



Take-Aways from CC Sunday School

August 27, 2017

Submission

Submission in our earthly relationships begins first of all with submission to God and to His Word. Are you committed to fully *believe*, *trust* and *obey* (even if you don't fully understand) what His Word says regarding every area of your life?

Submission to one another is not merely for the "leader-follower" relationships within the Body. The obedience/subservience kind of submission is not a part of every relationship, but love and humility are a part of every relationship that honors Christ. Love, self-sacrifice and humility toward one another—whether it be your peer, sibling, parents or husband—will be displayed in giving up your own desires and opinions for the sake of the desires and opinions of the other.

Submission is an acknowledgement of God's Sovereignty. I find a willingness to submit when I am fully convinced of God's loving and wise sovereign control of my life. Hudson Taylor said, "The real secret to an unsatisfied life lies too often in an unsundered will." If I am unsatisfied with how my life is going, I probably haven't come to terms with Who is really running things, haven't been convinced that He really loves me, and don't trust His wise choices for me.

Submission is a continual process. We don't reach a certain age or point in adulthood or even a level of spiritual maturity when submission is easy to practice.

There is peace in my soul when I obey God by submitting to those to whom I am to submit. When I don't submit, life is miserable. Submission is not conditional: the other person does not have to be worthy of it.

Besides submission being a command and a necessary Christian virtue for us all, failing in this area does not bring the satisfaction you would expect when having things "your way."

Every trial in your life will require submission—submission to God's will—for everything comes from His hand. You will know you are growing in this area when you agree that "it is a greater mercy to have a heart willing to refer all to God and be at His disposal than to enjoy immediately the mercy we are most eager and impatient for." *Flavel, The Mystery of Providence*

Singleness

As a woman married a second time and looking back I would change how I spent my 8 single years in-between by taking I Corinthians 7:34-35 and Proverbs 31 much more seriously:

- Be a woman who fears God: a woman of the Word and of prayer. Reading, meditating on, memorizing and obeying the Word. Lover of Jesus Christ.
- Be a good steward of time: meditating, witnessing, ministering, serving, working
- Be hospitable: engaging communication – question, listen, & speak. Entertain.
- Be a good friend: loyal & trustworthy, kindness in my tongue
- Be industrious: good worker, buy, sell, make, plant, learn
- Be a woman: keep my home, keep fit, be feminine. Learn to cook!

Singleness is not a time of being in a "holding pattern," but a time to live for the Lord with all your heart. Minister along with a friend, attend a Ladies Bible Study, teach a class, etc. Spend concentrated time studying your Bible, reading commentaries, missionary stories, etc. Focus on really getting to know God. The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever by knowing and worshipping Him in spirit and in truth. This is your chief end—now. Not just for when you are "all grown up," married, or a parent.

The essence of a single life is no different than that of a married life. Whether single or married, the single most important thing about us is what we are thinking about God. We need to learn Paul's secret: "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am." How?

The Great Argument for Contentment:

1. Conditions are always changing, therefore I must obviously not be dependent on conditions.
 2. What matters supremely and vitally is my SOUL and my relationship to God—THAT is the first [most important] thing.
 3. God is concerned about me as my FATHER, and NOTHING happens to me apart from God. Even the very hairs of my head are all numbered. I must never forget that.
 4. God's will and God's ways are a great mystery, but I know that whatever He wills is of NECESSITY for my GOOD.
 5. EVERY situation in life is the unfolding of some manifestation of God's LOVE and GOODNESS. My business is to look for each peculiar manifestation of God's goodness and kindness, being prepared for surprises and blessings—because *'His ways are not my ways, neither His thoughts my thoughts.'*
 6. I must regard circumstances and conditions, not in and of themselves, but as a part of God's dealings with me in the work of perfecting my soul and bringing me to final perfection.
 7. Whatever my conditions may be at this present moment, they are only temporary, they are only passing, and they can never rob me of the joy and glory that ultimately await me with Christ. [my life will have a happy ending!]
- Spiritual Depression, Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones*

“I would have started sooner being intentional about how and why I did things. My personality tends to just let life happen as I go along. Purposeful living does not just start when you get married or start a family. Finding purpose in what you do for the Lord brings the most contentment and joy no matter what stage of life you are in.”

I Corinthians 7:34—this is the best time to grow in your knowledge of, dependence on, and closeness to the Lord. Even if married, your BEST friend will still need to be Him.

Develop a love for children, and have married friends as well as single ones.

Study of the Word

The parable of the soils (Matthew 13) teaches us that having “*ears to hear*” is not a result of the perfect method but of the right mindset—soil that is prepared to bear fruit. Ask yourself these questions:

- *What am I looking for when I come to God’s Word?* God’s Word is not primarily about me; it is about God. We must be reading to understand and know Him, not just to find something to meet our needs or “get me through my day.”
- *Am I dependent on the Spirit of God?* I cannot have spiritual understanding without the Spirit. No method—no matter how thorough—can grant me spiritual understanding, conviction or blessing in and of itself.
- *Am I confessing and fighting sin?* Sin crowds out the Word of God and clouds my vision. The pride that is at the root of my sin keeps me from listening to Him in humility.
- *Are my heart and mind filled with too many other voices?* Soil that is full of rocks and thorns has no room for growth and will choke out God’s Word. What are you filling your mind with on a daily basis? Voices that contradict or question God’s Word? Sensuality and worldliness? Foolishness, or even just mindless entertainment? If we are going to love and learn from God’s Word, we must create space in the soil of our hearts for His Word to take root and bear fruit.

Three helpful tools:

- **Inductive Bible study method** (you can purchase an Inductive Study Bible or learn about it online to use with any Bible)
- **Good books on how to read and profit from the Bible**, especially the different genres of Scripture (Two suggestions: *Read the Bible for Life* by George Guthrie and *Women of the Word* by Jen Wilkin)
- **Good Study Bible** handy. (Use the study notes when needed to help in understanding a verse, but don’t rely on them all the time. Read the introductory notes about each book of the Bible before beginning, writing down some of the main ideas in your reading Bible so you can remember them as you read through that book.)

George Mueller said, *“the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to **have my soul happy in the Lord.** The first thing to be concerned about was not, how much I might serve the Lord, how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man may be nourished... I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the Word of God and to meditation on it.”* We are always looking for the Lord in a RELATIONSHIP when we go to His Word. When your heart is warmed by something you read, write it down in a journal and write down WHY it warmed your heart. What is it you saw about God that the Holy Spirit winged to your affections? Find a way to keep and cherish those moments. These are the *“consolations [that] delight your soul”* and build a confidence in Him that can’t be shaken by the storms of life. You are seeing His glory, and it will transform you!

Take however long you must in order to MEDITATE on some truth in your reading and write down in a journal (not necessarily daily) what you learn. This will enable you to remember and incorporate God's truths.

It is easy to allow yourself to be so busy that you fail to leave time for devotions or to be "too tired" at the end of the day to focus. You have to know yourself and your weaknesses and make it a priority or you can easily slip into making other things a priority. There is no substitution for personal time with the Word of God and prayer. Your walk with the Lord and fellowship with others will go cold if you do not daily feed on His Word.

“...it's a whole lot easier to breathe fresh life into an existing routine than it is to find that fresh life if you don't have any routine at all. So yes, you want to keep it fresh. Yes, you want to guard against it becoming just a routine. But don't throw off the routine just because it's become routine.” Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

The term “devotions” has in it “devote”. This means “give all or a large part of one's time or resources to (a person, activity, or cause)”. This is exactly what we want to be doing. It’s all about building a relationship with the One we love.