

SIM *now*

East Asia Edition

Knowing Him **Through Submission**

Hebrews 5:8-9

Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from what He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him .

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Celebrating
SIM's 131st Anniversary



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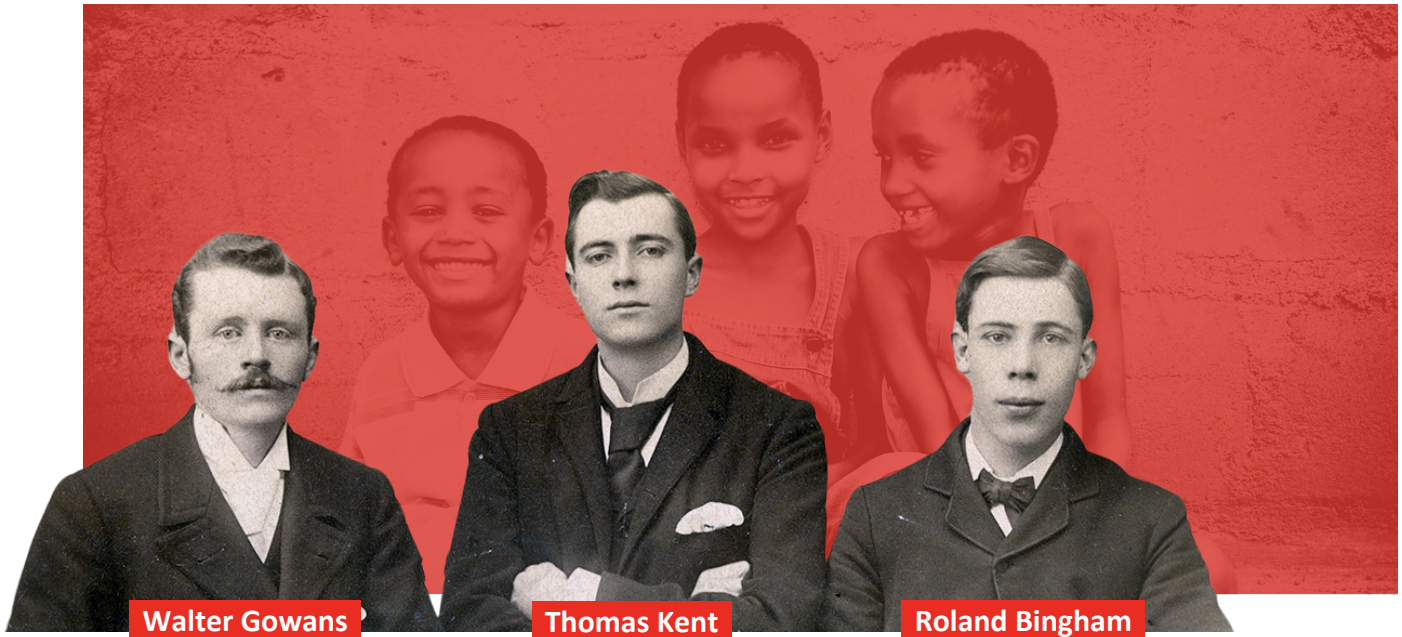
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Power of Submission: Lessons from SIM's Pioneers

Watson Rajaratnam, Regional Director



Walter Gowans

Thomas Kent

Roland Bingham

Submission and Knowing

Jesus, who not only became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey His Father, had also become the model for perfect obedience to Father's call to serve Him. The theme of submission and obedience to God is very significant as the worldwide SIM family is remembering its founding fathers during this month of December. Their lives and obedience to their Master continue to inspire and motivate us even today.

Submission and Commitment

In 1893, knowing the heartbeat of God for the unreached, SIM's pioneers Walter Gowans, Roland Bingham, and Thomas Kent set out alone in obedience to God's call to evangelise the 60 million least-reached people. Due to their sincere commitment and firm determination to obey the Lord, they were not at all swayed or discouraged even when many warned them that they were venturing into something which was impossible.

Submission and Suffering

As part of his consistent obedience to the heavenly call, in 1900, when Rowland made his second attempt to enter Africa with Albert Taylor and A.J. Moline, suffering which came in the form of a deadly sickness forced him to return home. The third attempt took place in 1901 and involved E. Anthony, Charles Robinson, Albert Taylor, and Alex W. Banfield, who were joined later in 1902 by Andrew P. Stirrett (1999:62).

But their obedience, suffering, and the death of the earlier two pioneering missionaries (Walter Gowans and Thomas Kent) sowed the seed of the Gospel which was to yield fruits in later years.

Submission and Perseverance

The determined Bingham did not easily give up but was submissive to His Master and obedient his heavenly call to fulfil the vision and burden that the Lord had placed in his heart. During the first two-decades of service in sub-Saharan Africa (1911-1931), the mission witnessed remarkable progress in the increase of missionaries, opening of more mission stations and expansion of the field work. As our pioneers knew their Lord, they were ready to persevere and even pay the cost to submit themselves to Him and to obey His call. How true is the statement, "...but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action" (Daniel 11:32). In the process of obeying their Master, our pioneers learnt to know Him more, as one who not only called but enabled "the called" to complete the task He had entrusted to them.

We sincerely hope that the current SIM Now issue which has stories of SIM East Asia missionaries who through submission have come to know their Master better which in turn has enabled them to continue to serve Him faithfully. On behalf of our SIM East Asia missionaries, I wish to convey our heartfelt thanks to all our donors and supporters for their unwavering partnership with us and greet them all a blessed Christmas and Christ-Centred New Year!

Knowing Him through Submission

Pastor Wei En,
Bible Church



From a human standpoint, if there is anyone who does not need to submit to the will of God, it would be Jesus the Son of God, Himself divine and God's co-equal. And yet, Hebrews 5:7-10 paints a picture of Jesus reverently submitting Himself to God's will, even if it meant death on the cross.

Submission and Supplication

What did Jesus' submission to God achieve? The passage gives us two outcomes. First, Jesus' submission resulted in His prayers being heard (v.7), though not in the way we might expect. Jesus' prayers were answered not through Him being spared from the cross but by Him being delivered from the fear of death. By submitting to God, Jesus was given supernatural courage to go through the agony of the cross.

Submission and Suffering

Second, Jesus' submission resulted in His willingness to suffer, which then perfected Him to become our Saviour (v.8-9). Though Jesus, being fully God and fully man, was already uniquely qualified to be the mediator between God and man, this qualification was made complete only upon His suffering and death. This is because only by suffering and dying could Jesus show His solidarity with humanity (Heb. 2:14) and be empathetic to our weakness (Heb. 4:15). Submission thus made Jesus "eligible" to become our Great High Priest.

Submission and Service

If Jesus, "Son though he was" (v.8), could only serve God's purposes through total submission, then surely submission must be a mark of all lesser beings (like us) who wish to know God and be His servants as well! From Christ's example in this passage, may we evaluate the quality of our submission to God in our daily lives!

1. Is our submission marked by desperate dependence on God like Jesus who depended on His Father? In the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus' closest companions could not be relied on for support in His hour of need, Jesus threw Himself at the feet of His Father (Matt. 26:38-40).
2. Is our submission marked by deep reverence for God like that of Jesus for His Father? At Gethsemane, Jesus asked the Father to take away the cup of suffering, a reasonable request as He had done nothing deserving of it. Yet, Jesus quickly surrendered even this to God – "Yet not as I will, but as you will" (Matt. 26:39).
3. Is our submission marked by radical obedience to God no matter the cost like that of Jesus to His Father? Jesus' submission meant saying "yes" to God all His life, even in the face of suffering (v.8). His ultimate act of obedience came through His obedience to death – even death on a cross (Phil. 2:11).

May our journey of submission to God lead us to experience the sufficiency of Christ for all our needs and unparalleled joy as we align ourselves fully to His will.

God is ready to assume full responsibility for the life wholly yielded to Him.

---Andrew Murray



SUBMISSION and Service

Matthew, Central Asia

Submission to God's Calling

I felt called to serve in a Central Asian country when the former Senior Pastor of my sending church, in response to a baby's cry, light heartedly asked during the Sunday service, "Is there a baby in our midst from a Central Asian country?" That question was God's prompting in my heart back in 2014, which led to a friendship with the first Central Asian family which was attending my sending church. I made five personal mission trips to that Central Asian country to know more about it and its people, before joining SIM to serve there long term.

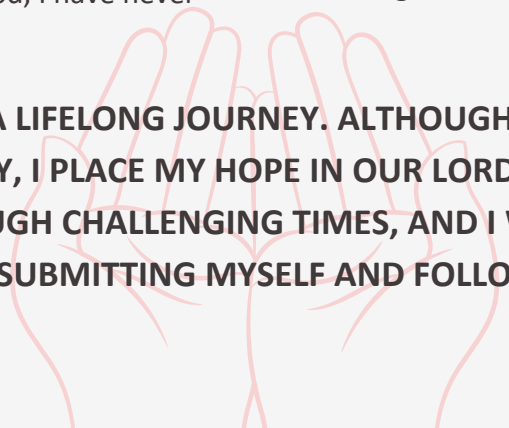
Submission to God in the field

I have been learning that submitting to God means to love Him wholeheartedly and joyfully worshipping and serving Him. In other words, submission to God is to develop an intimate relationship with Him through prayer and understanding of His Word. I have committed myself to love God wholeheartedly and to love my neighbours in the field as myself as there is no commandment greater than these (Mark 12:30-31). Ever since I submitted myself to God, I have never

looked back and have been trying my best to listen to Him, obey Him and equip myself to serve the people around me.

Submission and God's character

During my time in the field, while learning the language and serving alongside the Christian community, I have begun to understand that submission to God defines the character of God's assigned role for me. As a supporter to the church leaders and the community at large, I am reminded by the Holy Spirit often to demonstrate humility and His attributes (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control) to the people whom He has given to work alongside me. Therefore, the ways I demonstrate the attributes of the Holy Spirit are by building healthy relationships, listening attentively, praying for others, and showing care and concern for others by messaging encouraging words amidst challenging times, and fellowshiping over meals or other activities (James 4:10; Galatians 5:22). Also, I am reminded by the Holy Spirit to always be humble and have a teachable heart as I serve with others for God's kingdom.



SUBMISSION TO GOD IS A LIFELONG JOURNEY. ALTHOUGH THERE WILL BE UPS AND DOWNS ALONG THE WAY, I PLACE MY HOPE IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. I BELIEVE HE WILL SEE ME THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES, AND I WILL BE ABLE TO SERVE HIM FAITHFULLY BY SUBMITTING MYSELF AND FOLLOWING HIM ALWAYS.

Teachers from all over the world
serving with one heart



Hui Peng, Ethiopia

Making the unverifiable claim that we are submitting to God sometimes appears easier than it is to actually submit to those whom He has placed in authority. I have learnt that true submission requires a heart of humility that only God can give.

The SIM international school in Ethiopia where I taught for two years was primarily set up for missionary children. It had 300 students from kindergarten to high school and brought together teachers and students from at least sixty different countries and cultures; so, it is inevitable that there were differences in work cultures and educational philosophies. Having taught in Singapore, I went to Ethiopia with the confidence that I could contribute significantly. Imagine my shock when I entered the classroom and struggled to keep a class of just twenty-five students quiet and engaged!

Submission and Challenges

My pride made me feel that I knew what was best for the school. I felt that the teachers were too soft on the students and needed to set higher standards. I was so angry and questioned God often in my first few months in Ethiopia: Why were the students so demotivated and apathetic? Why did You call me here if none of the students felt the need for any learning support? I found it difficult to adopt to the behaviour management system implemented in the school. Although I was outwardly obeying, I still felt my strict ways were better.

Submission and Prayer

As I realised that we were not praying as much as we ought to, I joined the school's prayer team and started praying more persistently for the students and for me to have a posture of humility and submission. As I prayed, I felt God chipping away my pride, showing me my weaknesses and my need to learn from others and depend on Him. I started showing genuine concern for my students and God gave me a breakthrough when my most difficult student told me, "I understand this better now", while another student told his friends, "Ms HP is our homie (slang for friend)!"

Submission and Sincerity

As God helped me to sincerely acknowledge my colleagues' ways of relating to students and genuinely learning from them, He brought unexpected students to our lunch-time Bible study groups, students who felt safe enough to ask questions because of my colleagues' sincerity in reaching out in a more loving way than I was accustomed to.

When we learn to be humble by submitting to one another, we learn more from one another and become more effective vessels for God's use.

Many different nationalities represented
at the SIM international school



SUBMISSION MISSION AND

Remlal and Mami, Ghana

We are reminded by this verse in Ephesian 6:1-3 that says “...**first commandment with a promise...**” where God commands children to obey and honour their earthly parents in the Lord. The same is true and rightly applies to our relationship with Jesus. Without obedience and submission to God and His will, we doubt we would be able to develop a close relationship with Him at all. Perfect surrender is the only way to walk closely with Jesus, and to know Him deeper is to obey Him.

Submission and Abiding

As we stepped out and began our missionary journey by walking in obedience with him and following in His steps, we realised the importance of remaining or abiding in Jesus to find our strength and productivity. Knowing Christ is to remain in Him, and to remain in Him is to love Him, obey Him, trust Him, worship Him and to submit to Him.



Remlal & Family



Remlal with Goodnews Bible Church's pastors and leaders

Submission and Discernment

The key to surrender is prayer. Through our regular prayers (building a living relationship and fellowship with Jesus), we received the strength to surrender to His will. This deepening of our relationship with Jesus opened our hearts to His leading. Our surrender unlocked obedience and through that obedience we learnt to grow in understanding and discernment.

Submission and Servanthood

We have learnt that surrendering fully to His will is to serve others with unconditional love and humility and this manifests itself in servanthood and servant-leadership. Jesus says in Matthew 20:26 (NIV), “**Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.**” Jesus learnt obedience on earth by experiencing it. He chose the weak position of having to learn and grow. It's daily dying to self and living for Christ. Even while serving others, like Jesus we are learning daily to fully depend on God and to fully surrender to His will, so that we can say like Jesus, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work” (John 4:34).

Submission and Mission Journey

Finally, we have learnt that surrendering fully to God is a process. The path is not always easy but living a spirit-filled life under God's wisdom and grace makes this missionary journey worthwhile and meaningful to us because nothing makes sense outside the grace of God. Like Jesus we are learning daily to be confident of God's presence, stand firm in faith and not be shaken even amidst unforeseen circumstances and difficult times in our journey for Him and with Him.



New Book Recommended

In "I Will Go Where He Takes Me", Taiwanese missionary Debbie shares her journey of faith and resilience. Responding to God's call, she navigates spiritual and cultural challenges in her marriage and mission work. Her story showcases her raw courage and determination to fulfill God's mission, even amidst despair. Beyond the transformation of those she served, Debbie's journey reflects the profound goodness, mercy, and compassion of God for both the lost and His devoted servants. This inspiring book is available from SIM East Asia for SGD10. Contact: eastasia.info@sim.org

Regional Council Meeting

SIM East Asia's 33rd Regional Council Meeting for delegates from eleven SIM East Asia entities was held from 20 to 22 November 2024 in Port Dickson, Malaysia. Our keynote speaker was SIM International Director, Phil Bauman who spoke on SIM East Asia's theme verse for 2025, **"I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down (Nehemiah 6:3)."** He delivered three theme talks which were followed by times of reflection and prayer. Entity Directors' reports on their ministries were followed by times of prayer. Special talks were delivered by SIM International's Governance Consultant Mark Faus on "Governance" and Nancy Writebol on "Trauma Healing". It was truly a time of fellowship, reflection and thanks to God for His goodness and faithfulness in our ministries throughout 2024.



Spiritual Life Retreat

The Spiritual Life Retreat, 2024 for SIM East Asia home-based staff and members was held on 24 and 25 September 2024. Forty colleagues gathered for two days to learn and connect with another. The theme for the retreat was "Deepening Spirituality and Improving Effectiveness". The goal was to help every participant to know his or her working style, to understand how they could work and serve one another better and be effective within the organizations.

Gilbert So-Hoo delivered two morning devotions, emphasising on the importance of deepening our spiritual relationship with God in order to be productive or effective in our ministry for God. Dave Bremner, from SIM International, took us through the sessions on awareness of self, awareness of others, perspectives and personal application.

It was a blessed time of learning and knowing to appreciate one another's communication styles and handling of conflicts or work expectations. Reflecting on God's Word, praying and learning together helped to strengthen relationships and deepen our relationship with God and with one another.

SIM Celebrates

131st Anniversary with Theme "Stronger Together"

SIM proudly celebrated its 131st anniversary with a vibrant event themed "Stronger Together" at the Singapore Bible House on 29 November 2024. The gathering brought together supporters, partners, and community members to reflect on SIM's enduring mission and collaborative efforts in advancing the Gospel. For more details and photos, please scan the QR code!

