

Rebellion & Pride
versus
Submission & Humility

TEACHER TO TEACHER

Do you ever struggle with the sins of rebellion and pride? I know that I have and do! For me these are daily struggles. Regularly I find myself having to choose humility over pride and submission over rebellion. I have also discovered that it is my pride that usually gives cause for my rebellious attitudes and actions.

The manifestations of my pride usually look like:

1. Being more dependent upon my strengths and resources than upon God
2. Too often believing that my ideas and opinions are better than those of others
3. Having a tendency to be more of a people-pleaser than a God-pleaser
4. Being driven to obtain recognition

I too often find that I am tempted to rebel against:

1. Civil government by breaking minor laws (I hate wearing a seat belt)
2. My employer by breaking what seem to me to be unnecessary restrictions in behavior
3. God's Word when my selfishness kicks in

Rebellion and pride, like bitterness, give the evil one and his minions opportunity to establish footholds or strongholds in our lives, influencing our thinking and actions. In this lesson we will discuss the detestable nature of rebellion set against the biblical principle of submission. We will also study the devilish nature of pride and weigh it against the virtue of humility.

A significant amount of attention is given to the processes of confessing and renouncing rebellion and pride in both the Studying the Word Together and the Suggested Lesson Plan sections of your resource materials.

Please allow time in your preparation to carefully study and work through the processes. This will be freeing for you and will help you get in touch with any ways that you "miss the mark" in your own walk with Christ. As always, I encourage you to be authentically vulnerable with your Bible Fellowship. Your willingness to be real with them will give them a little encouragement to be honest with themselves. Your submissive spirit and humble heart can help create an environment in which the Holy Spirit can move to help some of your department members experience the forgiveness of God and a changing of heart attitudes. When this happens, the enemy is rebuffed and bound by the power of God's Word rather than able to ensnare us and hold us in bondage.

I pray that God will minister freedom to you and many in your department as the sins of rebellion and pride are confessed. May He anoint you and give you a spirit of peace and encouragement as you teach.

Christ Jesus, glorify Yourself in us! Amen.

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Studying the Word Together

It is hard to determine which initiates the other, but we know that both rebellion and pride are sins of the flesh that are intertwined. Both give impetus to many of the sin patterns in our lives. They are abhorrent to God and soundly condemned in Scripture. At issue here is the fundamental question: Who is in control of my life?

Rebellion and pride lead us down a path of self-seeking, self-serving, self-justifying, self-glorifying, and self-centered behavior that stands in opposition to the will of God for our lives and in concert with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

These enemies of our souls are in constant conflict with the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification in our lives. The good news is that we can become more effective in overcoming these enemies of our souls as we apply the truth of the Word of God and yield to the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

—Dr. Steve Dowdle

Lesson Seven of this series identified seven areas of sin that can provide an opportunity for the evil one to develop a foothold or establish a stronghold in the life of a believer. We will look at two of those areas in this study to contrast the sin with a Christian virtue. We will look at:

- ◆ Rebellion versus submission
- ◆ Pride versus humility

Like unresolved anger, rebellion and pride are serious problems with many Christians.

If we can replace unresolved anger or bitterness with forgiveness, rebellion with submission, and pride with humility, we can recapture ground gained by the enemy and, consequently, take important steps to overcoming the evil one in the journey toward becoming spiritual mothers and fathers.

Rebellion versus Submission

Rebellion generally can be defined as opposition to or defiance of authority, accepted moral codes, or social conventions. The Scriptures warn against rebelling against God and the authority He has put in place over us: civil authority, parents, employers, one's spouse, and church leaders.

Submission is the antonym or opposite of rebellion. It is understood to mean a willingness to yield or surrender to somebody or the act of doing so (see Commentary). Christians, when referring to God or Christ, use words that connote

submission. For example, we refer to Jesus as Lord, Master, and King. We refer to the Bible as the Word of God and believe that we are to allow the written Word to have authority over us as does the Author Who "breathed" (2 Tim. 3:16) the Scriptures.

► **What Is So Bad about Rebellion**

As I said in Lesson Seven of this series, rebellion is described in Scripture as being on a par with witchcraft. In 1 Samuel we read:

Rebellion is as bad as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as bad as worshiping idols. (1 Samuel 15:23, NLT)

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Just as the sin of witchcraft obviously opens us up to the enemy's influence, rebelling against God and His ordained authority opens the door to the enemy and gives him permission to work in our lives in a significant and powerful way. Satan is the original rebel and when we choose to be rebellious, we place ourselves under his strong influence. God's desire is for us to submit to Him and to the ordered authority He has put in place. This structure of order and authority acts as a protection for us, for without it there would be no social order. And the purposes for which God designed the family, church, and governments would be thwarted.

In Romans we are given what constitutes a command to submit to and pray for those who are in authority over us.

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.
(Romans 13:1-2)

► **What's So Hard about Submission**

I think the biblical concept of submission is one of the most under-taught of all spiritual principles. It is not well understood and is hard for many to apply as they seek to grow toward spiritual maturity—or as we say at Casas, as they seek to “close the gap” in their lives.

William Henley closed the famous 19th century poem “Invictus” with these often recited lines:

*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments
the scroll,
I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.*

It is human nature to want to be self-determining—to be master of our fate and

captain of our soul. It is particularly hard for those of us bombarded with the “it's all about me” messages of a culture immersed in a Western worldview, to submit to any authority. To place ourselves in submission to someone violates our desire to be “in control.”

Christians place themselves in submission to God as they experience His loving care in their lives and grow in their faith in Him. Children learn submission and obedience by first learning the benefits of obeying their parents. Workers submit to the authority of their employers as if they were directly serving the Lord. Wives submit to husbands who are committed to caringly providing for the satisfaction of their physical and relational needs—when they are being sacrificially served by their husbands as Christ serves the church. Husbands submit themselves to the needs and interest of their wives—freely giving to them because they have freely received from Christ. Members of the Body of Christ follow the established leaders in the church, receiving from their leadership the direction and care of a shepherd serving under the Great Shepherd. We submit to civil governments installed over us for the purpose of order, peace, security, and care.

In short, Christians are servants in the same way that Christ was a servant. Servants live in submission to authority and obediently follow the leadership of designated authorities.

Human leaders are imperfect and they all have weaknesses; some lack insight or personality traits. We can be easily tempted to take our own course of action, resulting in the sin of rebellion. When we teach the importance of biblical submission, this question always arises: *What is a person to do when someone in leadership requires us to do something that we believe is unbiblical or unethical, even abusive?*

The answer is simple. When authorities in any of our social structures (family, government entities, work environments, or church) require us to do something that God commands us not to do or when they

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try to prevent us from doing something God in His Word teaches us to do, then we must obey God rather than man. We find biblical examples of this principle in the Early Church (see Acts 5:29). In addition, we have no obligation to obey people who try to exercise authority outside their jurisdictions and we may protect ourselves from authority figures who would abuse us.

Pride versus Humility

Rebellion and pride are linked in that the source of a rebellious attitude usually grows out of pride. Pride has its beginning in the person of Satan. It was he who, through his actions and words, demonstrated blatant pride in his rebellion against God. The Scripture quotes a boastful Satan saying:

You said to yourself, "I'll climb to heaven. I'll set my throne over the stars of God. I'll run the assembly of angels that meets on sacred Mount Zaphon. I'll climb to the top of the clouds. I'll take over as King of the Universe!" (Isaiah 14:13-14, MSG)

Notice in this boastful passage how many times the enemy says, "I'll." I count five. These verses reflect an "it's all about me" attitude. Arrogance practically oozes from Satan's words!

The antonym of pride is humility. A humble person is modest, unassuming, and respectful. Scripture describes Moses as the most humble man on the face of the earth (Num. 12:3). Because of his humility, God spoke to Moses "face to face, clearly, and not in riddles" (Num. 12:8). Through Isaiah God said to Israel, "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word" (Isa. 66:2). Jesus describe Himself as "gentle and humble in heart" (Matt. 11:29). James, the Lord's half brother, said: "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up" (James 4:10).

When we wear the multi-colored coat of pride, we are following in the footsteps of

the evil one and become subject to him. When we modestly wrap ourselves in the virtue of humility, we become image-bearers of Christ.

► **Pride**

It is easy for us to identify the sin of pride, as it usually presents itself in multifaceted displays of self-reliance, selfishness (self-centeredness), and self-condemnation. Each of these types of prideful sin actually is idolatry. Pride is always a glorification or exaltation of self above the truth of God's Person and Word. For example:

- ◆ When we are too self-reliant, our actions reflect the "I will" arrogance of Satan, reflecting a desire for personal control rather than submitting to God's benevolent sovereignty (Exod. 20:3; Deut. 5:7; 2 Chron. 30:8; Job 22:21; James 4:7-8).
- ◆ When behaving selfishly, by our actions we declare that we do not trust God and others to meet our needs, so we take from others to satisfy our desire. This puts our own interest above others—a rebellious violation of the teaching of Scripture (Phil. 2:4; 4:19).
- ◆ When we step into self-condemnation, we are rejecting the truth that "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). The act of self-condemnation is an arrogant or prideful act because it raises the thought or opinion of the individual above the truth of Scripture.

► **Humility**

We have already established the biblical basis for the Christian virtue of humility. Now let's briefly review the mandate to walk in humility before the Lord. We will turn first to the prophet Micah.

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require

of you? To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.
(Micah 6:8)

In other passages we are directly instructed to humble ourselves:

- ◆ Be completely humble (Ephesians 4:2)
- ◆ Humble yourselves before the Lord (James 4:10)
- ◆ Be compassionate and humble (1 Peter 3:8)
- ◆ Humble yourselves...under God's mighty hand (1 Peter 5:6)

Blessings or benefits accrue to those who walk in humility before the Lord:

- ◆ You save the humble (2 Samuel 22:28)
- ◆ He guides the humble (Psalm 25:9)
- ◆ The Lord sustains the humble (Psalm 147:6)
- ◆ He crowns the humble with salvation (Psalm 149:4)
- ◆ [God] gives grace to the humble (Proverbs 3:34; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5)
- ◆ The humble will rejoice in the Lord (Isaiah 29:19)
- ◆ [God is] mindful of the humble state of his servant (Luke 1:48)

God can humble those who do not choose to humble themselves:

- ◆ God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. (Deuteronomy 8:2)
- ◆ I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless. (Isaiah 13:11)
- ◆ The Lord Almighty planned it...to humble all who are renowned on the earth. (Isaiah 23:9)
- ◆ Those who walk in pride He is able to humble. (Daniel 4:37)
- ◆ I am afraid ... my God will humble me.... (2 Corinthians 12:21)

Application Ideas & Questions

In the previous lesson I invited you to:

- ◆ Let God reveal to you your unresolved anger or bitterness
- ◆ Confess your bitterness and the pain associated with the offense
- ◆ Extend grace through forgiveness to your offender
- ◆ Request comfort and healing from the Holy Spirit
- ◆ Seek comfort from a trusted person

In this lesson I invite you to step through the process of confessing and renouncing both rebellion and pride and declaring before God your desire to walk in submission and humility before Him.

► Confessing and Renouncing Rebellion

Rebellion is a sin that requires confession and renouncement. James' admonition to "submit to God and resist the devil" (James 4:7) provides the foundation upon which we can face this sin. Submission to God allows us to be empowered to resist the devil and to remove the vulnerability that exists when we yield to the sin.

- ◆ **Step One:** Begin with the following prayer of confession and submission:

Dear Heavenly Father, You have said in the Bible that rebellion is the same thing as witchcraft and as bad as idolatry. I know I have not always been submissive, but instead I have rebelled both in my heart and in my actions against You and against those You have placed in authority over me. Please show me all the ways I have been rebellious. I choose now to adopt a submissive spirit and a servant's heart. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.¹

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◆ **Step Two:** Use the following categories to help tune your “spiritual ears” to the Holy Spirit as He reveals your sin to you. Remember, the Bible warns us not to rebel against: civil government; parents, stepparents, or legal guardians; employers—past and present; spouse; church leaders; God. Write down every rebellious act that comes to mind.

◆ **Step Three:** Now use the following prayer to confess and seek forgiveness for each of your rebellious acts:

Lord Jesus, I confess that I have been rebellious toward [name or position] by [specifically confess what you did or did not do]. Thank You for Your forgiveness. I choose to be submissive and obedient to Your Word. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

► Renouncing Pride

In confessing and renouncing pride we express our desire and commitment to be free of a life of self-reliance, self-centeredness, and self-condemnation. We express our desire to be free of living a life that is self-focused and to receive the blessing of God to live our lives for Him and others. We acknowledge that we want to derive our spiritual strength and identity from God through our relationship with Jesus Christ and His Spirit working in us.

◆ **Step One:** Use the following prayer of confession to establish your position before the heavenlies and bring you into a right fellowship with God.

Dear Heavenly Father, You have said that “pride goes before destruction and an arrogant spirit before stumbling” (Prov. 16:18). I confess that I have focused on my own needs and desires and not on those of others. I have not always denied myself, picked up my cross daily, and followed You. I have relied on my own strength and resources

instead of resting in Yours. I have placed my will before Yours and centered my life around myself instead of around You and others.

I confess my self-reliance, selfishness, and self-condemnation and pray that all ground gained in my life by the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ would be canceled.

I choose to rely on the Holy Spirit's power and guidance so that I will do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit. With humility of mind, I choose to regard others as more important than myself.

I acknowledge You as my Lord, and I confess that apart from You I can do nothing of lasting significance. Please examine my heart and show me the specific ways I have lived my life in pride.

Now, Lord Jesus, I ask you to open my heart to all of the ways in which I walk in pride rather than in humility.

In the gentle and humble name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.²

◆ **Step Two:** Use the list that follows to help tune your “spiritual ears” to the Holy Spirit as He reveals your sin to you. The Holy Spirit may say something like this to you: *Your prideful attitudes and actions include* (check all those that apply):

1. Having a stronger desire to do my will than God's will
2. Leaning too much on my own understanding and experience rather than seeking God's guidance through prayer and His Word
3. Relying on my own strengths and resources instead of depending on the power of the Holy Spirit
4. Being more concerned about controlling others than about developing self-control
5. Being too busy doing seemingly important and selfish things rather than seeking and doing God's will

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6. Having a tendency to think that I have no needs
7. Finding it hard to admit when I am wrong
8. Being more concerned about pleasing people than about pleasing God
9. Being overly concerned about getting the credit I feel I deserve
10. Thinking I am more humble, spiritual, religious, or devoted than others
11. Being driven to obtain recognition by attaining degrees, titles, and positions
12. Often feeling that my needs are more important than another person's needs
13. Considering myself better than others because of my academic, artistic, or athletic abilities and accomplishments
14. Having feelings of inferiority appearing as false humility
15. Not waiting on God
16. Other ways I have thought more highly of myself than I should include _____

◆ **Step Three:** Now use the following prayer to confess and seek forgiveness for each act of your prideful attitudes and actions that you checked off in the list above:

Lord Jesus, I agree I have been proud by [name each item you checked above]. Thank You for Your forgiveness. I choose to humble myself before You and others. I choose to place all my confidence in You and not to put confidence in my flesh. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

This process of cleaning up our spiritual house by getting rid of the sins that “so easily beset” all of us, results in the wonderful freeing of our spirits from the clutter and mess of sin. As we humble ourselves, we experience the blessings of God’s grace (James 4:6) in our lives. As we “put no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. 3:3), we learn that we can depend on God and our faith in Him is strengthened (Eph. 6:10).

As we submit ourselves to the teachings of Scripture to “not lean on your own understanding” (Prov. 3:5) and to “not be wise in your own eyes” (Prov. 3:6), we can experience the promises of “gaining renewed health and vitality” (Prov. 3:8). Jesus wants us to have a rich, full, abundant life (John 10:10) and that life of abundance is possible for us when we have chosen to be humble before God and others and obedient to His Word. The process we have reviewed in this lesson is just one of the avenues we can use to facilitate obedience and humility in our lives.

¹ Neil T. Anderson, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ (4th Edition)*, copyright © 2004 by Neal Anderson, Regal Books, Ventura, CA, p. 14.

² *Ibid.*, p. 15 (adapted).

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Commentary

Submission is a difficult concept for many to understand from a biblical perspective. In this Commentary section we will examine the meaning of the biblical word rendered as *submit* in the NIV in order to better understand the biblical principle of submission. Let's begin by looking at the verse upon which the name of our series is based:

*Submit yourselves, then, to God.
Resist the devil, and he will
flee from you. (James 4:7)*

The word *submit* in this passage is a form of a Greek word meaning "to place in order" or "to place under in an orderly fashion."¹ In the Genesis creation narrative, we see that God brought about order in several ways. First, all of Creation was ordered or placed under the care and authority of God. Thus Adam's place in the created structure was under the care and authority of God. Then everything in the Garden was placed under the care of Adam.

So we might more very literally paraphrase our verse from James 4:7 this way:

*Christian, voluntarily and humbly
place your self under God's loving
care and authority. When in this
submitted state you can truly resist
the devil and he will depart from you
because he recognizes the order
of things established by God,
his creator.*

Now let's turn our attention to the fifth chapter of Paul's letter to the Christian church in Ephesus. Before looking at specific verses, it is important to note that Paul is addressing everyone in the church. Many of the verbs are second person plural and he speaks to children rather than to a child. Paul gives instruction about personal life outside of the church,

but he also addresses the interpersonal relationships within the church. He says in verse 21:

*Submit to one another out of
reverence for Christ. (Ephesians 5:21)*

He is telling the church members that they are to recognize the structure and order within the church and to place themselves under one another's care and authority at appropriate times. For example, he speaks about members of the Body of Christ placing themselves under the leadership or authority of those who are exercising God-given spiritual gifts. In Romans 12 he says:

*We have different gifts, according to
the grace given us. If a man's gift is
prophesying, let him use it in
proportion to his faith. If it is serving,
let him serve; if it is teaching, let him
teach; if it is encouraging, let him
encourage; if it is contributing to the
needs of others, let him give
generously; if it is leadership, let him
govern diligently; if it is showing
mercy, let him do it cheerfully.
(Romans 12:6-8)*

When a believer is "operating" in his or her spiritual gift, he or she is submitted to and under the authority of the Holy Spirit. What we observe or experience when a person is operating in his area of gifting, is a manifestation of the imparted power of the Holy Spirit. When we place ourselves under a teacher who is operating in the spiritual gift of teaching, we are in effect placing ourselves under or submitting to the Holy Spirit. Placing ourselves under a spiritually gifted teacher makes it possible for us to receive God's intended blessing. If we rebel against or are hostile toward the spiritually gifted teacher and consequently rebel against the Holy Spirit, we

cannot receive the blessing contained in the manifestation of God's power.

In Colossians Paul addresses both wives and husbands, saying:

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. (Colossians 3:18-19)

Here he tells wives to place themselves under the care of their husbands because this is the order that God established immediately after the Fall (Gen. 3:16). But don't miss the fact that in the same breath he addresses the Christian husbands, telling them to love their wives. The verb *love* means that the husband is to be sensitive to the physical, relational, and spiritual needs of his wife and to dedicate himself to meeting those needs (Phil. 2:4).

Again looking at the fifth chapter of Ephesians, we find an expanded version of Paul's instruction to the Colossians:

[22] Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. [23] For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. [24] Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

[25] Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her [26] to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, [27] and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. [28] In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies.

He who loves his wife loves himself. [29] After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it,

just as Christ does the church— [30] for we are members of his body. [31] "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." [32] This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. [33] However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. (Ephesians 5:22-30)

Verses 22-24 suggest that wives place themselves under the care of their husbands—submit to their husbands—in the same manner that the church places itself under the care of Christ. Again, we find the concept of an established order. God has placed the Church under the care of Christ and wives under the care of their husbands. As in the Colossians passage above, Paul speaks directly to husbands about their ministry to their wife. He says, husbands:

- ◆ Sacrificially love your wife (v. 25).
- ◆ Be as concerned about your wife's needs as you are about your own (vs. 28-30).
- ◆ Love your one wife, being as faithful to her and as closely united with her as Christ is to His church (vs. 31-32).

When a Christian woman submits to her Christian husband, she is placing herself under the care of a man totally committed to meeting her physical, relational, and spiritual needs and to unselfishly acting in her best interest. It is only when she humbly practices the biblical principle of submission that she receives all of the attendant blessings of a loving husband and heavenly Father. Likewise, when a husband submits or places himself under the loving care of his wife, he receives the blessing of having his needs met by his wife and his heavenly Father (Eph. 5:21).

¹ Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, Editors, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Abridged)*, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, copyright © 1985 by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Abridged from *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, copyright © 1964, 1964, 1965, 1967, 1967, 1968, 1971, 1972, and 1974 by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Notes 

RESOURCES NEEDED:

- ◆ 2-sided copies of Lesson Notes / Take-Home pages
- ◆ Pencils or pens for each person
- ◆ Dry erase markers and marker board or felt tip markers and a flip chart
- ◆ A printout of 1 Samuel 15:23 from the KJV, the NASB, and the NIV for use in Step Two (see p. 9-12)

TIMEFRAME:

- ◆ 35 minutes

Suggested Lesson Plan

NOTE TO TEACHER: This *suggested* lesson plan contains many elements that, if employed, will help maximize learning for life-change in your Bible Fellowship. If you are an experienced teacher, you have freedom to create your own plan based upon the “Studying the Word Together” section. If you are less experienced, we suggest that you “stick to the plan.” However, even less-experienced teachers should feel free to modify the plan based upon the needs of your Bible Fellowship. This plan is designed to be presented in 35 minutes. It is important, therefore, that you carefully plan your presentation so that you communicate the main points with brevity and clarity.

Important Scripture References:

- ◆ 1 Samuel 15:23
- ◆ Daniel 4:37
- ◆ Romans 13:1-2
- ◆ Isaiah 14:13-14
- ◆ Micah 6:8

Teaching Goals:

- ◆ **Learn:** Bible Fellowship members learn to confess and renounce rebellion and to practice the biblical principle of submission
- ◆ **Learn:** Bible Fellowship members learn to confess and renounce pride and to humble themselves before the Lord
- ◆ **Experience:** Bible Fellowship members experience the freedom of confessing and renouncing the sins of rebellion and pride (Ps. 103:10-12; 1 John 1:9)

Before Class Begins:

- ◆ Give the printouts of 1 Samuel 15:23 from the KJV, the NASB, and the NIV to three people, so that they may read them aloud in Step Two. (You may copy these from p. 9-12.)
- ◆ Distribute 2-sided Lesson Notes 1 & 2 handout
- ◆ Wait until Step Four to distribute 2-sided Take-Home handout

STEP ONE: GETTING READY TO LEARN (10 MINUTES)

- ◆ Tell your department that today’s lesson contrasts rebellion and submission, as well as pride and humility.
- ◆ Invite them to form groups of three to four people. When groups are formed have the groups number off (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.).
- ◆ Invite the even-numbered groups to read 1 Samuel 15:23 (on their handout) and discuss their opinions regarding its meaning and its implication for believers who are trying to lead Christlike lives.
- ◆ Invite the odd-numbered groups to read Daniel 4:37 (on their handout) and discuss their opinions regarding its meaning and its implication for believers who are trying to lead Christlike lives.
- ◆ Select one even-numbered group and one odd-numbered group to summarize their discussions.

STEP TWO: REBELLION VERSUS SUBMISSION (10 MINUTES)

Use the material found on pages 9-2 to 9-4 to prepare for this section.

- ◆ **Rebellion:** Have pre-assigned readers read aloud 1 Samuel 15:23 from the King James Version, the

New American Standard Bible, and the New International Version. Then refer everyone to their handout and ask the class to read together the verse from the New Living Translation.

1. Explain to your group that rebellion is usually defined as opposition to or defiance of authority, accepted moral codes, or social conventions. The Scriptures warn against rebelling against God and the authority He has put in place over us: civil authority, parents, employers, one's spouse, and church leaders. Explain that just as the sin of witchcraft opens us up to the enemy's influence, rebelling against God and His ordained authority opens the door to the enemy and gives him permission to work in our lives in a significant and powerful way.

- ◆ **Submission:** Read Romans 13:1-2 (on handout) to your class and tell them that submission is the opposite of rebellion. Define submission literally as the act of "placing in order" or "placing under in an orderly fashion." Christians are to be respectful of God's established order and "place themselves under" the care of those that God has placed over them.

1. Explain that it is hard to practice the spiritual principle of submission because it is human nature to want to be self-determining—to be master of our fate and captain of our soul.
2. Explain that Christians place themselves in submission to God and experience His loving care in their lives and grow in their faith in Him. Children learn submission and obedience by first learning the benefits and blessing of living under the loving care of their parents. Wives experience the satisfaction of their physical and relational needs

as they place themselves in the care of husbands who are committed to sacrificially serving them as Christ serves the church.

3. Briefly address the principle of obeying God rather than man. For those who have been abused by authority figures, add that it also is biblical to protect ourselves from abuse. Make a genuine statement of sorrow that they have had such experiences; say that help is available in Pastoral Care for growing beyond their loss, but today's lesson is about the importance of healthy submission. Don't get sidetracked here.

STEP THREE: PRIDE VERSUS HUMILITY (10 MINUTES)

Use the material on pages 9-4 to 9-5 to prepare for this section.

- ◆ **Pride:** Tell your group that rebellion and pride are linked in that the source of a rebellious attitude usually grows out of pride. Remind them that pride has its beginning in the person of Satan who, through his actions and words, demonstrated blatant pride in his rebellion against God.
 1. Invite someone to read aloud Isaiah 14:13-14 from The Message (on handout).
 2. Explain that pride often manifests in self-reliance, selfishness, and self-condemnation.
- ◆ **Humility:** Remind your Bible Fellowship that the antonym (opposite) of pride is humility. Describe a humble person as modest, unassuming, and respectful. Tell them that:
 1. God said to Israel, "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word" (Isa. 66:2).

Notes 

Rebellion & Pride vs. Submission & Humility



2. Jesus described Himself as “gentle and humble in heart” (Matt. 11:29).
3. James, the Lord’s half-brother, said: “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up” (James 4:10).
4. Read Micah 6:8 to your group: “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”
5. Quickly describe the benefits of humility: that God saves, guides, and sustains the humble and that He is mindful of the humble and gives them grace and joy.
6. Mention that God can humble those who do not humble themselves before Him. As examples read: “I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless” (Isa. 13:11); and “Those who walk in pride he is able to humble” (Dan. 4:37).

STEP FOUR: APPLICATION & CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Use the material on pages 9-5 to 9-7 to prepare for this section.

- ◆ **Confessing and Renouncing Rebellion:** Explain that you would like to close by helping them experience the process of confessing and renouncing rebellion and then declaring their heart’s desire to practice the biblical principle of submission.
 1. Ask them to look at the closing exercise on Lesson Notes 2 (back of handout) and follow its instructions.
 2. When it seems that everyone has finished, distribute the Take-Home handout. Point out the instructions for confessing and renouncing pride as well as “Reflections” for the coming week. Encourage them to work through the process of confessing and renouncing pride on their own during the week.
 3. Close with a prayer corporately confessing and renouncing the sins of rebellion and pride and ask the Holy Spirit to fill each Casas attendee with a humble, submissive spirit.

Lesson Notes Blanks

Rebellion vs. Submission

1. Just as the sin of witchcraft opens us up to the enemy’s influence, rebelling against God ... opens the door to the enemy and gives him permission to work in our lives....
2. Christians are to be respectful ... and “place themselves under” the care... .

Pride vs. Humility

1. Rebellion and pride are linked....
2. Pride often manifests itself in self-reliance, selfishness, and self-ccondemnation.
3. A humble person is modest, unassuming, and respectful.

Passages to Read Aloud in Step Two: Rebellion

- ◆ 1 Samuel 15:23: For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.... (KJV)
- ◆ 1 Samuel 15:23: For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry.... (NASB)
- ◆ 1 Samuel 15:23: For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry..... (NIV)

Today in My Bible Fellowship

For Me This Means...

- ◆ Even-numbered groups: Read 1 Samuel 15:23 from "Today's Scriptures"
◆ Odd-numbered groups: Read Daniel 4:37 from "Today's Scriptures"
◆ Everyone: Discuss your opinions regarding the meaning of your group's passage and its implication for believers who are trying to lead Christlike lives.

Rebellion vs. Submission

- 1. Just as the sin of _____ opens us up to the enemy's influence, _____ against God and His ordained authority opens the door to the enemy and gives him _____ to work in our lives in a significant and powerful way.
2. Christians are to be _____ of God's established order and "place themselves under" the _____ of those that God has placed over them.

Pride vs. Humility

- 1. _____ and pride are linked in that the source of a rebellious attitude usually grows out of pride.
2. Pride often manifests itself in _____, _____, and _____.
3. A humble person is _____, _____, and _____.

For further study:

- ◆ Passages about humbling ourselves: Ephesians 4:2, James 4:10, 1 Peter 3:8, 1 Peter 5:6
◆ Passages about blessings or benefits of those who walk in humility: 2 Samuel 22:28, Psalm 25:9, Psalm 147:6, Psalm 149:4, Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5, Isaiah 29:19, Luke 1:48
◆ Passages that teach how God can humble those who do not choose to humble themselves: Deuteronomy 8:2, Isaiah 13:11, Isaiah 23:9, Daniel 4:37, 2 Corinthians 12:21

Today's Scriptures

1 Samuel 15:23: Rebellion is as bad as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as bad as worshiping idols. (NLT)

Daniel 4:37: ...those who walk in pride he is able to humble. (NIV)

Romans 13:1-2: Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. (NIV)

Isaiah 14:13-14: You said to yourself, "I'll climb to heaven. I'll set my throne over the stars of God. I'll run the assembly of angels that meets on sacred Mount Zaphon. I'll climb to the top of the clouds. I'll take over as King of the Universe!" (MSG)

Micah 6:8: He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (NIV)

Next Week's Lesson:

Healing Wounds

Confessing and Renouncing Rebellion

- ◆ **Step One:** begin with the following prayer of confession and submission:

Dear Heavenly Father, You have said in the Bible that rebellion is comparable to witchcraft and as detestable to you as idolatry.

I know I have not always been submissive, but instead I have rebelled both in my heart and in my actions against You and against those You have placed over me to care for me.

Please show me all the ways I have been rebellious. I choose now to adopt a submissive spirit and a servant's heart. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

- ◆ **Step Two:** Use the list that follows to help tune your “spiritual ears” to the Holy Spirit as He reveals your sin to you. Remember, the Bible warns us not to rebel against:

1. Civil government
2. Parental authorities such as parents, stepparents, or legal guardians
3. Employers—past and present
4. Spouse: Wives submit to God's order in the family and the loving care of their husbands; husbands submit to the caring ministry of their wives
5. Church leaders
6. God

Write down every rebellious act that comes to mind.

- ◆ **Step Three:** Now use the following prayer to confess and seek forgiveness for each of your rebellious acts:

Lord Jesus, I confess that I have rebelled toward [name or position] by [specifically confess what you did or did not do].

Thank You for Your forgiveness. I choose to adopt a submissive spirit and to be obedient to Your Word. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Confessing and Renouncing Pride

- ◆ **Step One:** Use the following prayer of confession to establish your position before the heavenlies and bring you into a right fellowship with God.

Dear Heavenly Father, You have said that “pride goes before destruction and an arrogant spirit before stumbling” (Prov. 16:18). I confess that I have focused on my own needs and desires and not on those of others. I have not always denied myself, picked up my cross daily, and followed You. I have relied on my own strength and resources instead of resting in Yours. I have placed my will before Yours and centered my life around myself instead of around You and others. I confess my self-reliance, selfishness, and self-condemnation and pray that all ground gained in my life by the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ would be canceled.

I choose to rely on the Holy Spirit’s power and guidance so that I will do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit. With humility of mind, I choose to regard others as more important than myself.

I acknowledge You as my Lord, and I confess that apart from You I can do nothing of lasting significance. Please examine my heart and show me the specific ways I have lived my life in pride.

Now, Lord Jesus, I ask you to open my heart to all of the ways in I walk in pride rather than in humility. In the gentle and humble name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

- ◆ **Step Two:** Use the list that follows to help tune your “spiritual ears” to the Holy Spirit as He reveals your sin to you. The Holy Spirit may say something like this to you: *Your prideful attitudes and actions include* (check all those that apply):

1. Having a stronger desire to do my will than God’s will
2. Leaning too much on my own understanding and experience rather than seeking God’s guidance through prayer and His Word
3. Relying on my own strengths and resources instead of depending on the power of the Holy Spirit
4. Being more concerned about controlling others than about developing self-control
5. Being too busy doing seemingly important and selfish things rather than seeking and doing God’s will
6. Having a tendency to think that I have no needs
7. Finding it hard to admit when I am wrong
8. Being more concerned about pleasing people than about pleasing God
9. Being overly concerned about getting the credit I feel I deserve
10. Thinking I am more humble, spiritual, religious, or devoted than others
11. Being driven to obtain recognition by attaining degrees, titles, and positions
12. Often feeling that my needs are more important than another person’s needs
13. Considering myself better than others because of my academic, artistic, or athletic abilities and accomplishments
14. Having feelings of inferiority appearing as false humility
15. Not waiting on God
16. Other ways I have thought more highly of myself than I should include:

- ◆ **Step Three:** Now use the following prayer to confess and seek forgiveness for each act of your prideful attitudes and actions that you checked off in the list above:

*Lord Jesus, I agree I have been proud by [name each item you checked above].
Thank You for Your forgiveness. I choose to humble myself before You and others.
I choose to place all my confidence in You
and not to put confidence in my flesh. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.*

Daily Reflections

Begin each daily reflection by meditating a few minutes on the suggested Scripture passage. Seek to listen to the Holy Spirit as He speaks to you. Then consider the comments and questions about the passage. Be aware of both your thoughts and your feelings. Respond to God through both.

Monday: *Rebellion is as bad as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as bad as worshipping idols. (1 Samuel 15:23, NLT)*

The prophet Samuel placed rebellion on the same par with witchcraft and idolatry. Most Christians would never consider becoming involved in witchcraft or bow down to an idol, but often find themselves tempted to rebel against the very ones that God has put in place to shepherd them—to provide care and leadership for them. Are there acts of rebellion that you need to confess and renounce? Listen to the Holy Spirit and talk it over with God.

Tuesday: *Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. (Romans 13:1-2, NIV)*

What evidence do you see around you of rebellious attitudes and actions? Take a moment to write down the examples that come to mind. Can you imagine that God's heart is grieved by such rebellion? Respond to God from your own heart for Him.

Wednesday: *You said to yourself, "I'll climb to heaven. I'll set my throne over the stars of God. I'll run the assembly of angels that meets on sacred Mount Zaphon. I'll climb to the top of the clouds. I'll take over as King of the Universe!" (Isaiah 14:13-14, MSG)*

This passage is a clear reflection of Satan's pride. We see the same kind of pride displayed in an "its all about me" attitude that looks like self-reliance, self-centeredness, and self-condemnation. What displays of pride might the Holy Spirit want to reveal to your spirit and mind? Listen closely and confess and renounce your pride as necessary.

Thursday: *He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)*

Can you imagine what walking humbly with God might look like for you? How might you need to change? What would you want to do more of? What action are you willing to take to walk more humbly with God? Ask God to encourage you and strengthen you for the task.

Friday: *...All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another because "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. (1 Peter 5:5-7, NIV)*

God opposes the proud! Wow! That's a strong and straightforward statement. How would it feel to you to know that God, Himself, was opposing you? On the other hand, God gives grace to the humble and lifts them up. Can you imagine how you might feel if you knew that God were lifting you up—exalting you? Express your gratitude to God for the grace that God has extended to you.

Rebellions