

Godly Service

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Many groups and individuals are asserting their claims to civil rights these days. The question is who really does have the right to rule the life of another? We are created equal and we are free moral agents. Do the parents have rights to put restrictions on children when they attain their teens? Does the boss have the right to work you overtime and not to pay you for that? Does the non Christian husband have the right to limit what you give to the church? There are some rebellions that come up inside us because we are selfish, self-centered and have a sinful nature.

I. Submit and humble yourselves: Peter's first letter, 5:5-7 talks about submission and humility. Peter tells here, "Young men/women, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore, under God's might hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

God's purpose in asking us to humble ourselves is to accomplish some good work in our lives and so that He may be exalted through our lives by exalting us in due time. God loves us and He cares for us. A.W. Tozer describes a humble man in this way: "A truly humble man does not expect to find virtue in himself and when he finds none, he is not disappointed." A humble man does not expect recognition from people but he always keeps his expectations on God and tries to let others have honor. Are we willing to be insignificant and willing to put others first? "In all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to his purpose"- Romans 8:28. When we submit ourselves in humility God will work out the things for us.

II. Submission to God during hard times of our life: Mary, the mother of Jesus when encountered by the angel of the Lord, she first reacted in fear and got troubled; when the angel had told her that she was going to bear a son who is the son of Most High, she reacted in doubt saying, how can these happen to me?" She was engaged to Joseph and was not yet married. But when the angel said her not to fear and the Holy Spirit was going to overshadow her, she simply submitted herself to the authority of God saying, "I am the Lord's servant, be it unto me according to thy Word."

When we are pressed in by difficulties, we often react in fear, doubt and anxiety. We all face problems concerning family, health, finance, and personality. But God gives us grace and peace during those times to endure. Paul in his letter to the Philippian church in 4:6 writes, "Be not anxious about anything but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." God has a purpose for our lives and He has a training program for us and the aim of His training program is to mold us into the image of Christ day by day through our circumstances. James 1:2-4 says, "consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

III. Submission to Authorities over us: The hardest problems we face in our life are with people rather the circumstances, especially when we find people getting in our way. We always want to go in our way and fashion. But God's word says something different.

Hebrews 13:7 exhorts to obey our leaders. Colossians 3:18-25 has exhortations for the Christian households. "Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord; Husbands, love your wives and do

not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. Slaves obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.”

How does this work out? God promises us in Proverbs 21:1 through the wisdom of King Solomon: “the king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.” In the book of Isaiah God promises us that He would go before us and make the crooked paths straight for us. And so, submission to those over you does not depend on how much you trust them, but it depends on how much you trust God. We always have the access to the Almighty God and he works out the circumstances for us when we submit; we have to let Him direct us where He exactly wants to lead us; God is at work on our behalf and we can trust and rest in Him even when we don’t understand.

IV. Submission to husband: God’s word says that the woman has no authority over man. When the man gives unto his authority, he loses his manhood and when woman does not submit herself to the husband, she loses her womanhood which God has given her.

V. Submission to a Christian Boss in the job: The ultimate responsibility in a work pertains to the head of the department and God holds the boss accountable for all the work in the department and not the subordinates. God holds the subordinate accountable to do his/her best for the boss, in regard with the work which he entrusted you; your responsibility depends on your attitude towards God.

1. Accept the boss as he is - no one is perfect. One sign of your emotional maturity is to accept people as they are and we need to have an understanding spirit. Try to keep him happy with your work.
2. Don’t advertise his weaknesses; compensate for them instead. If he has forgetfulness, have a system to remind him of the things but don’t nag. Don’t accuse him; give him a boost with loyalty and speak with respect. Know his priorities; know your priorities and set your priorities accordingly and adapt to his schedule. These things hold well in marital relationship too. And for unmarried women, this attitude prepares them for marriage.
3. Serve the boss - give him the facts and leave the decision with him. Be willing to carry and increase your responsibility as determined by your boss; relay his messages accurately and respond to him in a submissive tone. Keep confidences; watch out for the announcements and respond in a gentle way without any excitement. Pray for him in his responsibilities.
4. Have the ability to admit a mistake and be willing to take the blame. And finally let the boss have the credit and commit the results of your labor to the Lord. Our main job is to serve the Lord by serving others.

If the boss is a non-Christian, God knows your responsibilities concerning your job and your problems and may be you need to talk to your boss in regard with your problems. Ask God to show you another if it is His will but in any case God will take care of you.

VI. Final words: We all need to serve one another with humble spirit- 1 Peter 5:5. God wants us to take the humble place. It takes courage and strength to humble. Humility does not mean weakness; humility is strength. We as women are naturally emotional and insecure and we need many reassurances. We react differently than men with more tears and taking things more personally; but God made us to be dependent

and created us to be a helper for man. Instead of looking for the consideration of the husband which we feel would enable us to submit to him, we need to take the first step in obedience to God as the former does not work. And we will not be satisfied without God's consolation and comfort. God knows our difficulties that result from our very nature. God has the right to tell me what to do. "Do nothing out of strife or vain glory but in humility consider others better than yourselves." Philippians 2:3. Oswald chambers said, "Strong saintly character is not the production of human breeding or culture but saintly character is a manufacture of God. "God is at work in our lives for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose." (Philippians 2:13) Therefore we need to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt us in due time.