

Under Authority - Church Authority

Submission to authority is always voluntary. If it's not voluntary, it's not true submission.

Whether in a family or church family, we should be submitted to one another in love.

Ephesians 4:11-15 NKJV - *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ*

Ministry gifts are here to help us!

These are ministry gifts given by God, not positions people take for themselves. Their purpose is to help the Church grow, mature, and function properly. They are not given to control or dominate, but to serve, equip, and strengthen the Body of Christ.

Typically Pastors (shepherds) are the leaders in a local church. Not apostles, prophets, or anyone else.

One way we submit to authority in church is by getting behind the vision of the local church.

Galatians 6:6 AMPC - *Let him who receives instruction in the Word [of God] share all good things with his teacher [contributing to his support].*

You give where you are fed.

Hebrews 13:17 AMPC - *Obey your spiritual leaders and submit to them [continually recognizing their authority over you], for they are constantly keeping watch over your souls (not spirits) and guarding your spiritual welfare, as men who will have to render an account [of their trust]. [Do your part to] let them do this with gladness and not with sighing and groaning, for that would not be profitable to you [either].*

If we rebel against God's authority in the local church, ultimately it hurts us.

If we rebel against the authority in the church then we aren't receiving the teaching, training and equipping we need to properly grow and become who God has called us to be.

Matthew 18:15-16 NKJV - *Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.*

This is what submitting to authority in church looks like. We follow what the Word of God says in disagreements and walk in love to resolve them.

As Christians, we should remain open to correction. (Teachable) Correction is a good thing!!

Proverbs 3:12 NKJV - *For whom the Lord loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.*

If you love someone, and you see them doing things that will harm them, going down the wrong path, you want to tell them. And this is what correction should look like in church. It's all done in love and motivated by love.

Proverbs 12:1 NKJV - *Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, But he who hates correction is stupid.*

Our flesh doesn't always like to be corrected. Being under authority in the local church means we have to put our flesh under.

We don't want to become a wolf in the sheepfold. People become wolves by not submitting to authority, not following Matthew 18, and causing harm to other sheep. When this happens, those wolves have to be removed.

Proverbs 13:18 AMPC - *Poverty and shame come to him who refuses instruction and correction, but he who heeds reproof is honored.*

2 Timothy 3:16 NKJV - *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*

When correction in a church is necessary it should be done in love and with the Word of God.

We have to be open to allowing the Word of God to correct us, through the authority in the local church.

2 Timothy 3:16 AMPC - *Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, [and] for training in righteousness (in holy living, in conformity to God's will in thought, purpose, and action)*

2 Timothy 3:17 NKJV - *that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Correction helps us to grow up into the person God has called us to be. When we are under authority in the church, we are connected to the ministry gifts who are here to help us and we receive our training and equipping for all God has for us.