

TRAINING Disciples to Train

Session 11: Submission (5c)

Offered by Ron Lively, M.Div., M.A. – BiblicalMentoring.org (Studies)

Step 1: Opening prayer

Step 2: Each person quotes the memory verse: VERSE: **Mark 10:45**

45 "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Step 3: Read and discuss all or part of the Bible Chapter – **Mark 10**

Step 4: Questions for Personal Applications and/or Group Discussions:

1. Phillips shares that in fact Christ's authority had been passed on to him and his staff. Think about how this affected their provided direction in certain tense situations.
2. What does it mean to exercise authority through servanthood.
3. Can you explain the author's point that Christ's message was plain that "spiritual love serves, it does not desire".
4. The author writes that "unbelievers serve because of fear, pride, loyalty or a desire for money". Consider that a disciple's motivation should be love.
5. Phillips claims that we must understand and live by four biblical truths. Can you name them?

Step 5: Read and discuss the Content from the book:

Chapter 5c per the author – Keith Phillips:

When these men assumed authority over me and our ministry, I verbally affirmed my submission to them. Christians must submit to their leaders voluntarily. There is no biblical provision for leaders to exercise their authority over one who does not submit. That is why the New Testament speaks first to the one who is responsible to submit, and then to the person who is to exercise authority: first to the children, then to the parents; first to the wife, then to the husband; first to the servant, then to the master. Consequently, my relationship with our Board hinged upon my submission to them.

My submission does not preclude further personal responsibility to search the Scriptures and test the leadership (Acts 17:11). However, I do this with a submissive spirit, trusting that such study will only enhance the instruction received. If we differ on an issue, I trust that these godly leaders will be open to discussion or will appreciate any correction or enlightenment. My spirit as a searcher is not critical, rebellious or distrustful. It is submissive. I love them and honor them. And I know the reverse is also true.

Submission to godly men who know me well has alleviated a tremendous amount of pressure. On the basis of their guidance and wisdom, I can now confidently exercise authority over those who choose to submit to me. In turn, many of our staff who have been entrusted with leadership positions exercise authority over other staff members and Christians in the ghetto. Christ's delegated authority has in fact been passed on to us.

Exercising this principle has provided direction for our staff in certain tense situations. We have often been asked for money to buy food. We realized that the money we gave frequently purchased liquor or narcotics. So we decided to provide a well-balanced meal for those who said they were hungry.

This sounded good in theory, but it did not work well on the streets. When someone was offered food, he responded, "I'd rather have money. Don't you trust me?" No matter how compassionately we explained, arguments and bitter feelings resulted.

Finally, I told our staff to simply say, "My boss says we cannot give out money, but I will feed you if you want." Surprisingly, that ended our dilemma. The people who asked for money respected the authority to which our staff submitted, even if they had no idea who that authority was. They could argue with the person, but not with his authority. A disciple joyfully submits to Christ and His delegated authorities.

Disciples Exercise Their Authority Through Servanthood

Instead of using brute force or authoritarian demands, a disciple exercises his authority through servanthood. Jesus told His disciples, "...You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you... whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:42-45).

Christ's message was plain: spiritual love serves, it does not desire. Servanthood is the highest form of leadership. The mature Christian chooses servanthood over lordship in every situation.

There are very few individuals who make such a stunning first impression that I am awed by them. One day it dawned on me that those unique people who do, have one thing in common: servanthood.

Walter is one of these remarkable people. The first time we met, he offered to clear his calendar in order to drive me to my appointments. He was sincerely concerned about my welfare. I never imagined that he was one of the top business executives in the country.

Walter never needs to say it, but I know he will do anything in his power to serve me. If I were in a desperate situation, I would not hesitate to phone him. Servanthood permeates his life.

Jesus said, "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you" (John 15:12, italics added). And Christ's love for His disciples was unselfish servanthood. He voluntarily assumed the form of a slave (Philippians 2:7). He washed their feet and willingly took their place on a cross. Jesus was not screaming and kicking when they led Him to be crucified. He was compassionate and forgiving. He served without reservation and then announced, "I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you" (John 13:15).

The apostles, whose authority in the Church was beyond question, were servant-leaders. They did not "lord it over" their spiritual children (2 Corinthians 1:24). They exercised authority in a humble, loving manner.

Unlike nonbelievers who serve because of fear, pride, loyalty or a desire for money, a disciple's motivation is love. He puts his brother's welfare above his own. Privacy is an infrequent luxury. Inconvenience is not unusual. He ministers unnoticed and, in the excitement, or tragedy of the moment, often leaves unthanked. Any high-handed word or action is out of character.

I remember teaching a seminar in a room where there was no stand for the blackboard. Al Ewert, our Wichita director, was with me. Quietly, completely unnoticed, Al slipped behind the blackboard and stood holding it against his body. For three hours I taught about discipleship—self-death, submission, obedience, love and servanthood. As the session ended, I looked at Al and was profoundly moved. I had talked about a Christ-like character while Al had lived it. "...whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant" (Matthew 20:26). Disciples exercise their authority through servanthood.

The submission-authority relationships that God ordained serve as the central nervous system for Christ's Church. We can only function correctly in the body of Christ if we understand and live by these four biblical truths which form the groundwork for joyful submission.

<i>Disciples Checklist - Submission</i>
<u> </u> <i>I have an inner attitude of trust in my sovereign, loving and omniscient God.</i>
<u> </u> <i>Christ's authority is supreme in my life.</i>
<u> </u> <i>When God's delegated authority touches my life, I submit to it just as I do to Christ.</i>
<u> </u> <i>I can exercise authority because I submit to authority.</i>
<u> </u> <i>I exercise my authority through servanthood.</i>

Step 6: *Share personal prayer requests then each person prays for the other's requests.*

Source: The Making of a Disciple by Dr. Keith Philips. Pub. by Fleming H. Revell Company, 1981. ISBN 0-8007-1181-5.
Intro by Robert E. Coleman. Content (except study questions) is taken from the book without revisions.

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