

## Are you a victorious abstainer?

What we believe needs to be lived out in how we behave. What we believe is the basis for how we are to behave!

So, what does the Bible mean by submission? It is our willing recognition of God's authority in our lives.

In this section of I Peter, he sets forth 4 specific areas in which Christians are to be submissive: government, at work, at home, in the Church.

Peter appears to be asking, answering 5 vital questions that believers must face:

\*\*Who has authority over me?

\*\*To what extent am I obligated to obey the authority over me?

\*\*Why must I be submissive?

\*\*How am I to respond when those in authority treat me unjustly or unfairly?

\*\*How can I have a Christlike, genuine submissive attitude.

Submission to human authority is ultimately submission to heavenly authority.

### I. Godly believers will be submissive for the sake of their souls-2:11

#### A. Peter appeals to us out of compassion as *saints*-2:11a

##### 1. God sees us as special-

God isn't looking for people to love Him out of duty, but out of devotion!

##### 2. God sees us as strangers-

##### 3. God sees us as sojourners-

#### B. Peter appeals to us out of concern as *soldiers*-2:11b

But thank God for those of His people who refuse to flinch in the battle or raise the white flag of surrender...who resist temptation, who refuse to yield to their sinful flesh because loving their Savior has far more appeal than loving their sin!

And we'd all say a hearty "amen" in agreeing with D.L. Moody, who said, "I have more trouble with D. L. Moody than with any man I know."

The word “abstain” here = “to hold yourself constantly back from or aloof from something harmful.” Rick Renner describes it this way: “to deliberately withdraw from; to stay away from; to put distance between oneself and something else; or to intentionally abstain.” It refers to refraining from desires that flow from the lust of our sinful nature, because they spoil our fellowship with God, hinder our spiritual growth.

Let me quote Rick Renner again: Let me stress something here that is imperative for you to understand: Your flesh is never content until it has completely taken you over and consumed you. Once you have given your flesh permission to have its way and to exercise even a small amount of power in your life, it will try to latch hold of you — and eventually it will wage war for total control of your life.

Please don’t think you can participate in only a little taste of sin and then walk free of it. Once the flesh has been allowed to indulge in sin, the cry of the carnal nature to indulge in sin once more will become stronger and stronger, ferociously working against you in its attempt to pull you deeper and deeper into sin until you are completely conquered by it.

It is a whole lot easier to avoid fleshly temptations than it is to uproot them once they get deeply rooted inside your mind, will, and emotions.

Do you have a strategy for winning the battle against your own lusts? What provisions are you making to live victoriously? Are you a fiercely committed soldier who possesses a warring mentality? The lusts that war against us can destroy us spiritually! This is war...not a game! Guard your souls, beloved... protect them at all costs.

## **II. Godly believers will be submissive for the sake of sinner-2:12**

The word “conversation” means much more than just what comes out of our mouths. It refers to a person’s lifestyle as a whole.

Telling the truth, doing right are powerful arguments for Christianity. And when our godly testimony results in someone getting saved, God gets all the glory because we were the right kind of testimony. Our good works are like little missionaries for God. Our godly behavior speaks loud and clear for God’s glory!

The best argument for Christianity is a genuine, godly Christian. Is your life commending Jesus Christ to the lost around you?