**Submit to God** (James 4.7)

According to some, a Roman victor would force defeated rulers to pass under a low bar to simulate their submission (= ‘send under’ in Latin). The word conjures up negative images, and seems humiliating and degrading.

It is understandable that the victor might do this – after all they would have suffered too. But this does not make it right. Revenge may be sweet, but it leaves a bitter after-taste!

This image of submission (as negative) affects how we see the concept, and it is not appealing.

Further use is found in the Bible, see Paul’s description of how husbands and wives relate to each other (**Wives, submit to your husbands** - Ephesians 5.22), also submission to the state & slaves to their masters. We tend to rebel against this notion which smacks of ownership and has great potential for corruption.

However we should also note Ephesians 5.21: **Submit yourselves to one another**, and Ephesians 5.24: **Wives must submit completely to their husbands just as the church submits itself to Christ.** Here submission becomes everyone’s experience. This does not necessarily make it more palatable.

We do use the word submit in terms of an essay to be handed in, or an item to be considered in a legal case, or sending a comment to a select committee in regard to a proposed law, but these are *papers*, not *people*.

TEXT*. People* generally do so only [1] when forced to, or possibly [2] when they trust the one submitted to. It is still a big ask, so why would we do this? Not just because it says so in the Bible, after all there are hundreds of laws we ignore, eg making appropriate sacrifices.

TEXT. But note that Jesus submitted to God – Suffering Servant, and “**but not what I want, but what you want”** (Mark 14.36). Was Jesus a special case or are we supposed to follow his example?

The Stationing Committee process has given us no presbyter – two attitudes to this: [1] trust in God and do nothing, [2] trust in God and find out what God wants us to do about it. In other words does God want us to be active or passive? Active in *his plans* not our own!

Can we let go of our own ambitions and submit to God’s ambitions for us? Presidential Team.

What will happen to the parish? What will happen in the Presidential Team process? I do not know, I submit to God (TEXT) and let him direct the courses of presbyteral leadership of the Parish and Presidential leadership of the Connexion.