

How to Submit to God

I was counselling a young man recently who is a friend. He was going through a tough time and his mistakes and previous bad decisions were catching up to him. Things he had been enjoying and working to achieve were potentially slipping out of his grasp. He was in danger of losing it all.

He is a Christian and attends church sometimes but wasn't walking in victory. Being a Leviticus Chapter 23 Feast guy, I began walking through the first several steps of God's plan for us using the Feasts as a guide. I do this with everyone as the Spirit leads. After about 40 minutes or so of listening and then sharing these steps, I thought I had him in a good place. Then suddenly in his frustration, he shook his head and said he felt like running away from everything and just hiding. He had no peace of mind. I started over again knowing that the peace he was seeking can only come from God and that comes by following His plan/steps. So starting back at step 1, I told him he just needed to humble himself and submit to God. He then looked up at me and asked, "How do I do that? I don't know how?"

I began to wonder how many people actually don't know how to surrender and submit to God.

So after sharing again the first steps to being in recovery and right relationship with God, I sat down and prepared to address the question, "How does one surrender to God", and make that important and necessary first step.

I Googled the question and found a Billy Graham sermon where he answered the question by stating, "First, surrender your mind. Now, when you surrender your mind to God, it means not only what we think but how we think." He also talked about surrendering your will. He used Revelation 22:17 to support his major point ("Whosoever will, let him come").

I saw another website answer from Doug Andre and he referred to Matthew 16:24-25:

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

He added, "For a non-believer, it takes admitting that you are a sinner in need of a Savior and embracing Jesus Christ by faith,....which enables a person to surrender in the first place." He also mentioned how Jesus Christ was the perfect model of surrender (John 5:30) and the example of Andrew and Peter who "left everything behind" to follow Jesus. Finally he noted that surrendering to God through Jesus "is the most important decision a person can make."

I didn't go much further in my Google search. Instead, I reflected on my own experience. I asked myself, how did I surrender? My surrender was based in large part upon my circumstances. My life was a mess. My plan wasn't working and I needed a change. Broken, I knew enough about God to turn to Jesus for help. The other thing that helped me was someone else's testimony. They didn't even say anything to me. I just watched how they were living and the complete joy and peace they had. I wanted

that kind of peace but didn't know how to get it. After looking at what this guy had, I went home that night and fell on my knees and surrendered to God and prayed to accept Jesus once again into my life.

So my first step in surrendering to God was simply turning to Jesus rather than anything else. In that instance I turned my focus and hope on seeking him and falling at his feet for my help and deliverance. Of course there are other steps beyond surrendering to Jesus which includes living for him through the power of the Holy Spirit. But truly the first step is surrendering. Like a person who acknowledges they are guilty and comes out of their hideout with their hands up in surrender, we too have to come out of our hiding places and surrender to the authority which is in Jesus Christ.

Finally, I looked at the Feasts and just a few other biblical examples of how to perform this critical first step of submission to God.

Scripture Reference	Application (How to do It)
Leviticus 23:5	Applying the blood, accepting sacrifice of Christ
Matthew 5:3	Acknowledge your brokenness and need for Christ and change
Matthew 3:13-15	Put away your pride and self-effort and humbly submit to Christ; seek Him
John 3:16	Pick up your cross and put away self and pride and humbly seek Christ
Genesis 1:4	Understand you are in a dark place and seek to follow Jesus as your light and guide
Psalms 23:1	Rather than being in control, let Jesus start to have control of your next moves
Matthew 6:9	Seek and pursue after a relationship with your heavenly Father
Matthew 16:24-26	Understand it is not about you, your feelings, your plan, etc.....you push all that away and instead focus on following and trusting in Jesus

Summary:

If I have a serious injury, I don't try to heal myself. Instead I change direction and actively seek the emergency room. If I don't humble myself and look to the hospital for help, I could die.

In similar fashion, when I find myself in a serious condition or situation where I can't handle or fix myself, I need to change my attitude. I have to humbly stop trying to do it myself or trust in others and actively seek Jesus. This is only the first step to recovery, but it is the critical first step. Without Jesus, we die. With Him we have new life.