



Framework Honor

Adapted from “Flip this House” series by Sam Rijfkoogel

When one hears the word submission it causes many reactions. This word has been misunderstood and abused over the years.

I am a recovering controlling husband. My wife, Jan, and I have dealt with power and control issues throughout our 28 years of marriage, but things reached a new low during my years working as a psychologist in the federal prison system. I began to bring the darkness of the prison environment home with me, and my wife and sons were the closest targets for my anger and frustration.

Then one day when I came home from the prison, I heard my younger son demanding that my wife make him something to eat. Not five minutes later, my older son came down the stairs and demanded Jan take him to a basketball practice. I started to lecture them both: “Don’t talk to your mother that way! You better start showing her some respect.

For many years, I had manipulated and controlled Jan to get what I wanted. For instance, when I would ask Jan where she wanted to go to dinner, I was more interested in starting a conversation about having barbecue than truly wanting to know where she would like to go. When I asked her if I could watch the football game on Sunday afternoon, it was more of a statement than a question.

This issue came down to selflessness versus selfishness. I *had* to learn to prioritize my wife over myself. As Christian husbands, we’re all called to a higher standard that includes laying down our lives for our wives (see Ephesians 5:25). We *have* to learn to make our wife our priority.

There is hope: Identifying power and control issues in your marriage is the first big step in transformation. God didn’t remove my selfish nature that day I saw myself in my sons’ behavior. I still have to make a conscious decision, every day, to think of Jan’s needs before my own.

Even if you don't believe you are a controlling guy, choose to let your wife share her heart with you. Stay silent . . . listen until she is completely finished—not just until you get distracted and start thinking about what you want to say in response to her comments. Encourage your wife to tell you when she feels you are not listening. Ask her to hold you accountable and not hide her feelings because she's afraid of your response.

You can make a commitment today to stop fighting for what you want. Then you and your wife can feel more like teammates than adversaries; and love, intimacy and trust can flourish.¹

God has a desire for you to have a proper understanding about true submission. When you understand this properly, joy will be found in your life. Also, it will release blessings that you cannot imagine.

¹ Ron Welch, "A Husband's Selfishness," Focus on the Family, 2014, <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/marriage/strengthening-your-marriage/a-husbands-selfishness> (accessed July 6, 2017).

COURAGE

C1: What is your understanding of submission in a relationship?

C2: How do you think submission fits into the framework of a relationship?

C3: If you are married, sit down with your spouse this week for fifteen to thirty minutes and ask her to explain to you her view of submission. You cannot say a word but listen. What did you glean from this conversation?

- Whether married or not, pray for twenty-one days, asking God to help you either understand biblical submission and/or to strengthen you in the area of submission.

STRENGTH

S1: Submission is not a popular thing in our culture and it is not politically correct. Please read and answer the following.

Colossians 3:18 (ESV)

- What do you glean from this verse?

Ephesians 5:21 (ESV)

- What do you glean from this verse?

- How do these two verses fit together?

S2: If you will serve your spouse's mission, you will see your own mission fulfilled. Read and answer the following.

Ephesians 5:22 (ESV)

- What do you glean from this scripture?

- If you are married, sit down with your spouse this week for thirty minutes and ask her to explain this verse to you from her perspective. Do not respond, instead listen. What did you glean from this conversation?

- Whether married or not, for the next twenty-one days, spend time in prayer asking God to help you understand this verse from His perspective.

S3: Submission is not inferiority just as authority is not superiority. Read and answer the following.

1 Corinthians 11:3 (ESV)

- What do you glean from this verse?

- If you are married, sit down with your spouse this week and spend thirty minutes listening to her explain her understanding of this verse. What did you glean from this conversation?

- Whether married or not, spend twenty-one days in prayer asking the God to help you walk out this verse the way He intended.

ENDURANCE

E1: Honor reflects living united with the Lord. Honor requires speaking that uplifts lives. Read and answer the following.

Colossians 3:18 (ESV)

- Look up the word “fitting” in a Bible dictionary. What does this word mean?
- If you are married, sit down with your wife for thirty minutes this week and discuss this verse. Ask her to explain her understanding of this verse. Then, explain your understanding of this verse.
- List different ways you can be respectful to your spouse and how you can honor each other.

E2: Honor releases blessings that are unlimited in your life. Read **Mark 6:1-6 (ESV)** and answer the following.

- From these verses why could Jesus not do miracles?
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very high and 4 being not very high, rate how well you honor your spouse. Write out a plan to improve.
- If you are married, sit down with your wife this week and for thirty minutes discuss this verse. Ask her for her thoughts and reflections. Make sure you talk about honor and its impact on doing great things. What did you glean from this conversation?

- Whether married or planning one day to be married, spend twenty-one days praying for ways to learn how to honor your spouse.

E3: Meet with three men in the next two weeks. Discuss this lesson on submission and honor. What did you glean from this conversation?