

Choose to Submit

Long Beach Alliance Church • September 20, 2015 • Pastor Chris Lankford

1) *The Voices In Our Heads*

- A) Each of us have different “voices” fighting for our attention. Certainly, the voice of culture is very loud in most of our minds. Since our culture changes at rapid speed, far more quickly than any generation prior, we often form our cultural views through the media we choose to digest.
- B) For those having a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit is another voice which speaks to our souls. We learn the Spirit’s voice through reading the Scriptures and responding in prayer. The Spirit is provided a “voice” through the Bible and as we engage life with genuine dependency on God through prayer. As we grow in maturity and depth in relationship with Christ, we are able to hear the voice of the Spirit through other Christians, significant life circumstances, and eventually – even everyday events.
- C) There is another important voice in your head. Your voice. This is the voice of reason (or insanity) and response (or addiction). It is the voice which filters other voices and responds. From your own soul this voice speaks your life into responses which lead to actions and behaviors reflecting your being.
- D) Is it any wonder the Apostle Paul already implored the Ephesians to grow into the “fullness” of their new identity in Christ (Ephesians 3:16-21)? To turn away from sinful instincts (2:1-3)? To reject old-self thinking (4:17-19)? To be renewed “in the spirit of your minds” as a brand new creation of God (4:23-24)?
- E) If Christ’s people will not live sold-out for the purposes of the Gospel (redemption) in their own lives, how will those outside the church ever know the power of Christ? The culture in which we live screams answers to life’s hardest questions, but those answers only lead to slavery and death. The church is in the world to seek and save the lost by living spiritually submitted lives to each other in Christ. This is spiritual victory!
- F) As those freed by the blood of Christ, our lives of mutual submission to one another serve as a counter-culture rescue mission for a world which cannot YET hear the Spirit’s voice. When we live convinced that God’s ways are best for us AND for our culture, and that our lives in Christ’s Church are the hope for ourselves and our culture, we will live out God’s design, no matter the cost. **Listen. To. Christ’s. Voice.**

2) *Submitting Wives (¼) & Sacrificial Husbands (¾)*

- A) Wives are to submit to their husbands as a proper reflection/honoring of the hierarchal headship structure of Christ as the head of the Church (5:22-23). Because of sin (cf. Genesis 3:16), this decision is not natural for a wife. The text makes clear that wives must make a conscious and responsive choice to be submissive (5:22).
- B) Paul calls everyone in the Church to submit (subordinate, order under, obey) to one another out of respect/reverence for Christ (5:21), revealing the mysteries of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit in/through the Church (5:22-33). Just as Christ submits to God (1 Corinthians 15:28) and still maintains completely equal value and importance, so the wife who submits is still of equal value and significance in marriage (Galatians 3:28).
- C) Without submission to Christ in everything, the church would never fulfill her Gospel purposes (3:7-13, 1:7-10). In similar fashion, without submission to your husband in everything, your marriage will never be able to fulfill its Gospel purposes (5:24). Submission is not based on the worthiness of the husband, even if he is not faithful to following Christ (note, 1 Peter 2:24-3:6). Submission to Christ and to your husband are inseparably related; remarkably one cannot exist without the other. Wives, your submission is active worship of God.
- D) Disrespect from a wife through disgusted looks, harsh words, mistrusting accusations, and dismissive comments disrespects husbands. A husband diminished by his own wife is devalued, emasculated, and feels like an embarrassing failure. These men are often needled and shamed, becoming hostile and mean, or the absolute worst kind of man, disengaged and passive. Wives, do not depreciate your husbands and Jesus.
- E) Women dignify themselves, Christ, and their husbands when they choose to submit, just as Christ dignifies the Father through His life and work (2:18-22). Willing submission champions Christ in a radical counter-culture manner, actively refusing rulership, control, or domination in marriage. Submission graciously employs actions, words, and patient attitudes which empower and enable a husband to lead. Wives, submit to your own husbands in everything, as to the Lord (5:22-24, 33).

