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## Submission

*“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”* – Ephesians 5:21

Dallas Willard says, “In submission we engage the experience of those in our fellowship who are qualified to direct our efforts in growth and who then add the weight of their wise authority on the side of our willing spirit to help us do the things we would like to do and refrain from the things we don’t want to do.”<sup>1</sup>

Richard Foster points out that of all the spiritual disciplines, submission is the one that has been most abused. In many churches, submission has been a controversial topic where power and authority are abused. Submission can be abused in leadership. Submission can be abused in marriage. Therefore, it is crucial to see that the Bible teaches mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21 and Philippians 2:3). The discipline of submission involves the practice of one *freely* submitting himself to the wisdom and guidance of another.

- Create a list of people in your life who you respect because of their wisdom and maturity. These are an ideal place to start in your practice of the discipline of submission.
- Without telling him or her, practice submitting to your spouse in a way that you might not normally.
- In your place of work, when asked to do something that you might usually disagree about or argue with, say nothing and submit to the request that has been made.
- If you have a spiritual director, ask him or her to identify an area of your life where you need to practice submission. Submit to whatever it is you are told.
- Ask a group of people your regularly spend time in to identify an area of needed change in your life. Without arguing or justifying, do what they say.

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<sup>1</sup> Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of The Disciplines* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988), 190.