

Friends,

This week we will investigate what it takes to submit to God, this act of yielding our very being and purpose to our Creator. It requires an attitude of humility and servanthood, attributes looked down on in our society as weakness. If you have ever tried to exercise humility or kindness you realize how truly difficult it can be. Often these actions receive looks of suspicion and doubt.

God the Sovereign Father requires and commands us to bend to His will, to have one God only, and to serve one God only.

Exodus 20:3-4

*You shall have no other gods before Me.*

*You shall not make for yourselves an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.*

For Christians, these two commandments are straight forward and direct. God is requiring absolute submission of us as we live this life here on earth. It seems pretty simple, and yet it can be very difficult. Realizing the total commitment required of us comes with the first breath after baptism. Hearing the words, *the old life has passed away, and a new life has come*, still brings chills to me.

We, like the Israelites coming out of Egyptian slavery, were once wandering in the wilderness. God brought the law to them. Understanding the law brought a realization of what sin was and the penalty of death. Because of who God is and His great love for us, we realize His commitment to us and our wellbeing. He provided a sacrificial system for the Israelites that they may know forgiveness. For us, He gave his Son—the complete sacrifice—so that we might live in forgiveness.

This is the God who demands us to worship only Him. He reveals His great love by graciously showing us His will: That all mankind will know Him, no exception. And that we show His love to others. Solomon tells us in Ecclesiastes 3:9-13:

*<sup>9</sup>What do workers gain from their toil? <sup>10</sup>I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. <sup>11</sup>He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. <sup>12</sup>I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. <sup>13</sup>That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God.*

Have you, like me, wondered about this whole thing called life? The above verses give us a little insight into what God's plan for mankind is. To enjoy the beauty of creation, to

wonder at the mind of the Creator and to be joyful in our relationship with Him as we work alongside Him. He has burdened us with knowledge of eternity. We are eternally with Him or eternally separated from Him. In His awareness of who we are, He knew we would need more instruction than just eat drink and be merry.

The following scripture reveals His plan.

James 4:7-10

*<sup>7</sup>Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup>Come near to God and He will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. <sup>9</sup>Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. <sup>10</sup>Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up.*

Seeking God and His kingdom causes the devil to flee. When we seek the Father's truth, satan can no longer deceive us. Accepting the sacrifice that washes us clean is the first step to yielding our hearts and desires of flesh. Knowing who we once were, separate from God, causes us much pain and anguish. Baring our soul to God with a desire to be one with Him will bring us great joy.

Proverbs 3:5-6

*<sup>5</sup>Trust in the Lord with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
<sup>6</sup>in all your ways acknowledge Him,  
and He will make your paths straight.*

Putting the world aside and seeking the very will of God takes a huge faith step. Yielding to the Father who knows all and sees all and is purely good sets us free from slavery, free from ungodly chains. By humbly laying aside our pride and worldly thoughts, our Father can share His truth about all things, and we can receive it and truly live for Him.

Romans 12:1

***12** Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.*

If we bring everything to the Father in faith and respond accordingly, this is truly submitting to Him. When our thoughts, words and deeds are blessed by Him, it will produce good fruit. Our relationships should be gauged by the fruit that is produced. What are they producing? Good fruit useful for the Kingdom, or worthless fruit rotting and drawing flies?

Seeking, pursuing, finding and putting into practice God's love is how we submit our heart to Him. Remember, He first loved us so that we might love others.

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Call to Action: Look up 1 John 5:3, Jeremiah 7:23, 1 John 2:4, and 2 John 1:6. What does it look like to submit to God the Father? (Really, just read all of 1 and 2 John! They are short and full of helpfulness for this subject)