

06/14/13 - Mutuality, Not Hierarchy

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Ephesians 5:21-33

Spirit-filled Christians (Ephesians 5:18) will:

- speak to one another in words of joyful praise (5:19a).
- sing together (5:19b).
- always give thanks to God (5:20). And
- "be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (5:21).

Ephesians 5:21-6:9 describe what mutual subjection involves. Since every Christian is subject to every other Christian, the subjection of wives to husbands, children to parents, and slaves to masters is NOT the central point of this passage. In fact, the word "subject" does not even appear in the Greek of 5:22.

Paul tells husbands three times to "love" their wives (5:25, 28, 33). And wives should "respect" their husbands (5:33). Children should "obey" their parents (6:1); and slaves, their masters (6:5). But Paul equally emphasizes the responsibilities of parents to their children and of employers to their employees (6:1-9).

Hierarchy is not what distinguishes Christian families from others. Every Christian answers to one "head" (5:23), one "Lord" (6:1, 4), one "Master" (6:9)?Christ.

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