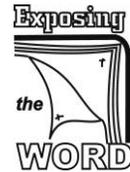


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The Epistles of 1 & 2 Peter

BY DR. EDGAR PIERCE



VI- Remember to Submit to Authority: 1Pe 2:13-25; 1Pe 3:1-7

The main problem that men and women in our country have accepting Christ may well be that we as humans have a problem with submitting to authority. Sure we give lip service to it but in our hearts, where the matter of faith and acceptance of God resides, we have a problem. Accepting Christ involves submitting to the authority of God that you are a sinner and helpless without Christ.

What gives men authority over other men? I found a good definition and explanation of authority. I give it to you in whole but will speak to it only in part.

A Power or Right

This concept of authority as something that causes another person to 'do what you want him to do' is reflected in most definitions. For instance, the *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* speaks of authority as 'a power or right to direct the actions or thoughts of others. Authority is a power or right, usually because of rank or office, to issue commands and to punish for violations.' Again the root idea seems to be control or direction of the actions of others.

William Oncken, Jr., in a 1970 Colorado Institute of Technology Journal, gives an analysis of authority that suggests it is comprised of four elements:

- 1. The Authority of Competence:** the more competent the other fellow knows you are, the more confident he will be that you know what you are talking about and the more likely he will be to follow your orders, requests, or suggestions. He will think of you as an authority in the matter under consideration and will feel it risky to ignore your wishes.
- 2. The Authority of Position:** This component gives you the right to tell someone, 'Do it or else.' It has teeth. 'The boss wants it' is a bugle call that can snap many an office or shop into action.
- 3. The Authority of Personality:** The easier it is for the other fellow to talk to you, to listen to you, or to work with you, the easier he will find it to respond to your wishes.
- 4. The Authority of Character:** This component is your 'credit rating' with other people as to your integrity, reliability, honesty, loyalty, sincerity,

personal morals, and ethics. Obviously you will get more and better from a man who has respect for your character than from one who hasn't.

William Oncken, Jr., Colorado Institute of Technology Journal 22 (July 1970): 273.

I am always reminded as Pastor that I only have pastoral authority because I am attempting with all my heart to follow God. I want to be competent, and have the character that motivates people to follow. I never want to abuse any position of authority that I am entrusted with by God nor the church.

Peter gives us several reminders of submission to authority in our section of the precious Word of God that is before us in this session. Our text is quite lengthy so we will not be able to deal with each verse but will attempt to get the main important thoughts of our outline.

I- Submission to the Civil Authorities:

I remind us all that the church was in the midst severe persecution of it at the time of the writing of 1 Peter. New significance is found in the exhortation to obey the government and civil law when we realize this persecution was underway. This adds weight to the statement of submission, like Paul teaching us to have joy while in prison found in the book of Philippians. Notice what Peter writes.

1Pe 2:13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

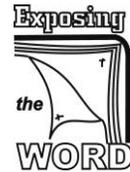
The first institution that God ordained was the family in the garden of Eden. We will discuss this in a few moments. The second one was the authority of civil government. We see here two purpose, punish evil and reward good.

The reason that we are to obey the laws of the land is that is the will of God. I know there are a bunch that call themselves Christians that want to throw out all governmental authority but beloved that would lead to anarchy. God gave us government for our well being.

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Rom 13:1-5 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

When we obey the laws of the land we are indeed obeying God. Unless the laws are in conflict with the Word of God I think God expects us to obey.

II- Submission to Personal Authority:

When Christian Herter was governor of Massachusetts, he was running hard for a second term in office. One day, after a busy morning chasing votes (and no lunch) he arrived at a church barbecue. It was late afternoon and Herter was famished.

As Herter moved down the serving line, he held out his plate to the woman serving chicken. She put a piece on his plate and turned to the next person in line. 'Excuse me,' Governor Herter said, 'do you mind if I have another piece of chicken?'

'Sorry,' the woman told him. 'I'm supposed to give one piece of chicken to each person.'

'But I'm starved,' the governor said.

'Sorry,' the woman said again. 'Only one to a customer.'

Governor Herter was a modest and unassuming man, but he decided that this time he would throw a little weight around.

'Do you know who I am?' he said. 'I am the governor of this state.'

'Do you know who I am?' the woman said. 'I'm the lady in charge of the chicken. Move along, mister.'

Bits & Pieces, May 28, 1992, Page 5-6

Many times those in authority, and especially high authority, have problems submitting to authority.

1Pe 2:18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

I worked in factories earlier in my life and noticed that many of the men who were given the title of boss where simply bossy. They made it hard to submit to their authority because of heavy handedness and incompetence in leading. Still that did not nor does not mean that they should not have been obeyed. Even when the boss is overbearing and hard Peter is telling us to be submissive to their authority.

The example he gives us of personal submission is the Lord Jesus.

1Pe 3:19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. 21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Christ submitted to those in authority over Him and by this act He brought about our salvation.

III- Submission to Family Authority:

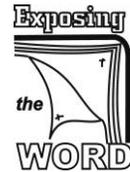
I do not want to sound like an alarmist but I think that our families are as a whole in trouble in America. There has been a paradigm shift in the families in the last 50-75 years. Look at the following quote to see this as well.

In Charles Swindoll's book, *The Quest for Character* (Multnomah), 'sociologist and historian Carl Zimmerman, in his 1947 book *Family and Civilization*, recorded his keen observations as he compared the disintegration of various cultures with the parallel decline of family life in those cultures. Eight specific patterns of domestic behavior typified

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the downward spiral of each culture Zimmerman studied: Marriage loses its sacredness...is frequently broken by divorce; traditional meaning of the marriage ceremony is lost; feminist movements abound; there is increased public disrespect for parents and authority in general; an acceleration of juvenile delinquency, promiscuity and rebellion occurs; there is refusal of people with traditional marriages to accept family responsibilities; a growing desire for, and acceptance of, adultery is evident; there is increasing interest in, and spread of, sexual perversions and sex-related crimes." *Confident Living, November 1987, p. 34*

Now notice what Peter gives us as a reminder about home life. **1Pe 3:1-7 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; 2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.**

One of the grand purpose of the order God set up we see here is so that the wife can win her husband by being the kind of wife God has called her to be.

Resources The Hidden Value of a Man, Smalley, Trent, pp. 43ff The Fight, J. White, IVP, pp. 124ff Headship in a Nutshell

If I could define headship in a nutshell, I would put it this way: biblical headship for a husband is giving the best of all that he is to those under his care and authority. I would define submission in a complimentary manner: biblical submission for a wife is giving the best of all that she is to the one that is in authority over her. Several hundred years ago, Martin Luther described it this way: 'Let the wife make the husband glad to come home, and let him make her sorry to see him leave. *Steve Farrar, Point Man, p. 173*

Peter goes on to tell the women and wives the inner beauty is more desirable than flashy outward appearance. **1Pe 3:3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.**

He then gives and an example of Sara, Abraham's wife. **1Pe 3:5 For after this manner in the old time**

the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: 6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

Now may I make a statement that I think is a biblical based one. If a man is submissive to God then he will be the kind of man who will lead not by bully and unnatural authority of brute strength but will lead by love and honor given to the wife making it easy for the headship to be practiced.

1Pe 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

Let me close with a question of what type are we?

Dr. A. T. Schofield used to point out that there were three sorts of dogs in his city of London: the wild, masterless dog that roamed the streets at will, stole his meals from garbage pails, and often came to an inglorious end in the lethal chamber of the humane society; the chained dog, which could not be trusted for more than a few feet; and the dog that knew and loved his master and responded obediently to his voice. The first of these had liberty but no law; the second had law but no liberty; whereas the last enjoyed the perfect law of liberty.

All men seem to be like one of these three dogs. The masses are utterly lawless when it comes to the authority of God. They are dominated by sin, and 'sin is lawlessness' (1 John 3:4). And then, there are many who are like the dog on the leash, they have law, but no liberty. These are legalists in the religious realm. The cheerless Pharisee is the representative of thousands who, 'being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God' (Rom. 10:3). But the Christian who knows the truth of New Testament deliverance is like the third dog. He needs no chain but is guided by his Master's eye and his Master's voice. *C. Ernest Tatham, from the book, 'How May I.', in Confident Living, January, 1988, p. 14*

I want to hear and respond to the Master.