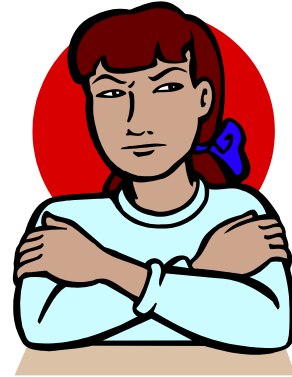
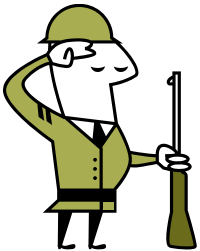


Submission to Authority

¹⁶ *You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.
My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart
you, God, will not despise. Psalm 51:16-17*



²³ *For rebellion is like the sin of divination,
and arrogance like the evil of idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,
he has rejected you as king. "1 Samuel 15:23*



Sacrifice and Christian service are useless without submission!

According to these verses above, what type of sacrifice pleases the Lord?

How is rebellion comparable to divination and idolatry, in your opinion?

Our Goal is to learn the importance of submission for radical discipleship.

- *How can we know if we have a rebellious heart?*
- *Why rebellion is such a serious sin in the Christian life?*
- *How can we learn submission?*

Rebellious Christians?! Is that possible?

Absolutely! In the name of the Lord himself we regularly rebel against parents, teachers, employers, pastors and civil leaders, always blaming the one in authority for being the “*bad guy*.” This fundamental flaw severely limits our blessing and usefulness in the kingdom of God!

And you...? Do you have a rebellious or submissive heart?

Ask ourselves the following questions....

- *How do you respond to the parking lot attendant who asks you to move your car?*
- *How do you respond to the usher who asks you to change seats?*
- *How do you respond to your boss when he or she asks you to do something differently?*
- *Do you follow traffic laws?*
- *How do you respond to the ministry leader who asks you to do something you would rather not do?*
- *What do you do when the pastor does or says something that “rubs you the wrong way?”*
- *Do you complain about your boss, pastor, or ministry leader?*
- *Do you tend to blame others when there is conflict in your life?*

Rebellious people tend to blame others for conflict in their lives.

- *You are fired from your job – My boss had it “in for me!”*
- *You lose a friend – They have “issues!”*
- *You get a parking ticket – The police should be doing more important things!*
- *You change churches – The pastor’s did not pay enough attention to me!*

In reality, such attitudes rebel not so much against specific people, but against God, the ultimate authority, who has placed these individuals in authority.

Why is rebellion such a grave sin?

1. ***Rebellion is the “original sin.”***
2. ***Rebellion is “Satanic” in essence***
3. ***The rebellious Christian is useless for God***
4. ***The rebellious Christian suffers spiritual attack from the evil one***
5. ***The rebellious Christian does harm***
6. ***The rebellious Christian uses the word, “Lord,” without submitting to God’s “Lordship.”***

1. Rebellion is the “original sin”

The root of all sin is rebellion against God and the authorities which He has ordained in the world. *We rebel because we believe we know better than God!*



The First Temptation – I want to be God! Genesis 3:4-5

“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

Describe Eve’s temptation.

According to Satan’s lie, why does the Lord implement laws in life?

2. Rebellion is a Satanic Quality

When Ezekiel prophesied against the King of Tyre, he compares his fate to the fall of Satan...

The word of the LORD came to me: ¹² “Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says:

*“‘You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: carnelian, chrysolite and emerald, topaz, onyx and jasper, lapis lazuli, turquoise and beryl.^[a]
Your settings and mountings^[b] were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared.¹⁷ Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings. **Ezekiel 28:11-13; y 17***

According to this text, what caused Satan’s rebellion?

Mention an example of how strength, fame, talent, or beauty could result in rebellion for a person.

3. *The Rebellious Christian is useless to the Lord*



.... Like a wild animal or an un-tamed horse!

⁹ Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you. ¹⁰ Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in him. Psalm 32:9-10

What does the rebellious heart share in common with an un-broken horse?



4. *The Rebellious Christian is "open" to Spiritual Attack*

The rebellious Christian is like a soldier who refuses to follow orders!

Why is it absolutely necessary for a soldier to submit to the orders of his commanding officers without hesitation?



5. *The Rebellious Christian is dangerous*

Like a car without steering or brakes!

If we refuse to submit, how can we be compared to a car without brakes?



6. The Rebellious Christian uses the name “Lord” without submitting to his “Lordship.”

²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ (Matthew. 7:21-23)

How is it possible to do miracles and prophesy without submitting to the Lordship of Christ in truth?

The rebellious Christian has a “stiff neck” – slow to “turn” in response to the Lord’s voice

⁹ “I have seen these people,” the LORD said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people. ¹⁰ Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation.” Exodus 32:9-10

Why compare a rebellious heart to a stiff neck?

And you...?

- How “flexible” is your neck?
- Are you an untamed horse?
- Are you a self-directed soldier?
- Are you a car without brakes?
- When an authority gives you instructions, do you respond quickly, or do you resist?

How to cultivate a submissive heart The “breaking” process

God breaks us with his discipline out of His love for us. How?

1. **Moments of Crisis** – He wrestles us - Jacob
2. **Our personal failures** – He shows us our weakness – Peter
3. **Long periods of waiting** – in the desert He teaches us to depend on him – Moses
4. **Moments of “cruel obedience”** – we agonize to accept His will – Jesus in Gethsemane
5. **Human authorities** – which represent the authority of God

God breaks the one He calls – for love!



¹⁹ *Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent.* **Rev. 3:19**

Read Hebrews 12:4-11

What are some ways God disciplines us?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What is the benefit of God's discipline in our lives? _____

_____.

1. God breaks us through moments of Crisis

God struggles against us to humble us.

Have you passed through moments in which God seems to be against you? It is natural to feel this way when He gives us a good “spanking!” But God disciplines us out of love, in order to form us into gentle and humble men and women.

Read Genesis 32:22-32 – *God wrestles with the rebellious heart – Jacob becomes Israel*

How could Jacob at the same time love God sincerely and yet also be shifty, sneaky and rebellious? Yet this is precisely what we observe in the story of his early life! In order to use Jacob, God first needed *to break* him. A lifetime of deception and shady dealings led Jacob to his ultimate crises. His lies had earned him enemies, and now his brother Esau came against him with an overwhelming force. The night before the looming battle, Jacob spent the wee hours of the morning locked in a wrestling grip with the Angel of the Lord.

In the case of Jacob, how did the Lord break him? What physical manifestation reminded him of this breaking experience?

_____.

The difference between “discipline” and “punishment.”

When Job suffered terrible loss, some friends suggested that God was punishing him for some secret or hidden sin. Others suggested that God was unjust, and should be denied! Job struggled at length to come to terms with his situation, and we finally learn that neither explanation was true. Job’s suffering had nothing to do with punishment, but neither was God senseless or unjust by allowing it. In some mysterious way, God allows and uses suffering to mold us. Much as the coach or the drill sergeant “disciplines” his chosen recruits, so also God allows struggle to mature us spiritually. This discipline has nothing to do with punishment, and everything to do with our spiritual formation into maturity and the likeness of Christ. (Romans 8:28)

Have you passed through moments of crisis in your life, when you were forced to struggle with God to accept His will. Describe the experience? What came out of it for you?

2. God breaks us through our personal failures – He shows us our fragility

Peter, before denying the Lord, boasted of his radical commitment and willingness to follow, even to the point of death!

⁹ *Peter declared, “Even if all fall away, I will not.”*

³⁰ *“Truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice^[a] you yourself will disown me three times.”*

³¹ *But Peter insisted emphatically, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the others said the same. **Mark 14:29-31***

As we all know, Peter was not as strong as he thought himself to be! After denying Jesus three times, he went away and “wept bitterly.”

How can the Lord use our own failures for our own good?

3. God breaks us through long seasons of waiting – the Desert

³ (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.) **Numbers 12:3**



Meekness is not Weakness!

We know the awesome power of Moses' leadership and authority – that he waged war against the greatest pagan superpower of his day. How can such a strong leader also be considered the “*meekest man on the face of the earth?*”

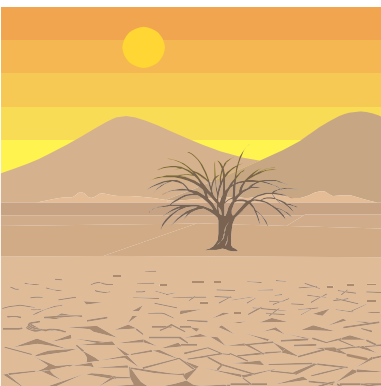
What is the true meaning of “meekness” in your opinion?

The desert – God's training camp!

Moses wasn't always so meek! Having been raised in the very palace of the Pharaoh, he grew up with the self confidence of a prince. As a young man, he became enraged when he witnessed an Egyptian abusing an Israelite, and took matters into his own hands by killing the Egyptian. Burning with zeal to save his people, he assumed the role of deliverer and tried to intervene in a dispute between two Israelites. However, before he could fulfill his destiny as deliverer, God needed to deal with his pride and will. Moses fled in fear from Egypt and hid as a fugitive in the desert. Having lost his privileged position in Egyptian society, he lived forty years in complete anonymity before being called by the Lord.



Why the desert?



The desert is a place of privation and need. We become deeply aware of our human fragility, and all our pretence of self-sufficiency melts away. Stripped of all our natural supports, we become obliged to depend on the Lord, and learn that “*man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*”



Read Deuteronomy 8:1-20 – *God uses the desert to break Israel.*

What are some of the privations, needs, or dangers we experience in the desert?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

According to the text, what are some of the “lessons” of the desert?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

After 40 years of “desert treatment,” Moses was humbled

He removed his shoes!

When God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, he commanded him,

“Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” **Exodus 3:5**

In that epoch, slaves generally worked in bare feet. In light of this fact, what did the act of removing his shoes mean for Moses?

Responding, he said, “Who am I....?”

When God called Moses to deliver his people, Moses responds by asking..

“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” **Ex. 3:11**

How do we observe the dramatic change in his attitude? _____

_____.

5. God breaks us through moments of “cruel obedience” - Jesus

Submission means yielding to the will of God – “Thy will be done!”

In spite of being the ultimate ruler of the universe, Jesus passed through the “cruel” breaking in the garden, the night before facing the torture of the cross.



’ During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. **Hebrews 5:7**



Read Matthew 26:36-44 and Luke 22:39-44 – The Agony in the Garden

How do we observe Jesus’ struggle in his humanity to accept the will of the Father?

_____.

And you...? Have you experienced a moment of intense struggle, in which you were forced to say, “... *but not my will, but yours be done.*” Mention the experience briefly below?

_____.



5. *God breaks us through human authorities*

Rebellion against human authority is rebellion against God's authority!

When we rebel against a legitimate authority God has instituted, we rebel against God Himself!

What to do with a “mean boss?”

The Case of David and Saul – “Touch not the Anointed of the Lord”

David had opportunity to take revenge against Saul!

You think your boss is bad!? King Saul attempted to pin David to a wall with a spear out of sheer jealousy - twice! David fled as a fugitive, hiding in caves and deserts, while Saul and his army sought to kill him. In spite of all this, David refused to do harm to his legitimate king. On one occasion, David entered a cave with his men, to find Saul there, relieving himself! At long last, he had his chance at revenge, seemingly provided by the Lord himself. His men encouraged him—“*Kill him!*”

Consider David's response...

“ But David said to Abishai, “Don’t destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the LORD’s anointed and be guiltless? ” As surely as the LORD lives,” he said, “the LORD himself will strike him, or his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. ” But the LORD forbid that I should lay a hand on the LORD’s anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let’s go.” **1 Samuel 26:9-11**

Why did David fear to harm Saul, in spite of Saul's wickedness and injustice?



We ought to revere our authorities with holy fear – the case of Miriam and Aaron

Read Numbers 12:1-10 -- Why did Aaron and Miriam rebel against Moses, in your opinion?

In general, why do people rebel against their spiritual authorities?

Submission to Spiritual Authority in the Church

*¹⁷ Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you. **Hebrews 13:17***

Have you ever found yourself complaining about your spiritual authorities, whether pastors or ministry leaders? (be honest) What was the cause?



Rebellion against Civil Authority = Rebellion against God

Read Romans 13:1-7 – Civil Authority

Mention a few civil authorities we encounter in society?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



According to the Apostle Paul, why ought a Christian to submit to civil authority in society?



Professional Authority

These words were written to servants – which in our day apply to “employees.”

*²² Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. ²⁵ Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism. **Colossians 3:22-25***

According to this text, why should we submit to our employers?

Write the names of some people in authority over you in your context of employment.

1. _____
2. _____

Family Authority – Husband the pilot and wife the co-pilot!



*²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything... ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. **Ephesians 5:22-25 y 33***

In contrast to male chauvinism, how should a husband lead his family?

How should the wife respond to her husband?

Children are to “*obey*” parents, but wives are called to “*respect*” their husbands. Why the difference, in your opinion?

Prayer of Submission

And you? Do you have a truly submissive heart before God’s authority? If you find yourself complaining often against civil, spiritual or family authority, then more likely than not, your will still needs to be broken by God.

Note an authority figure in your life to which you have a hard time submitting
(Home, work, church.)

Let us pray the following declaration of “surrender.”

(We suggest the posture of kneeling, as a symbol of submission.)



Lord God, I confess I am a rebel.

On many occasions I do things my own way

And refuse to submit to your commands.

I complain against authorities in my place of work, in my home,

and in my church.

Please forgive me.

I ask you to break my pride and willfulness.

As Jesus prayed, “Not my will, but your will be done.”

Amen.

Review Questions:

Mention the reasons why rebellion is such a grave sin in the Christian life?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

What are some ways in which the Lord breaks us and humbles us?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

