



A SURRENDERED WIFE

This is a subject close to my heart. Many years ago, when I was preparing for my wedding, a female colleague asked me what I was going to do after I got married. Without hesitation, I told her that I would cook, clean, sew and dress up neatly to welcome my husband when he returns home from work, and when I have children, to stay home and take good care of them. My intention was stated in I Corinthians 7:34 "...but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." Well, with a conviction like that, you would think it was easy for me to become a submissive wife. I wanted to be submissive voluntarily, joyfully and wholeheartedly. I found out much later that being submissive requires more than just looking after the physical needs.

The first few years of our marriage were the most carefree. We were in wedded bliss and enjoyed each other's company. Then, our first child was born. Oh how I loved this little bundle of joy! We did our sums and decided that I should quit my job to become a full-time housewife. I did a good job of keeping the house and looking after the baby without domestic help. Needless to say, the time required to do all these was taken from time that I would have spent with my husband. Then God delivered our second bundle of joy.

I continued to juggle housework, cooking, looking after the children and still looking good for my husband. I even had time to try out new recipes and baked for my family. I was physically very healthy and full of energy. But on the spiritual side, things were not going very well.

Over the years, I have stolen God's blessings for me and claimed them as my own achievements. I have become proud and self-righteous. I could not see eye to eye with my husband on some issues. It was trying at times but I did not turn to God. I tried to tackle the problems using my own wisdom and understanding. I became so miserable that I asked God to change my husband.

Then the ever-gracious God sent me to the Ladies' Bible Studies. As I read and learned God's Word diligently, I began to see things from a different perspective.

Ephesians 5:22 commanded that I, as a wife, should submit unto my husband, **as unto the Lord**. That was it! In order to submit to my husband, I must first submit myself totally unto the Lord. I humbled myself before the Sovereign Almighty God and asked Him to enable me to do all things through Christ, my Saviour and my Lord. As I continued to pray everyday, I felt a burden being lifted from me. I realized that only when my heart was filled with tender love, reverence, fear and humility of the Lord, then could I begin to be submissive. I began to ask God to change me instead. Now I learned to let go of my pride and self-righteousness. I used to feel guilty and burdened if my husband did not allow me to do what I felt was right. Not anymore, because I know God is watching over me and all things work together for good to them that love Him.

"For the husband is **the head of the wife**, even as **Christ is the head of the church**... Therefore as the **church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing**." Ephesians 5:23-24 states very clearly the position of wives in the household. It is right to be submissive to the husbands. It keeps the house in harmony and the marriage in bliss. Being submissive does not mean I do not have a mind of my own. My dear husband makes sure that that does not happen to me. Submission through the Lord can move husbands too. They begin to change for the better seeing how the Lord works in their wives.

I still do the same things everyday. I cook, clean, look after the children and take time to look good for my husband. I face the same issues that every ordinary household faces. Whenever we do not see eye to eye, we will decide to look into one eye, mostly his eye. But I am joyful and at peace now. I am thankful that I have surrendered all to the Lord and am becoming a truly submissive wife, a surrendered one.

Lydia Lim



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*Once upon a time
This pure heart of mine
Wanted to please my husband*

*I cleaned till it shone
Cooked the meals on the stove
Waited for him to come home*

*My family got bigger
Had a boy and a girl
Time for my husband got lesser*

*Housework I could tackle
Children I could handle
Love for husband no longer tender*

*We couldn't see eye to eye
To each his own mind
Love seemed out of rhyme*

*What happened to us?
Two persons so in love
Enough is enough*

*Oh Creator of night and day
Help us find a way
Our love forever to stay*

*Ephesians 5:22-24 to read
Lay all at Jesus' feet
Thy husband ye shall submit*

*Yes God I remember
Thy love for me so tender
I will learn to surrender*

- Lydia Lim

editorial

As a young bride saying her wedding vows, I was adamant to fulfil whatever I promised God especially the part on "obeying" my husband. I remembered stressing the word "obey" then. I told myself I would not be like the worldly feminist insisting on all my rights. I was in for a rude shock.

Obedying my husband was not an easy task to accomplish. It was by far the toughest thing I had to do as a wife! It was very difficult to NOT have my own way and things done my style after twenty-odd years. I was wilful and demanding. What a far cry from the determined "obedient" bride!

As wives, we expect our husbands to show love in helping us to do certain chores around the house but God made men different. Some husbands show their love in giving a mid-day call or message or a surprise gift, which may not be our liking. But that is love from their end. For some of us living on one income, our husbands show love in working hard all day long to provide for the family.

As wives, we are not to not always wants things to our expectation. We have to accept them in different ways. So wives, let us not complain about our hus-

bands. Dr Wayne Mack mentioned in one of his seminars that complaining about our husbands is tantamount to GOSSIP! Think about that!

God's word is very clear in Ephesians 5 regarding the hierarchy of the godly home. Just like in any establishment where there is a leader who makes decision and has a team of followers, the home functions similarly but in a smaller scale. The wife is to give due respect to her husband as head of the house and he in turn is also to seek his wife's view and make wise decisions for the whole family.

Through the past six and half years of marriage, I am thankful that God has shown me through His Word how a godly wife should be like. She is not selfish and demands her husband to love her the way she expects. Instead she is to be a life partner that works together with her husband to promote all things for God's glory and one who would spur her partner to more growth in the Lord. I must confess I am far from being one but each day, as I live *Coram Deo*, before the face of God, I am taking baby steps towards that goal. It is only when I first deny myself, pick up the cross and submit to God, then can God work in my life, and mould me to be the submissive obedient wife that He wants me to be. - JK

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