

1. We are continuing with our series that we began last week called **“My Favorite Sermon Series Ever”**.
2. I say that partly joking, but on the other hand hoping that before this series is over it will be your favorite.
3. That’s because the subject is something that is entirely necessary for healthy relationships of any kind, but that on the surface isn’t all the enjoyable to talk about.
4. **Submission.** One of the reasons the subject of submission is so unpleasant to think about is because the meanings of the word submission are all over the place.
5. I gave you three definitions and I illustrated them with a picture.
6. The first definition had to do with wrestling. And a couple of the words to describe this meaning were defeat and falling. This is what I think of when I think of submission by defeat.



7. The second definition was archaic, its meaning is was not necessarily healthy, but actually unhealthy. Humility or meakness. But not by choice. This is what I think of when I think of this kind of submission.



8. The last definition was very different. This form of submission means agreement, acceptance, or consent. The person chooses to submit. This is the picture I see when I think of this kind of submission.



9. When God's word, the bible mentions submission. When in the bible we are commanded to submit to God or someone else, it is this third definition that God intends.
10. It is not God's desire that we be choked into submission or that we be walked on until we submit. God's intent is that our submission be voluntary. It is our choice.
11. How do we know that is the truth?
12. All throughout the scripture God invites us to relate to him by giving us a choice.
13. **Revelation 3:20** Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.
14. Notice that God is standing at the door waiting. He is not barging through the door saying let me in or else. By knocking, he is giving us a choice.
15. **Matthew 11:28-29** "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."
16. Even when the Lord uses the illustration of a yoke that is used to unite two animals. It is not him forcing the yoke around our neck. He gives us the choice and it is we who put the yoke on ourselves.
17. And when we do we find that he is gentle and humble in heart.
18. When I think of gentle and humble, I don't think of choking someone around the neck or walking on them.
19. **John 15:5** "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

20. The remaining or staying is entirely our choice. Jesus says if. Indicating that it is our choice whether we remain in him or not.
21. So, over and over again in the scripture we see God relating to us as a gentleman who treats us with respect.
22. Now. That is not meant to deny that God can and does get angry sometimes. We see that in the bible as well.
23. But generally, what you will find is that God gets angry only when we have rejected him for the umpteenth time.
24. His go to emotion to relate to us is not anger. **Psalm 86:15** But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.
25. So, the picture of submission God wants us to have is that of agreement, acceptance, and consent. Choice.
26. Unfortunately, all of us have come into contact with someone, or several someone's who used submission in an entirely different way.
27. Rather than giving us a choice, they tried to wrestle us into submission, verbally, emotionally, and maybe even physically.
28. Others tried to get submission from us by walking on us. Speaking or treating us in an unkind way, all in the name of getting us to do what they wanted us to do.
29. So, part of what we set out to do last week was to identify and recognize the difference between healthy, unhealthy, and damaging or destructive submission.
30. These are my own thoughts on what that looks like.

Healthy submission is mutual submission. Both people submit to one another. (shaking hands)

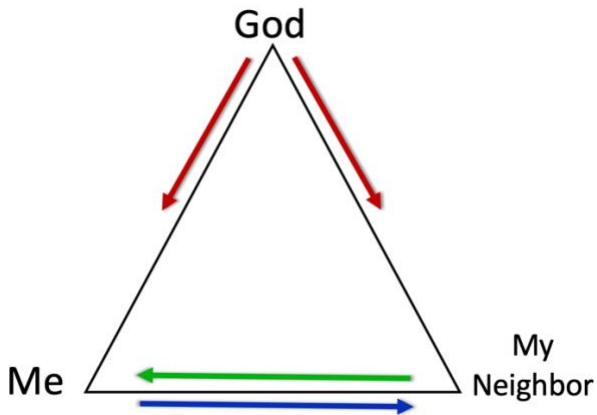
Unhealthy submission occurs when one person wants the other to submit, but they won't submit as well. (door mat)

Destructive or damaging submission is when one person demands or forces the other to submit without being willing to submit. (wrestling choke hold)

31. However, it's not just recognizing the difference between healthy, unhealthy, and destructive or damaging submission. We also need to know how to respond.

32. Last week in the story of Joseph in Genesis 39, we witnessed Joseph respond to all three types of submission.
33. Joseph submitted to his master, and in return his master submitted control and authority and power of his home.
34. Ms. Potiphar however wanted a different kind of submission. She wanted what she wanted. Come to bed with me. She wanted Joseph to give in, while she continued to treat him like a slave. Unhealthy submission. One sided.
35. How did Joseph respond? He resisted. He refused to be a door mat.
36. Then later Ms. Potiphar displayed a third kind of submission. She grabbed him by his clothing and demanded that he sleep with her. Do what I want or else.
37. And this time Joseph runs away refusing to be wrestled into submission.
38. So, how are we to respond to healthy and unhealthy submission.
39. We in turn submit to healthy submission. Because it's healthy and good for us.
40. But we resist or run from unhealthy or destructive submission.
41. Allow me to put it this way. Because of the way God treats us, we get our cue as to how we are to treat others, and we also get our cue as to what we are to tolerate from others.
42. God doesn't wrestle us, choke us, or walk on us to get us to submit. He gives us a choice.
43. In return. We should not wrestle, choke, or walk on others to get them to submit. We too must give them a choice.
44. And finally. We don't have to tolerate being wrestled, choked, or walked on. We have the choice to resist.
45. I am going to call this the submission triangle. And the basis for this triangle is found in the greatest commandments.
46. **Matthew 22:36-39** "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"
 37 Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'
 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

47. (triangle. God at top. Us lower left. Neighbor lower right)



48. (God relates to us by giving us a choice. We should relate to others the way God relates to us. And we have the freedom to choose how we will be treated by others.)

49. To me this is a picture of mutual submission. And why is mutual submission so important. Because healthy submission is mutual submission.

50. Healthy submission is mutual submission. (repeat)

51. Healthy submission is when we submit to God, because God has already submitted to us. (Hang tight. I will prove it in just a second.)

52. And healthy submission is when we submit to others, and they mutually submit to us.

53. When we practice mutual submission, no one is choked or walked on. Instead everyone is valued and loved.

54. When we practice mutual submission, no one is powerless. Instead everyone has the power to choose.

55. Now, I confess, that is the ideal. That is the way God designed it.

56. Starting next week, we will begin breaking down how to live and thrive in a world that is anything but ideal.

57. But for the remainder of today, I want to cement in God's designed plan for submission.

58. Let's focus on how God designed and created us to function in relationship with Him through submission.

TITLE: Healthy Submission.

1. And to do that I want to go back to a statement I made just a bit ago. Healthy submission is when we submit to God, because God has already submitted to us.
2. In order for there to be healthy submission, someone has to take the first step. Someone has to make the choice to submit to the other, so that the other has a choice to submit back.
3. There must be a starting place. Where is that starting place? Is it us submitting to someone else so that they have the opportunity to submit to us? Not really.
4. Is the starting place when someone else submits to us and we in turn choose to submit to them? Not exactly.
5. In order to practice healthy, earthly submission, we must first be engaged in healthy, heavenly submission. Meaning, there must be healthy submission going on between us and God in order for us to be able to submit to others.
6. And just like earthly submission, in heavenly submission there has to be a starting point. Someone has to take the first step.
7. And the one who has taken the first step is the Lord. God is the one all throughout the bible who demonstrates what healthy, Godly submission toward us looks like.
8. Let's look at 4 references from the bible where we are commanded to submit to God.
9. In the Old Testament, a very Godly king by the name of Hezekiah spoke these words to the people of Israel.
10. **2 Chronicles 30:8** Do not be stiff-necked, as your ancestors were; submit to the LORD. Come to his sanctuary, which he has consecrated forever. Serve the LORD your God, so that his fierce anger will turn away from you.
11. Then in the Old Testament book of Job, one of Job's supposed friends said this to him. **Job:22:21** "Submit to God and be at peace with him; in this way prosperity will come to you.
12. Then there is **Proverbs 3:5-6** Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; 6 in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

13. Then, if we look in the New Testament we will see a command there.
14. **James 4:7** Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
15. In each of these places the meaning has to do with the third definition I shared with you earlier.
16. **Submission:** the action or fact of accepting or yielding to a superior force or to the will or authority of another person.
17. *synonyms:*
· agreement · acceptance · consent
18. God is the superior force. He is the higher authority. So, part of our submission to Him is accepting the fact that he is God and we are not. He is great and I am not.
19. But the real key is the second part. We submit to him not by force or by mistreatment, we submit to him by agreement, acceptance, or consent.
20. He doesn't make us. He doesn't force us. We choose to yield and submit to him as the greater one in the relationship.
21. And so, because that is such a foreign concept, especially in our 2020 world, a question begs to be asked.
22. In our society that is inundated with the message, be your own person. Live only to please yourself. Never give in to anybody. Stand on your own two feet. Look out for number one.
23. Why would we ever consider submitting to God, and allowing him to guide and direct our life where He pleases?
24. And there is only one answer that makes sense.
25. We are not commanded to submit to a higher authority who chokes, walks on, or demands that we submit to him.
26. We are commanded to submit to a higher authority who long before we ever knew we needed to submit, proved to us how much he loved us by submitting himself to us.
27. It is God who is the starting place. It is the Lord who takes the first step. It is the Holy Spirit who willingly reaches out first.
28. Why? Why would God do that? Because healthy submission is mutual submission. Meaning each person submits to the other.

29. And the only way we can live out healthy submission, is if healthy submission has first been demonstrated to us.
30. Let's look at three ways God has submitted to us by thinking about the trinity. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

God the Father.

1. Before you were ever formed in your mother's womb, God the Father had already submitted to you something that cost him dearly.
2. **John 3:16** For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
3. I know almost everyone has heard that verse before. And I also know the word submission or submit is not used.
4. But if we examine exactly what it is that God gave and why God gave it, what we find is that God willingly submitted his only son Jesus as the price for our sins.
5. Go all the way back to Genesis 1:1. God created a perfect world, and in it he placed two sinless people. Utter perfection.
6. But in a short amount of time those two sinless people jumped off into sin. And what was the bait?
7. Don't submit to God when he tells you not to eat of that certain fruit.
8. So, they disobeyed, and as a result of their disobedience, sin entered the world, and because sin entered the world a sacrifice became necessary to atone, or pay the penalty for that sin.
9. In the garden, God killed an animal, clothed Adam, and Eve with the skin, and the first sacrifice was made.
10. Then all throughout the Old Testament, that pattern was followed. Millions and millions of animals were sacrificed, but none of those animals was the ultimate sacrifice that could pay the debt once and for all.
11. And so, God looked around and he identified the most valuable, precious, wonderful person in his life, his one and only son Jesus, and he willingly gave that son as the ultimate sacrifice for our sins.

12. He submitted his son for our benefit. He put his son into the hands of terrible people, to be mistreated and beaten and bruised, all because of his love for us.
13. But there was another act of submission that was needed.

God the Son.

1. God gave his son, but the Son still had to submit himself. And that is what he did in the garden before his crucifixion.
2. **Matthew 26:37-39** He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. **38** Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." **39** Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."
3. Father God. I know you gave me, because here I am on this earth.
4. I know it is your will for me to die once and for all for the sins of the world. I know that's your plan.
5. But right now, I don't really want to endure this God. Father, if it is possible, can we come up with another plan?
6. But God, if not. I submit to your will. I submit myself, so this world that you love, and I love can be saved.
7. And so, he did. He willingly gave his life.
8. But there was one more act of submission that was needed.

God the Holy Spirit.

1. Jesus knew we would need ongoing help to live successfully for him on this earth. So, he gave us the Holy Spirit.
2. **John 14:15-17** "If you love me, keep my commands. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever- **17** the Spirit of truth."
3. I absolutely love these definitions of the word advocate.
4. **Advocate: one who pleads the cause of another: one who defends or maintains a cause or proposal: one who supports or promotes the interests of a cause or group.**
5. If that's not submission, I don't know what is. One of the main roles of the Holy Spirit is to represent us before the throne of God.

Conclusion:

1. So why would I ever want to submit to God?
2. Because God the Father gave what was most precious to him, for us.
3. God the Son sacrificed everything, for us.
4. God the Holy Spirit exists to make sure that we are always represented before the throne.
5. And it is because of those three reasons that I have no trouble whatsoever standing here crying out to you to submit yourself to the Lord.
6. He has given everything for us. Surely we can submit and surrender to Him.
7. Pray.
8. Will you join me right now in submitting to the Lord. Whatever that sounds like. Whatever that looks like. Whatever comes to your mind right now. Submit it to the Lord.
9. Salvation call.
10. Perhaps, in light of the example God has set for us, you are becoming aware that you need to do better in how you relate to others.
11. That rather than trying to control what everyone else does, you give them a choice.
12. Prayer of surrender.