

Sunday, June 7, 2015

**“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”
(James 4:7)**

There are few topics that will stir people up faster than the topic of “submission.” It is in our warp and woof to not be under authority. Not submitting to the command of God was the sin of our first parents in the Garden, and that sin continues to dwell in us. We see it from the time that children are able to express themselves, to old age. Human beings, to one degree or another, simply do not want to submit.

The Greek word that we find in the New Testament that is most often translated as some form of “submit” is “hupotasso”, which is a military term meaning “to put under” or “to arrange in order under.” The image is of soldiers being arranged under a higher ranking officer, and on up the chain of command. Everyone has his own place, and yields to the higher authority. There are several types of relationships on this earth that God, by His wise command and will, has put us in, and has commanded that we be in submission. Overarching all of those, of course, is submission to God. We have to humble ourselves under His authority. We have to willingly and joyfully follow His commands with reverence, and likewise yield to His providence that falls out before us day by day. When we are in willing, godly submission as God commands us to be in our earthly relationships, we are submitting to God; when we are not, we are rebelling against God. And if you refuse to submit, can it be for any reason other than your deceitful, desperately wicked heart? (Jeremiah 17:9). At least one of the following sins is prevailing in you: strife, vainglory, contempt, pride, self-will, vanity, carnal-mindedness, self-righteousness, unruliness, deceit. To some extent, you are joining those wicked men and saying, “We will not have this man to reign over us.” (Luke 19:14)

The question is, what does God require of us? And we will find that out by searching the scriptures. The Lord willing, today, I would like to put you in remembrance of the following:

1. Children must submit to their parents.
2. Wives must submit to their husbands.
3. Servants must submit to their masters.
4. Citizens must submit to the government authorities that God has put in place.
5. Women must be in subjection in the church.
6. Members of the church must submit to the elders in the church.
7. Members of the church must submit to one another.

Before we go into each of these, there are a few things to be said. First, all submission in these earthly relationships takes second place to our submission to God: “We ought to obey

God rather than men.” (Acts 5:29). That is, nobody should be following a command that would cause them to sin. Second, submission involves an attitude of respect, willingness, thankfulness, sincerity and deference. If you are doing something begrudgingly and with murmuring, you may be obedient by the strict definition of the word, but you are not being submissive. Third, while I’m focusing primarily on the submissive side of things in this sermon, there are requirements on the part of the person who holds the authority as well, and I will mention some of those also.

Children must submit to their parents

“And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.” (Luke 2:51)

Here we have Jesus Christ setting the example of how a child should behave – He was in submission to His parents. Gill describes it as “yielding a ready and cheerful obedience to their commands.” And in some mysterious way, even God the Son will be subject to God the Father:

“And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” (1 Corinthians 15:28)

Those of you children who are still under the authority of your parents, you are to obey your parents in all things that are not sinful or unlawful, and in all things indifferent. You are to humbly submit under their reproofs and chastening, and consider that they are looking out for your good. And you should extend this same spirit of submission to anyone whose care you are under.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:1-4)

“Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children *to anger*, lest they be discouraged.” (Colossians 3:20-21)

God commanded it. It is well pleasing to Him. What other reason do you need?

And what if you have godless parents? Remember, God put you in that position in His wisdom. Your duty still remains.

On the other side of this, we have the fathers, who are not to provoke their children to wrath. We can do this by being too hard, or by being too lenient and doting on them. Charles Spurgeon, in a discourse on idolatry, said: "Favourite children are often the cause of much sin in believers; the Lord is grieved when He sees us doting upon them above measure; they will live to be as great a curse to us as Absalom was to David, or they will be taken from us to leave our homes desolate. If Christians desire to grow thorns to stuff their sleepless pillows, let them dote on their dear ones."

**"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."
(Proverbs 13:24)**

Wives must submit to their husbands

An unbelievable number of words have been written and spoken to try to explain this away, but it is the clear teaching of the scripture. This union of man and wife was the first human institution on earth, created by God. And even before the Fall, there was this concept of headship:

"For Adam was first formed, then Eve." (1 Timothy 2:13)

"And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.*" (Genesis 2:18)

After the Fall, the subjection to her husband became part of the woman's curse:

"Thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." (Genesis 3:16)

That is, whether or not her desire prevails will be dependent on her husband's wishes.

Matthew Henry says: "This sentence amounts only to that command, *Wives, be in subjection to your own husbands*; but the entrance of sin has made that duty a punishment, which otherwise it would not have been. If man had not sinned, he would always have ruled with wisdom and love; and, if the woman had not sinned, she would always have obeyed with humility and meekness; and then the dominion would have been no grievance: but our own sin and folly make our yoke heavy...those wives who not only despise and disobey their husbands, but domineer over them, do not consider that they not only violate a divine law, but thwart a divine sentence."

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in

every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it... This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence *her* husband.” (Ephesians 5:22-25, 32-33)

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them.” (Colossians 3:18-19)

“That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.” (Titus 2:4-5)

“Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” (1 Peter 3:1-7)

This is how God has arranged things, so don't kick against it. It is the job of the husband to rule his house, and set the policies in his house, and it is the job of the wife to follow them in submission. She should not undermine him. She should not be legalistic about it, but rather follow the spirit of it. She should not do things behind her husband's back to try to circumvent them. She should not be contentious, brawling and angry:

“*It is* better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.” (Proverbs 21:9)

“*It is* better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.” (Proverbs 21:19)

“A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.” (Proverbs 27:15)

I am not saying, however, that she must be silently and blindly obedient. There cannot be any tyranny on the part of the husband. You husbands are sinners too, and may be playing the fool. How can your wife be a help meet for you if she does not help you in spiritual things, and get you back when you've gone off the rails?

The wife is to submit to the husband, reverence him, love him, be obedient to him. And the husband is to love the wife, not be bitter against her, and give honor to her. Remember that your marriage is a symbol of Christ and the church, and behave accordingly. Wives – are you subject to your husbands like the church is subject to Christ? Husbands – are you loving your wives as Christ loved the church? This is especially important to consider in this generation, when the marriage covenant has been thrown down and trampled upon.

And what about an unbelieving husband or wife? We have direction for that in 1 Corinthians 7. As long as you're in a marriage, though, "wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands."

Servants must submit to their masters

A servant can either be a bond servant or a free servant. The way that this affects us at this time in this place is at our jobs. Most of us who are old enough to make a living, by God's providence, are in this servant/master relationship.

"Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." (1 Peter 2:18-19)

"*Exhort* servants to be obedient unto their own masters, *and* to please *them* well in all *things*; not answering again; Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." (Titus 2:9-10)

"Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him." (Ephesians 6:5-9)

"Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as

to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. Masters, give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.”
(Colossians 3:22-25, 4:1)

“Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and *his* doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise *them*, because they are brethren; but rather do *them* service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.” (1 Timothy 6:1-2)

John Brown says “servants are to be obedient to the commands of their master; that is, they are to do what their master bids them, in the way in which he requires it to be done, to the best of their ability...servants ought to take care not to withhold obedience to a just command, from a pretended regard to conscience, when the true cause of their non-compliance is their sloth or self-indulgence...This obedience, which is due by servants to their masters, ought to be characterized by respectfulness, faithfulness, diligence, and cheerfulness.”

How we behave in our work environments may seem like a minor thing, but this is a command of God. Gill says “The honour and glory of God, and of Christ, and of his gospel, is concerned herein, that his name and doctrine be not blasphemed, by a contrary behavior; but that the gospel, and a profession of it, be adorned by a suitable conduct.” Don’t forget the examples we have, as Jacob with Laban, and Joseph with Potiphar. Or our Savior Himself, who “took upon Him the form of a servant.” (Philippians 2:7).

And those of you who also play the master role, remember that your Master is in heaven.

Citizens must submit to the government authorities that God has put in place

We are required to acknowledge the authority of the governments that we are under, and to submit to whatever laws are in place.

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in

vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.” (Romans 13:1-7)

“Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.” (Titus 3:1)

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.” (1 Peter 2:13-15)

“And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.” (Luke 20:25)

We have firsthand experience with different branches of the government abusing their power, from police officers issuing unlawful orders, to legislatures passing unconstitutional laws, to judges establishing new laws with their Satanic opinions. But we are to submit to these earthly governments for the Lord's sake in at least three ways: 1. Because He commanded it. 2. Because of His example. “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1 Peter 2:21). 3. For His cause. Our actions as law-abiding citizens speak volumes for the cause of God and truth.

And if the time comes where we cannot submit to a law because following it will cause us to sin, then we must humbly submit to whatever the punishment is.

“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be *so*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver *us* out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” (Daniel 3:16-18)

If God has placed such an importance on submitting to human governments, consider how much more we should be submitting to the laws of God.

Women must be in subjection in the church

When we were picketing the Gay Christian Network Conference earlier this year in Portland, a counter-demonstrator held a sign that said “love your neighbor.” I asked her if she knew where that came from in the Bible and how you’re supposed to love your neighbor, and she didn’t know. What she did know, however, was that “you shouldn’t be preaching fear.” I told her “you know, Paul, over in 2 Corinthians, said ‘*Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*’” She said that she doesn’t read what Paul says because “he was kind of a misogynist.” That, my friends, is the doctrine of the world. The verses about the subjection of women in the church, along with the verses about wives being in subjection to their husbands, make these people lose their minds. Forsaking these verses has paved the way for fags to embed themselves in so-called churches all over the world. Despite what all of the promoters of the latest transgender nonsense would have you believe, the Bible teaches that there are two genders, and there are different roles for those genders. (Note: God won’t take your chromosome away).

“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”
(1 Timothy 2:10-14)

“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.” (1 Corinthians 14:34-35)

Those verses mean what they say, and despite all of the efforts to discredit them, there they stand as a testimony against the vast majority of so-called “Christian” churches today.

Members of the church must submit to the elders in the church

There is no doubt that this is the command of God, but I will start this section with an explanatory quote from John Brown: “It is not to the arbitrary will of your elders that you are bound to submit. It is to them declaring and executing the will of Christ...If elders teach doctrine inconsistent with the doctrine of Christ, or enjoin anything inconsistent with His law, they are not to be submitted to, but on the contrary opposed; opposed to the face, for they are to be blamed. But when the Christian eldership keep themselves within the proper bounds of their office, it is the duty of all private members of the society to submit to and obey them; and they cannot do otherwise without disturbing the peace of the society, interfering with the edification both of themselves and of their fellow church members, and

drawing down upon themselves that disapprobation with which the one Lord, who is the Author of order and not confusion must regard all who resist His ordinances.”

“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder.” (1 Peter 5:5)

“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.” (Hebrews 13:17)

An elder in a church has two main functions: teaching and oversight, and members of the church should submit to their elders in both of these capacities. To submit to them as teachers, you listen, pay attention and take to heart what they say when they preach, and when they talk to you privately. Again, Brown says: “Instead of taking offence when the elder in teaching comes very close to his conscience, the church member should readily and thankfully receive ‘the reproof’ which gives ‘wisdom;’ and, instead of rising in inward rebellion against the preacher, should accept the warning and rebuke which through his instrumentality is administered by his Master and ours.” To submit to them as overseers, understand that they are watching for your souls, and that they will watch for them knowing that they will have to give account to God. That means that he will make inquiries to see how you are doing spiritually. Don’t think that he is being intrusive. Brown: “The inquiries of the elder should be kindly taken, as originating in a desire to preserve a good conscience to himself, and to promote the highest interests both of the individual and of the society. And when he finds it necessary to exhort, and warn, and even rebuke privately, all this proceeding from a regard to Christ’s law, and being, indeed, but an execution of it, is to be met in a becoming spirit, not submitted to as a hardship, but received as a privilege...They watch, they watch for you, they watch for your souls. They watch; their work requires constant solicitude; they must be ever on the alert, to observe danger and prevent evil. They watch for you. Your best interests are the object of their solicitude. They are not watching for their own emolument or fame, but for your happiness. Others are watching against you; they are watching for you. Satan is watching you as a wolf the sheep fold, to steal and to destroy. Your elders watch, as faithful shepherds, to protect and save you. The world is watching you with a malignant eye, waiting for your halting. Your elders are watching, with the solicitude of parents, to keep you from falling. They watch for your souls – for that which is, of all you possess, most precious...Surely those who are benevolently engaged in a work so full of solicitude, and labor to promote your highest interests should not be counteracted by you, as they will be if you be not subject to them in the Lord...Remember that they must give account to Him, recollect what a stake they have in the matter, do not wonder that they should hazard offending you by the discharge of their duty, rather than run the risk of being ashamed before Him at His coming, as they must be if they act not the part of faithful watchmen.”

“And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.” (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

Members of the church must submit to one another

If we have the state of mind as described in Philippians 2, we will naturally submit to one another:

“If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” (Philippians 2:1-4)

“Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.” (Ephesians 5:21)

“Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” (1 Peter 5:5-7)

Brown: “There is a disposition to oblige, a backwardness to occasion pain. While there is a mutual teaching, admonition, and exhortation, there is a mutual submission to instruction, admonition, and exhortation. And while a brother does not so hate his brother in his heart as to suffer sin on him, his brother reproveth says by his conduct, ‘Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head...’ There is a kindly yielding to each other in matters which do not involve conscience; and there is a serving one another in love, a readiness to submit to labor and inconvenience to promote another’s true happiness. Instead of insisting on having everything our own way, we have a satisfaction in pleasing, every one his neighbor, to his edification. We not only bear with the infirmities of our brethren: we bear their infirmities, not pleasing ourselves. We ‘forbear one another in love,’ and ‘seek not every man his own, but every man his neighbor’s wealth.’”

The key to mutual submission within the church is humility.

“When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.” (Proverbs 11:2)

I love you. Amen.