

BREAKOUT MATERIAL – KATHIE WENDLAND

Placing Myself Under God's Authority

By Grace I Submit to God's Authority

Not as a slave to a harsh master but as a loved child of my Father!

1 Peter 2:13–1 Peter 3:7

1 Peter 1:2–1 Peter 2:11

I. First of all – God's Grace

A. *Chosen through the foreknowledge of God the Father*

B. *Through the sanctifying work of the Spirit*

C. *For obedience to Jesus Christ and*

1. *Sprinkling by His blood*

2. *Bear fruit*

D. *Ponder what Jesus has done for us*

E. *Look in awe at what Jesus has secured for us for eternity*

F. *Troubles and suffering on earth refine us and bring us closer to God*

G. *You are precious in God's sight, bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ...You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring Word of God.*

With a God ordained purpose for my earthly life...

H. *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God that you may declare the (excellencies) of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

II. The Christian's Response to God's grace

Therefore... our purpose on earth as redeemed people of God

A. *For obedience to Jesus Christ and*

1. *Sprinkling by His blood*

2. *Bear fruit*

B. *Therefore...Be Holy*

C. *Therefore...Rid yourselves of malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander*

D. *...that you may declare the (excellencies) of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

E. *You are the people of God... As foreigners and exiles abstain from sinful desires which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, ...they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

We live as aliens and strangers in the world, out of step with the world around us so that they notice how different we are and after laughing at us they give us opportunity to tell them how great our Savior and Redeemer is and what he's done for us all. What an awesome responsibility and privilege I have in this life! I get to be Christ's ambassador, living my life so that my actions and words reveal to the unbeliever the awesome God and Savior that I have.

1 Peter 2:13 – 1 Peter 3:7

III. Submitting to God's authority

This is the first instruction Peter gives as an example of what being an alien and stranger will look like on our earthly walk as Christ's ambassadors.

At all levels from the highest government position to the family home all those in authority from presidents and kings, male or female, to husbands and fathers and women in homes where there is no adult male are in that position because God put them there.

They are therefore God's designated representatives and by definition are in submission to God, whether they know it or not.

The word "submission" is a word Americans hate and rebel against and yet it is a fundamental attitude of God's people because God's people recognize that when submitting to others in authority they are in reality submitting to God himself. All sin is sin against God and rebellion against him. Numerous passages let us know God's distain for the proud, the arrogant, the rebellious and his just judgment on those who live in that manner of attitude. An attitude shared by the proud, the arrogant, and the rebellious is that they all feel and live like they know better than God and in effect can be masters of themselves and others.

In contrast, God's people who have been chosen by his grace live lives of humility seeing how awesome God is in comparison to themselves, recognizing that all they are and have is from the hand of a gracious God. God's people also recognize they have been chosen by God's grace to be placed under the governments and employers they have and in the homes in which they live. These institutions have been created for our good. Jeremiah's letter to the exiles is an excellent description of God's purpose for Christian "exiles" throughout the ages. (Jeremiah 29:4-14)

For the next 20 minutes let's take a look at some examples from Scripture to give us a better idea of the reality of submitting to God's authority as well the blessings that follow.

While there are discussion sections included they will be addressed during the breakouts that many of you have chosen. Anyone who has not chosen either of the additional breakouts is encouraged to work through those sections at home with her Bible open.

Submitting to God's authority on all levels of life

This includes:

A. OT examples—

God himself with prophets as his spokesmen — Moses, Joshua, Samuel

Priests (only sons of Aaron) as his mediators — Exodus 28-30:10, Leviticus 8-10, 21-24:9, Numbers 18

Babylon — Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk, Daniel 1-5, 7

Persia — Isaiah 44:24-45:7, Daniel 2, 6, 7-8, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

Greece — Daniel's visions and Nebuchadnezzar's dreams: Daniel 2, 7-8

NT example —

Rome — Daniel 2, 7, Romans 13, Philippians, 2 Timothy

B. God makes it clear that rebelling against those earthly authorities is rebelling against him.

Negative examples from which to learn:

Children of Israel against Moses — Exodus, again and again

Miriam and Aaron against Moses — Numbers 12

Sons of Korah against Aaron — Numbers 16

Vashti against Xerxes — Esther

Sapphira — Acts 5:1-11

Positive examples from which to learn:

Jael — Judges 4:4-24

Abigail — 1 Samuel 25:1-42

Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego — Daniel 1, 3

Daniel — Daniel 1-6

Ezra, Nehemiah — Ezra 1-7:26, Nehemiah 1-2:10, 13:1-9

Mordecai and Esther — Esther

Other examples for you to recognize when reading and studying the Word:

Pharaoh — Genesis 39-50, Exodus 1-12:37

Kings of Israel — both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms- 1 Samuel 8 - 2 Kings and Chronicles

Assyria — Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom — 745BC-about 700 BC- 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jonah, Nahum

Negative example — The Israelites against Samuel — 1 Samuel 8

C. Government

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority, whether to the (President) as supreme authority (in the US) or (all elected and appointed officials and governmental agencies) who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

Live as free people... What does that mean? How does Scripture define it?

Do not use your freedom as a cover up for evil... Often done in the US today. What does that look like?

Live as God's slaves...How did Paul's readers understand this?

Show proper respect to everyone...Everyone??? Really???

Love the family of believers... What can that possibly have to do with submitting to the government?

Fear God... How will that shape my behavior and attitude in my life as an exile?

Honor the (President, Governor, elected and appointed officials)... Does this really apply today? I'm sure it was much easier to do this when Peter was writing it, right?

See also Romans 13 for Paul's instruction on the same topic.

D. Workplace – How did people become slaves at the time of the apostles?

(Employees) in reverent fear of God submit to your (employers), not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.

It is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God.... If you suffer for doing good, and you endure it, this is commendable before God...

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps.

Secular organizations – These are organizations Christians choose to join. What guidance does this section of Scripture have for 21st century Christians?

See also Ephesians 6:5-9 and Colossians 3:22-4:1 for Paul's instruction on this.

E. Husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, men and women in the family structure

Wives, in the same way (As believers are to submit to government authorities, and as slaves [employees] are to submit to masters [employers], Christian wives place themselves under the authority God has given them as a blessing. The term calls for submission to a recognized authority, and authority given by God's perfect design.) be submissive to your husbands so that, if any do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

Wives, if your husband is an unbeliever, why would you want to be submissive to him – even if you really, really don't agree with him?

Review IV. A.**, B.**, and D.** before discussing this.

Your beauty should not come from outward adornment ... Instead it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

Discuss the point Peter is making here. In a culture that emphasizes appearance over substance what contrast is in the Christian's mind? In a culture that no longer understands, "Don't judge a book by its cover," and has replaced it with, "A catchy cover is all you need to become whatever you might want to become," what will be the goal for the Christian woman and wife?

Your beauty...should be that of your inner self...a gentle spirit... For in this way the holy (–

you are holy, remember?—) *women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed (lit. “listen, respond to”) Abraham...*

Discuss how putting your hope in God makes you beautiful AND makes you holy.

Discuss the purpose of this statement, *“They were submissive to their own husbands...”*
Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

See also Ephesians 5:25-33 and Colossians 3:19, 21. List why it is such a blessing to have a Christian husband to whom to submit.

Remembering the blessing that being called to submission is for women, what about women who aren't married? Who is there for them? This is a HUGE point for Christian women who are single for any reason and at any point in their lives.

Discuss what we as sisters in Christ can do to encourage and help out single women of any age. Also discuss some danger areas to be aware of for single women.

See also Ephesians 6:1-4 and Colossians 3:20-21 for additional instructions for Christian families

F. Within the church

1 Peter 5:1-5 again charges the men in leadership within the church to take responsibility for the welfare of the entire flock. Their attitude and conduct are to be exemplary: *“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers --- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedily for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”*

IV. Discussion

A. ** At all levels all Christians are called to submit to God's authority and to those to whom he has delegated it.

Define submission according to Scripture...

Contrast that definition to what sin has turned it into in today's world and especially in our culture.

B.** At all levels all Christians to whom God has given authority are called to Christ-like servant leadership.

Define the purpose of God-given authority...

Contrast that purpose with the sin-filled purposes we see around us.

C.** At all levels any Christian asked, expected, or commanded to do something contrary to God's Word will refuse to comply regardless of consequences for two reasons. First of all keep in mind that each and every one of us is under God's loving authority. If at any time the head over us is telling us to act contrary to God's Word and will we "*must obey God rather than men*". Second we know we can trust that God is in perfect control of the situation and will always provide for his people.

Discuss examples of being asked, expected, or commanded to do something against God's Word in today's world...

Discuss what factors will come into play when deciding whether or not we as Christians must refuse to comply.

Discuss consequences that may result from refusing to go along with the culture and rather representing Jesus Christ as his called ambassador.

When they hurled insults at (Jesus), he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins, and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed...

For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

V. Christian women in the secular world –Explain and discuss

A. Agree or disagree? Women in general including Christian women are more vulnerable and at risk of being used/abused simply because men are bigger and stronger.

B. Agree or disagree? There are actions Christian women can take to decrease the possibility of being used or abused by men.

C. Christian women need to be encouraged to stand against anyone who has power (physical, positional, emotional) over them when being asked to do something against the law of the land or against God's will and Word. Most often to always when Christian women and/or wives are called to submission in some way the phrase "as to the Lord" is included. Discuss what that means and how it applies when deciding whether the situation calls for humble submission or firm and confident standing against the one placed as head over her.

D. Agree or disagree? Christian women trust in God's promises to always take care of them in a way that will bring them closer to him.

E. Agree or disagree? Christian women respect and submit to all those in authority over them, male or female.

VI. Christian women in the home – Agree or disagree? Explain and discuss

A. In the case of an unbelieving spouse, father, brothers a Christian woman will strive to be a Christian in all she does, including an attitude of submission toward her husband, or father and respect for her brothers. Her goal is to win them over to know Christ with behavior that is Christ-like.

B. A Christian woman who has a Christian husband, father, or brothers enjoys the added blessing of having Christian men in the home who love her and encourage her to be all she was made to be. Because they understand Christ-like servant leadership they are an added blessing who have been given responsibility to watch out for her welfare with Christ's love for the church as the example.

C. Christian wives are perfect because they are Christian.

D. Christian men are perfect because they are Christian.

E. A Christian wife needs to be encouraged to stand against a husband who has authority over her when he is asking her to do something against the law of the land or against God's will and Word. A Christian wife trusts in God's promises to always take care of her and her children in a way that will bring her and her children closer to him. Keep the family of Korah in mind as well as the account of Ananias and Sapphira.

VII. Christian women in congregations – Agree or disagree? Explain and discuss

Within congregations, Christian women have the added blessing of having Christian brothers who have been called to positions to look out for their spiritual welfare and to equip them to serve as Christians in whatever position to which the Lord has called them, within the church or outside of the church.

VIII. Submitting to God's authority and to those to whom he has delegated it is rich in blessing from a most gracious God and Savior. Praise Him!!!