

The Church Hierarchy

INTRODUCTION

A. Every organization has to have a hierarchy. Businesses, Militaries, Governments, etc. Hierarchy means chain of command.

B. God organized the church with a hierarchy as well. Christians are to be in submission to God, but since God is 3 different individuals it can be confusing. To paraphrase Augustine - if you don't believe in the Godhead you will lose your soul, if you try to understand the Godhead you will lose your mind.

I. A CHRISTIAN MUST SUBMIT TO GOD, THE FATHER.

A. 1 Corinthians 11:3 But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

B. Luke 11:13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

C. Ephesians 4:6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

II. A CHRISTIAN MUST SUBMIT TO GOD, THE SON.

A. John 8:29 And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."

B. John 15:26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

C. 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. 27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. 28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

III. A CHRISTIAN MUST SUBMIT TO GOD, THE HOLY SPIRIT.

A. John 16:13-15 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

B. Acts 2:32-33 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

C. Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

IV. A CHRISTIAN MUST SUBMIT TO THE SCRIPTURES.

A. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

B. Hebrews 3:7-8 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice, 8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,

C. 2 Peter 1:21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

D. Galatians 2:11-14 Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; 12 for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. 14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?"

V. A CHRISTIAN MUST SUBMIT TO THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS.

A. Mark 13:11 But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

B. Matthew 16:19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

C. Acts 16:6 Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.

D. Ephesians 2:19-21 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

VI. A CHRISTIAN MUST SUBMIT TO LEADERSHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH.

LEADERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT ARE CALLED ELDERS / BISHOPS / OVERSEERS / PASTORS / SHEPHERDS - THESE ARE DIFFERENT NAMES FOR THE SAME PERSON.

A. Acts 20:17, 28 Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.

28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

B. Hebrews 13:17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

C. 1 Peter 5:1-4 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: 2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; 4 and when

the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

VII. A CHRISTIAN MUST SUBMIT TO BIBLICAL PREACHING AND TEACHING.

A. Preacher - Titus 2:15 Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

B. Preacher - 2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

VIII. A CHRISTIAN MUST SUBMIT TO DEACONS WHO HAVE AUTHORITY DELEGATED TO THEM BY THE LEADERSHIP.

A. Acts 6:2-3,6 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

B. Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

IX. A CHRISTIAN MUST SUBMIT TO FELLOW CHRISTIANS.

A. 1 Corinthians 16:15-16 I urge you, brethren - you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints -- 16 that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us.

B. 1 Peter 5:5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

CONCLUSION

A. Submission is not based on one being smarter, stronger, or more important than another, but on God's design for the church.

B. Have you submitted to those you should in the church?

C. If you have never submitted yourself to God you can tonight. If you believe in Jesus as the Son of God and will repent of your sins and confess Him as God's Son, you can submit to his command to be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins. If you are a Christian, but have not been submitting as you should, you may need to repent and make that right. Please come as we stand and sing.

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John 16:13-14; Acts 2:32-33; Matthew 28:19

IV. A Christian Must Submit to the _____.
2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 3:7-8; 2 Peter 1:21; Galatians 2:11-14

V. A Christian Must Submit to the _____ and Prophets.
Mark 13:11; Matthew 16:19; Acts 16:6; Ephesians 2:19-20

VI. A Christian Must Submit to _____ in the Local Church.
Acts 20:17, 28; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-3

VII. A Christian Must Submit to Biblical _____ & Teaching.
Titus 2:15; 2 Timothy 4:2

VIII. A Christian Must Submit to _____ Who Have

Authority Delegated to Them by the Leadership.
Acts 6:2-3,6; Philippians 1:1

IX. A Christian Must Submit to Fellow _____.
1 Corinthians 16:15-16; 1 Peter 5:5

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