

## “SUBMISSION: RIGHTEOUS LIVING REVEALED” PART 2

### HOLINESS

1 Peter 2:13-20

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January 23, 2015

**Bruce:** We don't just put that out for no reason at all. We're a family, and we need to bear each other's burdens. So take the prayer chain that we have very, very seriously. It's a great, great weapon that we have against the fiery darts of the evil one, and that's the prayer power we have with the Holy Spirit. So we can really support each other.

Let's pray. Gracious heavenly Father, have mercy upon me, the sinner. Father, we just pray once again, as we come again to the sufficiency of Your Scripture,. That You would be pleased to open our eyes, that we might live righteous lives for your glory, in a dark and deteriorating world. And may it be so, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

**Men:** Amen.

**Bruce:** Let's open our Bibles, please, to the book of 1 Peter, continuing the study of Holiness. And these recent passages, the verses we've called our attention to for your consideration, are dealing with expressions of righteous living. How do we manifest our righteous living as God's holy people? And so we want to pick it up, beginning with chapter 2 verse 13, and I want to read all the way down, because this will be the passage that we will be dealing with for the next couple of weeks.

We're talking about submission to authority, about the theme of submission. So let us listen to the word of the Lord, beginning in chapter 2. 1 Peter chapter 2, beginning at verse 13.

“Be subject, for the Lord's sake, to every human institution, whether it be the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by Him to punish those who do evil, and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good, you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. Servants, be subject to your masters, with all respect, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the unjust. For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it, if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if, when you do good, and suffer for it, you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in His steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth. When He was reviled, He did not revile in return. When He suffered, He did not threaten, but He continued entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly. He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but now have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” This is the word of the Lord.

**Men:** Thanks be to God.

**Bruce:** We're talking about submission. There is a lot of confusion about the word *submission*. Last week we began to talk about this. This is one of the ways in which the

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apostle Peter is saying that we need to be submissive in four different areas: submissive to one another, submissive as wives, submissive as husbands, and submissive as employees and employers.

And so we are submissive as citizens. We talked about submissiveness as citizens last week.

Remember that the word *submissive* is a military term. It means to come under the authority of, in lining up for battle. It's a word that basically says this. If you're out here by yourself, and you're entering into combat, you're going to have deep problems because you don't have coverage. But when you join a group, and you come on your line, you line up in a military order, under the authority of a commander, and you now have protection. Literally, the word *submission* means this: to come under the protection of.

Now we need to take that mindset, and put that into our understanding of what it means to be submissive as citizens. It doesn't mean that you and I are doormats. Try to be submissive in your own strength, and see what a failure you'll be. This is something that is supernaturally empowered by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. You and I cannot be submissive and understand what it means to submit to an authority who we don't like, or who we think is going to treat us unjustly. But that is exactly what Peter says you are to do.

He is saying, in effect, what good is it if you suffer for something you've done wrong? What really pleases God is when you suffer for injustice, when you suffer unjustly, when people treat you unjustly. That's what pleases God.

And so we need to understand this. God always operates in an authority position. What the Father ordains the Son accomplishes, and the Holy Spirit applies. He always works in a chain of command.

Submissiveness means coming under the authority of. Now we talked about submissiveness as citizens last week.

Let me give you an example that I think is the clearest in all of Scripture. Would you turn with me to Matthew chapter 26? I want you to see Christ's example of being submissive.

Let's begin at verse 47 of chapter 26 of Matthew. This is the betrayal and the arrest of Christ. I want you to see submissiveness.

Now Jesus also said this. “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” Meekness is not weakness, men. Meekness is living according to the power of God. You cannot be meek without the power of God. Because meekness is living according to the power of God. But it is not weakness. It is power under control. Now listen to this example of Jesus being meek, being submissive, and you'll see how powerful he was.

“While He was still speaking, Judas came, one of the Twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “Behold, the one I will kiss is the man. Seize Him.””

“He came up to Jesus at once and said, ‘Greetings, Rabbi!’ And he kissed Him.

Jesus said, ‘Friend, do what you came to do.’”

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Notice what He called him. Friend! Do you think that, when someone is betraying you, that you have the courage to call him “friend?” That’s not natural, brothers, that’s supernatural! That’s meekness. That’s living according to the power of God.

“Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus, and seized Him. Then, behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.” Now we know from John 18 that this is Peter. Peter was the one who was writing about submissiveness, because of this illustration, this event in his own life.

“Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into it’s place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will not at once send more than twelve legions of angels?””

Now a Roman legion was made up of twelve thousand troops—six thousand infantry men, and six thousand servants who took care of each soldier. One of the great strengths of the Roman army was that everybody who went into combat had a servant who took care of them. So Jesus is basically saying, “Don’t you know that I’ve got another option?”

You see, meekness always implies that you’ve got another option. He says, (*paraphrase*), “Don’t you know this? I can call down a hundred forty-four thousand angels, and the odds are going to be pretty good against you, and on My side. But I’m not going to do that.” That’s meekness. That’s submission.

Notice why. “Do you not think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will not at once send more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?”

There is His option. That’s submissiveness. What did He submit to? He submitted to His Father, and the Lord’s will in His life. That’s submission.

There are times in your life and my life when we need to be submissive to the authority of God’s word, because the Scripture will be glorified. I’ve got another option. I could shoot off at the mouth, or I could call twelve thousand angels down, but I’m not going to do that because the Scripture won’t be fulfilled.

You see, meekness and submissiveness always implies this. I’ve got another option. But I’m not going to exercise it, because I want the Scripture to be glorified, and God to be recognized as the Source of my life.

You see, we’re really submitting to whom?

**Men:** To God.

**Bruce:** We’re really submitting to God, aren’t we? Now, with that illustration, let’s go back to 1 Peter. I want you to notice what Jesus did in that illustration in Matthew 26.

Go back to 1 Peter 2:23. “When He was reviled, He did not revile in return. When He suffered, He did not threaten, but continued entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly.”

Now men, there is a difference between submitting to authority and entrusting yourselves to God. Nowhere in the Scripture does it say that you entrust yourself to an authority. You take that act of submissiveness, and you entrust that act of obedience so that the Scripture will be fulfilled and God will be glorified. You take that act of

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submissiveness, and you entrust that to whom?” Entrust that to God. That’s the power that we have as citizens. When you and I are submissive as citizens, you and I are entrusting that action, just as Jesus did. (*Paraphrase*) “Don’t you know I’ve got another choice? I’ve got other options. But I’m not going to do that. I’m going to take this submissive act of fulfilling God’s word through the Scripture. I’m going to entrust that to Him who judges justly.”

You see, the great power is this. It’s taking your act of submission, and taking that act and entrusting it to God. That’s the power that we have.

“Blessed are the meek,” Jesus said. Meekness is not weakness. Try that sometime in your own strength, and see if you can pull it off. You can’t do that. This is something that is supernatural. This is the empowerment of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in your life, because you’re regenerated. You’ve got a new life. And this is one of the ways in which you and I visibly give evidence of our regeneration. It’s the way that we are submissive to our authorities as citizens.

Now I know there are exceptions. But we don’t run our lives by exceptions. Very seldom will you ever be put into a position where you’ll have to violate God’s word and be submissive. When you do, always obey God and not man. Those will be the exceptions in your life, not the rule. The rule is this. Submit to all authority.

And what do you do when you submit? What does Peter tell us in those verses? What should you and I be doing in the midst of our submitting to authority, and entrusting that act to God? What are we to be doing? Doing good things. Notice: do good! When you’re submissive, do good! Don’t gripe, complain and blame. Do something that is good, because what does that do? That is pleasing to God.

Now brothers, understand this. This is not something that is easy to do. I’m not saying that it’s going to be a joyful thing to do. But I’m saying that it’s the most powerful thing you can do. Submit to your authority as a citizen, and entrust that act of submission to a holy God, who judges justly. Let Him be your defender. That’s living according to the power of God. We do that as citizens. That’s why we need to stick close to each other and encourage one another to be submissive as citizens.

Submissiveness means this, coming under the protection of. And the reason that we come under the protection of a sovereign God is because we’re taking our act of submission, and entrusting that to Him.

Let me read that again to you. Go back and read what Peter says in verse 20. “For what credit is it if, when you sin and you are beaten for it, you endure? But if, when you do good and suffer for it, you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.”

May God be pleased to grant us, brothers, the spirit of meekness, to live according to the power of God. Do the best you can when you submit to your authorities, and trust Christ with the rest. Remember, you’re entrusting that act to Him who judges justly.

The next area where we need to submit is to our working environment. Take a look at our next verses, beginning at verse 16. He talks about being submissive as servants.

You see, what is our motive for submissiveness?:” It’s for the Lord’s sake. Our submissiveness to our authorities reveals our allegiance to God, and God is glorified. And what is the reason? Notice that the reason for the submissiveness is for the Lord’s

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sake. The reason that you and I are submissive is for God’s glory. But you can’t do that in your own strength, men. That is something that the Holy Spirit gives us when we have new life in Christ. Try it sometime and see how difficult it is. But remember this. No griping, no complaining, no blaming. Just entrust that to a holy God.

And guess what the world is going to see? They’re going to see somebody who is demonstrating righteous living. You’re giving evidence of righteous living as a holy person in God’s kingdom, just by the way that we respond to our authorities.

One Greek linguist describes this word *submissive* as “a soldier joining a regiment.” It basically means this. You’re an individual when you join a regiment. But you are not individualistic anymore. You’re an individual, but you are no longer individualistic. In other words, it’s not about you. It’s about your regiment. It’s about your group. It’s about your team. It’s about following the leadership of your commander.

And so, when you are submissive, yes, you’re an individual, but you’re not an individualistic thing, about yourself. It’s coming under the authority and under the protection of someone. And when you join a regiment, that is your protection. When you’re out here alone, and un-submissive, that’s when you’re in danger.

You see, a person who is un-submissive has a problem with God. A person who is un-submissive is somebody who has a problem with God, because he doesn’t understand the fact that God is his protection.

So now we apply this into our lives as employers and employees. Notice what he says in verse 16. “Servants, be subject to your masters, with all respect.” There is the qualifier. He says to not only do it, but here is how you do it. Remember, you’re demonstrating righteous living. You’re demonstrating the fact that you’re another worldling. You’re demonstrating the fact that you’re an extraterrestrial. You’re demonstrating the fact that your citizenship is in heaven, but your life is on earth. Do it with all respect!

Now notice. Not only to the good ones and the gentle ones, but also to the unjust! In other words, it’s not about your boss! It’s about who? It’s about God! And how do you do it? Are you entrusting your act of submission to your boss for God’s glory, because it’s pleasing to Him? What are you supposed to do when you have an unjust boss? Do good! Do good things!

Romans 13 says this. “All authority is given by God.” Now my boss doesn’t know that. But I do. That’s the real issue. She doesn’t need to know that. I need to know it.

So what is my role every day? My job is to make her look good. My job, as a servant, is to treat her with respect, regardless of how she treats me. The issue is not her treatment of me. The issue is my response to her, because I understand the sovereignty of God. I understand that she is there as a Divine appointment over my life, as an authority in my life, work wise.

Now Peter was writing to a group of people, the Romans. There were sixty thousand servants in Rome. The whole culture was based upon servanthood. Your doctors were servants. Your lawyers were servants. Your maintenance people were servants. Your cooks were servants. Sixty thousand people in Rome were servants, because the whole economy was based on a servants’ economy.

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And Peter says this. (*Paraphrase*) “Be submissive to your authorities with all respect, even to those who are unjust.”

Do you know who Caesar was at the time Peter was writing this? Nero! What did Nero try to do? Destroy Christianity. And Peter has the audacity to say that, if you’re going to demonstrate righteous living, you’re going to submit to your boss. Men, you have to ask yourself this question. Do I believe that God is bigger than my boss?

Now that doesn’t mean that you’re a brown nose. That’s not what I’m saying. But I’m saying this. As a Kingdom citizen, you’ve got the power of the Holy Spirit behind you, that when you go into work, you can demonstrate the fact that you’re another worldling. My citizenship is in heaven, not on this earth, and you can demonstrate that very practically by demonstrating the evidence of righteous living by being submissive to your authorities.

The same principles apply to our relationships with our bosses and to our employees. In this case, Peter is referring to what would be known in Roman terms as “household slaves,” both those who are kind as well as those who are abusive. There were sixty thousand slaves in the Roman empire. Not only did they perform menial tasks, but they were doctors. They were teachers. They were musicians. They were actors. They were secretaries. They were stewards. All work in Rome was done by slaves, and he is saying, “Be submissive to your authorities,” because you are demonstrating righteous living of a holy God.

Now it is into this instruction that Peter tells us to be submissive, and that is because you’re entrusting yourself to a holy God when you entrust yourself through the act of submission.

The result was that the class behavior barriers were removed. What happened in Rome was that the class barriers were removed because of the submission of Christian people. It changed society. All of a sudden there was worth to a slave. There was value. There was meaning. There was significance to a slave because of their understanding of what it meant to be Kingdom citizens, and being other worldly.

In fact Calistus, one of the earliest bishops of Rome, was a slave. Both slaves and aristocrats were martyrs at the same time.

Peter also makes it very clear that Christians should not take advantage of Christian employers. In other words, how do we treat each other? With respect and dignity. You see, that’s the impact that we can make. Just think, if you went to work, (and I try to work on this myself.)

Years ago I had a boss who I did not know at the time. She tried to do everything to me to get me to resign, because she wanted a friend of hers who was a sorority sister to have my job. I never knew that. And people kept coming to me and saying, “Why is she treating you that way? Look what’s she’s doing! She just slit your throat publicly.”

I said, “That’s a non-issue. The issue is what is my response?” My response is to do what?

**Men:** To do good.

**Bruce:** To do good! So I kept trying to figure out how I could build her up publicly. How could I show her respect?

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Every time she would walk into the room, the first thing I would do was that I would stand up in her presence, because she was my authority.

One day she said to me, “Why are you standing up every time I walk into the room? You don’t need to do that.”

And I said, “I need to do that for my sake. It’s a reminder to me to show respect to you as my authority.”

You see, my job for thirteen years was to show her respect, regardless of how she treated me.

It turned out that, because of what I was doing, she began to change the whole demeanor of what I had built at PNC. As it turned out, she said, “You’ve got to get rid of everything that you’ve built. There are seven other cities in PNC, and I’ve got the choice to make everybody look like you, or to make you look like them. It’s cheaper to make you look like the other seven cities. So I want you to get rid of everything you’ve ever done. Just get rid of it, because I want you to look like the people in Canfield, Pa.”

So, oh! (*Laughter*) I had to make sure that when I saluted, I had all of my fingers up. (*Laughter*)

**Participant:** You’ve got a meeting, Bruce. (*Laughter*)

**Bruce:** I’ve got to go. There’s a meeting coming up. (*Laughter*)

So the point was, I had to say, “Yes, ma’am.”

So people said, “What in the world is going on?”

I said, “What’s going on is that I need to make her look good, because I’m under her authority.”

As it worked out, she said, “The one thing you can continue doing is your private foundation management services.” That’s what I’ve been doing for the last twelve years. This could not have turned out better for me than that. But who was the instrument to make it happen? She was! Now this is what I’ve been doing for the last thirteen or fourteen years. They have been the best thirteen years I’ve had at PNC, as a result of her leadership. She was the one who was the catalyst, the one who God used. He didn’t use me to create this. I’m not creative enough to do that. He used my boss, my authority.

And the issue was, am I responding correctly? The issue is never how you are being treated. The issue is how am I responding, because you are a meek, powerful person living according to the power of God.

Now brothers, you can’t do that naturally. Now I’m not saying that this is easy. I’m not saying it’s fun. I’m not saying it’s going to be happy and joyful. But it is the right thing to do, because it is pleasing to God.

You’ve got other options. I could have done many other things. I could have griped. I could have complained. I could have blamed. But how would the Scriptures be fulfilled?

You see the power that you have? Yes, sir?

**Participant:** And you had to work that out, because you had all those feelings when you saluted.

**Bruce:** Oh, absolutely!

**Participant:** And then you had to work that out to decide to submit.

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**Bruce:** Absolutely.

**Participant:** In that period of grappling with God and wrestling with Him, how did you come to that conclusion?

**Bruce:** I went back to the Scripture and read 1 Peter chapter 2, verses 13-20.

**Participant:** Jesus' example.

**Bruce:** Matthew 26, the example of Christ. What better example could I have, in somebody submitting to authority, and in taking that and entrusting it to God. I went to the Scripture and found out the examples. I didn't go to earthly examples. I went back to the Scripture and said, "What does the Scripture say? Is the Scripture really sufficient for me in this situation?"

Now it was a battle, no question about it. My pride, my ego, my reputation was all at stake. I'll admit that all of those things were there. But that's where the little card comes in. "Do not be conformed to the system of this world." "You've got to think right before you act right, and then you feel right." I had to go from my feelings to my thinking. And it was the Scripture that took me back to my thinking.

Do you really believe, men, that Scripture is sufficient for life and godliness? I had to go back to the Scripture and say, "What is sufficient?", because I desired to do what is pleasing to the Lord. It's not easy. It's not easy at all. But the Lord was very pleased to work out something for me that was the best last fourteen years I've had at PNC because of her.

And every time I see her, do you know what I do? I thank her. I thank her publicly whenever I can.

Now we have a very good friendship. She's a delightful person.

She had a situation recently that was difficult for her, and she called me and just said, "How would you handle this?" She came back to me. We have a wonderful friendship. The real issue was not how she was treating me. The issue was how was I responding to her?

Again, brothers, don't think this is easy. But it's powerful!

Do you understand the difference between submitting and entrusting? We submit to our authorities, but we entrust ourselves to God. The reason is that we do it for the Lord's sake. Let me give you a couple of uses of this thought of submissiveness to our authorities, both as employers and employees. Now that also means this. If you're a boss, how do you treat your employees? With dignity and respect. You treat them with dignity and respect, just as you would treat your boss with dignity and respect.

You see, my job is to make my boss look good. It's the mindset I have every day, to make my boss look good. I don't know what that means. All you can do is be an aggressive responder. When something happens, you're guided by the Scripture to make her look good, to make him look good, whatever the situation is.

How is it that you treat your employees if you're the believer and you're the supervisor? You want to create for them an environment in which to excel. What I want my people to do, I want them to excel. So I create an environment for them to excel. I remove all the hindrances to their excellence, and I try to manage a well balanced life.



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That’s what I do for my employees. I want to create an environment where they can excel individually.

Secondly, I want to remove all the hindrances to their excellence. What are the things that hinder my individual staff people’s excellence? My job, as the supervisor/manager, is to remove those so they can excel.

And the third thing is to create a well balanced life. When I first came to PNC, in 1987, I was given a group of people to create a brand new department in the trust division. I was given eleven people, and they were all on probation.

My boss said, “Here’s your new staff. We’re creating a new department. You’ve got these eleven people. And, by the way, they’re all on probation, which means you’ve got ninety days to either keep them or fire them. You can do whatever you want. We don’t know what to do with them. They’re yours. Welcome aboard.”

So the first thing that I wanted to do was to create something, an environment for them to excel. So we came up with what I would call our standards for excellence. How are we going to manage ourselves as a group?

So, for the first two days, we sat down and went through a beliefs/values exercise. I took them through this, and we came up with one thing that we all agreed upon, and that was this. Relationships are important. We didn’t talk about profit and loss. We didn’t talk about risk and compliance. We all came to the conclusion, twelve different people, all who had different fear motivations, we all came to one conclusion, that relationships are important. Now that was my point of entry to this staff.

Now how do I guide them to that? With whom do we have relationships? All right, we have relationships with each other, with our clients, and with our families. All right, if we say that relationships are important, we’re going to build our whole philosophy of our departmental strategy based upon that one concept, that relationships are important. So let’s talk about how we do that.

We spent the first two days trying to figure that out. Here is what we came up with, collectively, our standards of excellence.

In order for us to maintain relationships at a high level with each other, with our customers, and with our clients, no one will work after five o’clock. No one will take work home. No one works on weekends. And I added one more. No one gossips. We developed a self-managed team.

I didn’t manage the people. You don’t manage their work, you manage the people. Let them manage their own work! That’s their job! I don’t know what they do. I just know that I want to create an environment for them to excel in what they do. So we created an environment that we would manage ourselves. All twelve of us began to manage ourselves by this.

No one works after five o’clock. Now I’m not saying that these are the standards you need to have for your department. I’m not saying that. No one is going to take work home, because what would happen if you did? You would violate what?

**Men:** Your families.

**Bruce:** Your families. You see, we were committed to building our families.

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Now there were times when our salesmen needed to have a book prepared for a sales presentation. Rather than having my salesman and his secretary stay till eight o'clock and work on that, I would go to the team and say this. “We need to have somebody help us. How many of you can stay to help Mike make these new business presentations?”

Ten hands would go up. So I'm here, licking stamps. Somebody is going down to the Xerox machine. Somebody is going to the supply room. We had twelve people helping Mike do something, because our motive was what? It wasn't to get the new business presentation. It was to do what? To get Mike home! To be a good family man! All twelve of us bought into that. So that is how we managed ourselves. We developed a self-managed team.

It was very interesting, because all I was trying to do was to create an environment for them to excel individually. My job was to remove the things that hindered their excellence, and to create a well balanced life. That means that they would be good fathers, good mothers, good citizens, good church people, good people, good fathers, whatever they could be. I wanted them to have a well balanced life. That all went into the way that I was trying to manage these people.

After my first year, my boss called me in. He said, “It's amazing what has happened to that group of people. I don't know what you've done, but I've got one problem.”

I said, “What's that?”

He said, “You leave early.”

I said, “I beg your pardon?”

He said, “You all leave at five o'clock. It's like a hoard of people leaving at once.”

I said, “That's by design, sir.”

He said, “But it looks like you're not working hard.”

I said, “That's poor time management.”

Now here is where you have to make an appeal. I appeal to my authority. What does he want from me, as a department head? He wants me to be productive. That's all he cares about. He doesn't care how I do it. He just wants, bottom line, to be productive. So that is how I'm going to make my appeal.

So I said to him, “Sir, may I ask you a question?”

He said, “What's that?”

I said, “Are you dissatisfied with my department's productivity?”

He said, “Absolutely not! You're the most productive department I have. Of the seventy-five departments here at the bank that I manage, you're the most productive per capita. But it's easier for me to change one than it is to change seventy-four.”

I said, “May I make an appeal?”

He said, “What does that mean?”

I said, “Would you let me manage my people one more year the same way I'm doing it now? And if you're dissatisfied with our productivity, I'll change.”

He said, “You've got a deal.”

He came back the second year, and he said, “We don't even need to have a conversation. I don't know what you're doing. You just keep it up.” (*Laughter.*) It's understanding what it means to submit to your authorities. You make an appeal, because

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who has the controlling factor? It's the person who responds who has the power. It's not the person who initiates the issue. It's the person who responds who has the power.

I had the power in that conversation because of the options that I had to exercise. And I chose to exercise the ones that I knew were pleasing to the Father.

So whether or not you're the employer or the employee, Peter says this. (*Paraphrase*) “submit to your authorities, and treat your people with respect. And entrust that to a holy God who is sovereign over you, just as He is over them.” Be submissive. Come under the authority of, come under the protection of. And demonstrate the fact that your citizenship is in heaven, but your life is on earth. And do that because it is pleasing to the Lord.

May God be pleased to help us understand what it means to be submissive, to come under the power of the Holy Spirit, who will guide us. And we will become aggressive responders to what the Holy spirit leads us to do in situations of submitting to our authorities, managing our people well, and taking that act of submission, entrusting that to a holy God. May God be pleased to do so, for His sake.

Let's pray. Father, it's overwhelming, the power that You place within Your people, by the power of the Holy Spirit. We have a tendency to think that we're victims, but we're really the vessel. Thanks be to God, who always, always, always leads us in triumphal procession, and spreads everywhere the sweet aroma of the Person and work of Christ. May it be so, Father, in our lives, as we understand what it means to come under the protection of Your sovereignty and Your grace, for Jesus' sake. And all the Brave Men said, “Amen.” See you next week. Thanks, guys.