

The Blessing in Submission

Seeing the positive in what seems to be the negative

Genesis 16: 3-14 NLT ³ So Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian servant and gave her to Abram as a wife. (This happened ten years after Abram had settled in the land of Canaan.) ⁴ So Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress, Sarai, with contempt. ⁵ Then Sarai said to Abram, "This is all your fault! I put my servant into your arms, but now that she's pregnant she treats me with contempt. The Lord will show who's wrong—you or me!" ⁶ Abram replied, "Look, she is your servant, so deal with her as you see fit." Then Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she finally ran away. ⁷ The angel of the Lord found Hagar beside a spring of water in the wilderness, along the road to Shur. ⁸ The angel said to her, "Hagar, Sarai's servant, where have you come from, and where are you going?" "I'm running away from my mistress, Sarai," she replied. ⁹ The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her authority." ¹³ Thereafter, Hagar used another name to refer to the Lord, who had spoken to her. She said, "You are the God who sees me." [a] She also said, "Have I truly seen the One who sees me?"

Hagar's Pride

In this passage of scripture, we are introduced to Hagar, Sarai's Egyptian servant.

Hagar is given to Abram so that Sarai could have a child through her, and in the process certain things begin to happen within Hagar.

1. Hagar's pride rises within her.

- **Genesis 16:5** Then Sarai said to Abram, "This is all your fault! I put my servant into your arms, but now that she's pregnant she treats me with contempt. The Lord will show who's wrong—you or me!"

2. Hagar elevates herself by putting down and treating Sarai, her master, with disrespect.

- She truly believes she is better than Sarai because she is able to bear children and Sarai can't.

My Notes: Hagar most likely mocked Sarai every chance she got by telling or showing Sarai that she was pregnant and Sarai wasn't.

3. Hagar is no longer submitted to her authority due to the circumstances at hand.

- She's carrying Abram's baby so, why does she need to listen to Sarai anymore?
- She needs her rest and everyone to wait on her now.
- In Hagar's mind, she's the one that needs to be respected now and not be the one giving the respect.

Unfortunately, Hagar's actions caused her to be mistreated instead of being blessed and so she run away from her Master's house.

She thought that all of what she was doing was going to get her somewhere special in life but instead it got her and the child she was carrying out of her Master's home.

When we put our own interests before God's will or His ways, we will always get hurt. Nothing good will come of our decisions when we exclude God in the decision making.

Submission is not about "how BIG they are and how LITTLE we are". It's not even about someone having control over you or telling you what to do.

Submission is about protection. Submission is about trusting or putting yourself in someone else's hands to guide you.

Many times we want to take matters into our hands and in the process we make the worst of things.

Saul's Disobedience

We see this same thing happen to Saul when he decided to offer a sacrifice unto the Lord instead of obeying the Lord.

1 Samuel 15:1-3,9,13-14,20-23 ¹ Samuel also said unto Saul, The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord. ² Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. ³ Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. ⁹ But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly. ¹³ And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. ¹⁴ And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? ²⁰ And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. ²¹ But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal. ²² And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. ²³ For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

The Lord sent Saul to destroy the Amalekites and everything in their city. Saul thought he knew better than God and decided to spare the King Agag and the best of the land. Then he offered a sacrifice unto the Lord and told Samuel he obeyed the voice of the Lord.

Was Saul really obedient? Did he truly follow or do what God said?

For one moment, let's put ourselves in the shoes of Saul. What would you have done?

My notes: I know how my kids are and I know how I was when I was a child. If my parents told me to pick up my room and put everything back where it goes, I would have done it differently.

I would have done it my way, instead of my parents' way.

On purpose? Maybe not. Depends on the person/child.

Saul's Thought Process

Saul wanted to do what he wanted to do and not be punished for his actions.

Again, place yourself in his shoes or better yet, in the shoes of your child.

You've told your child to clean up his room and in the process of him cleaning, he sees a toy he likes and wants to play with it. Your child will stop cleaning and begin to play with his toy or he will continue to clean his room but put the toys he wants to play with aside and play with them when he is done.

Then, you (Mom) are going to be happy because your child has cleaned up the room just like you asked him to.

Question: Did Saul truly "clean up" the mess? Did he truly listen to the voice of God and obey? _____

This is what Saul did! He put his interests before God's will and it affected him greatly.

Was God pleased with Saul's version of obedience? _____

Saul's disobedience or unwillingness to submit to God's voice and the authority of his elder, Samuel, cost him his kingdom.

- **1 Samuel 15:20-23** ²⁰ And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. ²¹ But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal. ²² And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. ²³ For rebellion is as the

sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

The word "Rebellion" in the Hebrew is mēriy. This word truly means to contumacy.

con tu ma cy noun \kən- 'tü-mə-sē, - 'tyü-; 'kän-tü-, -tyü-, -chə-\ : stubborn resistance to authority; specifically : willful [contempt](#) of court

con tempt noun \kən- 'tem(p)t\ : a feeling that someone or something is not worthy of any respect or approval
: a lack of respect for or fear of something that is usually respected or feared

Saul sought to please or sought the respect of the people he was leading versus giving God the respect He deserved.

Saul became stubborn and disobedient, and in the eyes of God rebellion is like doing witchcraft or committing idolatry. Saul decided to place himself in the place of God and worship himself by doing what "HE" wanted to do.

Saul's Decision Affected Many

He may have thought this would only affect him, but it affected everyone around him.

- It affected Israel, the country he was King over.
 - This was supposed to be a victory over a country that harmed Israel, but Saul made it personal and about him; what he wanted, not what God wanted.
 - God wanted to deliver Israel from any future attacks from their enemies, but Saul made it into his victory.
 - If Samuel had no finished the job Saul started by getting rid of everything and the king of the Amalekites, then they might have come after Israel again.
- It affected his family, sons and future generations.
 - His kingdom was taken away from him. Therefore, his sons and his grandchildren would never become future kings of Israel.

- It affected everyone's decision to serve the Lord.
 - If he can defy God and not obey him, why should we obey the Lord? We know better, God does not!
 - It could lead a nation away from God instead of closer to God.
 - It must be God's will, not mine.

Back to Hagar

Genesis 16:7-9 NLT ⁷ The angel of the Lord found Hagar beside a spring of water in the wilderness, along the road to Shur. ⁸ The angel said to her, "Hagar, Sarai's servant, where have you come from, and where are you going?" "I'm running away from my mistress, Sarai," she replied. ⁹ The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her authority."

The angel of the Lord finds Hagar in the wilderness along the road to Shur.

Shur in Hebrew means "wall".

Hagar literally hit a wall. She wasn't able to get anywhere until she went back to her mistress and submitted herself to Sarai's authority.

It's Not Always Our First Choice or Second, Etc...

How many of us have ever been between a rock and a hard place?

How many of us can say, you were in a situation or place where you knew it was better for you, but you didn't want to be there?

Where Hagar was, at Shur in the wilderness, it wasn't a good place to be in, but it was certainly worse than where she needed to be – with Sarai.

- Where you need to be is not always your first choice or your second, or even your third; but it's better than where you might be right now or could be.

Hagar had a roof over her head, meals to eat, and a master that took care of her.

At this point, she may not be treated all that great for what she did and how she behaved, but it's better than being in the wilderness up against a wall (Shur).

She was putting herself and the baby she was carrying at risk.

The angel of the Lord spoke to her - gave her a warning – so that she and her baby would not suffer.

- The Lord always gives us a warning of things to come. If you do..., then I will...
 - **2 Chronicles 7:14** If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.
 - **Isaiah 43:18-19, 26-28** ¹⁸ Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. ¹⁹ Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. ²⁶ Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified. ²⁷ Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me. ²⁸ Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

My responsibility as a parent is to provide, nurture, love and protect my children. As a parent I should have my child's best interest at heart. Therefore, the things I ask of my children are to keep them safe and protected - because I love them!

When the Lord asks us to obey His Word and submit ourselves to Him, it's because He loves us.

We as His children should submit to his will, to His Word out of love, and because we want to please him, not out of duty as though He is making us to submit to Him.

Submitting oneself to someone or something is an outward and inward expression or manifestation. It is something you and others see. It may not be easy and it may not come naturally, but it is necessary!

If we want to make it to heaven, there are some things we are going to have to change in our walk with God. These things are going to be both inward and outward changes. They may not be easy but, they are imperative.

As we draw closer to God, He'll change our thinking and our minds and then it will show forth on the outside.

Do you think Hagar wanted to go back to Sarai? Back to submit herself to Sarai and serve her?

Genesis 16:9 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and **submit** thyself under her hands.

In study, I have found that the word submit in this verse literally means “to submit oneself”.

There are different kinds of “submission”. In this case, we can “be made to” submit or we can “willingly” submit ourselves, not to be told to submit, but to put ourselves in that place.

In the Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

sub mit

verb \səb- 'mit\
\səb- 'mit\
\səb- 'mit\

: to stop trying to fight or resist something : to agree to do or accept something that you have been resisting or opposing

Is it truly submission if you agree? _____

It is not submission if you don't disagree

When the angel of the Lord spoke to Hagar and told her to return and submit herself to Sarai, he basically told her, “Sarai, Abram or anybody can't make you submit. You have to willingly do it yourself”.

She obeyed the Lord and both her and her son were blessed.

What Does It Mean To Submit?

1 Corinthians 11: 3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

Ephesians 5: 21-33 **21** Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. **22** Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. **23** For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. **24** Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. **25** Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; **26** That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, **27** That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. **28** So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. **29** For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: **30** For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. **31** For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. **32** This is a great mystery:

but I speak concerning Christ and the church. **33** Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

What does this passage of scripture really mean?

The words "Submitting yourselves" in the Greek come from the word hypotassō, which comes from the root words hypo and tassō.

Hypo= to subject one's self, obey; to submit to one's control

Tasso= to appoint on one's own responsibility or authority; to appoint mutually, i.e. agree upon

This opens up this passage of scripture in a way I had never seen it before. We already knew that we needed to submit ourselves one to another and that the head of the woman is man, and the head of the man is Christ, but now we see that it involves more than that.

When verse 21 says "Submitting yourselves one to another", it is telling us that we place each other in the care of our spouse and that in this marriage/union, there is a mutually appointed responsibility or authority that each of us have.

Then in the following verse it says, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."

The same word submit in the Greek is used here.

Why do you think it says, "as unto the Lord"?

My Notes: It's a love relationship. I submit to my husband because I love him and want to please him.

Because my relationship with God reflects on my relationship with my husband, and my relationship with my husband reflects on my relationship with God.

My relationship with my husband is a mirror to my relationship with God and vice versa.

If we truly love the Lord and are walking according to His Word, that same love is going to reflect on my relationship with my spouse. This also applies to my family.

I'm not saying that it's always going to be easy living for God or that trials and tribulations won't come, because they will, but that our relationship with God is

both an inward and outward expression of my love for Him that I and others will see.

When we, ladies, submit ourselves to our own husbands (not someone else's husband), he in return will love us!

When we show our husbands respect and honor, he will do everything in his power to give himself for us, protect us, shield us from trouble, provide and care for us - like Christ loved the church. (Ephesians 5: 25)

Why Do We Submit?

Ephesians 5:32-33 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

We submit ourselves to one another because a marriage is the living, breathing example of God's love for us - His Church. It is what unbelievers and believers alike should see.

When a marriage is in harmony and submitting themselves to one another, it shows us that there is a blessing in submitting.

It is necessary to be submitted to your leadership.

When you submit to your authority, there's an umbrella of protection over you.

There is a blessing that comes from submission. You cannot minister to others if you are not able to submit yourself to your authority. Whether that authority is your father or husband and pastor.

1 Peter 5:1-7 1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: 7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

1 Peter 2:13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

Romans 10:3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

What do you think this verse means?

When we have knowledge of the righteousness of God, then we will know that it is important for us to submit to the authority over us, whether we agree with them or not. President, government, boss, even church leaders and even your spouse.

The Lord puts up in a place of authority and He takes down from...

In our walks with God, we can't serve The Lord with our own agendas.

Saying to God, "Okay this is what you can touch, and this is what is off limits. Don't deal with this portion because I'm not ready to give that up or change that yet."

No, we must crucify the flesh. We must die to our sins and to our flesh.

Once we die to ourselves and surrender all that we are, and were, The Lord can begin a new thing in our lives.

When we step in a place of submission unto God, our lives will be blessed.

It might be that some of you are going through some rough times and I want to challenge all of us today to take a look at our lives to see if we have truly surrender all to God. If we have truly submitted ourselves to God.

Blessings only come when we align ourselves to His will.

I'm not saying that submission comes naturally, because it doesn't. Sometimes it's a sacrifice...that's why it is called crucifying the flesh.

The word of God in scripture doesn't tell us to crucify the flesh for nothing.

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

It takes action in our part. It's not a simple, okay I give up, I surrender....no, it's literally putting your flesh in the cross and nailing it there....

The devil cannot touch or kill a dead man.