

Ordination, Subordination & Superordination..

1. Introduction: The Need to Know What System is in Operation.

System 1.

Known as the **traditional theology** of subordination and super-ordination. Creation had (has) innate to it orders called hierarchical. These relate to husband and wife, parents and children, families, and structures for nations. Typified by I Cor. 1 1:1-16 (esp. v.3), and found in Ephes. 5:21-6:9, 1 Cor 14:34-36, 1 Tim. 2:8-15, Titus 2:3-5. In this system there is a male leadership in the family and the church. Women are able to exercise ministry, but not to take leadership, i.e. eldership. Subordination does not mean inferiority. Husband and wife can be one in mutual complementarity, whilst having differentiation is gender. (See -The Man and The Woman).

System 2.

Known as **egalitarian theology**. All mankind is equal before God. Any authority system which exists is there because of the fall. Whilst it is true that husbands rule wives as part of the 'curse', yet that was predicted, not appointed. The Gospel reverses this. Gal. 3:28 makes it clear that distinctions of male and female, Jew and Greek, slave and free no longer count. Whilst (I Cor 1 1:3) there is 'headship' yet it pertains to source *oir* 'origin', and not to authority. All have ministry, women can lead as well as men, and be part of the eldership-pastoral personnel.

2. Evaluation of These Systems.

As we have said before, 'hidden agenda' makes this difficult. Only those living in the fullness of justification will have nothing to prove. If one of these systems is Biblical we need to accept it, personal predisposition towards another, notwithstanding.

3. The Biblical Principle of Authority.

Rom. 13:1 says authorities are ordained of God. Col. 1:16 says all authorities were created, i.e. prior to the fall of man. Gen. 1:16-19 speaks of 'rule' also prior to the fall. Man is to have lordship over the creation (Gen. 1:28f, cf. Psalm 8:5f.). **Headship** as in 1 Cor 11:3 is creational (ontological), not the result of the fall. Gen. 1:31 shows that all creation is good (*tob*), i.e. functional. It is not *tob* for man to be alone: it is functional to have woman. Man has headship of woman, and in this sense she is subordinate , cf. I Tim. 2:12-13, 1 Pet 3:5, Eph 5:21.

The term 'submissiveness' (*huptage*), and

the verb 'to submit' (*hupotasso*) in its active, middle, passive and aorist forms means 'to place under, subordinate, to be subordinated, to subordinate oneself, render obedience be submissive'.

Following are some of the **uses of the verb.**

- Jesus submitting himself *to his parents*. (Luke 2:51).
- The demons being subjected to the apostles. Luke 10:17-19
- Principalities powers and 'all things' to Christ. Eph.1:21-22; 1 Pet 3:22; 1 Cor.15:24-27 (cf. Psalm 8:5,110:1); Heb. 2:5-8 (cf. Heb. 1:3, 10:13).
- Christians to authorities. Rom. 13:1-7, I Pet. 2:13f., Titus 3:1.
- Wives to husbands. Col. 3:18; Eph 5:22-24; I Pet. 3:1; Titus 2:5.
- Children of God to 'the Father of spirits'. Heb. 12:9.
- Members of the body to each other. Ephes. 5:21.
- The younger men to the elders. I Pet. 5:5.
- Members to 'good men', fellow workers and labourers. I Cor. 16:16.
- The church to Christ. Eph 5:24.
- Spirits of the prophets to prophets. I Cor. 14:32.
- Servants to masters. I Pet. 2:18.
- Slaves to masters. Titus 2:9.
- The creation to vanity. Rom. 8:20.
- Sin (negatively) to the law. Rom. 8:7.

The noun is used of:-Women as subordinate, I Cor. 13:34-Children as submissive, I Tim. 3:4. 'Obedience in acknowledging 'the Gospel of Christ', II Cor. 9:13. Non-yielding where the Gospel is in peril. Gal. 2:5.

Also related to subjection and submission is obedience. In Titus 2:9 slaves are to be subject to their masters. In Col. 3:22 they are to obey (vb. *hupakouo*) their masters. In this case, if we bring these two references together subjection calls for obedience. In Heb. 13:17 (cf. 13:7) obedience (vb. *peitharcho*) and submission (vb. *hupеiko* 'to yield, give way, be submissive') are linked. In this case the church is to obey its rulers (elders).

'All Things are of God.' (I Cor 11: 2, II Cor 5:18).

Ray Anderson speaks of Christ's 'ontological joy of Sonship'. All things are ontological (rooted in God's reality) or are provisional, e.g. man's ruling his wife through the curse, the curse (etc.). We need then to go to the ontological, i.e. The Man and The Woman, The Father, the Son, the Bride the Bridegroom etc. to see (a) we cannot change thee things by cultural or theological 'advance' or 'correction'. We see the following:-

- (i) The Father commanded His Son, and he obeyed with 'ontological joy'.
- (ii) Christ commanded his disciples, and commands his People (The Bride) and they obey with ontological joy.
- (iii) Whilst God is Spirit and hence not 'sexual' yet He and His Son are 'masculine' and their masculinity is headship (Father of Christ, Christ of the church) hence the man is head of the wife headship contains both origin (See Gen 2:18-24 for man) and superordination. Man and woman know ontological joy when they share their vocation as the 'one-flesh' unity as do The Bride and The Bridegroom. It must be constantly reiterated that subordination is not superiority nor superordination superiority.