

Submission and Authority, Part 1

Key Verses:

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

John 15:1, 2; 8 - *I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. v.2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.*

v.8 - *By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.*

Objective:

There is a promise for believers of _____ and _____ under God's authority. All authority originates with God. To rebel against authority or to disregard God's appointed authority is to rebel against and disregard God. In this lesson, we will examine the importance of walking in full submission to God.

Scriptural Foundation for Submission

- 1) Submit yourself to _____ first.

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

- 2) Submit yourself to your _____.

Hebrews 13:17 - *Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.*

- 3) Submit yourself to _____ authority.

1 Peter 2:13 NIV - *Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority...*

Protection

There is a safe place for Christians who know how to live under the cover of God's authority.

Psalm 91:1 - *He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.*

1) _____ is how we remain under God's cover.

Matthew 28:18-20 NIV - *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All _____ in heaven and on earth has been given to me. v.19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, v.20 and teaching them to _____ everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

2) Adam and Eve enjoyed _____ and _____ in the garden under God's cover.

The moment they rebelled against God, they found themselves trying to cover the shame of their sin.

Genesis 3:7 NIV - *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*

3) The Bible is full of examples illustrating how rebellion resulted in the loss of protection.

a) Cain rebelled against God's plan for the type of offering that would be accepted. Sin captured his heart and in jealousy, he killed his brother and he was driven out from the presence of God (Read Genesis 4).

Genesis 4:11-16 - *And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. v.12 When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." v.13 Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. v.14 Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me. v.15 Then the Lord said to him, "Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him. v.16 Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden*

- b) Noah's son, Ham disrespected his father's authority and it resulted in a curse on his descendants (Read Genesis 9:20-27).
- c) King Saul usurped the authority of the priest by offering a sacrifice and it cost him his kingdom (Read 1 Samuel 13:10-14).
- d) When Ananias and Sapphira lied to Peter about an offering, it was the same as lying to the Holy Ghost and it cost them their lives (Read Acts 5:1-11).
- e) Church discipline at the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 5)

1 Corinthians 5:1 NIV - *It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father's wife.*

Notice the authority of the church to discipline a sexually rebellious member.

1 Corinthians 5:5 NIV - *...hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.*

Fruitfulness

The fruitfulness of a believer's life is determined by many things. Purity, devotion, and effort are all important qualities of a productive disciple. However, the attitude of sub-

mission is the one characteristic that stands out above all others.

A quick study of the life and ministry of the apostle Paul:

- 1) Paul was zealously fighting against God's true authority (Acts 9) and he was struck down and blinded by Jesus. He was submitting to the wrong authority.
- 2) Paul had to submit to Ananias and some unknown disciple in Damascus in order to recover his sight (Acts 9:17-19).

Note: Saul of Tarsus stayed with the little known disciples for days and he submitted to them and learned from them.

- 3) After being discipled in Damascus, he went to submit himself to the _____ in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26, 27).
- 4) The apostle Paul was not placed in an office immediately after he was saved. Rather, he went through a period of _____.
 - a) Paul voluntarily submitted to other believers. Then he voluntarily went and visited the apostles in Jerusalem.
 - b) He would later teach Timothy to make sure people who want to serve in the churches go through a period of testing.

1 Timothy 3:10 - And let them also be tested first; then let them serve...

- 5) Once Paul passed the test of faithfulness by helping the apostles, he was promoted to the office of a _____ (Acts 11:25, 26).

Barnabas recruited and trained Paul in ministry for several years.

- 6) After passing the test as a teacher, Paul was commissioned with Barnabas into the _____ church planting ministry.

Acts 13:2, 3 - *While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." v.3 Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.*

REFLECT

1. What does an umbrella in a hailstorm and being under spiritual authority have in common?
2. Authority in the church is very different than worldly authority. Leaders in the church are first and foremost, servant leaders. How does this affect your submission to godly leaders?
3. Discuss how a person can experience freedom through submission.
4. Why is obedience crucial to remaining under God's covering?
5. Can you think of a time when you submitted to an authority figure when you disagreed and it worked out for your good?

ACT

Meditate on this scripture this week and try to commit it to memory: Hebrews 13:17 ESV

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.



SOMEWHERE ON PURPOSE