

Introduction/Background: There is no more difficult subject to talk about than submission. The Bible specifically calls us into accountability with the practical realities that all of us face as followers of Christ living in a fallen world. In the realm of submission, Peter identifies this accountability as: submit to every ordinance of man (1 Peter 2:13), be submissive to your masters (employers) with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh (1 Peter 2:18), wives submit to your husbands (1 Peter 3:1), husbands, likewise, dwell with understanding and honor our wives, (1 Peter 3:7), young people submit to your elders and all of you to one another clothed with humility (1 Peter 5:5), and finally, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you (1 Peter 5:6-7).

1 Peter 2:13-25

(NKJV - emphasis and clarity added)

- (13) Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme,
- (14) or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.
- (15) *For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—*
- (16) as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.
- (17) Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear (Reverence) God. Honor the king.
- (18) Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.
- (19) For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.
- (20) For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.
- (21) *For to this you (as a believer) were called*, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:
- (22) “Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth”;
- (23) who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;
- (24) who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.
- (25) For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Peter 3:1, 7

(NKJV - emphasis added)

- (1) Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

- (7) Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, *that your prayers may not be hindered.*

1 Peter 5:5-7
(NKJV - emphasis added)

- (5) Husbands, *likewise*, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered, and *be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."*
- (6) *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,*
- (7) *casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

Why Submit? "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 'Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth'; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed." (1 Peter 2:21-24)

Central to the whole concept of submission is the answer to the question: *"Is God bigger than everything else that happens to us, around us, or at us? Is He bigger than all of those things that would cause us to call into question the unchangeableness of His nature and the certainty of His promises?"* **Is God bigger than that? That's the question.** If He is, will the resolution of the problem be by the genius of our style, our manipulation, our retaliation, our argumentation? Will the genius be by what we bring of our own strength to the situation? *OR*, will the genius of the resolution be the way God will ultimately and conclusively win? *AND*, God having irrefutably won, will we be beside Him and be victor with Him?

Submission is not required to go to Heaven, but without it we miss introducing the dimensions of Heaven into this world. Jesus didn't just come to get us to Heaven; but, as much as we allow, to get Heaven here. Heaven really only opens up here when we learn the spirit of submission.

1 Peter 2:13 -- *Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake,* (NKJV - emphasis added)

1 Peter 2:13 -- *In order to honor the Lord, you must respect and defer to the authority of every human institution,* (TPT - emphasis added)

1 Peter 2:18 -- *Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear* (respect), not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. (NKJV - emphasis and clarity added)

1 Peter 2:19-20
(NKJV - emphasis added)

- (19) For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.
- (20) For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? *But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.*

Wisdom Point: The assurance of your fulfilled destiny is never realized by the insistence of your rights! But, it is realized by our willingness to lay them down and to believe that God won't forget to see that we ultimately receive what is right.

1 Peter 2:21 -- *For to this* (submission) *you* (as a believer) *were called*, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: (NKJV - emphasis and clarity added)

Wisdom Point: He left us an example: VS. 21-23.

1 Peter 2:22-23
(NKJV - emphasis and clarity added)

(22) "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth";

(23) who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

Wisdom Point: Submission is the consummate test of our faith! It is submission that declares: *"God is bigger than my problem!"*

TRUTHS CONCERNING SUBMISSION THAT WE ARE CHALLENGED TO EMBRACE:

I. Defuse (false concepts of what submission is.)

A. The myth is that submission is a dehumanizing means of making people a doormat to anybody. The reality is that God has instituted submission as a means of establishing our personhood through the promise of God's power in our lives.

B. Submission is passive. Submission is an aggressive trust in the One who has the power to make all things work together for good. During the civil rights movement, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led with a strong submission to God who loves justice.

C. Submission cannot be imposed on you. True submission is something that is given from the heart. Submission can never be forced on you. You can be subjected by force to someone or something, but true submission requires a voluntary surrender of your rights for the sake of others.

Wisdom Point: Submission forces us to answer this question in each part of our life; "Who do you finally trust?"

II. Define. The definition of submission is essentially based on a military term that says if you position your troops right, if you strategically arrange them in the right way, not only will all the troop be protected, but they will be mutually protective. They take care of each other. I can't defend myself and I'm depending on you to protect me. The military concept is not only to protect one another, but that everyone will win.

A. In order for me to protect you, I have to lay my life down. If I am committed to the principle of submission, it means for your protection it might cost me. It brings us back to the cross. Jesus lays His life down because His long range objective is not the protection of Himself. It's the

protection of those very people who have beaten Him and affirmed capital punishment for the One who refused to defend Himself.

- B. The military term for submission includes the thought that all might come to victory together .** That's what Jesus has done!

III. Deploy -- how submission manifests power in our lives:

- A. Regarding civil government -- don't criticize -- Pray!** The Bible says that our assignment is to pray for those who are in government.
- B. With our employers -- don't complain -- Serve!** No matter how difficult the situation becomes in the workplace we need to decide if God is bigger and allow submission to become our point of recourse.
- C. When we are mistreated -- don't be surprised -- Praise!** We follow a Savior who was mistreated too! So praise Him, that's not pretending; it's recognizing that some of the things that happen to us when we have been unfairly treated are things that transcend.
- D. Wives -- don't defend -- Trust!** Trust that your husband is trying harder than you think he's trying to help make things work. Trust that through him God can do something in you!
- E. As husbands -- don't exploit -- Honor!** Seek to understand your wife. "Stand under" and look up to her and honor her. This is actually more demanding than submission.
- F. As children -- don't rebel or disobey -- Submit!** Submit to your parents. An attitude of rebellion (sometimes long after parents are gone) will rob you of a long life due to a festering "cancer" in your emotions that your body cannot tolerate.
- G. With your brothers and sisters -- don't compete -- Assist!** Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." (1 Peter 5:6)
- H. Don't live life in a self-developed struggle -- Surrender!** Casting all of your care upon Him, for He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7)!

Conclusion: With Christ as our example, we submit to Him willingly from our hearts with joy and praise. Through the spirit of submission we know that beyond anything that happens to us, our "God is bigger and is completely committed to the fulfillment of our destiny. With confidence and trust we cast all our cares upon Him!