

## **LIFE Group Leader Handout**

February 21, 2016

### **Why Some Christian Cannot Grow—Part 4—Submission to Authority**

Pastor Ayars

#### **Scripture—Romans 13:1-7, Ephesians 5:22-6:8 and Hebrews 13:17**

*[13:1] Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. [2] Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. [3] For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, [4] for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. [5] Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. [6] For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. [7] Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.*

#### **Main Idea—Human Authorities Are God's Instruments**

##### **Four Structures of Authority in Scripture—**

- Civil Government—Romans 13:1-7
- Family—husband and wife and parents and children—Ephesians 5:22-6:4
- Employment—Ephesians 6:5-8
- Church Leaders—Hebrews 13:17

Each has authority under God in the area that God has appointed—there are boundaries for authority.

##### **Why we rebel against authority:**

- Our rebellious sin nature.
- We fear they will wreck my life. In our obedience to authority we do not disobey the word of God.
- We want to be the boss of our own lives.

##### **Consequences when we resist authority—**

- We bring on ourselves the resistance of God.
- We expose ourselves to the realm and power of Satan—I Samuel 15:23 God's divinely appointed human authorities are sources of His divine protection.

#### **Application—**

- Do parts of your life story give testimony to the truth of this teaching?
- For those in authority—how has this message changed your ideas of how to use that authority under God?
- For those under authority—how has this message changed your outlook on those in authority over you and what God will do in these situations?

## **THREE ELEMENTS OF VIBRANT GROUPS**

by Bill Search

excerpted from smallgroups.com

So what are the core pieces of a healthy group? In my years of experience leading groups and leading small group ministries, I have identified three core patterns of healthy groups. You can add to this list, but you can't reduce it without harming the group. The three patterns are connecting, changing and cultivating. You will notice that these three are all verbs--simply put, they involve action. They don't describe community; they are the actions of community.

### **Connecting**

The first pattern is the relational pattern. You have to build a bridge strong enough to hold the weight of truth. If you don't build the relationships within the group you won't have the group for long. A few years ago, a Gallup poll conducted research on church health. One of the important factors that contributed to enthusiasm for church was friendship. If you have no friends at church you will likely wander away. If you do have friends--people who call you when you're absent, ask how you are doing spiritually, encourage you--you will likely have a strong commitment to your church. Likewise, you will have a strong commitment to your small group.

Simple things you can do to develop the connecting pattern in your group:

Start each meeting with an icebreaker

Plan out group meetings at least a month or two in advance so everyone knows when to meet

Deal with negative group dynamics (like a person who dominates the conversation)

Call and email people who miss a meeting

### **Changing**

The second key pattern is the growth pattern. Some call it edification or sanctification or metamorphosis. Simply put, it's change! A vibrant group helps you change into the person God intends you to be. Hearing truth is one part of change. But a community that challenges you and reinforces that change really matters.

Simple things you can do to develop a changing pattern for your group:

Study the Bible for application. Answer the question "So what do we do with this?"

Invite each member to share areas they are trying to improve and offer accountability

Create a judgement free zone where members can share what's going on without feeling judged (or feeling like a special project)

Keep the focus on Jesus who gives us the strength to change.

### **Cultivating**

The third key pattern is the missional pattern. The other two patterns are very exclusive. They focus on the group and the individuals in the group. This pattern is inclusive and focused on others. You might call it service, outreach, mission or evangelism. I use a farm metaphor: As you cultivate hearts for other people you are turning up the soil in your life (and hopefully in others).

Simple things you can do to develop the cultivating pattern in your group:

Study evangelism and spiritual gifts with the purpose of practicing what you learn.

Have each person identify at least two non-Christians they are praying for (and ask for a progress report every couple of months)

Adopt a needy part of the world and learn as much as you can. Pray for the country and perhaps support a mission there.

Serve at least quarterly as a group or encourage every group member to serve regularly.