



EXPOSITION

Monthly e-Bulletin from Virginia Beach Theological Seminary



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From My Window

It has been stated, “the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.” Though I am unsure of the exact context of this statement, I am certain that it captures the significance of the role of a wife and mother. One of the most powerful examples of a godly mother and wife in recent church history is Susanna Wesley. At age 19, she became the wife of Samuel Wesley who was 26. Their marriage produced 19 children of which 10 died. Samuel poetically wrote of Susanna, “She graced my humble roof, and blest my life; Blest me by a far greater name than wife.” Susanna was a brilliant woman who knew Latin and Greek, and invested many hours in the lives of her children. Two of her boys, John and Charles, powerfully impacted the world for Christ. It was not just her life and letters that captured her sons’ hearts, but her fervent prayers. May God continue to grace the church with many Susannas!



Women of VBTS in Spotlight

VBTS has a sweet and active ministry to the wives of our students preparing for local and global ministry. It is exciting for the faculty and staff wives to invest their time in the lives of those women who will play the most significant role in the success of their husbands’ ministry. The monthly speakers and times of fellowship are planned to encourage and sharpen the wives for fruitful ministry. Please pray for these women that God will bless their labor of love as they encourage their husbands during the rigorous seminary experience.



Despite the flood during Hurricane Matthew, God spared our facilities.



Truth for the Agora: “A Heart of Submission” 1 Peter 3:1

This month's Truth for the Agora by guest author Mrs. Carrie Foldberg, wife of retired military officer and speaker at Women of VBTS.

The Command: Peter's exhortation for wives to submit to their husbands is part of his broader call to believers to submit to all the authorities in God's social structure. From broader to narrower, these include the government (1 Pet. 2:13), the workplace (1 Pet. 2:19), the church (1 Pet. 5:5), and, here, the home (1 Pet. 3:1-5). Biblical submission—from *upotasso* (“to line up under”), is a military term, which displays an attitude of humbly recognizing where we fit in any organizational hierarchy.

The Context: Submission to authority was certainly not a new idea for believers in the early church. For centuries, Jew and Gentile alike experienced an oppressive submission at the hands of ruling governments, masters, religious leaders — and for many women, husbands. However, Peter's repeated emphasis on submission (6 times in 5 chapters) is in light of the newfound *freedom* believers have in Christ. In Christ, the church is a holy nation (1 Pet. 2:9); slaves and masters are one in Christ (Gal. 6:9); wives are co-heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7); and each believer is an important member of the church body (1 Cor. 12:12). It may seem to the female believer that because she has *equality* and *dignity* in Christ, she does not need to submit to oppressive authority, be it in the home, the workplace, the church, or the government. Yet, Peter makes clear that this freedom is not for pursuing selfish goals but for serving and obeying God (1 Pet. 2:16). He points us to the example of the One who perfectly displayed a heart of love-fueled submission.

The Comparison: Jesus provides the pattern for both the attitude and actions of submission to God-ordained authority, even when the authority may be unrighteous (1 Pet. 2:21). As God's apostle, He went where the Father sent Him (Heb. 3:1) and as God's slave (Phil. 2:8) He always did what pleased His Father (John 8:29). Jesus's *love for God* and *desire for God's glory* fueled His obedience (John 14:31, John 17:1). His heart of submission led Him ultimately to bear God's wrath on our behalf dying a shameful, painful death (Heb. 12:2).

The Consequences: We can expect to experience the same consequences Jesus did as a result of submission: *personal suffering* and *glorifying God*. The “Suffering Servant Songs” in Isaiah provide a stunning portrait of the emotional, relational and physical pain Christ experienced as result of abuse. Peter says we too, are to patiently endure the pain and mistreatment that can come from submitting to authority (1 Pet. 2:20). But, he reminds us of the temporary nature of these painful ordeals (1 Pet. 1:6, 5:10) and anchors our heart in the other promised consequence: bringing Christ glory by displaying His character (1 Pet. 1:7-8, 4:13-14).

The Call: As wives, we have been called for the same purpose as Christ (1 Pet. 3:1). As His disciples, Jesus sends us in the same way God sent Him (John 20:21). Jesus promises God will give us the power source for this submissive attitude: the Holy Spirit—Spirit of Christ. (John 20:22).

The Coal: The only way we can *fuel a heart* that willingly submits to authority is to trace our hearts on Christ's pattern (1 Pet. 2:11). Every day, we must pick up the mirror of the Word to behold the glory of Christ so that we may become like Him. (2 Cor. 3:18). May we consider—gaze intently at—Him (Heb. 3:1) and let nothing lead us astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Him and His glory (2 Cor. 11:3).