

THE SUBMISSION PARADOX

We submit to God and each other because it is right and pleasing in His eyes. Paradoxically, these acts of submission lead to greatness.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ Submission is the act of yielding to the position, role, power and authority of another, in obedience and compliance.
- ❖ To be pleasing to God, submission needs to come from a willing heart. It is more than just acting in rote obedience. We must have:
 - An **UNDERSTANDING** of whom we are submitted to —beginning with the almighty God! He has the right to do whatever He pleases with us. We need to be like clay in His hands.
 - **FAITH** that His way is best! Not just another alternative. Not requiring our approval. Submission to His way is the best possible outcome for our lives.
 - **PLEASURE** in the privilege of having the will of God performed in our lives (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).
 - **JOYOUS** anticipation of the future God has in store for us (Hebrews 12:2).
 - **CONFIDENCE** that God is doing a “good work” in us (Philippians 1:6).
 - **LOVE** for the one we’re submitted to (Deuteronomy 15:12-17; John 14:15; 1 John 5:3).
- ❖ We must understand that this joyous, faith-filled, pleasurable, confident, reasonable submission is not only to an invisible God out there somewhere. It is demonstrated most clearly and practiced most visibly in our interactions with each other.
- ❖ Let us consider a few biblical examples:
 - Jesus the Son of God was submitted to the will of His Father (Luke 22:42; Hebrews 5:6-9).
 - Men are subject to Christ, elders and civil government. (See 1 Corinthians 11:3a; 1 Peter 5:5-6; 1 Peter 2:13-17 [Titus 3:1].)
 - Wives are subject to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22-24; 1 Peter 3:1-2).
 - Children are subject to their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3; [Colossians 3:20]).
 - We all should submit to God (James 4:7; Hebrews 12:9-10).
 - Saints should be in submission to each other and to church leadership (Ephesians 5:21; Hebrews 13:17).
 - Even servants and slaves were instructed to submit to their masters (Colossians 3:22-24; Genesis 16:6-10; Titus 2:9-10).
- ❖ Submission is a critical characteristic for each individual to develop, and one of the most important keys to success in all aspects of life!
- ❖ Now here’s the paradox: We would think that submission makes us weak, but instead it is like the asphalt that paves the road to success and greatness!
- ❖ When a person is meek, humble, submissive and obedient, displaying a positive attitude and acting with dignity and respect toward those in authority (even when they clearly don’t deserve it), unexpected desirable outcomes occur.

KEY SCRIPTURES:

Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 22:42; 1 Peter 2:13-17; Hebrews 12:9-10; James 4:7; Ephesians 5:21; Colossians 3:22-24

- ❖ One of the best examples of how this principle works comes from the life of Joseph (Genesis 37-41). He was hated by his brothers and sold into slavery, wrongfully accused by his slave owner’s wife and thrown into jail. As he demonstrated all of the characteristics listed above, God Himself orchestrated an incredible series of events that culminated in his promotion to Prime Minister of Egypt!
- ❖ David the shepherd to David the king is another great example from the book of 1st Samuel.
- ❖ From the same book we read the story of Saul, the first king of Israel, who allowed pride and disobedience to overcome him, becoming a stark example of how things can quickly fall apart when we leave these principles behind.
- ❖ Of course, the greatest example of all is detailed in the life of our Lord Jesus, whose story is summarized in the ‘Christ hymn’ of Philippians (Philippians 2:5-11).
- ❖ We have no greater example of One who endured every injustice humanity has devised, willingly submitting Himself to the will and plan of God, even at the cost of His own life. Because of this, God highly exalted Him!
- ❖ How should we then live? Begin, or continue to do what we know is right, in full submission to God, His word, His servants, our human masters, and each other.
- ❖ In His own way and in His own time, the Lord will give us the rewards of submission.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. *“Submission is a critical characteristic for each individual to develop, and one of the most important keys to success in life.”*
 - Do you agree/disagree with this statement?
 - Do you consider the act of submitting to another person to be a difficult thing to do?
 - What things cause this difficulty (i.e. attitude, age, character of the other person, etc.)?
2. Read some of the scriptural examples on submission that were given in the lesson and discuss what each has to say (e.g. Heb. 5:6-9).
 - How can we apply them to our lives?
 - In your opinion, (how) can submission lead to greatness?

Prayer Time

“Not my will, but Thine be done.... May this same prayer be mine every day,” Lord, as I submit to Your will and to Your way.

WEEK OF SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2019

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week’s message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) ☁️ (Think about)

👉 (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) ↔️ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

Start-up: Define (or ask your digital assistant) the word “paradox.” What paradoxical statement(s) can you think of?