

Spiritual Practices Submission

Philippians 2:3-8

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷ rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

I. THE FREEDOM IN SUBMISSION

A. Submission Frees Us from Always Needing to Get Our Way

...have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage... (Phil 2:5b-6)

B. Submission Frees Us from A Spirit of Rebellion

he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross! (Phil 2:7-8)

C. Submission Frees Us to Value Other People

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. (Phil. 2:3-4)

II. THE FOUNDATION OF SUBMISSION

A. Self-denial is the Foundation of Submission

Luke 9:23

Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

Luke 17:33

Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it.

B. Self-denial and Self-love are not in Conflict

Matthew 22:39

Love your neighbor as yourself

C. Self-denial Saves us from Self-indulgence and Self-pity

D. Self-denial is a Pre-requisite to Self-fulfilment

Luke 17:33

Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it.

III. THE RADICAL SUBMISSION TAUGHT BY JESUS

A. The Cross-Life of Jesus Undermined All Social Orders Based on Power and Self-interest.

Matthew 20:25-28

Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

John 13:12-15

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. ¹³ “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

B. The Cross-Life of Jesus Is One of Voluntary Submission and Freely Accepted Servanthood.

Philippians 2:5-8

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷ rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

IV. THE RADICAL SUBMISSION TAUGHT IN THE EPISTLES

A. The NT Call for ALL Christians to Live in Submission is Rooted in Christ’s Life of Submission.

He...emptied himself, taking the form of a servant (Phil. 2:4-7).

1 Peter 2:21-23

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.... When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he trusted to him who judges justly.

Eph. 5:21

Submit to one another *out of reverence for Christ*.

B. The NT Call for ALL Christians to Live in Submission is a Consequence of Freedom and Equality in Christ.

Galatians 3:28

There is **neither** Jew **nor** Gentile, **neither slave nor free**, **nor** is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Eph. 5:21

Submit to one another *out of reverence for Christ*.

Wives, be subject to your husbands.... Children, obey your parents....Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters...

Col. 3:18-22

Col. 3:18

...as is fitting in the Lord”

Col. 3:19-4:1

Husbands, love your wives.... Fathers, do not provoke your children.... Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly...

V. The Limits of Submission

A. Radical Subordination Commands Us To Live In Submission to Human Authority until It Becomes Destructive.

The limits of the Discipline of submission are at the points at which it becomes destructive. It then becomes a denial of the law of love as taught by Jesus and is an affront to genuine biblical submission (Matt. 5, 6, and 7 and especially 22:37-39).

Peter calls Christians to radical submission to the State when he writes,

1 Pet. 2:13, 14

Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be the emperor as supreme, or to governors...

Yet when the properly authorized government of his day commanded the infant Church to stop proclaiming Christ, it was Peter who answered,

Acts 4:19, 20

"Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard"

Upon a similar occasion Peter stated simply,

Acts 5:29

"We must obey God rather than men"

Rom. 13:1

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities

B. Defining the Limits of Submission in Difficult Situations Requires Deep Dependence on the Holy Spirit.

VI. ACTS OF SUBMISSION

A. Christians are Called to Submit to the Triune God

B. Christians are Called to Submit to the Word of God

C. Christians are Called to Submit to One Another

- Families
- Church
- Neighbors
- Needy