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SUBMIT TO GOD AND RESIST THE DEVIL--AND DO IT NOW!

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JAMES
NUMBER 31
JAMES 4:7

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JAMES 4:7 "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

In our time we here in America have become "freedom conscious." This is because of our heritage, our history, and the land of freedom in which we have lived. But the Communist conspiracy has made great inroads into this concept of freedom in all realms of our living. In the realm of academics and in the realm of expression, whether it be drama or literature or art or music. Even the movies coming out today are designed to enslave us. No matter whether you like it or not, you are all victims of this propaganda.

Satanic Propaganda

This Communist Satanic propaganda has infiltrated all realms of our living. It has gotten into every phase of our military establishment. The principles of freedom on which our nation was built are now being whittled away and the Communist approach threatens the very destruction of our free society. The Devil also has a conspiracy and we learn about all of this from the Word of God.

The Basis of Freedom

In this paper we are to study a verse which gives us the basis of true soul freedom. But no one can have freedom apart from authority. Freedom cannot long exist apart from authority. Freedom means capacity for life and capacity for love. The great characteristics of Christian living cannot exist apart from freedom, and freedom cannot exist apart from authority. Authority starts in the human soul and ends there. It starts with the volition of the individual and volition that is under the rule of authority. Whether it be the law of gravity or the concepts of salvation, the principle is exactly the same. Basically, the person who rejects authority has at least an 80-20 chance of ending up a neurotic, a psychopath, a very miserable individual with no purpose and no goal. To reject authority overtly is to reject authority within your own soul. When authority is broken down in the soul, they call it psychosis.

As an illustration of this, look at the drug traffic. Drugs, outside of their use in medicine, are extremely dangerous. They destroy the soul. Yet the soul has a protection against these drugs, and we call that protection volition, we call it freedom. To say no, to not go along with the crowd, to not become addicted to a condition produced by chemistry, to reject taking drugs that are said to give a lift to the soul, is one of the greatest victories of freedom that one can achieve. Once one becomes a user of drugs all concepts of authority are blurred. He loses all contact with reality. No matter where you go or what you do, if there is going to be happiness in life then there must be authority in life.

Take another illustration.

The illustration is a real feminine woman. They can attain the status of a feminine woman very early in life and can maintain that status until they die. There is nothing greater in the earth than a feminine

woman, and nothing worse than a frustrated female. A frustrated female has rejected the authority of her right man, and out from under that authority, she becomes capable of most anything. This condition leads to unscrupulous acts, mixed up thinking and causes them to lead others into the same frame of mind. The reason behind such activity is the rejection of authority. Now she may even be lady-like, have poise, be clean in speech and living, but this still doesn't make her a lady. The ladyship of a female is in the soul and she must recognize the authority of her right man in order to attain the statue God designed for her.

Now a male can be exactly the same kind of menace by not recognizing authority. How many males of our day have we seen who fit this description? Long-haired hippies, males in all kinds of crimes, in all kinds of homosexual activities, rebellion against the military are just a few such illustrations. They have no capacity for freedom and authority, and when this happens, they form into wolf packs. They murder athletes at the Olympic Games, they commander planes and endanger the lives of innocent people they have never seen or heard of, or they shoot down innocent, unarmed people. About the best you can say of them is that they are two-legged animals.

An Absolute Necessity

Authority is necessary for your freedom, whether it is the authority of the Police Department in your city, or the authority and discipline in the military establishment of the nation. If authority is not restored to the military organizations of this nation, we will not stand too much longer as a strong nation. Please remember, people have had to die in order that you might sit here free tonight. In the realm of sex, we run into this same principle. Apart from control and authority sex becomes a hideous nightmare. In the realm of happiness and friendship if there is no authority or discipline, then just one idiot can spoil the whole party.

The Highest Authority

The most rigid authority in the world is found in Bible Christianity. But here in this realm is also the capacity for the greater blessing and life and super grace that God can provide. There will never be any blessing for you in the operation of God's plan of grace apart from discipline and authority.

JAMES 4:7 "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." This word "submit" is an aorist, passive, imperative of "hopotasso" and this is a military word. It means "to put in subjection" or "to submit" or to "stand under an authority over you." To submit is not too difficult for some. But remember this. The real meaning of submission is this--IT IS A WORD WHERE YOU RECOGNIZE AND SUBMIT TO AUTHORITY WITHOUT BEING DEGRADED. You don't become inferior because you submit.

Surrendered life is the highest life that we know anything about. Take football. Right at this season of the year there are hundreds of thousands of boys and young men out on the practice fields of this nation submitting themselves to the authority and commands of coaches so they can play football this fall. They will undergo almost any kind of physical punishment in order to whip themselves in shape so they can win that game. You take authority and submission off the football field and those teams will fall apart before the week is out.

You and Christ

Lift this idea up now to the highest realm, the realm of your relationship with Jesus Christ. You and Christ are pulling a load together. He speaks to you, instructs you daily, gives you suggestions on how you can best do your job. If you submit to him, if you obey him, if you allow him to command your every thought and act, then you will find life is victorious and glorious. This is submission, but it is the highest freedom known in this earth.

Now the super grace believer will be under great pressure from Satan. Satan never likes for a man to be under submission to Jesus Christ. But to win the battle the believer must reject the authority of Satan constantly and be subordinated to the authority of Christ all the time.

No Audible Voice

God does not speak in an audible voice today to anyone. And if someone comes to you and says he did, then you get away from them as fast as you can for you will know they know little about the Bible and God. People who say God gave them some special private message are just deluded. (I heard of a man who said God told him to go to a certain address to witness to a certain person and when he got there it was an empty lot. You see, God didn't tell him to do that in the first place and he was living under some false impression.) Think of the many people running over the earth today who say they have heard the voice of God. Now get this principle--ALL GOD WANTS YOU TO KNOW IS EXPRESSED IN THE BIBLE AND HE IS NOT GOING TO GIVE YOU SOME PERSONAL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION APART FROM THE REVEALED RECORD. Now don't misunderstand me. I didn't say God will not guide you, or give you impressions or use circumstances through which he will speak to you. God uses thousands of ways to communicate with individuals. But when the Canon of Scripture was finished, his written, revealed record was completed and it will never have any addition made to it.

HOW SUBMIT?

Naturally the question will come--How are we to submit? How are we to subordinate our wills to his will? Remember this word "Submit" is in the imperative mood and it is a command.

Illustration

Maybe we can answer this "How?" with this illustration. In the army there is the General and you are subservient to him. Possibly you will never see him, yet his authority is over you. But there are officers in between that General and you. There is the Company and then that Company is made up of Platoons and the Platoons are made up of squads, and in that squad is a loud-mouthed sergeant and you really see him and know him. You probably never see the General, but you see that loud-mouthed sergeant every day. This is authority you can see.

Now the authority before you is the right pastor-teacher and this is your immediate authority. But get this--HE IS UNDER AUTHORITY TOO. He is under the authority of God and he is responsible to God to exercise that authority in a right way.

A Second Authority

But there is a second authority and that second authority is The Word of God. But it does not become authority for you until it is in your soul. The Word of God is no good to you until it is in your soul, and then it becomes authority to you. Teaching the Word of God can be likened to a room full of bottles. The Pastor-Teacher throws the water

of doctrine out and some catch little and some catch more. But it is your only authority, whether you have little of it or much. Your submission to God is based on the doctrinal content of your soul. So we have two things--The Pastor-Teacher

The Doctrine he is able to teach you

So the Word of God means order, content, and authority. And remember this. You can't dream up doctrine. It doesn't grow out of some gloooooorious experience you have had. It doesn't come by thrills or ecstasies.

So we have three things here.

First--The authority of the Pastor-Teacher. This is his office.

Second--We have his message. And he must work and study to give it to you out of the Word of God. The meaning of the Bible is in its words, so he must come to know the meaning of the Word in the Bible.

Third--His personality, his private personal traits.

So it is authority, communication and personality. And please remember this--it is not that he is spiritually qualified to teach you. His spiritual qualification is not the merit of his teaching. The spiritual qualification is in God and in his message. So when we get together under the spiritual qualification of God, I dish it out and you take it in. That's what is meant by "Submit to God."

There are many people who want to do something in order to submit. Well, the objective is not to do something overtly but to learn something, to take in some truth and this is the way you submit to God. For quite a long time, I wondered why God dumped me in Little Rock and left me here. But if I ever had that idea, I never have it anymore. The telephone rings and I hear it over and over again, day in and day out. It goes something like this--"I heard the service on television, or I listened to the tapes and I have come to know Christ. I've had my life changed."

This verse says "Submit yourself" and the next word is "Therefore." This is an inferential conjunction "oun." It is used to state a conclusion from the previous verse. The next words are "To God" and this is a dative of "Ho Theos." The definite article defines the noun rather than giving the quality of the noun. The meaning is that God is the author of this plan of perfect authority by which we are to be benefitted. So this verse says, "Be subordinate therefore to The God. And if you don't do this, then your life deteriorates and disintegrate and you live as a Christian out of fellowship.

Next we have the little particle "De" and it is a conjunction of contrast translated "But." "Resist" is an aorist, active, imperative of "anthisteimi." It means "stand against" or "oppose." Then we have the word "Diabolos" and this is a title for The Devil, Lucifer is his name. This word means slanderer. So it means resist the Devil by having Bible Doctrine in your soul. You can't resist the Devil by throwing the Bible at him. You can't open the Bible and show him a verse.

1 PETER 5:5-9 "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." These verses bring out this same principle. Under super grace, you oppose him. Then the verse says, "He will flee" and this is a future, middle, indicative of "Pheugo." He may be the present ruler of this world, but when you confront him with Bible doctrine, you defeat him every time.

This verse says, "He will flee from your presence."
Next we are going to have a series of aorist, imperatives. All of them are direct commands to us. Draw nigh, cleanse, purify, humble yourself, etc. But this is another subject and we will study this next time. In this next study we will learn how to "Draw Nigh to God."