

Abbey Baptist Church, Reading  
Worship Service with communion 10:30am 1st March 2026  
Jill Bird leading and Zoltan Biro preaching  
[www.abbeybaptistchurch.org.uk](http://www.abbeybaptistchurch.org.uk)  
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## Submission

GOD our Father is here, holding out his loving arms towards us  
Today as we **come** before our Father GOD, but also our Lord and King, we quieten our hearts.  
We **come** with all that we are, all our distracting thoughts, all our anxious thoughts for our life and our future. LORD you know them all, we bring them to you and lay them at your feet.  
LORD Jesus you never change and every day you say again **come** to me.  
We quietly express our trust in you with the words of Psalm 103

**Let all that I am praise the LORD; with my whole heart I will praise your holy name.  
Let all that I am praise the LORD; may I never forget the good things he does for me.  
He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases.  
He rescues me from the evil one and crowns me with love and compassion**

## YOU ARE A GOOD GOOD FATHER

Be still for the presence of the Lord, The Holy One is here  
Come bow before Him now, With reverence and fear  
In Him no sin is found We stand on holy ground  
Be still for the presence of the Lord, The Holy One is here

Be still for the glory of the Lord, Is shining all around  
He burns with holy fire, With splendour He is crowned  
How awesome is the sight Our radiant King of light  
Be still for the glory of the Lord, Is shining all around

Be still for the power of the Lord, Is moving in this place  
He comes to cleanse and heal, To minister His grace  
No work too hard for Him In faith receive from Him  
Be still for the power of the Lord Is moving in this place **MP 50**

You are the king of glory, you are the Prince of peace,  
you are the Lord of heaven and earth, you're the sun of righteousness.  
Angels bow down before you, worship and adore,  
For you have the words of eternal life, you are Jesus Christ the Lord.  
Hosanna to the Son of David! Hosanna to the King of kings!  
Glory in the highest heaven, for Jesus the Messiah reigns. **MP 790**

## Family time

The offering will be taken during the singing of this song

You laid aside, your majesty Gave up everything for me  
Suffered at the hands of those You had created  
You took all my guilt and shame When You died and rose again  
Now today You reign In heaven and earth exalted

I really want to worship You, my Lord  
You have won my heart and I am Yours  
Forever and ever, I will love You  
You are the only one who died for me  
Gave Your life to set me free  
So I lift my voice to You in adoration **MP 795**

## Children leave for their classes & Prayer

**Bible Readings** - Philippians 2: 1 -11  
Ephesians 5:20–21 &1 Peter 5:1–7

All to Jesus I surrender all to Him I freely give  
I will ever love and trust Him In His presence daily live

I surrender all. I surrender all  
All to You, my blessed Savior I surrender all  
All to You, my blessed Savior I surrender all

All to Jesus I surrender Only at Your feet I bow  
Worldly pleasures all forsaken Fill me with Your love and power

All to Jesus I surrender Burn in me now, sacred flame  
Be my joy and my salvation Glory, glory to Your name **MP25**

**SERMON** Good morning. Today we are continuing our series on Spiritual Habits. These habits help us grow God's gift in us. The first part of the series looked at growth that happens in our hearts, this is often invisible. The second part of the series is looking at growth that is visible to others or may even affect others. First, we looked at service, or helping others to grow and develop alongside us... Not overpowering others. Last week Simon talked about solitude, it is a choice we make to fully focus on God. This voluntary withdrawal from the noises of life is also noticeable to others.

Today we explore a subject that is both deeply biblical and extremely uncomfortable for many: **submission**. Our readings today highlight both Apostle Paul's and Apostle Peter's take on this subject: Paul writes: "Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." While Peter writes: "All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

Nowadays submission is not a popular word. Our culture believes in the idea of winning at all costs. It celebrates independence and promotes personal rights above all. Yet Scripture calls believers to something different, something higher, a life marked by humility, mutual compliance under God's ultimate leadership. So today we will consider four aspects of biblical submission: *the meaning, the attitude, the practice and the reward*.

## **I. The Meaning of Submission** (*Ephesians 5:21*) “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”

The word “submit” (*Hupotasso*), comes from *hupo* (“under”) and *tasso* (“to arrange”). It comes from a military term for arranging troops under a commander, often a voluntary, orderly, and functional submission. It is not forced inferiority. It is chosen humility.

While in the original military use submission goes only one way Paul redefines it when he says: “*Submit to one another.*” This is mutual submission. In this context submission is not: agreeing with sin, endorsing making mistakes, overlooking bad behaviour or remaining silent in the face of abuse. NO, NO, NO...

Submission is surrendering our preferences, giving up pride and choosing unity over ego.

Imagine two cars approaching a narrow, one-lane bridge from opposite directions. Only one can pass at a time. If both drivers insist, “I have the right of way,” neither will cross. Traffic stops. Frustration grows. They may get out of their cars and start shouting... BUT none of them will go anywhere. However, if one driver pauses and allows the other through, both eventually move forward. Submission is not losing the road. It is choosing progress over pride.

In many homes, churches, and workplaces, progress is delayed because no one wants to give way.

So why do we resist submission? Mostly, because we fear. We fear being overlooked, being mistreated and most importantly of losing control. Submission is only possible when we trust God. When we look at the phrase “Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God” it really means to accept God’s authority, trust His timing, and believe His care.

Hold out your hand and make a fist... what can you do with a closed fist: fight, protect yourself, take control. Now open your hand... you can do a lot more with an open hand, you can hold, create and hug. Most importantly You cannot receive with a closed fist. Submission opens the hand of the heart and puts the future in God’s care. Peter promises that God will exalt the humble “in due time”, not immediately, not always publicly, but certainly.

## **II. The Attitude of Submission** (*Ephesians 5:20; 1 Peter 5:5*)

What is interesting in the passage in Ephesians is that before Paul orders submission in verse 21, he commands thanksgiving in verse 20: “Giving thanks always...” Gratitude reminds us that we are saved by grace, we are sustained by grace and that we depend entirely on God. To use another analogy, gratitude is like chlorophyll, it helps us to absorb God’s goodness. Gratitude springs from humility and develops from a sense of appreciation of each other’s gifts. Pride grows in entitlement, while humility grows in gratitude. Peter reinforces this: “Clothe yourselves with humility.” When you dress up it is a deliberate act to put something on. Humility doesn’t just happen. It must be chosen daily. Consider an apron. An apron is not worn for status. It is worn for service. To “clothe yourself with humility” is to put on the mindset of a servant before you enter the room. When we start a discussion we have to ask: am I dressed for service or for superiority, or am I ready to listen, and explain or ready to win an argument?

Of course, the Biblical model of submission is Jesus Christ himself. He lived in obedience to the Father. He did not cling to status. He embraced service. He entrusted Himself to God’s will even in suffering.

Submission did not diminish Him. It fulfilled His mission. If the Son of God could humble Himself, we cannot ask for exemption.

Now, Peter adds a sober warning: “God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble.”

Imagine the fact that God resists pride. When pride controls us, we fight, not only people, but God.

### **III. The Practice of Submission** (1 Peter 5:1–5)

Peter addresses both leaders and followers. Elders are told shepherd willingly, not for personal gain, not as forceful rulers. The younger are told to submit. At first this looks like those who have seniority because of age, role or title should lead, while the juniors should be the sheep. But then Peter broadens it: “All of you... be subject one to another.” Submission operates in both direction.

**A. In Leadership** Biblical leadership is not control. It is stewardship. Leaders submit to God’s authority and at the same time also submit to the spiritual welfare of those they lead... They voluntarily take on the burden of others.

**B. In Followers** Submission means respecting the structure, honouring the responsibility and supporting godly growth, even when personal preference differs. In an orchestra, there is a conductor, but every musician must also listen to each other. The conductor is committed to the piece of music the orchestra performs. He cannot change halfway. But at the same time the violin section can’t decide to play louder than everyone else, the whole concert would collapse into chaos. Each instrument matters. Each must give way to the whole. Submission creates harmony. Without it, even the most gifted player would only produce noise.

### **C. Practical Applications**

**1. In Marriage** Not every disagreement requires victory. Many conflicts dissolve when one person says, “Let’s do it your way.” Submission here does not mean complete silence especially in serious matters. It means flexibility in minor ones.

**2. In the Church** Preferences about style, hymns, programs, or decorations must never outweigh unity. We must always ask: Is this a biblical or theological issue or a personal preference? Submission preserves unity and fellowship.

**3. In Conflict** Before defending your position, ask two questions. (1) Am I protecting the truth, or my pride? (2.) Would conceding at this point strengthen peace? Sometimes submission is not a compromise of conviction, but a compromise of ego.

So let me wrap up what we have learnt about submission. Learning to compromise through submission is not giving up truth, surrendering personal preferences for the sake of unity. It means releasing pride and embracing grace. It is not defeat. It is discipleship. The Palm tree survives storms because it bends. Oak trees that cannot easily bend can snap under such pressure. Submission is not weakness. It is spiritual flexibility rooted in deep trust.

My prayer is that, we learn to bend without breaking, concede without resenting, and trust without fearing. Amen.

1. Brother, sister, let me serve you; let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.

2. We are pilgrims on a journey, and companions on the road;  
we are here to help each other, walk the mile and bear the load.

3. I will hold the Christ light for you in the nighttime of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.

4. I will weep when you are weeping, when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow, till we've seen this journey through.

5. When we sing to God in heaven, we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony.

6. Brother, sister, let me serve you; let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too. BPW 473

### **Communion**

Come to the table of Jesus our Saviour. Come humbly and in full submission to him and to each other.  
Come because you love God, and want to love God more.  
Come because Jesus first loved you, and in humility and submission to his Father, gave himself for you.  
Come because we want to learn to give Jesus joy as  
Come to remember and to give your most sincere thanks

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus had a meal with his friends.

He took a loaf of bread and after giving thanks to God, he broke it and gave it to his disciples.  
He said, **Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.**

Jesus took the cup of wine; and after giving thanks, gave it to them and said,  
**Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, remember me**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup we **proclaim** the victory of JESUS' death and resurrection over our own souls, over each other and over all spiritual evil forces around us. We look to the day LORD JESUS when you will return and the victory will be complete for ever and ever AMEN

### **Prayers of intercession** Mary

Our Father God, we thank you that we are all part of your worldwide family; you have no favourites and that means that we can all relate to each other and love each other as brothers and sisters. Today we look forward to your presence in each of our Connect groups as we meet together, after our time of worship, to share in fellowship and in understanding of your word to us.

Within our family we come from many different countries and cultures, we speak many different languages, but still we know that you are our Father and that we are your much loved children. So, in this knowledge that we all are one family in you, and that you told us to share one another's burdens, we do indeed take to ourselves each other's concerns.

We hear of violence and terror in the countries from which some of us have come to take refuge in the United Kingdom and we share in their grief as they live in so much uncertainty about the situation of the families they have left behind.

We know that much of what happens in your world depends on the leaders, both for good and for ill, so we pray that they may be guided to work for the good of all people near and far.

Finally we pray for ourselves and for those we love, both here in our Abbey family and among our wider families, friends and neighbours, naming silently, or aloud, those for whom we love and care.

May the love of Jesus be with all God's children here and everywhere. **Amen**

**I love You, Lord** Your mercy never failed me  
 All my days, I've been held in Your hands  
 From the moment that I wake up Until I lay my head  
 I will sing of the goodness of God

**All my life You have been faithful,** All my life You have been so, so good  
 With every breath that I am able, I will sing of the goodness of God

**I love Your voice** You have led me through the fire  
 In darkest night You are close like no other  
 I've known You as a Father I've known You as a Friend  
 Oh, I have lived in the goodness of God, oh-oh-oh

Goodness of God Lyrics © So Essential Tunes,

**Blessing**

**May we go out with those words ringing in our ears. We have a good Father who knows every detail of our lives and will never leave us. We lay down our lives again in surrender and submission both to our loving Father but also to each other with joy and expectation of his loving faithful presence in the week ahead.**

**The Grace**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,  
 and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore, **Amen.**

**Notices – After the service today we will meet over coffee in our Connect groups for sharing and prayer**

Wednesday 4th	10:30 12:00 2:00	Renew Café Bible study iCaf English lesson and First Steps course
Thursday 5th	10:30 10:30	Toddlers Bible Study
Friday 6th	11.00 5:00pm	World Day of Prayer Service at Wycliffe Church Table Tennis
Sunday 8th	10.30 After service 7pm Youth night	Sunday Worship Meeting for all to discuss the results of the questionnaire At Lower Earley Baptist Church cross town event
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup>	7.45pm	Lower Earley Baptist Church - Prayer meeting for a possible new church plant on Loddon Garden village development <a href="#">About Loddon Garden Village</a>
Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup>	9am	Men's Breakfast

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