

The Sense (Nonsense) of Mutual Submission in the Body: Flying through Ephesians
Eph 5:22–6:9 (Overview) Dr. John Niemelä Grace Chapel November 8, 2006

1:3–14	Gentile believers should praise the Father for what the Trinity did for Jews first
1:15–23	Paul [a Jewish bel] thankfully prays for enlightened EphGBels to know their calling in hope, their rich inheritance, & the Father's powerful working for bels w/ His power that raised & seated Christ
2:1–10	Despite Jews & Gentiles being dead, God made alive, raised, & seated them together w/ Christ (saving separated from God people by grace through faith) so they cannot boast but that His created Church would do the good works He prepared for it.
2:11–13	These now alive & near-to-God Gentiles are to remember their former alienation
2:14–22	Christ made peace between alienated JBels & GBels when he made both one & broke down the dividing Law & reconciled both to God, so Gentiles are no longer aliens, but fellow citizens w/ JBels, (both) having been built into a (God indwelt) holy temple—the Church.
3:1–7,13	Paul [requests that they not lose heart at his imprisonment] on behalf of the GBels, because he assumes that they know of the grace (spiritual gift) given to Paul, namely that God revealed the previously unrevealed mystery to the apostles and NT prophets [e.g., that some Gentiles would be fellow heirs, of the same body, and fellow partakers (with some Jews)]
3:8–13	Paul rec'd a grace (gift) to announce the Church's inheritance & mystery dispensation—the Church—hidden from creation by the Creator—God's great eternal plan accomplished thru Christ. Thus, Paul's imprisonment should not discourage them, because (his message resulted in) imprisonment is their glory
3:14–19	In light of God uniting Jews & Gentiles Paul prays to the Church's Father to strengthen the EphGBels that Christ might indwell their assembly in order that they (who were established in God's love) would know the extent & depth of Christ's love w/ goal that they would manifest God's character in its fullness.
3:20–21	Believers should praise the Father forever who works exceedingly [on behalf of Christ's body] doing for it what we never could have imagined, let alone, asked for.
4:1–6	[In light of God joining Jews and Gentiles in one body] bels ought to live in a way appropriate to the fact that God has called them into His Church by humbly bearing with one another in love, that is, by preserving the unity that the HS effected thru a jointly-bound peace [treaty, the peace-treaty that created the Church] is because the one body corresponds to the one triune God has called the church in one way
4:7–16	[In mild contrast w/ the body's unity] the Spirit gave spiritual gifts in proportion to the gifted people given to the Church by the ascended Christ, based upon Christ (as the divine Victor who descended to earth before ascending to heaven) having the right to give them to the church; & (specifically) Christ gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, & teachers to equip the saints, so the saints will minister to edify the body until its maturity in faith matches Christ's mature stature; & the purpose for the body maturing is that (rather than being childishly unstable & subject to trickery) its maturity (resulting from the body speaking doctrinal truth lovingly) would match its head (Christ) The whole body, because of being joined to Christ by every part effectively doing its role, causes the body to grow (into the head) in order that it edify itself in love
4:17–24	[In light of Christ designing each part of the positionally unified body to cause it to grow to a maturity matching that of its head, Christ] GBels ought not live within the futile mindset (unenlightened-alienated-ignorant-blindness causing lewd & greedy uncleanness) of GUnbels; but the EphBels did not learn Christ through a futile mindset, but learned Christ by Him teaching them [thru gifted APEPTs He gave] non-futile Christ-centered knowledge, namely that [when they were joined to Christ] (1) regarding their old conduct, they (corporately) put off their being-corrupted old-man position [in Adam], (2) their mind was renewed, & (3) they had corporately put on their new-man position (created according to God in righteousness & holiness)
4:25–32	Bels are to please the HS (because He sealed us); e.g. speak God's truth w/ bels, because we are of the same body; resolving righteous indignation before it becomes sinful & allows Satan to divide the body; working laboriously to have something to give to needy bels (rather than stealing); speaking what edifies, rather than what destroys, to give grace to hearers; kindly forgiving rather than venting destructively because Christ thus forgave us.
(5:1–8a)	[Based on need to walk worthily (4:1)] bels should imitate God [by pleasing HS] & should love fellow-bels because JC died for us, but should not converse re immorality nor covetousness, nor speak filthily/foolishly, nor coarsely joke; but should thank (God & bels) because idolaters—e.g., immoral, unclean, & coveters—lose all reward, so bels should not think of rewards as guaranteed, because God's wrath comes upon idolatrous unbels, so enlightened bels ought not link w/ unbels
5:8b–14	Bels should live as God's enlightened children by showing <i>as approved</i> (to selves) what He likes; not fellowshiping w/ fruitless dark deeds (because the HS is source of all goodness) because unbels' secret deeds are shameful conversation, but light exposes darkness as darkness], so lethargic believers should arise from the corpses, so Christ will shine [His word] on them
5:15–21	[Based on the fruitfulness of living as God's enlightened children] bels should seek to live wisely & know God's will; specifically, rather than being drunk, they ought to let the (Holy) Spirit fill them [with the Word] that they speak to one another in psalms, sing to and thank the Lord, & mutually submit to each other

NEW EXPOSITION

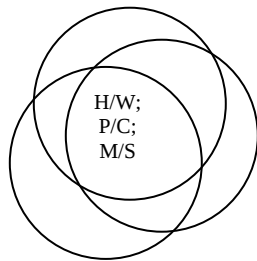
Relationship of 5:21 to 5:22–6:9

. . . submitting to one another in the fear of God.

The word translated *one another* (*allēlois*) is part of our word *parallel* (*para* = beside; *allel* = one another. Two parallel lines are lines that beside each other without intersecting one another, no matter how long they are)

Paul speaks of mutual submission: What does he mean?

Paul gives three sets of overlapping relationships



8 theoretical combinations exist for those who are H (or W) & P (or C) & M (or S):

1	2	3?	4?	5	6	7?	8?
Husband	Husband	Husband	Husband	Wife	Wife	Wife	Wife
Parent	Parent	Child	Child	Parent	Parent	Child	Child
Master	Slave	Master	Slave	Master	Slave	Master	Slave

However, some are neither husband nor wife;
 some lack inter-generational relationships;
 some are free without owning slaves

Twenty-seven generic combinations are theoretically possible (18 are realistic):

A	B	C	D?	E?	F?	G	H	I	J	K	L	M?	N?	O?	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V?	W?	X?	Y	Z	W
H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U
P	P	P	C	C	C	ca	ca	ca	P	P	P	C	C	C	ca	ca	ca	P	P	P	C	C	C	ca	ca	ca
M	S	F	M	S	F	M	S	F	M	S	F	M	S	F	M	S	F	M	S	F	M	S	F	M	S	F
1	2		3?	4?					5	6		7?	8?													

H = Husband; W = Wife; U = unmarried person (neither husband nor wife)

P = Parent; C = Child; CA = Childless adult (neither parent nor child)

M = Master; S = Slave; F = Freeman (who does not have slaves)

What is the big point about the final chart and all of the statistics?

Consider combo ~~W~~: (U-CA-F) unmarried-childless-parentless adult-freeman w/o slaves

A. Does *submit to equal obey*?

We can make sense of Paul telling children to obey their parents (Submit to one another)

Can we make sense of Paul telling parents to obey their children? (Submit to one another)

B. Can *submit to* mean something other than *to obey*?**1. How does one who has less authority submit to the one with greater authority?**

A. The body of Christ to its head (Christ)

Ephesians 5:23, 24

B. A wife to her husband

Ephesians 5:22, 24, 33b

C. Children to their parents

Ephesians 6:1, 2

D. Slaves to their masters

Ephesians 6:5, 6, 7

(What about employees to employers?)

2. How does one who has greater authority submit to the one with less authority?

A. Christ to the church

Ephesians 5:25, 26, 29

B. A husband to his wife

Ephesians 5:25, 28, 29, 33a

C. Parents to their children

Ephesians 6:4

D. Masters to their slaves

Ephesians 6:9

(What about employers to employees?)

CONCLUSION