

1. We are continuing this morning with our series about the subject of submission.
2. We have jokingly named it my favorite sermon series ever.
3. The subject of submission can cause a negative response if we fail to understand the differences between healthy, unhealthy, and dangerous or damaging submission.
4. Please forgive me for repeating myself; however, having a good grasp of the differences between healthy, unhealthy, and dangerous submission is the foundation upon which all these messages are built.

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)

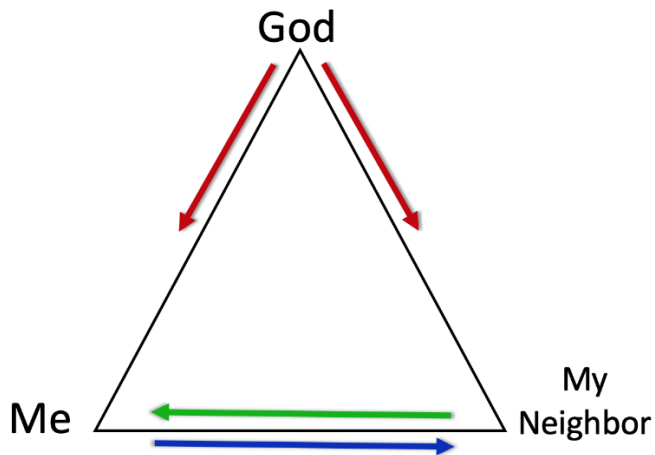
Destructive or damaging submission is when one person demands or forces the other to submit without being willing to submit. (wrestling choke hold)

5. In the bible when the word submission is used, or we are commanded to submit to God or someone else, it is healthy submission God is referring to.
6. In week one, we learned from the story of Joseph how we are to respond to each of these types of submission.
7. We are to submit to healthy submission.
8. We are to refuse unhealthy submission.
9. And we should run away from destructive or damaging submission.
10. In the bible we are given God's plan for how we relate to him, and how we are to relate to others.
11. I am going to call this the submission triangle. And the basis for this triangle is found in the greatest commandments.

12. 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.'

13.



14. (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.)
15. To me this is a picture of mutual submission. And why is mutual submission so important? Because healthy submission is mutual submission.
16. And **all healthy relationships require healthy submission.**
17. Healthy submission is when we submit to God, because God has already submitted for us.
18. And healthy submission is when we submit to others, and they mutually submit to us.
19. When we practice mutual submission, no one is choked or walked on. Instead everyone is valued and loved.
20. When we practice mutual submission, no one is powerless. Instead everyone has the power to choose.
21. I told you last week that is the ideal. God's ideal plan is that we submit to him because he has already submitted for us.
22. God the father submitted his one and only son for our salvation.
23. God the Son submitted his life. He chose to lay it down when he prayed to God in the garden. If it's possible let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will by your will be done.

24. And finally, we said God the Holy Spirit submits for us in that he is before the throne of God and he acts as our advocate. He constantly and continually pleads our case.
25. And so, the only proper and appropriate response is for us to submit our lives to Him.
26. And then the proper outflow of that submission is that since God has submitted for your neighbor, your neighbor can submit to you.
27. And because God has submitted for you, you can submit to your neighbor.
28. That is the ideal.
29. But if God created and demonstrated the ideal plan for submission. We must know that our enemy, **Satan will do everything in his power to wreck God's ideal plan to pieces.**
30. One of the ways he does that is by attempting to get us to believe a myth about submission.
31. A myth is something that sounds like the truth, but really isn't the truth at all.
32. And here is the myth the enemy tries to cement into our thinking.
33. **The myth that says, submission leads to loss. When I submit to another, I lose something.**
34. And if we are not careful, that can begin to sound true.
35. I believe it is one of the reasons why when I first told others, and then you that my subject would be submission, the reaction is almost always negative.
36. Why would I want to think about submission, because when I submit I am losing something?
37. So, how does the enemy condition us to believe the myth? He conditions us to believe that submission equals loss by placing people in our lives that seem to prove the point.
38. As early on in our lives as possible, our enemy introduces us to people, people we eventually grow to trust and love, who later take advantage of our submission to or for them.

39. We willingly give ourselves to them and to the relationship because it just seems so right. And it is right. Because all healthy relationships require healthy submission.
40. But that person we love, and trust turns out to be unhealthy or damaging.
41. They expect us to submit, but they refuse to submit. And when we feel put off by their lack of submission, they may walk on us to keep us where they want us.
42. Others may require or demand that we submit to them by doing damage or harm either emotionally or physically.
43. Hopefully. Quickly. We will realize that this is not healthy, or this is destructive, and we will run or get away from that relationship.
44. **But even if we are able to get out, we can take with us a belief.** And the belief is, I submitted. I gave. And all I got in return was loss. They took from me.
45. So, we conclude, the way to be happy and healthy is to be on guard and resist submission so this doesn't happen to me again.
46. And thus, the myth is born. Submission equals loss.
47. And so, because of our experience, it is so easy to believe and accept this as truth.
48. The reality, however, is that it may be sort of true, but it is not completely true.
49. The myth is that all submission leads to loss. But here is the truth.
50. All unhealthy submission. All dangerous or destructive submission leads to loss. Truth.
51. But here is the other side of the truth. **Healthy submission leads to gain.** Healthy submission does not rob or steal from us, healthy submission blesses us and brings increase.
52. The trap is that the enemy wants us to lump all submission into the same category, and as a result miss the blessing and life that healthy submission brings.
53. So, for some today, I want to help you avoid the trap.
54. For others, I want to help you get free from the trap.

55. The trap of believing that all submission leads to loss.
56. Truth. Healthy submission produces gain and not loss.
57. When I am engaged in healthy submission, I have more than I had previously.
58. Through healthy submission I now possess what I could never have possessed on my own.
59. Let's look at some scripture.
60. Job 22:21 "Submit to God and be at peace with him; in this way prosperity will come to you.
61. Job's friends may have been wrong about a lot of things, but what they were right about was some of the benefits of submission to God.
62. When we submit to God we gain. What do we gain? We gain peace and prosperity.
63. So many people today will sell their soul for peace and prosperity. They will search for peace and fulfillment in thousands of ways. And so many times the result is that they not only don't find what they were looking for, but they lose so much more in the process.
64. But the pathway to peace and prosperity is submission to God.
65. Submission isn't the problem. It is submitting to unhealthy things and people that is the problem.
66. Proverbs 3:6 in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.
67. In life, a curvy, twisty, hilly path indicates trouble, hardship, and difficulty.
68. But a straight path is one in which there isn't nearly as much strain.
69. How many in our world today find themselves going down a path that is causing them nothing but trouble, and rather than turning to the Lord, they choose another path that is worse than the first. They lose even more.
70. But it is in fact submitting to God in all our ways that causes us to gain. Gain what? A straighter path. Not easy. Straighter.
71. Hebrews 12:9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live!

72. Resist submitting to God and what happens? Death. We lose life.
73. But when we submit to God we gain life.
74. In each of these cases it is not submitting that bring loss. It is submitting to unhealthy or destructive people or things that bring the loss.
75. When we engage in healthy submission. Mutual submission. We gain more than we had previously, and we now possess what we could never have possessed on our own.
76. So, **one of the keys to our victory in life is to refuse to throw submission out the window**, and rather throw unhealthy and destructive submission out the window.
77. What we keep and allow is healthy submission.
78. We have identified the myth.
79. And we have embraced the truth.
80. Now let's apply that truth to our lives. Let's first look at...

### **Submission to God.**

1. James 4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
2. This verse probably ranks in the top five or ten of the most quoted verses in the bible.
3. It is one of those victory verses. I mean, what Christian doesn't want the devil to flee from us.
4. What Christian doesn't want to put the devil on the run as often as possible? All of us want that.
5. What's interesting however is that often times it is not the whole verse that is quoted, it is the last part that is quoted.
6. If all we do is resist the devil, I can assure you he is not going to flee.
7. If all we do is resist the devil, we are going to get beat up.
8. **It is not the resisting alone that brings victory; it is resisting after submitting that brings victory.**
9. So, God clearly states that the key to putting the devil on the run is submitting to Him and resisting the devil.

10. But if, however we have believed the myth, we may tend to relate to verse 7 this way.
11. Because our past experience tells us that submission leads to loss, we read that verse and we, almost without thinking about it decide, oh submission is bad. Submission is painful.
12. So, I am going to toss the part that is painful, and I am going to keep the part that will bring me victory.
13. I'm just going to resist the devil and he will flee. But when we resist the devil without first having submitted to God, we find that the enemy doesn't go anywhere. He doesn't even flinch.
14. So if we, even unknowingly, believe the myth by failing to submit to God first, we have in fact believed the enemy's first lie that submission brings loss, and so the enemy just keeps on flooding our minds with lies rather than fleeing.
15. God doesn't love you. If he did you wouldn't be having this struggle.
16. If God really loved you, things wouldn't be so hard.
17. And before long our mind is so jumbled with false messages that it's not the devil that flees, it's us that wants to flee.
18. Now, let's look at what happens when we throw the myth out the window and live based on truth.
19. We read that verse. And it means something to us, and it touches us because either recently we have been, or soon we will be under attack.
20. But in the face of enemy attack, if we live by the truth, look what happens.
21. Lord God. I am under attack. This is hard and this is tough. But I refuse to believe that submitting to you is the problem that is bringing this loss.
22. Lord God, I choose to believe that is in submitting to you that I will gain an edge against my enemy the devil and have victory.
23. So, Lord. Whatever you're up to. Whatever you are trying to accomplish in my life. I submit to it and I submit to you.

24. Do that first, and then start resisting the devil, and see if it doesn't change everything.
25. Once you have submitted to God, the enemy starts getting worried because he knows whatever he throws at you won't change your mind about trusting in God.
26. And the last place the devil wants to be is the place where you have submitted to God, and God has committed to help you resist.
27. And he starts thinking. We better get out of here because the two of them. You submitting to God and God helping you, is a winning combination that can't be beat.
28. Healthy submission brings gain and not loss.
29. Now, let's apply this to a human relationship.

### **Husbands and wives.**

1. Another one of those half-quoted passages of scripture is found in the book of Ephesians.
2. Controlling husbands everywhere love to quote **Ephesians 5:22-24**  
**Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.**
3. I wonder how many times over the centuries since Paul wrote those words, have husbands commented to their wife on the way home from church.
4. Honey, I sure hope you were listening to the sermon today. That was really for you.
5. You are supposed to submit to me. I am the head.
6. In fact, honey. the bible really covers it all. You are supposed to submit to me in everything.
7. My response to that is yes. That is exactly what it says. But I also have a question.
8. **What kind of husband is the wife supposed to submit to?** Well...her husband. Not so fast.
9. Is she supposed to submit to a husband who walks on her and makes her feel low?



10. Is she supposed to submit to a husband who demands his way and thinks only of what's good for himself?
11. Not according to the next verse, she isn't.
12. **Ephesians 5:25** Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her
13. Yes, the wife is to submit to her husband. But the husband is supposed to submit for his wife. Not to, but for.
14. The kind of husband that is worthy of being submitted to is the kind of husband who loves his wife so much that he is willing to lay his life down if necessary to protect and take care of her.
15. The kind of husband that is worthy to be submitted to is the kind of husband who sees it as his role to emulate and imitate what Jesus has done for us by submitting his life for us.
16. **When the wife submits to that kind of husband, she doesn't lose anything she gains everything.**
17. Husbands listening today. Be that husband and see if you very rarely have to worry about her submitting to you.
18. And on top of that. When we are willing to be the type of husband who submits for his wife. We gain we don't lose.
19. When she sees that wherever you're trying to lead you are willing to lay your life down for her and the cause, she will want to follow and support and be a part of that kind of journey.
20. What does the husband and wife in that kind of marriage gain? She gains a husband who provides the safety and security she needs, and he gains a wife who gives him the respect he needs.
21. In that kind of marriage nobody losses, everybody gains.

Conclusion:

### **1. The Myth About Submission.**

2. But what if because of past disappointments, these two people conclude that submission equals loss, and the husband refuses to submit for his wife. And the wife refuses to submit to her husband?
3. I started to ask the question, what do they lose?
4. But I concluded the answer is too long. The question with the shorter answer is, what don't they lose?

5. Let me be clear. As we consider submitting to God and submitting for and to others. Our goal is not perfection. None of us is perfect.
6. Our goal is to simply be guided by, and live by truth.
7. What is the myth? Submission equals loss. Not true. Unhealthy submission leads to loss.
8. What is the truth? Healthy submission leads to gain.
9. Holy Spirit help us differentiate between healthy and unhealthy submission in our past and in our present. Help us to see the truth.
10. Now Holy spirit. Help us to embrace the truth.
11. Help us to not see submission as the problem, but unhealthy submission as the problem.
12. Help me to stop relating to you God, and to others out of fear of loss, but rather from the hope of gaining.