



Writing Life Faith



The Staff Handbook: Submitting to Authority

"A wise youth harvests in the summer, but one who sleeps during harvest is a disgrace." (Proverbs 10:5)

Life at Camp, Part 1.

Quote of the Week

"Samuel, I want you exactly where I've placed you."

Last summer, on the second-to-last day of camp, God met me. For weeks, I had been asking Him a ton of questions. I was worried. I didn't know what the future held. I had no idea what His plan was for the following year. I had grown anxious.

Then, the week I was scheduled to write a post about *Self-Control*, God asked me to give up control and turn myself over to Him. He asked me three questions (which you can read in the post), and changed the course of my year. First, He assured me that I was where He wanted me. Second, He advised me on how to make the next year count. Then, He shook up my prayer life by reminding me that we hear from Him when we don't have an agenda.

It's been ten months, and here we are again. I'm back at the river for summer #3 of full-time ministry. (Please pray for me.) This year has flown by. I finished more school, interned and worked at a graphic design business, got more involved with my church, grew my gifts and talents, and launched devotionals here on WLF.

Summer Series.

You may wonder where I got the title for this series. Last year, it was *Fruit at Camp*, all about harnessing God's power for ministry. This year, it's all about following the instructions God (and His designated leaders) give us.

Last year, I had a choice. I could submit to God's authority and plan...or go my own way. I've learned that God's way is so much better. It involves sacrifice (that's what camp is), but the eternal rewards outweigh it all.

At camp, there are leaders. It starts with God. We submit to Him first. But He has also appointed human leaders. God laid out His expectations in the Bible. Camp leaders will lay out their expectations in a badly formatted Word document. Same idea. This summer, as part of WLF, we'll turn this series into a handbook that blends human wisdom with divine wisdom. I've wanted to do this for a while now, and I think the time has come.

If you're working for any earthly leader, I believe this series will be valuable. There are worldly instructions we must obey, and there are godly instructions we must obey. This summer, we'll look at God's guiding principles (aka virtues) for being a godly leader, servant, employee, and steward of His Kingdom. I hope this benefits you as much as it will help me.

Side note: if you have ideas for topics I should cover, please let me know! I'd love to include your suggestions in a future post.

Today we started with my story about submitting to God's authority. Shocker, but I also have authorities to submit to at camp. There are waterfront leaders, cabin leaders, ministry leaders, and camp leaders. That's why today's focus is...

Submitting to Authority

Before you start cringing and reminding me that "I'm independent and mature enough to make my own decisions", let's hold this trait up to a microscope. What does the Bible say?

Submitting to Authority in the Bible.

"Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honour you." (Romans 13:1-3)

Welp, as much as our self-sufficient nature hates it, here it is, plain and simple. God calls us to respect our leaders. There are no caveats for *"Submit to authority if it makes sense or if you feel like it."* I'm not saying this to convict anyone. I'll be honest, this is a struggle for me. It's in my nature to overachieve and look for ways to do stuff better. God has written this into my personality on purpose. Unfortunately, I take it too far by judging people when they don't live up to man-made standards or do things as I think they should.

It's not my place to usurp authority, even if I think I can do something better. That isn't my job, which is why I need to practice today's virtue.

Submitting to Authority at Camp.

"Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit." (Hebrews 13:17)

People will say the best way to lead is by example. I agree. Funnily enough, everyone wants to be above the law until they're the ones giving it. Then everyone needs to submit. As a

third-year camp staff, my job involves setting a godly example. Even if some choose not to, it's between God and me to obey His commands.

For me, it means saying yes, no matter the ask. Who cares if I don't feel like obeying? Leaders lead by example. If you aren't willing to respect and obey your superiors, why should I obey you?

Here's my advice to aspiring leaders: model being a good servant. When I put myself in my boss's shoes, I ask this question: "What would my dream employee do?" Then I do it.

Practical Application.

How can you submit to authority in your life? Maybe it's your parents. Maybe it's your boss. Maybe it's a camp leader. Maybe it's the government. How can you set a godly example? Here are three ideas...

1. Practice Humility.

Scripture says we are to be humble, thinking of others as better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3). When you think about your authorities, do you love them or loathe them? Do you look out for their best interests, or your own?

2. Be Dependable.

Leaders want people they can depend on. Be that person! When they give you a task, joyfully agree to do it. If you wanna level up, go back once you're done and ask for another job.

3. Set a Good Example.

You don't have to be in a leadership role to set a good example. The best leaders will lead wherever they are. Often, they'll lead from among their subordinates. They'll be in the trenches with their people, spurring them on and encouraging them all the way. You can set a godly example every day, regardless of your position.

That closes part one of the staff handbook. If you have comments or questions, please let me know. Until then, God bless, and let's be leaders who draw others to Christ! I'll see you next week.

To quote 1 Peter 5:5a... *"In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you, dress yourselves in humility as you relate to one another."*



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