

1 Peter: Hope and Relationships

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[0 : 0 0] A lot of new faces. So if this is your first time, welcome to Watermark. If this is your 100th time, welcome. My name is Tobin, and I'm one of the pastors here.

If you're joining us for the first time, we have been looking at the book of 1 Peter. 1 Peter was written by Peter to Christians, Christians who were churches that were probably 20 to 30 years old.

They were growing, they were vibrant, but there was a problem. There was a problem, and it was that there was persecution coming along very quickly and rapidly, and the Christians didn't know how to act in a world that was hostile to them.

Peter's been telling us all along, and we've been looking at it throughout this passage, that when we come to Christ, if you're a Christ follower here, that Christ's Spirit comes inside of you, and He enters into you, the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, He enters into you, and He starts to change us.

He changes us. He changes the way we think. He changes the way we speak. He changes the way we act. He changes our values. He changes the way we dress. Some people, the change happens really quickly.

[1 : 0 6] It's like you've seen people who are addicted to something, and all of a sudden, boom, they're no longer addicted. But then for some people, the change happens slower, and God has different lessons to teach them, and different things to build into their life.

And so He's working with each one of us as His children in a journey, and each one of these journeys looks different. We get in trouble when we start to compare our journeys with each other because God sees us as different people.

We're different talents and vessels that have His image stamped on us. Last week, He started using different words about us. You remember when we talked about it last week. If you weren't here, go back and listen to the passage.

He says that He started calling us things like a royal priesthood, and the idea was the priest was the Latin actually means a bridge builder, that we're bridge builders.

We're here to build bridges between the world that doesn't know Christ and our community and our family. So we're called something different. We're called a holy nation. It's holy that we're set apart, and we talked about how our passports are in heaven and not in Hong Kong or America or Texas or wherever you're from.

[2 : 1 1] We talked about that we are these living stones, that we're these living stones, and life has been put into us by the living stone, Jesus. And we used an illustration.

We talked about how Christ says that He's just His foundation. He's this cornerstone, this precious thing, and that all of us fit onto this foundation.

This might be just our life, and then Jesus is in our life, and my life is fitting here, and Christ is teaching me, and He's ordering things and orienting things, and I'm learning things. But He says also that these rolling stones come together, and they lay on top of this foundation together, and they start to build this thing called a church.

That's one of my prayers as a pastor often, and it's probably the most difficult prayer, is to try to pray that the holy stones will stop being rolling stones, and they'll come together, and they'll build this church, this vessel of God's glory and His honor.

And we said that when we began this church, that several of us prayed, and we thought, well, what does it look like to be a holy nation, and a royal priesthood, and different stones, living stones. And we said that we felt like God was calling us within this congregation to do a couple things.

[3 : 24] We said that we would have to pray, and we mentioned it last week, that we're all called to pray. Someone came up to me afterwards and said, I mean, this isn't the venue that we always have, and no, you know, we don't know where we're going to meet almost every week.

We find out about a month ahead, and we start scrambling, and this is the venue we want to meet in every time, but sometimes we don't get to meet this in here because there's lawyers in here, or a banquet in here, or something like that, and then we get put up on the 7th floor, and the 6th floor, and the 4th floor, or ISF, and all those are great places to meet, and we're so thankful for those places, but we're not choosing, hey, let's go on the 7th floor today, because I know some people really hate the 7th floor, and they don't like it, but we're just praying and saying, God, where do you want us, and we want to be here, and we need places for kids to meet, and so every Sunday is an adventure for the staff, and so we, as a family, need to be praying about those things, and thinking about those things.

We said that every one of us needs to serve. You can't see that, but serve, that we're called to serve. Every Sunday, there's 20 to 50 people that serve in here, and do different things, and Sunday school teachers, and teaching, and leading, and worship, and we feel like if we don't all do it together, then it's not, it's not going to work, and so we feel like it's part of being this living stone, is that we come together, and we're all called to serve.

If you serve one Sunday a month, in some capacity, that's amazing, and we usually do it within our community groups here, at Watermark. We're called to tithe, tithe, we talk about tithing, and giving, and we talk about what does that look like, and you know, we don't pass a tithe here.

If you're new here, you're going to see these little purple envelopes, and there's little boxes here, but it was a step of faith for us, the 40 people who started. We said, hey, we want to bring our friends to a place where they're not always passing money buckets around, because it freaks them out, but we're going to talk about money, because we feel like it's one of the greatest hindrances to people in Hong Kong, money, and education, and power, and lust.

[5 : 19] Well, we're going to talk about all those things, but we don't pass an offering around, because we didn't want your guests to feel uncomfortable, but it means that those in the family need to give, and help us with the outreaches, and the cost of the venue, and all these things that are involved in being a church family, and building this building, and when we talked about, the last thing we said we were called to do as a holy people is to invest and invite, that we're all called to invest in people's lives, and invite people into the community group, and invite people into church, and there are people that you're going to meet today, and tomorrow, and at work, I'll never get a chance to meet.

In fact, the minute I meet them, and I say, you know, I'm a pastor, they're like, you know, shut up, and they don't, you know, they usually say other things, but you, you get a chance to just talk about it, and live a life that's different, and that's what Peter's talking about, he's talking about living a life that's different, a life apart from words, and we talked last week that we all need to do this, as a family, that if one block doesn't fit in, then the Lego house that we built here was, would have holes in it, and it wouldn't function the way that God meant for it to function, and then we'd be in trouble, we wouldn't be the church that God wants us to be, because we need everybody, we need you to come and to serve if you're in God's family, we don't want you just to come and be a spectator, and that's what happens in churches a lot, right, sometimes churches have like a football match, there's 22 people playing in the front, and there's 80,000 people watching, but we believe that for you to serve, and to do all these things, it will actually make you a better you, it's a step of faith, and trusting the Lord, and then we come to this passage this week, and we're looking at it, and I know some of you are laughing,

I mean some of you, the minute you heard the word submit, you just shut your mouth, and said there's nothing I'm going to listen to here, there's nothing I can learn from here, and some of you are laughing at me, because you're like, oh Tobin, he just opened this hand grenade, and he's holding this hand grenade there, and he's going to blow himself up, and let's see how long it takes him to blow himself up, with the word submit, maybe he'll get the pin in, but he's probably going to blow himself up, you know, because it's just a different, it's the S word, you know, in Christianity, and in the world today, no one wants to talk about submitting, or what that looks like, or submission, it's crazy, but you know, Paul, he talks about that, he's been talking about that, but it's, it's scary, it's scary, you know, I used to work in a hospital, I studied medicine, and I did trauma unit, which was my love, and then, I can remember, I was working in, in a cardiac care unit one day, and with the doctors, and just kind of interning, and watching things, and this guy came in, and he was probably my age, you know, a young 50, and, but he had had his massive heart attack, and he,

I had a heart attack 10 years ago, mine was about medium, and his was really bad, and he was frail, and he was not doing good, and his wife came in all dressed, and she was, she looked beautiful, and she walked in, and they walked into the doctor's office, and the first thing the doctor said to him was, can you step out, I need to talk to your wife alone, and so he, he's kind of concerned, so he got up, and he, he stepped out, and the doctor and the wife were talking, and the doctor looked at him, and said, your husband's in really bad shape, I mean, any kind of stress, any kind of things that can agitate him, it will, it will kill him, and she's just taking notes, and listening, and she's just so meek, and so, and just wants to help her husband, right, and she's taking, he goes, so you just need to remove all stress from his life, you can't have any stress in his life, so when he comes home, there can't be any kind of stress, or things like that, and you don't need to talk about stress, you need to talk to the kids, about being quiet in the house, because at this point, it's very delicate, and it could kill him, and I mean, it would be really bad, stress is bad, and she's like, you're taking notes, and she goes, you need to, you need to cook him his favorite foods, you need to cook things that he likes, and because sometimes, eating meals can make you upset, and digesting, and things like that, and so you need to cook his really, really food, and go, okay, thank you doctor, and she goes, and you need to dress nicely, you need to present yourself, so whenever your husband comes to the front door, you, you greet him, and you smile, and you, you look the best, that you've ever looked, and you're just beautiful, because that would just relieve stress, as he walks in, and he was like, sanctuary, a place of home, it's peace,

I'm okay, and she's taking these notes down, and he goes, you know, one other thing is, you need to have sex with him, because sex has been known to be this thing, that relieves a lot of tension, and stress, and so you, you need to, you need as a wife, to have sex with your husband, and in fact, you need to have sex whenever he wants it, you just need to write, you know, whenever he wants to have sex, whenever he engages with you, you just have sex, because that's going to take away all the tension, and all the pressure, and all the stress, and so that's, that's what you need to do, and she said, thank you doctor, okay, I'll write it down, and then she writes it down, and he goes, I'm going to bring your husband in, and you guys can talk about this, and so he walks, and he opens the door, and the guy, he comes shuffling in, he sits down, and he sits to his wife, because he's just thinking, you know, and he says, what did the doctor say?

[10:27] and she says, you know, honey, I love you, but you're going to die, you get it?

Come on, but that's what submission is like, right, that's why it's so hard, and so we want to look at, it's a joke, okay, some of you are like, what?

I worked in a trauma unit, but not in a cardiac unit, but no, but I think that's why it's just so difficult, but what we want to do today, in our time that we have, is I just want to look at submission, or what it means to submit, I want to look at a little definition of it, I want to look at some examples of what it is, and what it isn't in our world today, because I feel like we have all these things bombarding us, and this is what it means, this is what it doesn't mean, this is what it means, so we want to look at that definition, what it is or what it isn't, and then how do we do it, how do we come about it, and you realize right away, that when Paul, and Peter is talking about it, he's been talking about it throughout the whole book, he's been talking about it, about how we deal with our governments, he's been talking about it, with how we deal with our bosses, he's been talking about it, how we deal with our relationship with God, he's been talking about, how we deal with our relationship with each, Other. And now he talks about how we deal with it in marriage. And what scripture does, and I don't know if you realize this, is that when God writes the Bible, he puts these institutions that are over us. Some people call them umbrellas to protect us, but they're these structures, these institutions.

And there's the institution of God in our relationship with him. There's the institution of government or the king. There's the institution of the family. There's the institution of the church. There's the institution of work. And all of these institutions are put in us, and he talks about them in his word. And what he says in his word is that within every one of these institutions, there's a structure. And within a structure, there's authority. And there's those who have authority, and there's those who are under authority. He says whatever structure you're in, you're either reporting to somebody or you have authority over somebody. And it's really important to listen to this, because the scripture says that authority, the word, is always used in the meaning of to protect and bless. When somebody has authority over somebody, whether it's the king, God, family, husband, church, or work, whoever has the authority over it, the meaning of it within scripture was to protect and to be a blessing. Authority was never meant to benefit the person who has authority.

In scripture, you'll never see that. That's not how God prescribes that. He always says that authority is over us to protect us and to make us thrive. And that's the number one responsibility for those who have that authority. But what scripture says is that sin came in, and it broke up all of these relationships. Our relationship with God, our relationship with the government, our relationship with the church, our relationship with each other, our relationship with work, our relationship with the family. And it broke up all these authority structures. And so now people don't know what to do and how to live within these things. And so Peter is teaching you and me, he's saying as Christians now, we need to go back to the way it was before. That when God's spirit comes into us, God's spirit changes us. The word submit, it's a military term. It actually means to stay in rank. That's what the Greek word means. It means just to get put in rank. But the Bible, it doesn't use it that way. The Bible uses the word submit as an attitude of our heart, an attitude of our mind. It says that submission is a choice. It's just something that we willingly yield to the one in authority. That we do it, we yield to the one in authority, whoever that is within the structure, God, government, church, family, husband, work. We yield to those people in authority because we want to honor God. Does that make sense? The word actually means that, it actually means, I don't like using a lot of Greek words sometimes because, yeah. But anyway,

[14 : 51] I can barely speak English sometimes. So, but it means to be ordered in God's will. So that when we're called to submit, it means that we are to follow God's will. We're to follow God's order within the structures that he set up for us. And the Bible never talks about submission as weakness.

In fact, it uses God and Jesus often in submitting. Do you know that we're the only faith in the world that has a God who submitted? You know, no other faith, no other religion, no other belief system would even think about having a God who submits to people underneath him. But the passage says that Jesus, who is God, submitted to us so that he might bring us to a new place.

The idea behind submission biblically is always to bless, to protect, to make better off. And the idea is always strength and it's always voluntary. Does that make sense? Now, the world tells us a lot of different things, doesn't it? I mean, the world says different things, but the Bible says this is what we are to do is God's people because we have a God who did it for us. When you read scripture, what you see right away is when God set up these structures, what he said is that unless we submit within these structures, unless we give in and follow out of obedience to what he said, these structures won't work. There's not going to be harmony between us and God. There's not going to be harmony between us and our government and king. There's not going to be harmony between us and our boss. There's not going to be harmony between us and our wives or our husbands. I mean, we talk a lot in our churches about serving, but what we hardly ever talk about is submitting and submission. But in the language at the core of serving is this idea of submitting and submission. You can't truly serve another person unless you submit to them and you submit to them. The scripture tells us in two books in the very front of the Old Testament. We're going to study them one day, probably in our fifth or sixth year.

In Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, it says, at one time there was an angel. He was the most beautiful angel. His words in Hebrew and Greek actually means he was a covering angel. He covered the throne of God.

He's the most perfect creation. In Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14, it says that this angel, Satan, was kicked out of heaven because he didn't want to submit. He didn't want to submit. He didn't want to obey God. And then we read in the first book of the Bible, Genesis, this same angel, this demon, he comes into creation, into these structures, and he enters right into the relationship of man and God and husband and wife. And what he does is he uses the same thing that he used on himself.

[18 : 41] He talks to Adam and Eve about looking out after their own interest. He talks to Adam and Eve about disobeying God and not submitting to him because if you submit to him, then you're not going to get everything that you want.

And they listened. And those structures became fractured. I mean, you see it again in the Matthew and Mark and Luke. We spent three years going through Luke.

And all throughout Luke, you see that Satan, this perfect angel who's fallen now, he comes to Jesus. And how does he tempt Jesus? He tempts him the same way in the authority structures.

And he tempts Jesus not to submit to God. He tempts Jesus not to obey God. He tempts Jesus to be independent of God.

And the scripture says over and over and over that at the center of all of our relationships, at the center of all that God has created, there's this core sense of us working together, thinking the best of each other, sacrificing for each other, loving each other, submitting to each other, that this thing is at the center of it.

[19 : 50] And Jesus talked about it all the time in the Gospels, right? He said, hey, just don't, it's not enough just to believe me. He says, believe me and follow me. Follow, that word means to submit.

It means to take our interest and put them below the interest of the person that we're helping or serving or following. Does that make sense?

Now, this is a foundation. I know I'm going to, this is the hand grenade. I'm trying to hold on to it, but eventually I'm going to let it go. The good thing about letting it go is when it blows up and people get angry, I'm here. You can write me in emails.

You can write the elders' emails. We're happy to get together with you. We want to discuss God's word because we want to be a healthy church. We want to be a healthy family. We want to be a healthy community. We want to be an amazing, healthy city, Hong Kong.

So the grenade's going to blow up. Some of you, it's already blown up and you got shrapnel everywhere, but I'm not leaving. So you can email me. You can get angry with me. You can get angry with the elders, but let's talk about it. But what I hope you're dealing with is not me.

[20 : 52] I hope you're dealing with God. Because if you come to church every Sunday and there's nothing that ever bothers you in here, that's bad. Because God's words and his commandments and the laws, they are hard sometimes.

And Jesus calls us to struggle. And I think this is one of the areas that I struggle with so much, and it is so hard. You know, the world says that submission has to be limited.

The world says limit your submission and make it all about authority. Only submit to those people who can beat you up. Only submit to those people who can get you what you need.

I mean, we tend to think of submission as this. It's Tobin, and there's people above me, and there's people below me. People above me, I submit to. They have authority to me, so I obey them. People below me, they listen to me.

But my goal in life, my goal in life is to take those people from the top and put them where? Come on. It's church. You can talk.

[21 : 57] Where? I want to put them underneath me, right? I mean, to be successful in every area of life, whether it's my finances or the stuff I have or the house I have or the kids that go to school, my goal is always to take these people who are above me to put them below me.

And the more people that are below me than above me, that ratio determines how successful I am. And that's the struggle we have all the time. The disciples had that problem, didn't they?

I mean, over and over, Jesus was saying, what are you guys talking about? They're talking about who's the greatest in the kingdom. They wanted to put people that were above them below them and people who were below them above them, and they wanted to put themselves above.

But what the Bible says and what Peter's been trying to tell us throughout these passages is that submission is broad. Submission is to our peers, and it's to those not in authority over us.

Submission is in God's kingdom. I mean, in God's kingdom, we've been reading, and it says the greatest person in God's kingdom is the person who serves everyone.

[23 : 02] The greatest person in God's kingdom is the person who serves everyone. And when he says that, he's thinking of Jesus, right? And he's thinking of us. He said, hey, Tobin, don't just place your interest before others, but seek other person's glory.

Seek other people's benefit. The world's going to tell you this, but the Bible says this. I mean, the world says that submission should only be observed if your best interest is at heart, right?

Doesn't it? I mean, the world says that if someone is watching, you submit. Right? I mean, we have radar detectors in our cars, some of us, because we want to see if somebody's watching.

If they're watching, we slow down. I mean, we're at work, and we want to make sure that our boss is there when we get in there, or before we get in there, and we want to make sure our boss leaves, you know, way before we leave, because we realize that there's this idea of submitting, and if somebody's watching, then we do it.

But if not, no. I mean, many of us in here, right, you're working crazy hours. You're working unhealthy hours. You're working insane hours.

[24 : 19] You're working for this big paycheck or a bonus. I mean, we, the world tells us, if you submit, you won't experience pain.

You won't experience suffering. I mean, most of our lives, as people in the world, we're trying to get rid of pain and suffering, aren't we? If I submit to my boss, I'm not going to have the pain of losing my job.

If I submit to this person, then I'm not going to experience suffering. If I submit to my husband, or I submit to my wife, then my life will be easier, because I'm not going to have all this suffering. I mean, that's what the world says.

See, the pin is flying off right now, and the hand grenade's about to blow up. But, you know, but what the Bible says is that our submission is, is motivated by faith. The Bible says our submission is motivated by hope.

The Bible says our submission is motivated by love. I mean, the Bible says that as Christians, when we submit, submit that we actually often move towards suffering. We actually often move towards pain.

[25 : 27] We actually often do things that make us very uncomfortable and very difficult. The world says, no, get away from those things, but what Scripture says is, we're following Christ.

Christ is throwing himself on the hand grenade. So we, as Christians, are called to move towards self-sacrifice.

We're actually called towards to move pain, and you know what the hard thing about being a Christian is sometimes? Paul says this. He says, sometimes you're going to do those things, and you're never going to receive your reward here.

I mean, most of us do things so we can receive our reward here and now. But Paul says if we follow God, that the benefit of that, we might not ever even receive that until we get to heaven.

For some of us who like the gospel sexy, I come to Christ, everything's perfect, I get a Rolex, I get a beautiful wife, everything works out. We don't like to hear those things. But Paul's saying this is what happens in the real world.

[26 : 38] Can I share one more? Is that okay? Can I share one? These are all personal. These are all me, okay? This is Tobin. I'm sharing you. Okay, one thing, and then I'm going to bring a special speaker up here who's much wiser than I am.

This is what I've been learning. In Tobin's world, the idea of submission often involves complex sets of rules and regulations in gray areas.

In Tobin's world, submission has to be centered around rules and what's enough and what's not enough and what should I do and what shouldn't I do and all these regulations. Is it like that in your world?

I mean, when you read the Old Testament, it's full of it, right? The people of God, they were given 12 commandments, but how many rules did they end up with? Hundreds. Hundreds of rules.

Why? Well, what you see eventually is that the people, they didn't really love God. They didn't really want to submit to God.

[27 : 42] And so they set up all these different rules to see how close they could get to doing things so that it wasn't comfortable enough for them. We do that, don't we?

I mean, my kids are, are my kids in here? They're not in here. My kids are playing. Kip's here. I won't use your name this time, buddy.

But my kids are playing. And all of a sudden I hear a scream and I walk in there and I say, what happened? Well, so-and-so hit me. Okay. So that's what I usually do. I usually find blames.

Christina's really going, oh, so tell me what happened here. But I walk in there like, okay, let's deal with it right away. So what happened? So-and-so hit me. Oh, did you hit them? No. So what did you do?

I flicked them. Okay. No hitting, no flicking. Have fun and be nice to each other.

[28 : 43] It's about 20 minutes later, right? People start freaking out and screaming. And I walk in there and go, what happened? Did you hit somebody? No. Did you flick somebody? No. I bumped them.

But we laugh, right? But we do that too, don't we? Don't we do that? I mean, the command is there and we look at it and we go, oh, but you know, what if I just did this instead?

What does it mean to serve? Or what does it mean to give? Or what does it really mean to pray for people? What does it really mean to be a part of a church? I mean, I'm doing a sliver of that thing, right? That's okay, right?

In Tobin's world, the laws multiply and they flourish when there's no inward submission in my heart. If my heart isn't after the Lord, if my heart isn't to love my life, if my heart isn't to be a good wherever God's placed me, then I set up all these rules and these gradations so that I can feel good about myself.

Am I just talking to myself? We all flick, hit, push, tug, because we don't want to obey.

[30 : 16] We don't want to submit. And so Peter comes to this passage today and he talks about this next relationship and it's husband and wife. He talks about how wives and husbands should interact, but he's been talking about it all along within the government and within the work.

He's been talking about how we're different. And so what I thought I would do is I would drop the grenade on my marriage. And so I've asked probably the wisest person that I know, my wife Christina, to come up and I want to ask her some questions about this passage.

So Christina, will you come up here? Okay. How are you doing? Are you worried?

Okay. So we haven't actually talked about this a lot. We looked at the passages and things like that. Christina and I have been married for 17 years now, right?

And we have four kids, right? And Christina was heavily involved in ministry. What you don't know is she's an amazing discipler.

[31 : 22] Okay, you don't have to say all that. She's probably just as gifted as I am. Or more. You think you have a pastor in the church, but you really have two people working for the church, right?

That's the way we see it. We're a package deal. So Christina, when you look at this passage for... Does that mean I have to get up here every time you ask me? Okay. So if we look at 1 Peter 2 and 3, 1 through 9, maybe just the question we thought about was, what in your life, how have you come to think about this idea of concept of marriage and submission within marriage?

Okay. Well, first off, I have to say that when Tobin asked me to come up here, I didn't want to. So this is definitely you're seeing submission in action.

But we just got back from the summary and I asked him about his sermon series and he was like, okay, we're going to talk about stuff and I want you to come up. And I said, oh no, you know, just trying to settle in, get the kids in school.

I really don't want to have to, you know, think about something like that. And he goes, but it's the subject submission. Oh, okay, great, lovely.

[32 : 38] So yeah, so I'm here. So I grew up in a family that actually did live by this concept. And so I did see this role model to me.

And I remember actually very clearly my grandmother talking to me about one time. She, her husband, and she would travel around the world actually.

And back then, that was quite extravagant and people didn't do, didn't travel around the world back in my grandparents' day very often. And so, but my grandfather really liked to do this.

And so my grandmother was, I guess this particular time was like, you know, I don't see the purpose in it. Why do we have to go on another, you know, holiday? It's a holiday. It's, you'd think you'd be excited, but there's, why do we have to do this?

And she said, but you know, every time I followed my husband and every time the Lord, I'd be along the way and I'd talk to somebody and this specific time they went to Europe or something.

[33 : 38] And she said, and I talked to somebody, you know, along the way and I was able to share my faith with them. And it was such an encouraging time. And so the Lord always, you know, it always gave me a purpose in it.

And so that was kind of what I saw growing up with my family. But also, I did struggle with this concept when it came to husband and wife relationships because just what we learn in society, you know, that it's a superior versus inferior thing, which is what I've come to believe is not what the Bible is saying, but our world says that.

And I think that as I talk with women, my friends, our study groups that we do together, you know, we always push back when we hear that because we think of, you know, Confucianism says that that submission is, there's a superior and an inferior, right?

And so it wasn't until I was shown 1 Corinthians 3, 11, 3, that I really learned to accept this more and realize that it's God's order of things.

It's a structure. It doesn't have anything to do about equality. And that made me be able to relax and open up and go, okay, maybe I can listen to this more and see what God has to say if it's not about equality.

[35 : 01] Do you want to read that passage? It's in the bulletin. Oh, okay. So it talks, it says that, that Jesus Christ submits to God the Father and that man submits to Jesus Christ and that woman submits to man.

So where it starts to rub me wrong, I was like, wow, well, is Jesus equal to God the Father? Yes. The Bible talks about the Trinity and so, and how they're equal.

They are all God, right? Three parts. But Jesus submitted to God the Father, so they're equal. It doesn't have anything to do with superiority or inferiority. So then, wow, if Jesus submitted to God, perhaps I can submit to my husband.

And the verse that we're talking about says, you know, submitting to your husband. And I just want to make clear that the Bible does not say submitting to your boyfriend or all men, right?

Like some cultures say, actually, right? So the biblical way is only your husband. And so I do actually think that's important because sometimes we think the other.

[36 : 17] So anyways, I think that in light of this, that submission is not an ignorance, right? That I walk around in ignorance or ignorant to the situation, any situation.

It does not mean that I'm subservient to my husband. It does not mean that I have to be silent when my husband sins. I need to admonish him and love him in Christ as a brother. It does not give me, this is not an excuse for abuse in families, right?

If you feel threatened in any way for your safety, this is not an excuse for that to go on. You need to ask for help from others, right?

So that's not what he's talking about. But if it is an average unkindness within the family or a lack of love, God says that he is going to be the one to judge them.

And so it's not my place. I don't have to be the one to take revenge or to fight back. But you never had that happen in our family at all. Never, ever.

[37 : 27] I'll just wait. You just wait. It's very risky for him to ask me up here. Maybe he won't do it again. How about that? So it's not our place of revenge, but what the verse says that we're talking about, it's an opportunity for us to show God's love and grace to our husbands as a witness, right?

For them, to them. As a witness to win them over to Christ or as a witness to draw them closer to Christ. So I've come to see that this is a choice that God has given to us as wives.

It's not a commandment from my husband, which I'm very happy about. And in Colossians 3, 23, it says that I'm not even really submitting to my husband.

I'm submitting ultimately to God. Don't tell him that because I think he likes it when he thinks I'm yielding to him. No, I'm yielding to God, really. You know, and if you think about it, that means that my loving him or yielding my own desires is actually not based on his performance, right?

And so if it's not based on his performance, then when I'm obeying my Lord and I'm following God and I'm trusting and caring that he's going to take care of me, I don't have to worry about my own self, that I'm following him.

[38 : 59] And this can actually save marriages. I think I've seen it save marriages when women are willing to lay their life down for their husband. Also, in Ephesians 4, it says that God calls us to be humble, gentle, patient, bearing one another's burdens in love.

And I grew up going to a summer camp where we had a motto that we went around cheering, chanting all day and it's called the I'm Third model and it's where God is first, others are second, and myself third.

So that became my motto in life. Not that I'm very good at it, but you know. So the next question will be when we talked about it, it's like what are some of the hardships or benefits that maybe you've, probably no hardships in our marriage, but the benefits are huge.

So what are the benefits that you've experienced in our lives as you've lived out this principle? I know I'm just, boom, boom, boom. You're having a lot of fun, right? Yeah, yeah. Well, really I don't know why I'm up here because I'm not very good at this thing called submission anyway, so I don't know.

I do remember the first time in our marriage when we just got married when I did submit for the first time. I remember it very clearly maybe because, you know, I had to, it was the first time I actually did it.

[40 : 29] And we were moving to China and we, I had, Tobin had given me this ring to get, as an engagement ring and our marriage ring and he said, well, there's, uninsurable in China, so I don't want you to take it with you.

I had, you know, and I'm like, wait a minute. I just waited 30 years for this ring. And it might seem silly now, but I was like, and my grandmother, you know, my grandmother has, her stone is in this ring and I'm never, ever going to take it off.

So, you know, nobody's ever going to steal it. I don't think it needs to be insured anyway and so it's really not a big deal and, you know, I want to take, I want to take this ring. This is very symbolic for me. And then at the end of the day, you know, he said, I really don't think you should, I don't want you to risk it.

I don't want you to take it. So I remember that was the first time I put it in the safety deposit box and I didn't see it again for another five years. And it was very sad, but I did it and I don't know that there were necessarily any benefits that came out of it for me.

Except for the fact that, you know, it's the first time I totally remembered having to not get my way, right? So, but other things like, even silly things like, you know, going on a date night and we go to dinner.

[41 : 49] And, you know, we've had major blot arguments over where we're going to dinner. And if I only would have just, you know, said, oh, I think about the other person instead of me, it wouldn't have been such a, you know, ruined our whole evening, right?

Tobin loves Western food and I like Chinese food. That's, that's the, that's our issue. And then, when we, we started doing these Israel trips, just trying to give you a few examples of, of our life.

We started doing these Israel trips when we take tour groups over to see the Holy Land and my children, when we started doing it, my children were quite young. They were babies. And so, when he first asked me, he said, let's do this together.

I don't want to do this without you. Let's do it together. And I said, any mom in their right mind would not leave their one-year-old child. I was nursing.

The last time I, the last time I nursed my child was the day before we went on this trip, you know, to go, you know, and do this, you know. And, but I said, okay, I'm going to follow my husband and it has been an amazing adventure.

[42 : 56] I was able to go and walk in the footsteps of Jesus, you know, and learn a ton. And my children, I think, are still okay. And, yes, even God asks me to yield and serve my husband in sex, which he's very happy about.

Okay. So, whether it's seemingly a small thing or a large thing that we are giving up our, yielding our own desires to, I don't want, I don't, don't let anybody convince you that it is easy to submit, right, or to serve another before yourself because it's or not, right?

Because we all have stubborn self-wills, right? But this is the beauty of it. I think that's, this is the beauty of it is that only through Jesus Christ can we have the ability to obey the Lord.

That he gives us that. He gives us this, he doesn't leave us alone to do it on our own. He gives us the Lord. He gives us the fruits of the Holy Spirit. He gives us his spirit.

And even when we don't, you know, obey God, he forgives us. Right? And he seems to always have future opportunities for me to follow him in this way.

[44 : 24] I have a few, just a few more things. One thing. For me, I pray a lot. I pray for our relationship and I pray for Tobin as he leads our family.

I pray, I ask God to help yield myself to him, to Christ, and to trust, that I can trust and care for him. I read these verses a lot, actually.

I did a whole study once on the role of men and women, which was fascinating. I remember that, I try to remember why I'm doing this. I'm doing this because it is to win over my husband to Christ or closer to Christ.

And he says, in these verses, he says, it actually makes me beautiful in his eyes when I follow God's ways. And as a woman, I do desire to be beautiful and to be precious to God.

So that's some of my motivation. I hope it encourages you. That's the only reason I really got up here was to hopefully encourage other women and love my husband. Thank you, Hannah.

[45 : 36] You're going to be excited. So the third question I was going to ask is when we first saw each other, you were checking me out. I just want to know what was it that drew you to me, right?

Teasing. You know, the passage is talking to all of us. We talk about it and it makes a big deal within marriage, but Peter's been saying it's within all our relationships.

It's for married people, it's for wives, it's for husbands, it's for single people. All the citizens of God's kingdom are called to submit and to seek the other person's glory and betterness than our own.

I don't know how you feel. I mean, again, this is a grenade, it's going off, and we're thinking about these things. You're thinking in yourself, okay, what does this mean for me at work? Maybe some of you are thinking, what does this really mean for me in my dating relationship or with the other singles I hang out with?

What does that mean? What does it mean for me at school? I'm a student, and I'm submitting. Am I submitting just so my teachers see me do things and they think, wow, he's a great student, or is my heart behind it and I'm really trying to honor God as God's child?

[46 : 47] What does it mean in church when I'm doing things? Am I doing things because people are watching me or is it because I'm doing it for the Lord so that I'll be beautiful in his sight?

There's a lot of things we need to unpack here, and hopefully as you go out and we meet in community groups this week, we'll be talking about some of these things and thinking about these things, but the last thing the passage says is this, because these things, if you go out and you try to do it on your own, you're going to fail every time.

And what he talks about in 1 Peter 2 verses 21 through 25 is how this all is possible in our life.

And what he says is this, that you and I on our own are dead, we can't do anything. But Christ came and he submitted on a cross.

He submitted himself to God's will, he put us above himself. This is God, right? This is, if you think about the hierarchy structure, God puts himself above us and he dies for us on the cross so that we then can come back into this relationship that we're broken but now they're fixed.

[47 : 59] And what he says is the only way that we can do this as a church family, the only way we can even hope to do this as husbands and wives and single people, the only way we can hope to do this is by continually coming to the Lord that's inside of us and praying to him and reading his word and submitting our lives and confessing we may do it wrong because we're not up here saying we do it right even 50% of the time.

We struggle all the time. But what we know is that God's spirit inside of us is continually empowering us and continually giving us choices that we never had before. And the choice now is am I going to submit and do what I know is best for Christina or am I going to stay selfish and do what is best for Tobin?

When I got married I had a terrible time with marriage because I thought marriage was just like the rest of single guyhood. We all have uniforms. The goal is to make sure your uniform wins and the other uniforms lose.

But what I didn't realize in marriage is that your husband and your wife you have the same uniform. And if your wife loses you lose. But what the passage is saying here is as God's children that all of us have the same uniform.

And if we try to win then the body of Christ loses. And the people around us lose. And the only way we're going to win is by continually submitting to Christ and the power within us.

[49 : 24] He says a very interesting word there and there's two phrases I want you to think about as you leave. He says Christ gave us a pattern. It's a very interesting Greek word. It actually means a tracing.

What it means is this that Christ traced his life on his piece of paper. And every day you and I have a choice to lay our life piece of paper on top of this paper and start to trace our life over what Christ did.

Christ left us a tracing. Now some of us aren't in the family yet and we're tracing dollar signs or we're tracing power or we're chasing Citibank or whatever we think is going to bring us hope and satisfaction and meaning.

But the passage says here that Christ left us this tracing, this pattern and now as his people we have a choice because his spirit inside of us gives us the power to do that.

He says that Christ walked these footsteps. The imagery is very strong in the language. What it means is this dad walked on this beach and the little kid is walking behind the dad in the dad's footprints.

[50 : 36] And what Peter is saying is as we walk with God together, as the spirit changes our lives, we start to take our footprints and we start to take our patterns and we start to pattern them after Christ.

We start walking in his footsteps. But every day is a choice. You and I have a choice. Are we going to submit and follow the God, the creator of our soul?

Or are we going to trace our lives after something else? It's interesting to me, Peter wrote this passage to people who were very, very mature Christians.

They've been walking with God 20 and 30 years and he still comes back to the same thing every time. he comes back to the cross. He comes back to Jesus' sacrifice for life.

And what I understand as a pastor is that that's what all of our life is about. Understanding the cross, how it impacts our work, how we interact with our government, how we interact with our family, how we interact with our colleagues, how we interact with other singles, understanding grace and the power of God's spirit within us.

[51 : 50] we can give you 50 things to do when you leave here but all that's going to do is make your performance better. It's going to be those laws, Tobin's laws, prolific.

But what we're talking about is our heart. And the choice is are we going to let God change our heart or are we going to keep the heart the same way it is?

It's step by step. I fail, fail, fail, fail. Okay, God does something. Fail, fail, fail. Okay, God does something. But when I realize that God is taking us on a journey and the question is do we want to go with him?

Does that make sense? Always comes back to the cross. Always comes back to what Jesus did. Always comes back to a choice. Are we going to use that power, allow that power to change us?

Or are we going to follow in somebody else's footsteps? Father, we thank you for this day. We thank you for your word that is living and active. This is true today as it was 2,000 years ago as Peter shared it to all these churches that were about to struggle with persecution and death and difficulties as your people.

[53 : 12] Father, I pray for us in here. I know that there are many of us in here right now that we are copying, drawing, tracing something else besides you.

We have our hope in the job. We have our hope in Hong Kong. We have our hope in our body. We have our hope in our ability to think and be clear and outthink and outtalk other people. We have our hope in all these things and we're tracing this life.

But if we were honest and looked at the end picture, we'd realize that there's very, very little hope there. So I pray for those of us in here who are tracing something different and haven't yet entered into the family.

I pray that they would ask questions. They would seek the people that brought them. I pray they would come talk to Christina and myself and we would talk about these things and look at your son and look at the claims of your word.

And Lord, for the rest of us in here who've been on this journey and we've been walking in these footprints but then all of a sudden we realize that we've lost the footprints and we look behind us and we look in front of us and there's no feet and we're just going down this trail on our own and in our own power and our own strength and we're lost.

[54 : 34] Father, we just come before you and we just confess that our selfishness and our pride and our arrogance and our self-sufficiency is your people. We're so thankful that you're always watching us.

We're so thankful that you give us other opportunities to obey and to trust you. We're so thankful that you're the God of second chances and that you never, you never, you never give up on us as we sing but I don't know if we really believe that.

Lord, we pray for this church and we pray for the people who serve and for the people who speak and pray that our lives are different than the people around us. We pray for the offering that's being taken that it would honor you and allow us to do the ministries that you've called us to do and we pray just that we would be your hands and your feet in this amazing city called Hong Kong.

Father, thank you that we do it together and I pray that there's any words that we spoke today that were not of you that we would quickly forget those things but your word, that precious nugget of your son and his life, help us to think about that.

Help us to live that out in every area of our life. I know there are students here, there's teachers here, there's doctors here, there's lawyers here, there's bankers, there's housewives, there's husband wives, our husbands and all those people where we have to just every day think about what does it mean for me?

[56 : 02] What does it mean for me? What does it mean for me to trace my life after Christ? What does it mean for me to walk in his footsteps? I know that we need this message even more when difficult times come and your word says they will.

If we're different, difficult times will come but we have a shepherd who watches after our soul and who takes care of us.

And so we come to you today, our shepherd. We love you. We need you. We pray these things in Jesus' holy name. Amen.