21-33 focuses on how this love and submission should play out in the marriage relationship. What should be the motivation for love and submission in marriage? What should be some practical evidence that this ‘arrange in order under’ is taking place in a marriage?

Prayer: LORD Jesus, help us to follow Your example of submission because of our love for You and for the Father. Help us to love each other with genuine affection and take delight in honoring each other. Amen.