

## Chapter 14 - Learn to Submit

1. Take a few minutes to reflect on the story.
  - A) In the life of Peter, we observe positive growth from a first-in-line kind of guy with a compulsive need to comment on everything to a humbler, but more effective, servant of Christ open to correction and submissive to authority. How does the trajectory of your spiritual life compare?
  - B) Peter wrote only 8 chapters (in 2 letters) of the New Testament, yet he made 7 statements about submission in one way or another (1Pe 2:13; 2:18; 3:1; 3:5; 3:22; 5:5). It is clearly a theme that was on the front burner for Peter. What about you? Do you consciously submit to others?
  - C) Consider the relationship between submission to God and submission to others. Read 1John 4:20 and consider how it applies to submission. How is submission to God reflected in your submission to others in your life to whom submission is due?

2. Of all of the topics covered in *Refresh*, this one may be the most tension-filled because of our culture's attitude toward submission in any and all forms. Once considered a virtue necessary for the smooth functioning of society, it is now seen as a weakness of those who embrace it and as abuse by those who support (or enforce) it. Describe your own view on this subject and note how it is shaped by the culture and by the Bible.

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3. Read through the verses in the "Biblical Background" section. Are some of these easier for you to accept and implement in your life. Which one is the biggest struggle? Why do you think that is?

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4. In the most popular stories of Jesus, He is the one in control, doing great things, challenging people about their beliefs and behaviour and leading his disciples throughout the land teaching them His

revolutionary way of thinking about God and how to have a relationship with Him. Consider Jesus as the world's greatest example of submission. Jot down a list of some of the evidence that supports that view of Him.

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5. We can discuss submission interminably and it accomplishes nothing (even if we are correct in our views of it). Submission is about action. It must be practised to have any value to us or to anyone else. Take a few minutes to jot down the names of some of the people to whom God calls you to submit. When you've done that, honestly consider your response to them.

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6. Building on the previous exercise, remember that these people are not morally, emotionally, intellectually or even spiritually superior to you (though hopefully those in leadership are more spiritually mature). How does knowing this help or hinder your ability to relate to them in a godly way (i.e. by submitting to them)?

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7. Now think about some of the people God has in submission to you. Jot down a few names. Think about how they might feel about being in that role. Note a few things you might do, as you relate to them, to make their submission to you a joy rather than an obligation.

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8. Mutual submission may be the hardest of all because there is no understood social hierarchy to guide us. Needless jockeying for social dominance is a waste of time and spiritually damaging to the believer. Now jot down the name of a few peers and make a note of how you will demonstrate to them that you “esteem them better than yourself.” (See Philippians 2:3)

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**For Group Leaders:**

As “the leader” you have a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate what submission looks like from a position of authority. Take some time to explain how Jesus words in Matthew 20:25-28 have affected you and your understanding of leadership.

This chapter also provides an opportunity to demonstrate that servant leaders are still leaders. Not every comment made in a small group setting is beneficial. Some might even tend toward error. You’ll have to assess the relevance and value of comments while affirming the person making them.

Encourage your group members to work on those areas where submission is most difficult. Pray for one another and offer to provide accountability for those who recognize their need for that and are willing to submit to it.