

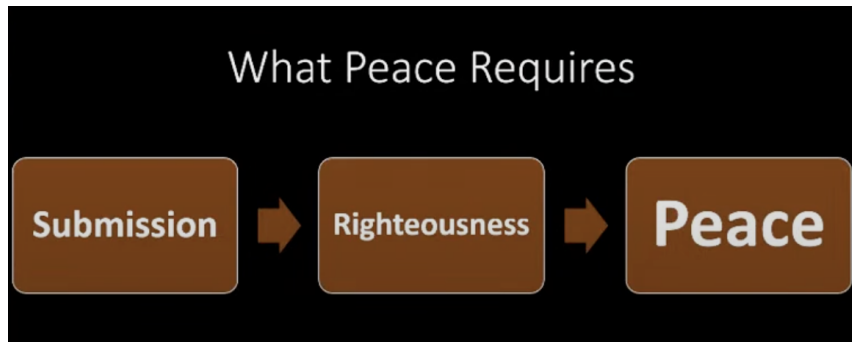
## Radical #8 Radical Submission

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2-26-23

A question to ponder: How badly do you want peace?



Peace requires righteousness and righteousness requires submission. Peace will require a lot from you!



This is from last week's message on Radical Parenting:

### Heb 12: 7-11

**7** Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? **8** If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. **9** Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! **10** They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. **11** No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Some questions:

- What transforms hardship into discipline? Ans: Submission
- To whom should we submit? Ans: The Father of spirits
- What is the benefit? Ans: Peace, righteousness, life, goodness, holiness peace

Are you sold on the idea of righteousness?

**What is submission?**

the action or fact of  
surrendering or **yielding** to a  
superior force or **to the will or  
authority of another person**

Surrendering or yielding: good synonyms. We often experience failures to yield or submit and we see these consequences all over. We want to get our own way!



Here is a quote from one of my favorite authors is Richard

Getting My Own Way

“[The] freedom [that] corresponds to submission [is] the ability to lay down the terrible burden of **always needing to get our own way**. The obsession to **demand that things go the way we want them to go** is one of the greatest bondages in human society today. People will spend weeks, months, even years in a perpetual stew because some little thing did not go as they wished. They will fuss and fume. They will get mad about it. They will act as if their very life hangs on the issue. They may even get an ulcer over it.”

—Richard Foster

Foster:

People spend years in a stew, fussing and fuming, over a little thing that they didn't get their way on. It can even lead to physical consequences. Have you experienced this?

What happens when you don't get your own way? Have you witnessed someone not getting their own way. We have demands on ourselves and each other the world at large and even God. Here are some examples of demands:

Getting My Own Way: Demands

- The dishes will be done in this particular
- Dishes will not be left in the sink.
- I will be comfortable.
- I will not be uncomfortable.
- I will be entertained.
- I will not be bored.
- I will not be embarrassed by my family.

What happens when we don't get our own way:

I will get my sleep! (Exactly how much sleep I think I deserve!)  
Anger, frustrations, and unresolved frustration leads to a rage that you may carry around and **not even know it!**

**James 4:1-2, 6-7**

**1** What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? **2** You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight.

You may say, I'm not murdering people. But Jesus says imagining the death of your brother is murdering. Have you imagined the demise of people who stand in your way?

**6** That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."

We are out of control: we are in conflict among each other. There is a battle within us and this requires humility which is where we find God's favor.

**7** Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Another Richard Foster quote:

The Discipline of Submission

**"In the Discipline of submission we are released to drop the matter, to forget it. Frankly, most things in life are not nearly as important as we think they are. Our lives will not come to an end if this or that does not happen."**

—Richard Foster

Our lives really won't come to an end if we don't get what we want but *we don't really believe this.*

We are ready to surrender, at least on a deep level. So what is RADICAL submission?

Submission can be radical in its **depth** or **breadth**. For example, I could focus on the surprisingly broad array of people you should obey in life; this is the typical way our mind thinks about submission.

Instead I want to focus on submitting deep in our minds, hearts, and souls. We need a deeper submission if we want peace and righteousness. We have many demands on the world and each other: certain ones become really deep within us. They may have even become vows:

Demands → Vows

**Vows are deeply and strongly held demands, usually because they protect against significant pain, suffering, trauma, or hurt.**

Last week, I heard a story from someone about something that happened long ago on a bus, an incident where they were made fun of and shut down. It had all kinds of consequences for their life and was the source of a vow. I also have a bus story: how many times was I riding on a bus as child or teen and saw girls that I thought were whispering about me. This

was a deep hurt even though I was reading into things: I pulled away some demands like this:

What Happened on the Bus?  
pain, suffering,  
trauma, hurt  
I will not feel  
that way again. I will not be in that  
position again.

People can make decisions like:

- I will never ride a bus again.
- I will never allow people to appear to be talking badly about me.

Are you obsessively drawn to do things because of things that happened in your past? You might have a vow.

Some of my vows:

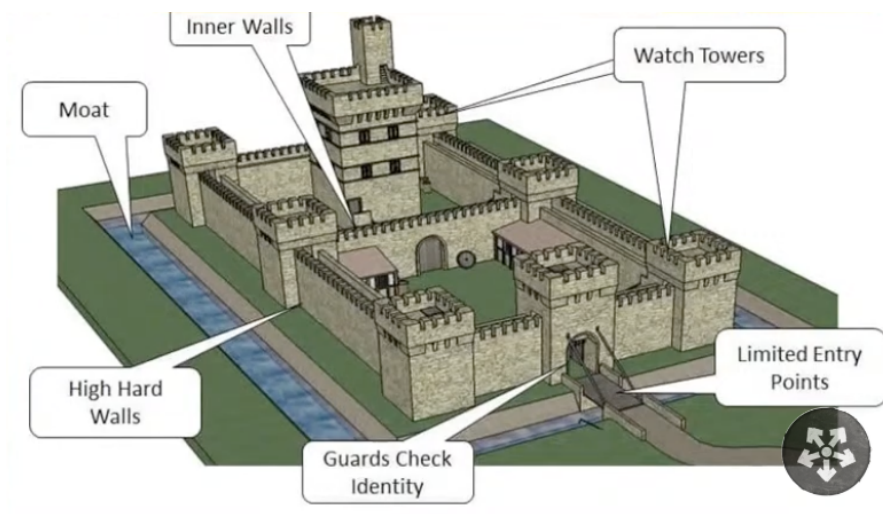
My Vows  
I will not be rejected.  
I will not be exposed as  
stupid or irresponsible.

These sound silly to read them outloud: vows can sounds this way when you actually put words to them.



You can think of them as castles or strongholds in your soul: where you go to hide when the world doesn't go the way you demand it to go. When you don't get your way, you run to your stronghold. A stronghold is a place in your mind.

We build them up over time: We have all sorts of things that fortify our strongholds:





Paul also talks about these.

**II Cor 10:4-5**

**4** The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish **strongholds**. **5** We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

From Gods point of view, our well defended strongholds look like this:



They are intricate designed but God, the creator of everything, see them as sand castles. He can direct the waves behind the castle and they are done.

Here is another example: A bombard came about after the ancient castles.



God can send fires or earthquakes to sack your castles!



Or he could leave you alone:



He could leave you alone in your lonely abandoned castle.

A CS Lewis quote from The Great Divorce:

Who Will Reign in Your Soul? —C.S. Lewis  
“Milton was right,” said my Teacher. “The choice of every lost soul can be expressed in the words, **‘Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.’** There is always something they insist on keeping, even at the price of misery. There is always something they prefer to joy—that is, to reality. Ye see it easily enough in a spoiled child that would sooner miss its play and its supper than say it was sorry and be friends. Ye call it the Sulks. But in adult life it has a hundred fine names — Achilles’ wrath... Revenge and Injured Merit and Self-Respect and Tragic Greatness and Proper Pride.”

God can leave us to our own strongholds in our well protected swamplands where no one will visit any more. The interior is lonely and run down and we get what we want.

Which is Worse?  
“There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’ ”  
“The damned are, in one sense, successful rebels to the end... the doors of hell are locked on the *inside*.” —C.S. Lewis

Maybe you are convinced that it’s time to yield and surrender and you would rather not stay in the hell of your making; having your own way is not that important. If it’s easy, we would have already done it. There is a lot on the line. Foster says we won’t die but it sure as hell feels like it. We are protecting the trauma and hurts in our lives. How do we give these up?

Part of the problem is that we don’t know what our vows are. If you don’t know what your problems are, I suggest you fast:

Richard Foster quote: (slide)

Fasting: Uncovering Vows  
“More than any other single discipline, **fasting reveals the things that control us.** This is a wonderful benefit to the true disciple who longs to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. We cover up what is inside us with food and other good things, but in fasting, these things surface. If pride controls us, it will be revealed almost immediately. David said, “I humbled my soul with fasting” (Ps. 69:10). Anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear — if they are within us, they will surface during fasting.” —Richard Foster

Lots of stuff surfaces during fasting. This is not a happy joyful thing: this is fasting as a discipline. Please join us for fasting during Lent. It's not too late! I am giving up Youtube during Lent. I've already given up Twitter but because I think it might need 90 days, I started this in January.

You will find things that need to come out: you might uncover strongholds and vows through fasting which you can bring these before God.

#### **James 4:7-10**

**7** Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **8** Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. **9** Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. **10** Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

#### **I Peter 5**

**5** In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." **6** Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. **7** Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

We need to repent and believe the Gospel; how should we surrender?

- **We need to come near to God.** How can you do this?
- **Cast all your anxiety on him.** What would this look like?
- **Grieve, mourn and wail.** *This is important:* our vows often come out of unmourned, ungrieved suffering and hurt. Sometimes we need to grieve the sin we committed and those committed against us in order to resist our strongholds.
- **Resist the devil.** The devil is very happy to make these vows of "never again" and don't trust God. If you surrender, the devil is out.
- **Wash your hands and purify your heart.** Practically this could look like ritual bathing (Mikvah: ancient Jewish ritual of bathing for purity). Would this help you, however weird? Take baths: *do something with our bodies to enact things in our minds.*

**What do you need to do physically to resist strongholds?**

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- Why should we submit?
- What is submission?
- What the consequences for our act of submission?
- What happens to our hearts when we don't submit?
- What causes or enables our lack of submission?
- How do we radically submit?

