

We Will... Submit (Hebrews 13:17)

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Date: 17 November 2024

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[0 : 0 0] Well good morning church. That's not bad. I'm not gonna make you do it again. As I was watching Brett walk up I was thinking I just love being on the east side of the state because Brett's an elder but he has a pocket knife. I'm like that's the coolest thing ever. You never would you see that on the west side so it really is good to be here this morning to worship the King of Kings together to begin our week to center our affections on Christ and look forward to the study this morning. Let's pray and then we'll dive into some some material this morning. We're getting close. We've been doing this series on our kind of our membership covenant together and we have two three weeks left in that and so we're nearing the end of that and then we will launch into an Advent series through the course of December. It is that time of year so and we saw snow yesterday so great. This is the best living on the east side. Alright let's pray. Father we do come before you this morning and we delight to be your sons and your daughters. Thank you for calling us your family revealing yourself as father.

Jesus you are worthy to be worshiped to be thought about to be submitted to for us to submit ourselves to. In fact you modeled that for us. You emptied yourself. You took the form of a servant. You were found in in the likeness of men. You humbled yourself to the point of death to die on the cross in our place and because of that God has highly exalted you above every name that exists in the universe that every that at the name of Christ every knee would bow and so Lord we want to be those sorts of people this morning that our our knees would bow but our hearts would bow to you and Lord that that you would have full authority over our lives for you are worthy and so whatever we need to hear this morning would you would you prick our hearts by your word by your spirit and what me might we become more attractive as your people as a result of time spent hearing from you so we commit our time to you we pray everything that is said that is received would bring you glory in Jesus name we pray amen so Scott is away our lead pastor elite shepherd he's away this week actually enjoying much deserved rest with his bride Wendy they're off in

Arizona in the heat and he was actually scheduled to preach this this sermon and asked if I would cover for my sister of course I'd be happy to do that and then I looked at the membership covenant and realize what he had done to me and this is our commitment this on this section it says we will submit ourselves joyfully to the loving oversight of God's appointed elders at shepherds over us for the care of our souls which is for our good as they submit themselves to Christ the chief shepherd like it I already know I'm not the the sharpest knife in the drawer but what I realized this week is Scott actually is because he gave me we're gonna give generously and now I'm gonna talk about submission this morning I don't know that there's a dirtier word within cultural discourse of our day than that word submit and it's not just culture that that hates this concept of submission right in the words of that famous theologian lady Gaga we were born this way to detest this thought of submission we have this strong a version to authority from day one from being told what to do some of us are a little sophisticated in the way that we nuance our depravity in this area by claiming like I don't have a problem submitting I just like to learn things on my own which is simply code for I'm proud and I really don't want to yield in fact we have from the 4th century Augustine he actually recalled the rebellion in his own nature and retelling an incident during his youth where he was stealing fruit from some with some of his boyhood friends and he and he writes this in his confession he says we took away an enormous quantity of pairs not to eat them ourselves but simply to throw them to the pigs perhaps we ate some of them but our real pleasure consisted of doing something that was forbidden the evil in me was foul but I loved it and maybe we can relate to some of those thoughts and yet for a local church to be healthy to be joyful to be useful in rescuing sinners from an eternity in hell joyful submission to biblical authority is actually essential and so this morning just to give you a bit of an outline of where we're going to go I'm going to define spiritual leadership for us within the confines of the local church talk about what submission is and then finally how is biblical authority a beautiful treasure in our lives that gives you a little bit of a roadmap for where we're going to go this morning but first off we're going to consider spiritual leadership within the local church and I think it's probably helpful for us just to review from a couple weeks ago what a church is okay this word in the Greek eklipsia comes from two

Greek words *ekk* out of and *callio* to call so we are this called out assembly what is the church it's an assembly it's a called out assembly or a called out gathering Peter writes it this way in 1st Peter 2:9 says but you are a chosen race a royal priesthood a holy nation a people for his own possession that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light so we are church the new humanity rescued from sin and we're a people the church is not a building it's a gathering of Christians but we're a people in fact to Peter goes on in the next verse he says hey once you weren't the people but now you're God's people and so for a church to exist there's some ingredients that are necessary and they need to be present we looked at those from Acts 2:42 obviously to have a church you need people so you need believers you need the Bible preached the gospel proclaimed the ordinances of baptism and communion observed fellowship partnership in one another's lives prayer and then the final ingredient you need to have qualified biblical leaders and before we get into sort of define who these are I think it's important just to note that as the church is described it from Peter's vantage point he talks about the church being a priesthood and so I want to make sure that as we talk about leadership this morning that we don't create this artificial divide in our mind of oh there's leaders and then there's the congregation and there's a massive gap between the two because there's not there's not this large divide in fact I think that's bad ecclesiology to think that I'm gonna come to church and have this expectation that I'm gonna be served we all gather intend to use our gifts to be generous with our time our talent our treasure to look for ways to be the body regardless of designation of leadership or not and we really need to have this mindset that you know what every member is a minister and we're here to serve amen so there's not this giant divide I love yesterday we had a men's breakfast I showed up about seven there were guys here there were already here at six and they were making a meal they were just I was I had prepared spiritual food I had other guys preparing some physical food and it was a wonderful morning and it was wonderful because you were eating food I prepared so you're welcome men that said the big question then for us is who is to lead care for and shepherd the church okay who's ultimately in charge of the church Jesus okay Jesus is ultimately in charge of the church in fact in Colossians 1:18 it says he is the head of the body the church he's the beginning the first born from the dead that in everything he might be pre-eminent Peter in 1st Peter 5:4 says that Jesus is actually the chief shepherd so I want us to have in our minds when we think about the church who is the senior pastor of 4th Memorial it's Jesus Scott is the lead under shepherd but ultimately Jesus is the senior pastor of this church and by the way Scott delights in this especially on weeks when ministry and

the labor is hard to be remembered to be reminded this is this is God's church Jesus is a senior pastor he loves the church and he promised to build the church and there's great solace in that resting in that so Jesus is ultimately the senior pastor of our church and during the first century on a human level who was leading the church you had apostles they had authority over churches but the problem is there's no more apostles and scriptures clear that there's no more apostles today because in Ephesians 2:20 it says the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets Christ Jesus being himself being the cornerstone so we have some guys in construction do you put a foundation up on the second floor on the third floor no it's at the very base of the structure Jesus has accomplished everything necessary for the church to exist he gave his life we're now the new creation we can gather as this called out assembly his work is complete on that regard so is the apostles and prophets part of the foundation work okay there's no more eyewitnesses of

[11 : 52] Jesus present so if the apostles aren't in charge anymore on a human level who takes responsibility who leads the church and there's some different ideas on this for sake of brevity I'm gonna give us just kind of three main categories of thought here some would say today who actually J no one's in charge of the church anymore the church should just be holy spirit led so there's real no official human leaders and there are denominations that abide by this the Quakers they embrace this model of church leadership Plymouth brethren embrace this model there's very little structure oftentimes in these churches they sometimes want to refer to them as we just do organic ministry often these churches are rather small and have a hard time accomplishing much of anything because really when everybody's leading no one's leading and so some would say well maybe that's how it should be you can go to the other side and and and decide well actually J the apostles the original 12 aren't here but we sort of have them still present in a way and there's an idea that there are now bishops that have replaced apostles and that Peter maybe was the first pope and so you can get know where I'm going here that the Roman Catholic Church they embrace this idea that that today in terms of human leadership you have a pope and cardinals and bishops and priests and and they sort of concocted this idea of apostolic succession from Jesus's affirmations to Peter and Matthew 16 that Peter on this rock I'm gonna build my church and they decide oh that

Jesus was was saying to Peter you're the first pope which is just really really bad exegesis what's the danger of taking that position well you're placing men on par with Scripture when they speak ex-cathedra they're speaking authoritatively and what they say stands on par with God's word and so it's a dangerous mindset to have placing men on par with Scripture unless we forget much of the New Testament was written by the Apostles and I think we even see some of some of this idea of apostolic succession with the whole new apostolic reformation movement out of Reading, California the Bethel movement that that Apostles exist today and I would say if you're in a church and they're saying there's Apostles and prophets that are running around it's not a healthy church you have given man far too much authority God's word we yield what I am doing this morning I'm not innovating anything I'm really trying to preserve and communicate what the author's intended so authorial intent is everything when we come to God's word because he meant us to understand something very specific from each passage but that's another idea of biblical leadership and so I say the third way that this looks who's leading today and

I think this is the biblical pattern that Scripture delineates for us and it's that elders have replaced those Apostles and we see an example in Titus 1 5 where Paul writes the Titus this is why I left you in Crete so that you might put what remained into order and appoint elders in every town as I directed you so ultimate authority for every local church ought to reside within that church in the form of elders and that's how we function here at 4th now some of your light maybe it's the first time you've heard that word before or maybe you've never thought about it before because you've grown up in a very biblically committed robust church and you've never thought about it but maybe this morning you're kind of wondering why do we call them elders kind of an odd term and what I will say is the Bible actually uses three words to describe spiritual leaders in the church and they these words are used interchangeably so if you guys have a copy of the scriptures you can turn to 1st Peter 5 first couple verses use all three of these words and Peter does so interchangeably and he says this in 1st Peter 5 verse 1 he says so I exhort the elders so there's that word in the Greek is Presbuta Ross I exhort the elders among you as a fellow elder and I love that that Peter actually he's not he's not I'm an apostle no he's like I'm just a fellow elder with you I think it's a humble statement on

Peter's part there the fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as of our taker in the glory that is going to be revealed verse 2 shepherd point mono okay where we get our word pastor from shepherd the flock of God that is among you exercising oversight and that's the third word oversight Episcopacy or overseer not under compulsion but willingly as God would have you not for shameful gain but eagerly and so these three terms are used interchangeably here but they really describe nuances or or different aspects of spiritual leadership and we could use any one of these three words to refer to the elders of 4th Memorial first one word used here is elder and and the reason we use this word is this idea of age this idea of wisdom I think it emphasizes the character of spiritual leadership in a church you need to have men that walk in wisdom I think it harkens back even to Exodus 18 where

Jethro gives counsel to Moses you know select men who fear God to help care for God's ancient people and so it's men that walk with God and elder has that that sense of these are men of character you have this other word in here overseer what is that and what's the emphasis in in in in that leadership word it's that that these individuals are guardians okay they watch over the flock one of the primaries a way that they watch over the flock is they they listen for false doctrine they bring us back it's sort of that image of the watchman from Ezekiel 33 right I'm gonna speak truthfully we have a responsibility to do that to make sure that that God's word is is being taught accurately and then people are using it to give biblical counsel in a way that's accurate to the word and then there's a word pastor and I think it emphasizes aspect of a spiritual leadership that that leaders are really shepherds okay and they do that through feeding nourishing the flock they they lead them to good pastor and how do we do that well every time we gather I'm trying to lead you to to write to God's word right this is this is this is this is good food for you to ingest to eat but any one of those words could work we could call our elders overseers or we could call them pastors but we don't do that we call them elders and I know maybe it leads to the next question of like why J then are you referred to as a pastor and Scott and Cole and why do we do that why do we make the distinction and I would say we do that really as a cultural accommodation to distinguish leadership that is compensated by the church versus those that are volunteering their time there's actually a biblical precedent for this in 1st Timothy 5 we see this in verse 17 it says let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor especially those who labor in preaching and teaching for the scripture says you shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain and the laborer deserves his wages so you don't muzzle the ox right there they're doing labor there they're there they're they're treading out the grain and as they're doing that they're not muzzle so they can snack a little bit as they're doing their work and I don't know if you've connected the dots yet but J Scott Cole like we're we're akin to oxes there's nothing more I want to say on that front yeah for those that labor at preaching teaching right there they actually are afforded time but the fact that that there are some that are compensated it affords us time to carry out these tasks because we're compensated and we can we can give time to studying God's word preparing God's word and church it is it is a unique privilege there are places on planet earth where churches don't have the funds to be able to do this there there are a number of pastors that are bivocational and so it's a privilege to be able to to give time to study God's word in order to herald really the mysteries of God to his people and I see it as a privilege I was reminded of it actually this week because I was texting with one of my son-in-laws who's off in the military doing like all the manly things you could possibly imagine guys getting to do and he sent

[22 : 08] me a few photos of some of the guns that he was shooting and I was like for a moment I was like oh man that's a great job so I text back I'm like man it'd be great to trade you know vocations for a day and he wrote back he's like oh man Jay I would give anything to be able to study the Bible all day and it was just like it was such a great reminder of like yes what a privilege church what a privilege to study God's word to be able to teach to proclaim God's word and I think fourth is blessed because we've got a number of of elders that function as pastors to be able to to do this week in week out now another important aspect of biblical leadership is that leaders shouldn't function in isolation okay if possible there's always a plurality of spiritual leaders we see this in Acts 14-23 this is on Paul's first missionary journey and it says here and when they had appointed elders for them in every church with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed so Paul's first journey he's already setting up team leadership within the churches and that's God's model that's God's plan so you know Lister Iconium Antioch like elder teams are being set up that's that's that's that's protection that's a good thing this word elder it shows up about 60 times in the New Testament only three times it's used in the singular it's always a plurality and I think God demonstrates his wisdom there right better decisions are made in plurality there's greater accountability it's protection for the church you don't have one individual feeling more powerful and authoritative it protects the the elders right it's not one guy serving alone burning out on his own and I think because you when you serve on a team then yeah Pastor Scott can be away this week and and ministry just continues to move because because the majority of elders are present here serving and loving and you were if you were here this morning you were blessed because your elders were teaching and caring and shepherding you so so there's always a plurality now who can be an elder leads us to the next question well there's some biblical qualifications there's some given in Titus one but I'm gonna read the the section from first Peter or first

Timothy 3 on the matter versus 2 to 7 it says therefore an overseer must be above reproach the husband of one wife sober minded self-controlled respectable hospitable able to teach not a drunkard not violent but gentle not quarrelsome not a lover of money he must manage his own household well with all dignity keeping his children submissive for if someone does not know how to manage his own household how will he care for God's church he must not be a reason convert or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil moreover he must be well thought of by outsiders so that he may not fall into disgrace into a snare of the devil we don't have time to hit each one of these this morning that could be a more in-depth study if we just take this particular passage at some future date but just to bottom line it the call to eldership and I hope you see this in this section is really a call to character kind of the big idea Paul is telling Timothy here where a man's life is in relation to God himself and his family and to others it's in order these men they walk with Jesus I think that was one of the things that attracted our family to fourth when we got to know Scott and we realized man this guy actually knows the Lord which shouldn't be a surprising thing like a pastor like walks closely with the Lord but it just emanated from Pastor Scott and and and it drew us here because we saw here's a guy that knows the Lord that walks with him in a humble posture and is very attractive but this this call to to character you see a couple umbrella statements in verse 2 it says this individual must be above reproach so they're blameless there's no profound inconsistency in their life and then in verse 7 it says they must be thought well of by outsiders it's the same command right will the testimony of my life of the life of the elders somehow tarnish the name the message of the gospel now as we read this statement of qualifications for those that serve in spiritual leadership within the church whether we call them elder overseer or pastor it's all the same theologically every one of us should really aspire to this sort of life I don't want us to think of this as a special category for a select few this is the this is spiritual maturity that the Lord desires for all the reason it's given to elders is to ensure those that are serving in spiritual leadership meet these qualifications but this should be a list that that that that causes us to be aspirational in this regard that we would all seek spiritual maturity why do you suppose that being an elder in

God's church is primarily a call to character why is that because this is not the list that you would get in other sort of in in business realms a leadership profile this is a very different sort of resume why is that and I would say it's a call to character because the key way elders lead and I think it's actually goes without saying it should be of every good leader is really through example right Paul said in 1st Corinthians 11:1 he says hey follow me as I follow Jesus he says in Hebrews 13:7 if Paul the author and he quite possibly might be he says remember your leaders those who spoke to you the word of God consider the outcome of their way of life catch this and imitate their faith that's why character matters church because as as spiritual leaders we're trying to set a pace of this is what it looks like to walk closely with the Lord amen now we're on a roll so let's just go a little further since

Scott gave me this section and talk about the next obvious maybe controversial to some I don't know but perhaps you've noticed because you're an observer you're like wow J is a guy and Scott's I mean Scott's really a guy and Cole puts both the shame but you know the elders they're men what what about women in relation to the role of elder pastor within a church and I would say this within the qualifications that we have and we're not going to get into 1st Timothy 2 this morning but in 1st Timothy 3 and Titus 1 these qualifications are specifically given to men the husband of one wife he he he and so we believe that the Bible clearly teaches there are some governing teaching roles within the church that are restricted to men I have absolutely no axe to grind on this issue personally I have more daughters than any of you I win I have so many daughters I went to the Ann Wilson concert last night and we're singing hey girl and I'm like there you know because I'm I'm like a girl dad and

I even made a comment to one of my daughters on the way back I'm like man I thought you were gonna like change your outfit midstream do you know mix it up and they're like dad you're such a good girl dad to even have that thought so I have no axe to grind here I mean my my heart for my family is they would they would have as much fruitful abundant ministry as God could possibly call them to but on this issue God says I'm calling men to lead elder pastor there's three views here related to gender roles and in church leadership let me just quickly mention there's the egalitarian position this is this represents the college that the very liberal progressive Christian college I attended for a couple years in my undergrad work and and the egalitarian position on on gender roles they're saying hey there's no distinction between the roles of men and women in the home or the church women can be pastors elders and there's some denominations and they carry out themselves this way on the flip side of that there's the hierarchical position you could call it the chauvinistic position women are commanded to follow male leadership and given no voice with male leaders and are often looked down upon as the weaker gender and in these churches the gifts of women they're not used they're not seen we hold a compliment a complementarian position here at fourth I believe it's a moderate position I believe it's the biblical position our elders believe it's a biblical position and it states this that men and women are partners in every area of life and ministry together although equal they have complementary and distinct roles so that men are to sacrificially lovingly lead in their homes like Jesus and lead in the church as well and that's the position that we we hold we believe that it's it's biblical that's why we hold it but let me be clear on this men and women are equal in value in the sight of God both created in his image Genesis 1:27 so clearly states God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him male and female he created them equal in value and yet there is a role distinction the distinction in general's it's part of the created order that there's male headship present in the garden even before their sin Adam was created first Eve was actually created as a helper to

[33 : 17] Adam sculpted as a helper it's a good thing women it's not a bad thing it's not a derogatory thing in fact I think it actually demonstrates there's something very seriously lacking in men there's a deficiency they need help they're incomplete and it demonstrates this complementary position of man and woman Jay I don't like being called a helper well how do you think God feels in Psalm 118 7 who else is called a helper in the Bible the Lord is on our side our helper okay I mean that's pretty good company I mean you know God Almighty John 14:26 but the helper the Holy Spirit well that's pretty good to the third part of the Trinity okay okay I'll be okay you know it's interesting to me that the primary accountability after the fall is directed to whom Adam he was directed to Adam the man God spoke to Adam first after the fall and in Genesis 3:9 says what the Lord God called to the man and said to him where are you and so the fall sin being introduced into the human order it's not so much about you taking the first bite as it is about Adam admonishing his role as sacrificial kind loving leader men he was the one who was given the instructions of actually to not eat of the tree of good and evil he was actually called in the garden to be a leader of his very small family at the time and he punted and in Genesis 3:6 it says she took of its fruit in 8 and she also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate and I think this is why our elders here are so passionate about men leading sacrificially with their families it's

God's best design church it's God's best design God crafted husbands to lead and Adam had capacity to crazy bless his family and he was functionally absent and so I would just say a word for our men like draw near to the Lord today draw near to the Lord tomorrow so that we can engage better with our families than the day before amen Jesus always boosted the status the value of women throughout his ministry his earthly ministry he taught them he allowed them to travel with him he entrusted the good news to to the woman at the well he entrusted the most important news of the resurrection to women at the tomb they seemed to do a better job and maybe that's why he called men to engage to lead or we would just sit back and say man it's getting done it's getting done yet Jesus did not select women to be apostles nor did he replace those that fled at the cross with the women who were faithful to the end and so maybe you're hearing this and maybe this is new and you didn't put together the fact that Jay and Scott are both guys very manly manly guys that sit at computers all day what can women do in ministry a ton you're not really limited you can serve in every ministry that we have here at 4th you can serve communion pray read scripture and the list goes on you want to serve we have a ton of children that need to be discipled I love the testimony from 2nd Timothy 1:5 I'm reminded of your sincere faith of faith Timothy that dwelt first in your grandmother Lewis Lois and your mother Eunice and now I'm sure dwells in you

Timothy was the man of God that he was because of these women that were pouring into his life you can you can disciple children we have needs all the time you can teach other women Titus 2 4 talks about training up older women training up younger women if you're a woman you can actually instruct both men and women when not in the context of the church gathered there's an example of this from Acts 18 Apollos is an emphasis he's this eloquent speaker he's competent and it says in verse 26 he began to speak boldly in the synagogue but when Priscilla and Aquila this husband wife heard him they took him and explained to him the way of God more accurately they took him aside okay they corrected him in private church it happens in my life all the time you have no idea how much I get corrected by my lead corrector who I'm married to about things I should not say when I'm doing ministry I'm so much better 30 years in than I was years ago and so you have an example there of that not in the context of the gathering but taken aside and so maybe you're thinking well Jay you're limiting women by not allowing them to be elders it's not my word this is God's word I don't think it's that limiting just for women actually and I think in Mark Devere helps us here because he makes the point you know what eldership is actually limiting for everyone for both men and women because the majority of men will never serve in this capacity either now we're really on a roll so let's just let's talk about submission right yeah let's get to this awful word what what does submission mean what does it mean to submit to the elders of a church this word submission the Greek word who put us oh it actually means to put under or to arrange under and this word submission it's actually a military term and refers to soldiers arranging themselves themselves under the orders of a higher ranking officer and so submission then comes from the acknowledgement of proper order and authority and the thing that I want us to understand here about submission it's placing oneself under okay it it's the willing choice of one in submission to follow it's not something demanded by the higher authority and it's this idea of you know what I will follow you as you follow Christ it's not blind following but I will follow you as you follow Christ as you declare the words of

Christ as you live out the words of Christ another thing that I think is important to note here going back to marriage like that husbands are the head of their homes and there's headship there and wives say I will willingly follow you submission biblical submission is not all women submitting to all men okay it's in the context of a wife submitting to her husband and then to men and women across all of us submitting to the leadership that God has ordained and you know what's remarkable about this whole notion of saying I will willingly follow you is that God isn't asking something of us that isn't true of him the submission is present actually in the Godhead in John 4 34 Jesus said to them my food is to do the will of him who sent me into accomplish his work so Jesus submits to the father John 5 30 I can do nothing of my own as I hear I judge and my judgment is just because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me so Jesus declared hey I'm not doing my own thing I'm submitting to the leadership of the father and it's a beautiful picture of what spiritual leadership is and we go to Philippians to and see that it's a laying down of one's prerogative it's of life to give life it's servant leadership and so finally church why why should we joyfully submit to God's shepherds in this life well scripture tells us and will end on this this passage Hebrews 13 17 because it says here obey your leaders and submit to them for they're keeping watch over your souls as those who will have to give an account and if there's elders here and I know there are this is this is that's a heavy verse the sobering verse we will give account to the chief shepherd how we led how we cared how we pastored let them let the elders do this with joy not with groaning catch this for that would be of no advantage to you why should we joyfully submit to God's shepherds because they actually care for your souls and they care for your joy and it says here it's actually for your advantage it's for your advantage so that you're not tossed to and fro by the waves you know of every wind of doctrine you're not deceived by the enemy schemes it's God's protection on your life right the world says do whatever you want don't submit to anyone love who you want to love do what feels good and yet

God says this is a grace in your life oh jay I want to marry an unbeliever you don't understand pastor like I met my soulmate well you're gonna hear from the shepherd scriptures clear second Corinthians 6:14 right don't be unequally yoked with an unbeliever and I'm gonna speak the truth because I care for your soul it's not gonna go well with your life if you make that choice yeah I don't feel in love anymore I just I'd like to divorce my husband or wife well Malachi 2:16 God hates divorce you know biblical grounds I'm not gonna say that's a good thing the world will you probably pay a counselor lots of money and they'll probably echo whatever's in your heart of what you really want to do outside of God's authority but as as God's shepherds under shepherds we have to tell you the truth and it's derived from an authoritative book and it's not something that we're trying to work it's truth and it's love we're trying to be gentle in the correction well God doesn't mind who you know if I'm fooling around with my girlfriend boyfriend well says in Hebrews 13 for you know honor the marriage bed and here's a little insight for all of us if you're in this posture this morning of saying great J spiritual leadership called to willingly follow this how God ordained it set it up but you know what I don't want to submit and maybe you're there this morning and here's the secret and

[45 : 38] Satan doesn't want you to actually recognize this but if that's your posture I don't want to submit guess what you already are you're submitting to someone or something that is less than God and maybe you're submitting to your fleshly appetites maybe it's the influence of godless friends influences in your personal orbit but you're submitting we're all submitting to someone or something and there's a cost thing Proverbs says it very well in Proverbs 13:18 it says disgrace comes to him who ignores instruction but whoever he's reproof is honored church submission to godly leadership is a grace in each of our lives amen and God set it up that way gives us opportunity to actually then as we submit to God's leaders to submit to him because they are speaking they are leading their pasturing on his behalf as they follow him and it gives opportunity to actually submit ourselves to the living God right to the highest power to the highest person in the universe right to the author of life I want to operate and live by his rules because I want blessing joy productivity for his name's sake in this life church it's a privilege to say I will willingly follow the leaders of God to set up in my life who represent him in my local church it's a privilege it's a privilege that's why we can do it joyfully because as we submit to those who are submitted to the leadership and the words of Jesus guess what we experience God's pleasure and maybe you've had a season where you've like operated in sin and you're just like I don't feel so great there's I'm lacking joy and then you repent and you're hearing the words of shepherds in your life and all of a sudden you're like well why am I why am

I just generally happier because you're reminded I'm clean I'm forgiven my past is dealt with my future secure let's serve the Lord together and it's so good right the fruit in our lives there's not burdens there's not consequences of sin that we're dealing with I'll end with this I still remember a conversation with a gal that I got to pastor through her middle school high school and college years at a church on the west side and and I can recall having conversations with her as a teen and she just struggled with some of the you know some of the exhortations and scripture in particular to pursue holiness and righteousness and and really struggled on that and did premarital counseling and and and then she got married and then a few years after she was married she came back to me and she said pastor Jay I just want to tell you something thank you for telling me the truth when I was a teenager it's

I understand now and that was the greatest blessing in my life and it was just like yes God tells the truth and he's appointed some to shepherd that into our lives so church I believe that fourth has the right men leading we're not infallible but God's word is and as we lean into his words to the best of our ability we do it for your joy church we do it for your flourishing and we do it for the advance of the gospel amen father thank you for the way in which you have designed your church Lord it is a humbling task to serve as a as a shepherd and I know the other men feel this as well it's sort of this holy burden that we carry and Lord we want to we want to exercise that leadership in in a posture that so much resembles your posture Jesus from Philippians to that you would give up the prerogatives of heaven to serve a people and Lord we want to be those type of leaders and and Lord I pray that you would Lord if there's conviction that needs to happen this morning that you would provide that and Lord we want to to experience the joy of your salvation this morning and this week and and Lord we don't want to be people just dabbling in sin and rebellion and the Lord pray that we would be yielded not only to the leaders you've placed here in the church but Lord ultimately we'd be yielded to you and to your word Lord I believe that the posture of joy is the posture of submission to you and so Lord I pray that we would leave here I'm new to that and if there's sins to confess we would do that and Lord as a result you would increase ministry in each of our lives this week we would have a word and encouragement a way to serve and bless someone else because we're walking closer to you in your name we pray Jesus and all God's people said amen