

Week 7: Submission

“What freedom corresponds to submission? It is the ability to lay down the terrible burden of always needing to get our own way. The obsession to demand that things go the way we want them to go is one of the greatest bondages in human society...In submission we are at last free to value other people. Their dreams and plans become important to us. We have entered into a new, wonderful, glorious freedom - the freedom to give up our own rights for the good of others. For the first time we can love people unconditionally” Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, pg 111, 112.

“Godly submission is rooted in God’s good and loving intentions for each one of us. Submission is not something God forces down our throats - because forcing people to submit is oppression. Therefore, biblical submission does not trap people in abusive relationships that rob them of their freedom. Submission is a way we allow God’s kingdom agenda to shape our choices, relationships and vocations. And it always works in conjunction with our personal freedom” Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, pg 136.

Try one or more of these (taken/adapted from Foster and Calhoun):

If you are in an abusive relationship of any kind, please reach out to a trusted mentor or friend or one of the pastors on staff. God does not call us to submit to abuse and we want to help you take steps towards safety.

Submit Your Day

When you wake, submit your day to the Lord. Give your mind, body and spirit for his purposes. Listen for his direction throughout the day, surrendering inwardly as you submit where needed outwardly.

Transformation through Discipline

Consider a flaw or area of growth you would like to have transformed in your life. What spiritual discipline might help you cooperate with God in his transforming work? Willingly practice this discipline for a stipulated period of time. Submit your process to a trusted friend. What is this like for you?

Consider the Needs of Others

What sacrifice of time, comfort, service, etc. can you give to meet the needs of another? Commit to listening to those around you and hearing their needs. Can you share a meal, babysit for someone, mow a lawn, visit with someone who is lonely, etc.? How can you put others before yourself?

A Willingness to Share

Sometimes submission means being vulnerable. We submit to God and others when we ask for and allow others to help us and listen to us. In what ways can you allow others to consider and meet your needs?

Letting Go

What is an area God is leading you to give up control, perceived or real? How can you let go of needing your own way in this area? How does this lead you to value others more and see them through God's eyes?

A Willingness to Grow

Seek out someone to mentor, disciple, teach, correct and guide you and submit to their instruction and mentorship as they invest in you and help you grow.

If you'd like to learn more about spiritual transformation and various ways to invite Holy Spirit to work in and through you, these are great places to start:

[*Sacred Pathways: Nine Ways to Connect with God*](#) by Gary Thomas

[*Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation*](#) by Ruth Haley Barton

[*Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*](#) by Richard J. Foster

[*Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us*](#) by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun

[*Practicing the Way: Be with Jesus, Become Like Him, Do as He Did*](#) by John Mark Comer