

EPHESIANS

Bible Study 5:22-6:9

Questions will be posed and space will be allowed for a written response. Make every effort to answer the questions before looking below for the answer. **The answers will be in bold print at the end of the “questions” section.**

Wives and Husbands – Ephesians – 5:22-33

1. Going back to 5:21 “Submit” means “to line oneself up under . . . the word has primarily the idea of giving up one’s own right or will, i.e. ‘to subordinate one’s self. How only can we do this?
2. 5:22-33 After reading these verses...Make a “to do” list for wives and husbands. Next give the why’s for the “to do” list.

Children and Parents – Ephesians 6:1-4

3. 6:1-4 After reading these verses...Make a “to do” list for children and parents. Next give the why’s for the “to do” list.

Slaves and Masters – Ephesians 6:5-9

4. 6:5-9 After reading these verses...Make a “to do” list for slaves (employees) and masters (employers). Next give the why’s for the “to do” list.
5. What is your favorite verse/phrase in this section?

Some Answers to the above Questions:

1. It is the Spirit who empowers Christians to live in this manner. This word or concept is used in verses 21, 22, 24, 25, 28, 31.

2. Wives – Submit (22, 24) – Respect (33) (Reverence is another word for respect.)

- **(V. 22) The phrase “as to the Lord” does not put a woman’s husband in the place of the Lord. But rather it shows that a woman ought to submit to her husband as an act of submission to the Lord.**
- **(V. 23) Headship is not tyranny. We might think of the husband as the head of a marriage and the wife as the heart of a marriage (Paul uses “body”), we see that one is not more important than the other – neither can survive alone.**
- **(V. 23) As the Church’s Savior, Christ earned, so to speak, the right to his special relationship to the church.**
- **(V. 24) This verse is about being obedient for the sake of good order. Two heads would produce a monstrosity.**

Husbands – Love (25, 28, 33) – Leave father/mother...become one (31)

- It may be helpful to note at the outset that the holy writer uses twice as many words to talk about the husband's responsibilities as he does about the wife's. Paul assigns to the husband a role that is harder and that involves far greater self-sacrifice!
- (V. 25) The Word of God commands the husband to emulate Christ's sacrificial love. Besides actually laying down his life, he is called to put the needs of his wife before his own. This means even putting her need for emotional connection with him before his desire for physical gratification.
- (V. 25) To give oneself up to death for the beloved is an extreme expression of devotion toward his wife. It is more than the wife is called on to make.
- (V. 25) There are two incredible examples of love in the passages below: Exodus 32:30-32 is about Moses love for Israel even if they are being very trying at the time. Romans 9:2-3 has to do with Paul's love for his fellow Jews even as they were persecuting him
- (V. 26) "Washing with water through the word" means that The Lord Jesus died not only to bring forgiveness, but also to effect a new life of holiness in the church, which is his "bride." Paul is speaking of the sanctification of believers, begun in the sacrament of baptism and to be perfected on the last day.
- (VV. 27, 28) As Christ's love cleanses and perfects the church, so the love of a husband is busy enhancing, beautifying, and caring for his wife.
- (VV 28-31) If the husband and wife become "one flesh," then for the man to love his wife is to love himself. No normal person injures or gives pain to himself.

The Church comes from Christ, as Eve was from Adam; and this birth is the foundation of the spiritual marriage.

The word "united" means to glue or adhere in way that makes permanent.

- (V. 32) The profound truth of the union of Christ and his "bride," the church, is beyond unaided human understanding.
- (V. 33) The love and respect stated in this passage is a rephrasing and summary of the whole passage.

The love in a marriage is one that loses itself in another and that sacrifices itself. It is a love that is willing to die for another.

All comparisons fall short of an adequate definition, but a situation from the sports world can perhaps bring us a step closer to grasping the meaning of "submit." Take the case of a pitcher and catcher on a baseball team. It's a matter of assigned roles, a designated order of things. That's the essence of team play. Consider some of the following concepts:

- Both are on the same team and have the same objective.
- Both want to make their contribution to winning the game.

- The catcher calls the pitch. The pitcher “submits” to that decision. That doesn’t mean he can’t ever “shake off” a pitch or that there might not be an occasional conference at the mound, but in general, the catcher calls the pitches.
- The catcher has to know the pitcher well and calls pitches according to the strength of the pitcher so the pitcher can succeed.
- The catcher is not better than pitcher – Pitcher is given the number 1 when it comes to keeping track of plays made. The catcher is number 2.
- Nothing happens until he/she throws the ball.
- The catcher sacrifices his/her body and calls for a curve or knuckle ball (which may bounce in the dirt and hurt the catcher) if it means that that pitch will get the batter out.
- The catcher sacrifices his/her own needs by calling for something other than a fastball when a runner may be attempting to steal a base because anything less than a fastball will make it harder for the catcher to throw out the runner.
- The catcher often takes the blame for a stolen base even if the pitcher may not have done his part to keep the runner close to the base.
- The catcher knows the batter and gives a target for optimum effect.
- The catcher directs where to throw the ball on a bunt situation because he/she has the best view of the whole field.
- The catcher needs to go out and encourage the pitcher when things are not going well.
- The pitcher needs to throw the pitch called for by the catcher or risk injury to the catcher.
- The pitcher position is the most glamorous and the catcher is not glamorous at all (tools of ignorance).

By nature all of us are inclined to inject our notions of equality and our ideas of “fairness” and conclude God is imposing an unfair arrangement on women. But Paul is not talking to natural man or unregenerate people here. He is confident that his readers are filled with the Spirit and are people who understand when he urges them to submit “out of reverence for Christ.”

3 Children – Obey (1) – Honor (2)

- (V. 1) In the Greek the word means “to listen under,” carrying the clear idea of obedience to authority.
- (V. 1) Children who obey their parents find the strength and motivation to do so “in the Lord.” That is, they know it brings him pleasure.
- (V. 1) In a time when every expectation needs to be explained from every imaginable angle, obedience is commanded of children just because it is right.
- (V. 2) To honor includes two things: That children acknowledge and regard their parents as their superiors and that they accordingly submit themselves to the will of their parents.
- (V. 3) The promise attached to the commandment to honor parents originally promised long life in the Promised Land. This highlighted the family and its solidarity as crucial to Israel’s future. In our time one wonders if life is actually prolonged by the reverence and honor taught here. Isn’t it true that the more we live within the structures of

God, the less we'll know stress? And if we know less stress, might not a longer life follow?

Parents – Do not exasperate (4) – Train and instruct in the Lord (4)

- (V. 4) When Paul says “fathers” he is speaking to them in their role as the head of the household. Mothers, of course, are by no means excluded or assumed to be less active in bringing up the children.
- (V. 4) “Exasperate” means to embitter them. Examples might be are inappropriate methods of discipline; angry outbursts, lack of encouragement, praise, or affirmation; physical or verbal abuse, unreasonable expectations; comparing to other children; nagging; and making love contingent on meeting certain standards.
- (V. 4) Training and instruction may include instilling sound principles of life, training to good habits, cautioning and protecting against moral dangers, encouraging prayer, Bible reading, church going; taking pains to let them have good associates; and especially dealing with them prayfully and earnestly.

4. Slaves – Obey (5, 6) – Serve (7)

- (V. 5) By using “respect and fear” Paul is not saying it is going to be easy or comfortable. In urging the Ephesian slaves to obey their masters, Paul acknowledges that they may well be doing it literally, “with fear and trembling.” It is safe to say some anxiety may be involved.
- (V. 5-7) The last part of verse five is explained in verses six and seven. They are to render to their masters as they seek to fulfill the will of God, whose eyes behold their actions even where they evade the eyes of men.
- (V. 8) It is absolutely essential to keep in mind that Paul is writing these words to Christian slaves. These words are not directed to unregenerate people, suggesting that they can improve their status before God by good service to masters or that they can put themselves into a position where God owes them a reward. No, Paul is talking about their conscientious service as a fruit of faith.

Masters – Treat in same way (9) – Do not threaten (9)

- (V. 9) He says be careful in your conduct. Even though you are a master over your slaves, don't forget that there is in heaven someone who is your Master as well as theirs – and he doesn't play favorites.
- (V. 9) Masters should give up the traditional custom of keeping servants in obedience through fearful threats.