

Marriage's Dirty Word: Submission

Kemi Searcy

Ahh, June – the time for weddings. June comes in second place as one of the most popular months for nuptials. Sixteen percent of all weddings occur in September, followed by June at fifteen percent. Therefore June is also a month full of anniversaries celebrating those weddings. One topic of particularly heated discussions around marriage is the issue of submission.

Submission isn't really a bad word all by itself. Arguments don't arise when submitting to the authority of our boss, our pastor, the government, or the laws that govern us. These types of submission help our credentials in the workforce, help us qualify for leadership, and keep us from fines. We don't cry, "Unfair!" We just submit and go about our business.

Why do we mind so much submitting to our husband? He is closer to us and knows us better than the boss, the pastor, or the government. Perhaps we struggle with spousal compliance because we haven't seen the divine nature of submission within marriage. Or maybe we really don't understand the benefits.

To get a clearer picture of our roles in marriage, let's look at the first couple, Adam and Eve. These young people lived in a perfect world, a garden that was a little bit of heaven on Earth. Their relationship with each other was pure as they connected to God face-to-face each evening.

After the Fall, they no longer dealt in face-to-face counsel with the Almighty. Satan had entered in to distort their relationship with God. Satan could have just stopped there, because Satan's complaint was with God. But it wasn't enough.

Satan knew he needed to also mess up Adam and Eve's relationship. He knew the importance marriage had in the divine plan of God and needed to stop it through divorce, warped societal philosophies, and redefining it beyond a man and a woman. He worked on marriage by convincing women that submission meant wives were not as valued as husbands. If we are to truly rise to thwart the enemy's plans, we need to understand that marital submission is not a dirty word.

After the Fall, God had to create hierarchies of authority, since man was no longer going to have face-to-face instruction. Those divisions of authority can irritate our need to have everything be equal. Nothing is truly equal in this world or there would be chaos. Roles of leadership, government, etc. could not exist.

Submission is not being subservient. If it was, Jesus's sacrifice would not have had its power. Remember, Jesus is part of the Trinity. He is God. Yet He did not try to grasp that authority and devise a way He didn't have to go to the cross. He submitted to living in human flesh, bearing our sins, and rising victoriously. (Philippians 2:5-8)

Jesus' example to women is unprecedented! If He can leave heaven to submit, we should be able to submit within marriage. Women are not to be subservient to their husbands. They are to fulfill a role within the hierarchy of the marriage. (Ephesians 5:22-23)

Every time we lift up our marriage, we shoot the devil in the foot because we are imitating Jesus. Every time we choose to submit we slap the devil in the face because we choose to die daily. Every time we choose unity we shoot the devil in the heart because we restore the unity that was in the Garden of Eden.

The destruction of marriage is important to the devil because marriage is a picture of the Trinity. The Trinity is comprised of three Persons as one God. (John 10:30) In the same way, Scripture says marriage is two people becoming one. (Genesis 2:24)

Each Person in the Trinity has their role, so do husband and wife. Each Person in the Trinity defers to the others, so should wives and husbands. Each member of the Trinity is just as valuable as the others; the same is true for spouses, yet hierarchy is established for both the divine and the earthly.

So while you celebrate your anniversary, answer some questions from a divine perspective.

Since marriage is the #1 character builder – Would you want to throw away the best chance of developing your character?

Jesus said to forgive 70 times 7--- How many sins did God forgive when Jesus took every sin ever committed on the cross? Are we able to forgive when our spouse oversteps and causes us hurt?

Since marriage reflects the Trinity's unity – Would you want to ignore this way of demonstrating the image of God to your children and the world?

So, don't just put up with it, embrace submission, woman of God! And enjoy your part in God's divine plan!