



## I. God commands children to \_\_\_\_\_ their parents

### A. The Commands.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ **your parents.** – *Children, obey your parents...* v.1. Cf. 1 Peter 2:13-14
  - The opposition of Nature. *Proverbs 22:15 (Cf. Ps 51:5; Jer 17:9)*
  - The opposition of Society. *Romans 1:28-30.*
  - The opposition of Time. 2 *Timothy 3:1-2*
2. \_\_\_\_\_ **your parents.** – *Honour thy father and mother...* v.2 Cf. 1Ti 5:4

### B. The Reasons

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ – *for this is right...* v.1 Luke 2:51
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ – *Which is the first commandment with promise...* v.2 Cf. Ex 20:12; De 5:16
  - A good life Cf. De 11:26-28; Gen 22:18
  - A long life Cf. Pr 3:1-2; 4:10

## II. God commands fathers to \_\_\_\_\_ their children.

### A. The Warning: *Provoke not your children to wrath...* v.4

- Not Let them grow up – this is the PASSIVE father.
- Not Drive them up – this is the DRIVING father.
- Not Push them up – this is the ANGRY father.
- Not Prod them up – this is the CRITICAL father.
- *But Bring them up* – this is the GODLY father.

### B. The Command: *Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* v.4

1. **Bring them up in Loving** \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Bring them up in the nurture... of the Lord.* v.4 Cf. Hebrews 12:5-11
  - Chasten out of love not anger. *Proverbs 3:12; 23:13-14*
  - Correct disobedience not childishness. *Proverbs 22:15*
  - Use a paddle. *Proverbs 22:15*
  - Apply appropriate force. *Proverbs 19:18*
  - Provide affection before & after. *Proverbs 13:24*
  - Start early in the situation and early in life. *Proverbs 13:24*
2. **Bring them up in Bible** \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Bring them up in the... admonition of the Lord.* v.4  
*Deuteronomy 6:6-9*

### ***Concerning the error of mutual submission...***

***Ephesians 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.***

The error of “mutual submission” is promoted from ignoring the context of this verse, imposing what we want the Bible to say, and dismissing the explicit commands that follow. The context (5:18-21) commands all believers to be filled with the Spirit, which results in 3 unnatural, Spirit-led behaviors:

- Singing and making heart-felt melody to the Lord (v.19)
- Giving thanks always for ALL things (v.20)
- Submitting yourselves one to another (v.21)

Each of these behaviors are produced by being filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit, and each is opposed to our flesh, because the Holy Spirit and your flesh are at war against each other (Gal 5:17).

Submission is so egregious to us that we seek to alter its meaning, and it’s so essential to godliness that the Holy Spirit inspired 3 specific examples of submission to one another (human authority). The command of submission begins with wives to husbands in ch.5, but it continues into ch.6 commanding children to obey their parents and servants to obey their masters. Observe the repeating patten; God first instructs the subordinate how to follow; then He instructs the authority how to lead.

- 5:22-33: (subordinate) Wives submit; (authority) husbands love sacrificially.
- 6:1-4: (subordinate) Children obey; (authority) fathers bring them up without wrath.
- 6:5-9: (subordinate) Servants obey; (authority) masters reward justly and don’t threaten.

These are the specific “one another” examples given by the text. Therefore the text is not commanding mutual submission of husbands and wives but rather commanding all Christians to Spirit-led submission to whatever authorities God has placed over you (e.g. husbands, parents, and masters).

It is noteworthy that when commanding the submission of subordinates, God is consistent and careful to command authorities to lead in a way that makes submission easier. Many well-meaning Christians embrace mutual submission because they see Scripture’s command for the husband’s sacrifice and love. Undoubtedly, the husband is commanded to love sacrificially, to prioritize his wife’s needs over his own, to love and cherish her, and to honor her. One could say that mutual kindness, mutual humility, mutual honoring, or mutual serving is taught, but submission pertains specifically to obeying authority and inherently requires that there exist both an authority role and a subordinate role.

- Mutual submission is illogical and impractical. How are both the authority of each other? Who is the head, making the final decision and bearing the ultimate accountability to God? Instead of taking turns being the head or flipping a coin, God appoints the husband as the head.
- Mutual submission is antithetical to Biblical submission, which calls Christians to place themselves under the authority of evil governments “in all things” and to disobedient husbands “in every thing.” It’s only in the times that a wife disagrees that she can truly submit; otherwise, she’s still fulfilling her own will.
- Mutual submission is interpreted inconsistently. Those who propose mutual submission for husbands/ wives are not willing to consistently apply this to the other domains of leadership expressed in this passage – to assert that parents are likewise to submit to their children or that masters are to likewise submit to their servants.
- Mutual submission violates the spiritual picture. The prescribed roles of husbands and wives (5:22-33) expressly picture the roles of Christ and the church, in which there is no mutual submission – Christ is always the loving head of the church, and the church is always to be His submissive bride. Never is Christ subject to the church nor the church the head of Christ. While Christ sacrifices His life, comfort, and reputation to die for the church, He never relegates or relinquishes his authority. To make Christ submissive to the church is blasphemous heresy. The subsequent roles – children obeying fathers (6:1-4) and servants obeying masters (6:5-9) – also have divine pictures that defy mutual submission; the Father is never subject to us, His children; neither is the Lord Jesus subject to us, His servants.