

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
16-10-2022  
St Cuthbert's Anglican Church – Tweed Heads

Jeremiah 31: 27-34 God tells the Israelites that they are in exile now,  
but God will rebuild a New Covenant,  
and put the law on their hearts

Psalms 119: 97-104 Loving God's Law

2 Timothy 3:10–4:5 Paul encouraging Timothy to persist in faith, especially  
through Scripture, which is inspired by God.

Luke 18: 1-14 Parable of the widow and the judge - Persistence in prayer  
Parable of the tax collector and the Pharisee - Humility

### Introduction

I would like to begin today with a question.

Are we willing to totally submit our lives to God?

The way we are conditioned to think in our society, is that if we submit to something other than our own will, then we have failed. The reality of the Christian faith though is that it is only when we are able to fully submit ourselves to God, that we are able to fully experience the power of God's love and forgiveness in our lives.

If we have a Christian view of the world, then we have to acknowledge that it is not all about us. Now, this can be hard to get our heads around, and challenging to live into.

It's not all about us, and it's actually all about God.

But God has created the world for us, and God has created us to live in a relationship with God our creator, through Jesus. It is only by submitting to what God has done for us in Jesus, that we can experience the fullness of life that God created for us, to live into.

So, let's begin to unpack this idea of "Submitting our lives to God", by looking at what it might mean for us, and by looking at what the scriptures that we have heard today, have to say about submission.

## The Word Submission

Firstly, what do you think of when you hear the word submission? Being Australian, my mind went straight to sport. I thought of a Wrestler “tapping out”, or the trainer “throwing in the towel” from a boxer’s corner.

Normally if we think of submission, we think of a form of defeat.

It seems counterintuitive, but that’s exactly what we need to do with God. We need to submit our lives to God. And when we totally submit, and surrender our lives to God, then we allow ourselves to be filled with God’s Holy Spirit.

And we begin to be enabled to live the best lives that God has planned for us.

## Submission in Readings

Let us now look at what we might hear of submission in our readings today.

We hear again this week from the prophet Jeremiah. Last week we heard how Jeremiah encouraged them to be thankful and live good lives in exile. And they were in exile because they had failed to submit to God. This week we hear Jeremiah telling the people that God is going to make a New Covenant with them. God says he is going to do something to fix up the dilemma they find themselves in. Ultimately, God made this new covenant by sending Jesus into the world for us. So ultimately, we need to submit to Jesus, to be a part of this New Covenant. Jeremiah tells us that in this New Covenant, we will know God, we will have God’s law imprinted in our hearts, and we will know God’s forgiveness.

In the readings from Psalm 119 and in 2 Timothy today, we are called to submit to God’s Word. In Psalm 119:97 we hear:-

<sup>97</sup> Lord, how I love your law: it is my meditation all the day long.

And in 2 Timothy 3:16 we hear:-

. <sup>16</sup>All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness

Are we submitting ourselves to God’s word by reading the Bible each day?

In the reading from 2 Timothy today we are called to submit ourselves to teaching from the Church. In 2 Timothy 3:10-11 we hear:-

<sup>10</sup>Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, <sup>11</sup>my persecutions, and my suffering the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra.

Are we submitting to God, by seeking to get the most out of sermons, and the teaching we get in Bible Studies, or other Christian resources?

In the reading from Luke's Gospel today we are called to submit to God in Prayer. We hear an example in the story of Widow and Judge, of how the widow continued to submit to God in prayer.

Are we submitting to God daily in Prayer? Seeking to pray our Parish Prayer for Growth each day would be a good example of this.

In the Reading from Luke's Gospel, we are also called to submit to God in humility. We need to be humble as we come before God, not trusting in our own skills and abilities, but trusting in God's love and mercy.

Are we submitting to God in Humility?

### Example of Submitting to God

I would like to share with you a small story of submitting to God. I heard a story of a man who had committed to regular evening sessions to improve his spiritual life and prayer life with God. He had been attending these classes for a couple of months and he was ready to quit, because he didn't think it was doing anything for him. As he was driving home that night from the classes, a push bike was pushed out in front of him on the road and he hit it. There were some teenagers around, angry and accusing him of damaging their bike. He stopped and got out of the car. He spoke with them and really listened to them. Because of his calmness and his attentiveness to them, he was able to diffuse what could have been quite a volatile situation.

The next week he returned to the class and apologized to the Spiritual Director. He told the teacher he had been about to quit, and of the event with the push bike and the teenagers. He said before he started the classes he probably would have got out of his car and started yelling abuse at the teenagers, but the lessons on prayer and spirituality, must have helped him. He had changed and grown because of his commitment to the classes, but he hadn't really noticed it, until it came to a point where it showed in his life.

Sometimes we also might not realize, how submitting to God is good for our lives, but if we keep submitting to God, we can be assured that it will be.

Jesus submitted to death on the cross, and three days later came the resurrection. The central element of the Christian faith.

## Conclusion

Today we've looked at some of the ways we are to submit to God.

Through God's Word in the Bible.  
Through God's teaching in the Church.  
By being persistent in Prayer, and  
By being Humble before God.

When we submit to God, it's a bit like what happens when a wrestler submits – all the pain goes away. We too are freed, if we submit to God.

But unlike the wrestler who loses, when we submit to God, we win.

When we submit to God, we are freed to come into relationship with God.  
When we submit to God, we are freed to live God's way, and to take our part in the wonderful plans God has for our lives in the world.

Amen.