

Series: Hebrews

Lesson # 75

Title: Obey and Submit

Scripture: Hebrews 13: 17

Date: 4-12-09

Place: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Princeton, New Jersey

Hebrews 13: 17: Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

(v17) Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves:

We find who the Spirit of God says has "the rule over you" in verse **7: Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God.** In the church, this is speaking primarily about pastors. Also, your parents who believe God are over you. A parent's primary concern in the household should be to teach you the word of God. Verse 7 tells us to "remember" them--bring to mind the faith which they have taught you and shown you by example. Verse 17 tells us to "obey" them--to obey in this case has to do with the heart. It is to trust them from the heart; give yourself to be persuaded that those which Christ has given to have the rule over you truly have your best interest in view. And to "submit" outwardly just as we do from the heart.

Faith without works is dead: Just as scripture teaches that if we truly have faith in the heart then grace will reign outwardly, so it is here. If we believe in our hearts that Christ has given us a pastor after his own heart to have the rule over us then in our conduct we will submit ourselves to that one.

Now, look to I Peter 5: 2: this is the Holy Spirit's word to me as I teach and lead you. Hebrews 13: 7 says to "remember" the example set before you. Here the Holy Spirit tells me to "what example to set." **1 Peter 5: 2: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. 3: Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.**

1. I have taken the responsibility to watch over you--therefore I pay attention to what each one is struggling with, I pray for you continually, I seek a word from the Lord for you for the present hour; so then Hebrews says "remember", "trust from your heart it is for your good" and submit.

2. Not by constraint, but willingly--the Lord Jesus Christ did not have to be constrained--he was moved by love to God and love for his brethren. Therefore he willingly took the oversight to walk perfectly before God's law as my representative, to go to the cross and answer justice for me, to glorify my God for me by declaring my God just and the justifier. He sent forth the Spirit which gave me life, he granted me repentance and faith and drew me to him. Therefore by his spirit in me I do not have to be constrained but willingly take the

oversight of you to teach you of his glorious person and the work he finished. Our text in Hebrews says, "remember" that, "obey--be persuaded from the heart that is my desire for you" and "submit".

3. Not for "filthy lucre" for greedy, sneaky, personal gain, but of a ready mind (from a true heart.) Our text is saying, "remember" your pastor's motives, "obey--have a ready mind, a true heart, not double-minded for personal gain" and therefore "submit" outwardly.

4. Neither as being lords over God's heritage--we have one Lord--King of kings and Lord of all lords--Jesus Christ the Lord. Therefore I will not attempt to *make* you do anything. I have no authority to exalt myself over you to try to get you to do these things because I know our Lord make us willing in the day of his power--he is able, I am not able. I never want to hear the Lord say these words to me: **Ezekiel 34:4: The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up *that which was broken*, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.** Our text says, "remember the pattern" and "obey--trust from the heart," and "submit" or else you prove that you think *yourself* a lord over God's heritage.

As your pastor, the Holy Spirit only commands me to speak and to do that which is edifying for you and which will help you to remember how to conduct yourself. As for you, the Christ commands you to do only that which he commands me to do as well. The same holds with you and your parents.

Next, we are given reasons to obey from the heart and submit wholly to them that have the rule over us.

(V17) for they watch for your souls,

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Ezekiel 3:17: Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. 18: When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. 19: Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. 20: Again, When a righteous *man* doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. 21: Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous *man*, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.

Acts 20: 28: Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

(V17) that they may do it with joy.

John called the saints his own children. **3 John 1: 3: For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. 4: I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. 5: Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers.** Your fathers and mothers know what John meant here. There is no greater joy than when a child obeys their parents. Just as it is with a father and his children so it is with a pastor and those he takes the oversight of. It is because we desire the fruit of the Spirit working in you.

The past few weeks we have seen the sacrifices that a believer offers by Christ: thanksgiving, praise to his name, walking honestly and supporting the brethren, now today we are told to obey and submit to them that have the rule over you, and we read in **v16: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.** How is that? **Mark 1:11: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.** (We learn why in Isaiah) **Isaiah 42:21: The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make *it* honourable.**

THE LORD GOD IS WELL-PLEASED WITH SUCH SACRIFICES BECAUSE HE IS WELL-PLEASED WITH HIS SON WHO PRODUCED THAT FRUIT IN US THROUGH THE SPIRIT. THAT IS WHY JOHN SAID, I HAVE NO GREATER JOY THAN TO HEAR THAT MY CHILDREN WALK IN TRUTH! AND THAT IS WHY I JOY WHEN I BEHOLD YOU REMEMBERING WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT, BELIEVING IN YOUR HEART, AND SUBMITTING OUTWARDLY.

The joy is when you see that God is blessing the work in the hearts of those to whom you preach--it causes your pastor to thank God on your behalf. **1 Thessalonians 3:9: For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;**

(v17) and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

1. It is unprofitable for you personally, not to obey and submit--how can you learn with a hard heart?
2. It is unprofitable for your brethren around you--how can they learn when you become a distraction by your proud refusal to be instructed.
3. It is unprofitable in that it causes your pastor grief so that he is troubled in his prayer and work for you.

MOSES IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF ONE GRIEVED BY THE FLOCK

Deuteronomy 9: 16: And I looked, and, behold, ye had sinned against the LORD your God, *and* had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which

the LORD had commanded you. 17: And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes. 18: And I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger....22: And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibrothhattaavah, ye provoked the LORD to wrath. 23: Likewise when the LORD sent you from Kadeshbarnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice. 24: Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you. 25: Thus I fell down before the LORD forty days and forty nights, as I fell down *at the first*; because the LORD had said he would destroy you.

Jeremiah 13: 15: Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken. 16: Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, *and make it* gross darkness. 17: But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for *your* pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive. 18: Say unto the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your principalities shall come down, *even* the crown of your glory.