

Submit to God Together

Let God have His way. Come under His authority together.

**1 Sam 3:10-18; 2 Sam 15:25-26; Mark 14:35-36;
John 13:8-9; Heb 12:7-11; James 4:7**

Now let's talk about submitting to God, which means letting God have His way. Doing this more and more will enhance your eternal life in heaven. [1] You will be able to try more of the opportunities and challenges in heaven because you will have a higher level of trust in God. [2] You will see heaven a little more through the eyes of God. [3] You will see other citizens of heaven, people and angels, more from God's perspective. And, [4] You will have a better place of service in heaven.

Submitting to God means letting God have His way and choosing to be under His authority. Submitting to God together with others in your Christian Inner Circle means helping everyone let God have His way and be under His authority.

You can submit to God and His ways out of duty, but that will not prepare you much for heaven. You want to submit to God because He loves you far more than you love yourself. His design for your life and how you live it is what is best for you, even better than you can imagine for yourself.

Just as parents appreciate children who submit to their rules, so God appreciates each of us differently to the degree we let Him have His way. He loves us all unconditionally and equally. But, that does not mean He appreciates us all the same. Certainly, those who cared less about how God wanted them to think, feel and act will not have the same favor with Jesus in heaven.

Before we became true Christians, we did not live for God or His purposes. Even if we lived honorably, we did not possess our new spirits that would make it possible for us to have God's thoughts and feelings behind our good works. But, when we accepted God's great gift of salvation by believing the good news of Jesus Christ, we were born again and the Bible in 2 Cor 5:17 says that we became new creatures in Christ. We each could now begin living for God and becoming like Jesus. The journey of submission to God and letting Him have His way regarding how we think, feel and live our lives began.

Before we trusted Jesus Christ's death to remove the barrier to God, which was our lack of holiness, we could not truly submit to God willfully. Before that, we might have submitted to a misunderstood God we thought we had to please to earn our way into heaven. Thankfully, salvation is free through nothing but believing the true God when He says that His Son's sacrifice was sufficient for our own salvation and to find favor with Him.

We are on a journey of increasing submission to God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. And the Holy Spirit, the third person of the One God, helps us grow in submission. Our new life in Christ comes with spirits that are now capable of letting God's way of living transform us, allowing Jesus to live in us more and more with the result of increasing natural and spontaneous submission to God.

We submit to God by adopting His way of thinking about what is happening in our lives and all around us. Often this involves turning away from our old selves that are still tuned in to the desires and ways that are not God's ways. For example, when we wake in the morning, we can dread the responsibilities that face us and the people who annoy us or we can realize through thinking God's way that He has given us the gift of another day to live gloriously for Him. Psalm 118:24 says, "*This is the day that the Lord*

has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Submission to God is pleasurable to God, but also very wonderful for us. As just one example, if one of us does not like himself or herself, God thinks differently because He loves us and gave Jesus to us. In such a case, it is transforming to trade our view for His perspective. In God's view, we are not who we used to be but who He made us to be in Christ.

Of course, this depth of submission to God is not easy. That is why we need one another's help to have victory in submitting to God. To submit to God together as his people, we must help each other see, understand and conform to the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of Jesus. This means to help one another adopt God's way when our way is not His way.

This requires help from those other Christians who know us well, our most frequent and intense Christian relationships, those of our Christian friendships, Christian families, and Christian marriages. We all have desires – and two or three Christians with Jesus can determine if we are off course from God's plan. Since the stakes are eternal, we should not just stand by and watch our Christian friends and family members throw away eternal blessings for temporary indulgences.

To choose to let God have His way requires ever-growing trust. As you grow to trust that God knows more than you do, including the future, you have an easier time letting Him guide you through life. As you trust increasingly that God loves you, you can realize that you are not on your own and welcome His input to your decisions. As you trust that what God is doing with you is what is stated in Romans 8:29 in the Bible – that He is changing you to be like Jesus – you begin to see those things that come into your life as God preparing you for eternal life. You can grow in trust that as bad as situations may seem, they are for your good, especially forever in heaven.

When you get to heaven, the more you have learned to trust and submit to God here where things can go terribly wrong, the more you will be able to trust God to take care of you in heaven where nothing can go wrong.

God is trustworthy, and the more often you step out to meet some difficult situation in dependence upon Him rather than on yourself, the more you will see His hand in guiding and protecting you. Then, in heaven you will be able to try difficult challenges to the extent of the trust in God you gained before death.

We can't even guess at all the new physical, mental, and athletic opportunities we will have in heaven. After our spirits are reunited with our new bodies, perhaps there will be the challenge of space travel. Those who trusted God before death and saw His protection where evil could operate will have enough trust in Him to get on that space ship and brave the unknown. This is just one of a thousand examples how in heaven you will be able to try more of the opportunities and challenges because you will have a higher level of trust in God.

Submitting more and more to God now will also help you see heaven a little more through the eyes of God. To submit to God, you must focus on how God sees things. Then when you get to heaven, you will understand its design and its society much better. If you do not put effort into understanding God and letting Him have his way now, in heaven you will still submit to Him and His ways, just not understand so much why you are doing so. The difference could be likened to a robot who just lives the way things are programmed or a human who understands why things are to be done a certain way.

It is God's heaven, and He is going to have His way there because everyone will want to be submissive to Him. But, not everyone will understand what God wants to the same degree or have the same level of joy that God is getting His way.

Even though we will be happy no matter what, wouldn't we want to go to heaven understanding at a deeper level why we are letting God have His way?

For instance, we know from Hebrews, Chapter Ten in the Bible that God desires Christians to meet with one another regularly. But, it makes a huge difference to know why God wants us to get together often. A Christian who has never thought about why God wants His people to gather together will think that it is wonderful just to be in the same room with other believers. However, the Christian who cares about God's wishes and wants to be submissive to God's design for when believers get together will understand the much bigger picture and search for God's perspective.

In the portion of Hebrews that talks about Christians not giving up meeting together, two specific reasons are given – to see that each of us does our part in the work of God and to place courage into one another for doing the work of God.

Further meditation about Christian meetings will reveal that there needs to be many times for the 65 Together's of Scripture to be implemented, all of them essential to God's purpose through the work of the Holy Spirit to conform us to the image of His Son, Jesus.

Meetings of heaven's citizens will also have purpose. We will be able to see heaven's society for what it is supposed to be – full of love for God and one another that brings glory to God. All of us will participate correctly in heaven's relationships, but not all of us will know why it is all happening and appreciate how it is dear to God's heart.

It will be wonderful if, when you get to heaven, you will have submitted to God in seeing other people from His perspective. For all eternity you will be meeting other citizens of heaven far different from you. You will be sitting down with one small group after another telling stories of how God has blessed your lives, including how He rescued you before death when you lived surrounded by the dangers of evil.

God has loved each of the various citizens of heaven from before they were born. Therefore, it will be much better if you submit now to God's view of Christians from different cultures, different worship styles, and different denominations. Having done so when it was difficult will develop your spirit into a powerhouse of understanding others from God's point of view. Your spirit will change to be like Jesus your Lord and Savior.

And, finally, you will have a better place of service in heaven the more you have submitted to God's will now before you die. It is recorded in the book of Matthew in the Bible, Chapter 16, verse 27, that Jesus said, *"For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done."*

There will be places of service in heaven that will be given only to those who have proved under the harshest of environments that they will voluntarily and joyfully submit to God and let Him have His way. Individuals and groups will be rewarded with positions of authority over others who did not adequately prove themselves submissive before death. Some will be mayors and some worship leaders, to name a few of the thousands of positions requiring a high level of submission to God and His ways.

Quality of life in heaven will be tied to the assignment of service. God will trust heaven's citizens commensurate with their having put His ways first above their own. By letting God have His way, we earn His trust. Everyone will have proved their level of submission before death, and that level will determine the assignment he or she qualifies for in heaven. While each person in heaven will be content with where he or she ends up, that does not mean that everyone will have the same quality of heavenly life. Assignments will have different levels of experience and quality.

A Christian who resisted letting God have the say in how he lived his life will still be completely happy, but with a less responsible job in heaven. With sin gone, he will not desire more than he has. His quality of life will be fine with him, but in comparison with those who became, say, mayors of towns, it will not have near the privileges. This may be actual or allegorical, but imagine that street sweepers are valued as much as mayors, but go to the Street Sweepers Convention at the throne of God every five years while the mayors go every six months.

When we have Christian friends or family members who do not care so much about what God wants but only to receive blessings from Him, we must warn them. We can scold them, but isn't it better to point them to heaven and show them that they are building a terrible resume? It would be far better to convince them that proving themselves submissive to God opens up increased quality of life after death that lasts forever.

To continue to become more and more like Jesus in submitting to God, we all should delay making decisions that we suspect might not be what God wants. We need to bring our Christian Inner Circles into these tougher choices. We can even pray for more and more tough choices so that we can grow in our loyalty to letting God have His way. Individuals, friendships, families, and marriages who now submit to God's way while tempted to do otherwise will enter heaven more solidly predisposed to let God rule.

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There is more about submitting to God together at our website ChristiansTogether.org. Just go down the list of the Togethers and click on "Submit to God Together".

Prayer to Embrace this Together

Sovereign Lord, I and those in my Christian Inner Circle will need Your help to grow our spirits to submit to You together. Help us to yield to the work of the Holy Spirit for all of us to give You more glory in this way in our faith together.

Please help us all to become more like Jesus Who was always in submission to Your will. Help us to help one another let you have Your way in all that we do by encouraging each other to change our thoughts, feelings and actions to Your way of thinking, feeling and acting.

May our lives worship You more because we hold You in high esteem and submit to Your ways as You have communicated them in the Bible. Help all of us in our Christian Inner Circles to expand church worship to lifestyle worship all week long.

Make us strong in Your power to defeat the devil by going Your way about things rather than the evil courses he suggests to us in so many subtle ways. Help us to find great satisfaction in defeating Satan's strategy for us to leave Your path and sin.

Help us all to prepare for heaven by growing to more completely submit to You, as that will be the only life in heaven. Help us help one another to realize that we are already in the kingdom of heaven and should be constantly submitting to You. Help us urge each other to ask You what You want done and how You want us to do it. Help us learn how to live under Your sovereignty. We need to see the kingdom of heaven through Your eyes.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.