

1. We're going to continue talking about the subject of submission.
2. The last two weeks we have looked at the myth about submission.
3. **The myth**, the thing that sounds true but really isn't is that **when I submit I lose something**.
4. That submission equals loss.
5. The truth is, when I am engaged in unhealthy submission: when the other person wants me to submit, but they are unwilling to submit, without a doubt I lose something. I feel walked on.
6. When I am engaged in damaging or destructive submission: meaning the other person forces me to submit, but is unwilling to submit, without a doubt I lose. I feel choked and abused.
7. But when I am engaged in healthy submission: when I submit to or for the other person, and they submit to or for me, I don't lose at all.
8. In fact, when I am engaged in healthy submission I gain what I didn't have before, or never could have on my own.
9. But our enemy, Satan, doesn't want us to be able to tell the difference, he wants us to throw all submission completely out the window, and reject it all together.
10. **Why? Why does Satan want us to throw all submission out the window? Because, we have identified that all healthy relationships require healthy submission.**
11. Having a healthy relationship with God is impossible without submission. God the father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit has submitted for us, and the only appropriate response is for us to submit to God.
12. Having a healthy relationship with any other human being is impossible without mutual submission. A relationship in which one person submits to or for the other, but the other doesn't submit at all isn't healthy. It's damaging and dangerous.
13. So, because our enemy knows that without healthy submission our lives will be completely miserable, he sets out as early in our lives as possible to get us to believe that when we submit we lose.
14. And who among us wants to lose? None of us wants to lose.

15. So, one of the ways he sets us up to believe the myth is that when we allow people in our lives, who we eventually grow to trust, love, and submit to, we inevitably come across someone, or a bunch of someone's who take advantage of our love and submission, and they use that against us in a way that hurts or harms us.
16. And even if we are successful at getting away from that unhealthy or damaging relationship, if we don't guard our heart, we can walk away with the belief that the problem was that we submitted at all.
17. Because I submitted to them I lost. So, the answer must be to not submit to anyone ever again.
18. And because we then tie submission to loss, we are now more likely to carry that same belief into our relationship with God.
19. When God in His word commands us to submit to him, it triggers this myth, which in turn triggers this fear inside us. And that fear causes us to want to skip over or quickly move past the part of our relationship with God that requires submission.
20. But that leaves us in a huge spiritual bind. Because without the necessary submission to God, we can't have victory in our life.
21. And the devil knows it. That's the whole point.
22. **James 4:7** Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
23. You see, Satan doesn't just want us to have a miserable life. His end game is more than pain and sorrow and heartache. He likes that, but he really wants something more.
24. What he really wants us for us to live in a place where we can't defeat him. And if we can't defeat him we can't have victory.
25. And if we can't have victory, then it is impossible to live the victorious life God promises.
26. If he can't keep you out of heaven, he will settle for the next best thing. An ineffective, unproductive, watered down Christianity that leaves us stuck or running around in circles.
27. And I am convinced more and more that the weapon he uses is fear.
28. Fear of loss, but also fear of something else. And that leads us to today's message.

TEXT: **Numbers 13:25-28** At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land. **26** They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. **27** They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. **28** But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large.

TITLE: **The Myth about Submission-Part 2.**

INTRO:

1. So here is the second part of the enemy's myth about submission.
2. If submission equals loss, and loss equals pain, then the way to avoid future pain is to resist submission.
3. Said another way. I don't want this to happen again. So, I will avoid the thing that caused this pain in the first place.
4. And since we perceive the source of our pain as submission, it seems logical to resist submission.
5. Now, I will not pretend that I understand every dynamic that was going on in the passage of scripture that I just read you.
6. However, there are three things I am sure of.
7. When Moses sent these 12 men into the land of Canaan to survey the land and bring back a report...
 - They were standing on the edge of a promise that was at least 425 years old. Every generation for 425 years or more would have anticipated this huge moment.
 - God had clearly told them he was giving them this land. **Numbers 13:1-2** The LORD said to Moses, **2** "Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites.
 - Their refusal to submit to the Lord and enter the land was the straw that broke the camel's back. None of that generation except for 2 people would ever set foot on that land again. The rest would die in the desert.
8. Now, I am not trying to convince you that what God was asking them to do was easy. I don't think it was easy at all.
9. But what was going through their mind that caused them to decide and say, we cannot do what God is telling us to do? In essence, we will not submit to God's command to take the land.

10. And my simple answer is this. What was going through their mind was Egypt, and not wanting to go back to the pain and heartache they experienced there.
11. Their reason for not obeying the Lord according to verse 28 was that the people who lived there were powerful and had large, fortified cities.
12. And the last time they had been around powerful people with fortified cities was when they were slaves in the land of Egypt.
13. In their minds, it doesn't matter that God told us to go in and take the land. Those people will overpower us and make us their slaves, and I'm not going back to that. I want to avoid that at all costs.
14. So, submitting to God's plan went right out the window.
15. What is it they didn't want to go back to? An extremely difficult and trying way of life.
16. To be fair. They had every reason to not want to go back to slavery. I don't blame them one bit.
17. I don't believe God was put off by their fear of not wanting to go back to slavery.
18. What God was put off by however is that they chose to resist submitting to him and his plan as the means to protect themselves from future pain.
19. Let's go back for a moment and look at the depth of their painful past. (notes on website to follow along)

Genesis 46

1. Because of a severe famine in the land. A man by the name of Jacob, who had 12 sons and a family of about 75 people, moved to the land of Egypt so they wouldn't starve to death.

Exodus 1

1. The pharaoh who had helped save Jacob's family died, and a new king became afraid of these people who were now called Israel.
2. The children of Israel multiplied, and their family grew, and they were just living their lives minding their own business.

3. But the Pharaoh convinced the others that these people were a threat that had to be dealt with. So, they did.
4. They made them their slaves. It says that they oppressed them. They worked them ruthlessly. Their lives were bitter, and things were harsh.
5. Just a reminder. They were being subject to damaging and destructive submission. They were being choked around the neck if you will. let's call it what it was. It was a miserable existence.
6. But in spite of the horrible conditions, they continued to grow and multiply.
7. Then, just when it seems things couldn't get worse, they did in fact get worse.
8. The king commanded that all the boy babies that were born be killed by drowning them in the Nile River.
9. I cannot imagine a more horrifying or shocking existence.

Exodus 2

1. So, what did the people do? They cried out to God. And they didn't just cry out for a day, a week, a month, or even a year. For 400 years they cried out to God.
2. I will not attempt to try and explain why God allowed their slavery to last 400 years.
3. I will not attempt to explain how difficult it must have been to cry out and never get deliverance.
4. But in spite of all their hardship, we see that God continued to multiply them and in fact bless them.
5. Is it not miraculous that in spite of the fact they were treated brutally and each day attempts were made to wipe them out that they grew from a family of 75 people into a nation of over a million people?

Exodus 3-4

1. So, God's plan for deliverance finally came through a man by the name of Moses.
2. And when Moses returns to Egypt to demand that Pharaoh let God's people go, things don't get better, in fact they get worse again.

3. The Egyptians treat them more brutally and more harshly, and within no time they are ready to run Moses out of the country.
4. Then fast forward to Exodus chapter 7, and God begins to release a series of plagues on the people of Egypt.
5. With each plague their freedom was a little closer, because with each plague God was wearing the Egyptians down.
6. By Exodus chapter 12, the Egyptians can't stand any more punishment from God, and they not only let the people of Israel go, but they give them the supplies and even riches they possess as a parting gift.
7. For the first time in 400 years, the people of Israel are free.
8. Except, as I continue to read the story of their existence from this point forward, I would make the argument that they were not free at all.
9. It is true, they were no longer physically slaves in Egypt, but their behaviors indicated they were anything but free mentally, spiritually, and emotionally.
10. From exodus chapter 15, all the way to the passage of scripture I read you in Numbers 13, I would describe this period in their lives as...

Their refusal to submit.

1. It was as if when they got physically free from the unhealthy, damaging, and destructive submission that was forced on them in Egypt, they had made up their mind they were never going to submit again.
2. And on the one hand I understand completely. They did not want to be a part of unhealthy damaging submission. You cannot blame them.
3. But as I mentioned in the first part of this message. They gave into the temptation to throw all submission about the window. Even healthy, life giving submission to God and his servant Moses.
4. Starting in the last part of Exodus chapter 15, let me recount the low lights for you.
5. Exodus 15 they complain about the water being bitter to drink.
6. In Exodus chapter 16 they complain about not having enough food to eat.

7. Later on, in chapter 16, after God had miraculously provided Manna, or bread from heaven. When Moses gave them direction from the Lord on how much they were to gather and how long they were to keep it. Many of them ignored the direction.
8. Then in Exodus chapter 17, they grumble and complain again about not having water to drink, and God miraculously makes water flow out of a rock.
9. Fast forward to Exodus chapter 20 where God gives Moses the ten commandments or laws on how the people are to live. Moses in turn gives the laws to the people.
10. Then in Exodus chapters 21-31, God instructs the people on how he wants them to worship him.
11. The problem however is that in Exodus chapter 32, we find that while Moses was up on the mountain where God was speaking to him, the people of Israel are down at the bottom of the mountain making idols, worshipping those idols. And then getting drunk and engaging in everything that drunkenness brings.
12. In Exodus chapter 33, God is so fed up with their rebellion and rejection of him every step of the way that he tells Moses. Just go on without me. I can't take this anymore. (healthy submission. They had a choice, and God had a choice)
13. God changes his decision and agrees to go on with them.
14. Fast forward again to Leviticus chapter 10, and two of Aaron's sons, Aaron was Moses brother, were killed because in their serving as priests, they refused to relate to God in the way he had asked.
15. Fast forward again to Numbers chapter 11, and the people whine and complain about all the difficulties and hardships they are dealing with. And their complaint is against God. (at least it's not slavery)
16. A short time later, again they are complaining about food. The food God is providing isn't what they want anymore.
17. So, God sends more meat than they can eat for a month by causing quail to fly in by the millions, and all they had to do was go out and collect them.
18. Exodus chapter 12, Moses own brother and sister oppose him and talk negatively about him to all the people.

19. The phrase that was used over and over during this period to describe the people was stiff-necked.
20. Like a child stiffening it's back in defiance of the parent's direction.
21. Basically, their behavior communicated: I'm not submitting to you, I am going to do my own thing.
22. They wouldn't submit to God.
23. They wouldn't submit to God's plan.
24. And they refused to submit to Moses who was trying to lead them toward God's plan, in spite of the fact that God had proven in every miraculous way it could be proven that he was not like those slave drivers back in Egypt.
25. What God asked them to submit to was a period of some of the greatest outpouring of love and blessing and provision that any people on earth would ever receive.
26. But yet they refused to submit to this healthy relationship.
27. And the straw that broke the camel's back was there in Numbers chapter 13. On the edge of the promised land. Refusing to submit to the Lord's plan to go in and take the land.
28. So again, I ask. What were they thinking? Why did they consistently refuse to submit to God, his plan, or anyone trying to lead in God's plan.
29. I believe because they chose to live a life that was guided by never being slaves again and never being hurt again.
30. When they saw the powerful people with their fortified cities, they refused to submit to God and his plan because they were afraid doing so would put them in danger of being enslaved again.

Conclusion:

1. Here is the thing. Refusing to submit, to God or to others, didn't prevent them from going back into slavery.
2. Refusing to submit to God and others kept them bound in slavery. They never left their slavery.
3. Isn't it a stretch to say they never left their slavery? I don't believe it is, because every time things got difficult, guess what they talked about? Egypt.
4. Exodus 16:3 The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death."
5. Exodus 17:3 But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?"
6. Numbers 11:5 We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost--also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic.
7. By refusing to submit to God and his plans as a way to prevent future pain and heartache, they literally stayed in that bondage, and even begin to describe that bondage in wonderful flowery ways.
8. Isn't it interesting that when they were forced to be slaves it was the worst thing ever, but when they chose to be slaves it was the best thing ever?
9. As we close today I want to wrap all this together and apply it to our lives.
10. I want to ask you to apply this word to your life.
11. I want to help you do that by asking a question.
12. Is there some area of your life where you are not submitting to God, his word, or his plan because you are trying to prevent from happening in the future what has happened in your past?
13. I'm not trying to minimize that past hurt or pain. I am not insinuating that it wasn't a big deal because it was a big deal.
14. But if you live with the goal of not getting hurt again, that hurt has now become your master. It is in charge of and is controlling where you go and what you do.

15. You say but I'm afraid. I get it. We all have fears. But if for just a moment we can be led by the Spirit of God rather than by our fear, we will be reminded that God is nothing like that person or thing who hurt us, and he has proven in every way possible that he isn't.
16. We can submit to the Lord because he has proven he can be trusted.
17. Begin by thanking the Lord for his goodness.
18. Holy Spirit, remind us of the good things God has done.
19. Confess that God has proven he can be trusted.
20. Lord God, I no longer want to be a slave to fear.
21. I submit to you, your word, and your plan.