

Fairview Memorial Missionary Baptist Church

Winter Bible Study

January 27, 2018, Lesson One

Prepared by Elder Jeff Moran

BIBLICAL SUBMISSION

I. Introduction

Because human beings have a strong self-will, we are naturally averse to submission. Sadly, this inclination is becoming more and more prevalent in our society. As the defiant voices of self-assertion and entitlement grow louder, it seems the virtue and benefits of biblical submission are being squelched. Through this lesson, we hope to gain a better understanding of what the Bible teaches about it, its relevance in life, and why it is essential to being Christ-like.

II. Definition

The word *submission* means accepting or yielding to a superior force or to the will or authority of another, and is the noun form of the word *submit*, which is of Latin derivation: sub (under) + mittere (send, put) = to put under. Today's topic is closely related to obedience, yet different; for before a person voluntarily obeys, he decides to forsake his own will in deference to one with greater authority.

III. Children to Parents

One of the most important life lessons that a child can learn is to respect and submit to authority, and this begins at home. Eph. 6:1 and Col. 3:20 teach that it is pleasing to God for children to honor their parents and submit to their will. By teaching children to submit in family relationships, we prepare them to do so in other situations, such as in school where they are expected to respect and obey teachers and administrators. Many of the problems in today's schools could be prevented, if parents would teach their children about the need to submit.

IV. Wives to Husbands

This teaching is not a popular one, yet it is what the Bible says in Eph. 5:22, Col. 3:18 and I Pet. 3:1, 5-6. Unfortunately, the Women's Movement, which did bring certain beneficial changes, contributed heavily to an altered societal view of the husband-wife relationship. As we've strayed from the roles that God intended for husbands and wives, the rate of divorce and single-parent families has increased. When the example at home is not biblical, children are likely to pursue a rebellious life of self-will.

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VIII. Of Flesh to the Spirit

Submitting our flesh to the Spirit is an important element in the sanctification process. In I Cor. 9:27, Paul said "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." The ESV version puts it this way: "I discipline my body and keep it under control." Paul also spoke of this struggle in Rom. 7, and wrote in 8:13 that we need to mortify (put to death) the deeds of the body through the Spirit.

IX. Of Church to Christ

Eph. 1:22-23 and 5:24 teach us that the church is subject unto Christ. As the savior of the body, Jesus is also the head of the church (v. 23) and His doctrines are supreme. No one has the authority to alter the offices, government, teachings or practices set forth by the author and finisher of our faith. In fact, II Jn. 8-11 tells us we are to reject anyone who comes peddling doctrines different from those of Jesus.

X. Of Minority to Majority

It is the duty of the minority to submit to the will of the majority in a Baptist church. II Cor. 2:6 says "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many." J.M. Pendleton explains that a literal translation of the phrase "of many" would be "by the more," by the greater number, or by the majority. In so doing, matters can be dispensed with and the unity of the church preserved.

XI. To Elders/Pastors

Heb. 13:17 gives the following instruction: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." Also, in I Tim. 5:17, we are urged to "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." With belief that our pastors are Spirit-placed, and confidence that they are being led of God in the discharge of their duties, we have an obligation to submit to them and heed the messages they deliver from the Lord.

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V. Youth to Elders

I Pet. 5:5 and Tit. 2:3-4 teaches the young to respect wisdom and experience, and submit to the teaching of those who are older.

VI. Citizens to The Law/Government

Rom. 13:1-7 and I Pet. 2:13-14 teach us to obey the laws of the land and submit to those in authority. This includes obeying traffic laws, paying taxes, obtaining necessary permits/licenses, reporting for jury duty, and when necessary, registering for the draft. Unless a law is contrary to the Word of God, we are instructed to comply, recognizing that its authority is commissioned by the Lord.

VII. Submission to God

As we move into the area of submission to God, it is important to note that it involves three elements:

- humility - acknowledgement of a greater authority;
- sacrifice - resignation of self and self-will; and
- obedience - compliance and performance of what is required.

A. For Salvation

Is. 55:6-8 admonishes the unsaved to forsake his wicked ways and unrighteous thoughts, and return to the Lord where he can find mercy and pardon. Heb. 3:15 says we should not harden our hearts, but yield to the voice that is calling us to repent and trust in Jesus.

B. For Direction in Life

Once we are saved and the children of God, we must submit to our Father's will and the instruction of His Word if we want to enjoy His blessings and avoid chastisement. Lu. 6:46 says "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" I Cor. 6:19-20 reminds us that "Know ye not that ...ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price..." Ja. 4:7 says "Submit yourselves therefore to God." Mt. 6:10 says "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Heb. 12:9 asks "...shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" And Lu. 9:24 declares "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

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XII. To Each Other

Eph. 5:21 and I Pet. 5:5 teach that we should all submit to one another in a spirit of humility. When we consider others above ourselves, as taught in Phil. 2:3, we display one of the most attractive features of God's love - "seeketh not her own." (I Cor. 13:5)

Conclusion

When we think about submission, the ultimate role model is, of course, the Lord Jesus. In Mt. 26:36-42, we see him in Gethsemane, agonizing over the fate that awaited him. His flesh dreaded the suffering that lay ahead, and in his first prayer, we hear his preference to avoid it, if there was another way for salvation to be brought down. But by the time of his second prayer, his initial words "if it be possible, let this cup pass" (in v. 39) had changed to "if this cup may not pass" (in v. 42). It seems He received his answer, and His desire for the Father's will to prevail brought about complete submission.

While we will never face a dilemma of this magnitude, the example Christ set for us, is worthy of emulation no matter what our issue may be. May God give us the grace, humility and wisdom to yield our will to His, and ever live the surrendered life that brings honor and glory to our Heavenly Father.