

Oasis - Her Legacy - Submission Study Guide (Complete with Speaker's Notes)

Introduction: To acquire a new life-skill often we need a coach or mentor to help us develop those skills properly. If we start with wrong information, we will always have a wrong application and the process simply can not function as it was designed to. Submission is a life-skill; we must learn to function in all relationships properly. There is no better expert, teacher, coach or mentor than Jesus Christ, when it comes to teaching us the life-skill of submission.

- My goal is that at the end of this lesson like each one will know how to “exchange your will for God’s will”. We will look at the example Christ provided us in his last hours. I would like us to walk out of here today in a spirit of victory, knowing that we have the power & ability to do this well. We will discuss the topic and examine the scriptures that illustrate, mentor and coach us, in how the discipline of submission is applied in our relationship with Jesus Christ & the family of God.
- The **foundation** of biblical Christian faith is **submission**. Without submission, faith is not possible because faith and submission are **both rooted in the trust we place in God**. We begin our walk with God by surrendering our lives to Jesus Christ, making him the LORD of our lives.
- Without mastering the life-skill of submission, we will not learn to walk in victory; instead often we will feel more like victims. It is the enemy’s goal to make victims, but it is God’s plan and purpose that we walk in victory; the same victory that rose up Jesus Christ from the dead, that is the victory of submission. The power of faith is comes through the life-skill of submission.
- Submission is a learned life-skill. It does not come to us naturally. In fact, our human nature is very resistant to learning. If this life-skill can be **learned**, then it follows that it must be **taught**. If it is foundational to our faith, it also means that we are responsible to **teach** this life-skill, so that we have proper faith development and victory in our walk with the Lord.
- **Etymology** is the study of the history of words, their origins and how their form and meaning have changed over time. History shows that the meaning of words can change drastically over the ages and even within one generation. Foreign students learning English often have been frustrated by our language, because the dictionary will say one thing and yet the way the word is used on the street and in our culture, it can mean something completely different.
- The word “submission” is a word that can be confusing, even to those whose mother tongue is English, because it is a word that is in the process of being **changed by culture**, even as we speak.
 1. Firstly, it is a word that has been purposefully **stigmatized** as a **negative character quality** by some religions and cultures.
 - We must confess that at times our own churches and “religious institutions” also played a role in this, by teaching this life-skill in a negative context or by simply not teaching on the subject at all.
 2. Secondly, it is a concept that has been very badly misrepresented by secularism. In the past few decades our secular culture has **devalued submission in every relationship**, to the point that today we see, almost a complete **lack of respect for all authority today**.
 3. Our society has become so extremely **individualist** that it is in danger of spiraling into anarchism. In Canada we hear a lot about the “Charter of Rights & Freedoms”, but not enough attention is given to the proper respect for those in authority. Jesus said,
 - John 13:35 ... By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. **Love will not result without the foundation of respect**. Love is based on respect. This includes respect for those in authority. In Christ we are all one body and we are defined by our love for one another. It is exactly for this day that we need to show the world that we are one & we respect one other and we work in unity in the kingdom of God.

Personal Work: So then, how do we actually learn the biblical life-skill of submission? In order to understand how submission shapes our faith, it is best to study the subject from the Biblical perspective. It is helpful to begin by examining our own ideas, to see how we have been shaped by the things we've learned.

1. Hearing or reading the word "submission", what thoughts and/or feelings come to you?

2. Compare and contrast definitions: Without the use of a dictionary, using a short phrase or single words;

a) According to culture what would you say is the world's definition of "submission"?

b) According to the Bible define "submission"?

c) What is your own personal definition of "submission"?

Which definition does your own definition more closely reflect (a) or (b) and what might be the reason for that?

Group Table Work & Discussion: (10 minutes)

3. Respond to the following questions and statements by writing down your thoughts and then discuss the questions with 1 or 2 others at your table. (Writing out your responses will help you to clarify your thoughts and understand yourself better.) Think about your personal understanding or views about submission and try to identify how your views came to be influenced or shaped. How did you come to hold your views? Were your ideas shaped by teachers at school, friends, your parents or grandparents, TV or movies, or the books you read? At what time in life do you remember first thinking about these ideas (childhood, high school, college, university, or later)? Can you identify what or who influenced you the most in shaping your ideas about submission? What feelings does this topic & discussion bring out in you right now?

Personal Work: (15 minutes) Read the scriptures together and then answer the questions.

4. **Compare and contrast** – How might submission and obedience be similar, and how might they be different? Ephesians 5:20-22; 6:1-5, Colossians 3:20, 1 John 5:2

- Children – obey
- Slaves – obey
- Children of God - obey God
- Wives - submit as to the Lord (out of love)
- Christian brothers & sisters – submit out of reverence for Christ

- **Submission extends further than obedience ...** Notice, depending on the type of relationship some times **all that is required is obedience**. It seems this may have to do with the nature of the relationship and authority and age.

But, we see that **obedience is the least that is required**. The same is true of our society. We are all required to **obey the laws** of the land, regardless of how we feel about them. Children are usually expected to obey. Adults are expected to function by more mature motives. It seems the more mature or the more intimate the relationship, the more is required.

Illustration: Child says, "I'm sitting on the outside, but I'm standing on the inside."

Apparently, we can be **compliant** on the outside, but still be **defiant** on the inside. Obedience simply requires compliance, but submission requires much more. At times **we tend to behave like children**, sitting on the outside and standing on the inside. Only if we have learned how to sit on the inside and outside we have gone from obedience to submission

*Obedience is an **act** and submission is an **attitude**. One can be **obedient** without being **submissive**, but one cannot be **submissive** without being **obedient**. Submission requires a change in the will, but obedience can be accomplished without a change in one's will. Obedience can simply be **compliance**, but submission must be **complete willingness**, without any coercion.*

- **So how do we then move our hearts and heads from obedience to submission?** God requires more than obedience of us, he requires submission. This means that God wants us to **change both our walk and will**. Obedience can make us feel like "**good victims**", but submission makes **great victors**. Only in submission is our own self-defiant will conquered.

5. Read through the following passages and then respond to the questions:

Luke 22:14-27

- Where did this story take place? In Jerusalem just a few hours before he went to prayer at the Garden of Gethesame, the night he was arrested
- Which of disciples were with Jesus at this time? All of them were present in the room, even Judas
- For what occasion and purpose had Jesus gathered them together? It was the annual traditional Jewish "Passover" meal, but there is no mention of a lamb, just bread & wine because Jesus knew he would be the Passover lamb that day. It his very last meal together with his most trusted friends and it also was Jesus' farewell lesson and message with his disciples.
- What time of day did this take place? It was in the evening – the "Passover" meal was always in the evening and he was telling the disciples that he would be the one to die for the "passover"
- What **2 main topics** came up for discussion amongst the group at this occasion? Which one was the betrayer & who would be the greatest in the kingdom.

Matthew 26:36-46

- Where did this story take place? Garden of Gethsemane
- What time did this take place? during the night
- Which of disciples were with Jesus at this time? Peter, James & John (2 sons of Zebedee)
- Where does it indicate, were the other disciples? they were further away, but also in the garden
- What was Jesus purpose for being there that night? to pray
- At what point did Jesus come to "submission"? Jesus conquered his will through the process of prayer. His Father's will became his will wholeheartedly and he was able to release his will and exchange it with the Father's.
- It was in the Garden of Eden that we (Adam) changed the will of humanity to defy God and it is in the Garden of Gethesame that Jesus Christ restored the will of God on behalf of sinful humanity.

Illustration of changing desires/will:

Often we see young couples falling in love. The young lady learns to like all the **sports** her boyfriend enjoys and he learns like **shopping** with her. They each put their own interests aside and they put the other's interest before their own and an amazing thing begins to happen. A beautiful relationship takes shape. They are delighting themselves in the love they have for one another.

Psalm 37:4: Here we discover a great formula by which we can learn to conquer and exchange our **self-defiant will** with **God's will** and his love.

"Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart."

As we delight ourselves in someone we take on the **values and the will** of the one we are delighting in. As we delight ourselves in God, **our desires are exchanged with new desires**. God trades our will for his will. Christ traded his life for our life when he went to the cross. The old man is traded for the new man when we come to faith through Christ. As we delight ourselves in God's word, He fills our hearts with new desires – his desires. As we grow to love God more and more, we learned how this life-skill affects all our relationships, and our faith grows deeper. It happens through an intimate relationship with Jesus, through learning more and more about Jesus and through communion in prayer.

- Let's be honest with ourselves, submission for most of us, is a huge issue. We have been told that we **need to** and **have to** submit, but seldom have we been taught **how to**. **Many have settled for obedience, making us victims of our cultural background and religion**. Only through submission are we released and set free. Submission is a choice. Submission empowers us to make choices and those who make choices are free. Our will has been set free to submit and obey.
- God does not intend for us to live under the law. He sent Jesus Christ to fulfill the law and set us free. Freedom gives us choices. **Victims don't make choices** they always have things happen to them. Someone else is always to blame. We see that pattern established in the Garden of Eden. **Victors make choices** and we choose submission. Submission is only submission when we choose it.
- Jesus conquered his self-will and gave up his will in exchange for his Father's will. In the Garden of Gethsemane we see submission being played out to perfection, through the prayer of Jesus.
- Jesus prayed 3 times to be released from the situation, and each time he said, not my will, but thy will be done. **Jesus exchanged his will for the will of His Father and made it his own**. He had always done this, but this time it meant dying. **Jesus was not a victim, he was a victor**. He chose to go to the cross. He chose to die for us, so that he could rise again and therefore, we now have the same resurrection power in us as Christ had in him.
- Submission means we can do anything we "**want to**", but we have to learn how to **change our "want to-s"**. Our will or "want to" is changed by continually nurturing the love life between us and Jesus. It is the **relationship** that sustains the **power to submit**. We must never neglect to nurture this relationship, because the enemy will quickly come and turn us back into victims. We have the power to choose and we can exchange our will with His, to walk and live in real freedom, power and victory.

During the week: personal study, prayer and meditation:

6. What does Paul teach the apostles in the following scriptures concerning godly submission and servanthood in the body of Christ;

Hebrews 12:7-11: What does appropriate discipline demonstrate about a relationship? What should be the outcome of appropriate discipline? It demonstrates that we belong to God, we are his children. If we share in discipline, we will share in holiness (faith) and it yields peace and righteousness.

Romans 12:1-2: What step must we take in order to experience personal transformation? We must present ourselves as a living sacrifice, we must be willing to give up ourselves completely without reservation, so that God can do the work in us to make us new creations.

What is the method by which God transforms us? renewing our minds

How does Paul say we can “test” God’s will? We can discern the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Philippians 2:8-11: Why is it important that we should humble ourselves and bow our knee to Jesus Christ? Because Christ humbled himself to come to earth, to die for us. If Christ can humble himself and he had no need to, then we should be able to humble ourselves (who need to). We have a choice to either humble ourselves or God will humble us, because every knee will bow to Jesus, because he is Lord.

7. What do the following scriptures teach us about godly submission in the body of Christ;

Luke 2:49-52:

In what 4 ways did Jesus grow into full maturity?

- 1) stature - physically
- 2) wisdom – intellectually
- 3) favour with God – Spiritually
- 4) favour with man – socially

In what different ways should we grow to full maturity? physically, intellectually, spiritually & socially

In what context did Jesus first learn submission? In the context of relationships in his family-home environment, in his social environment-community and in a spiritual environment-synagogue

In what context do we best learn submission? In the context of relationships in the home, church and community.

In Jesus development how did he learn to know God?

- 1) Home
- 2) Synagogue

What are some of the best places we can develop and grow in our faith? Home, church and Bible School training.

John 8:28-30:

Where did Jesus find his identity? In the Father

What demonstrated that he was not a “people-pleaser”? He always did the things that pleased his Father.

What actions did Jesus do on his own initiative or authority or on his own accord? Nothing

What voice did Jesus listen to and follow? His Father’s

How might Jesus have been “taught” to recognize his Father’s voice? By learning God’s Word (Scriptures)

How might you learn to recognize the Father’s voice? By learning God’s Word (Scriptures)

Hebrews 5:7-10:

Why do you think it was important for Jesus to learn obedience and submission? So that he could be an example to us, teaching us how to live and walk with God as he did.

How might we learn submission (and obedience)? through difficult circumstances, the same as Jesus (through suffering)

John 13:3-5: What are some examples in our day that might be equivalent to “washing someone else’s feet”? Hospital visitation, prison visitation, ministry with the poor and needy, single parents.