

Moving onto Ephesians 5:22-6:9, we will see how the Spirit leads the believer in all wisdom to understand that submission is done in accordance to the authority and order established by God. Paul provides three examples that serve to help us understand this; 1. Relationship of husband and wife 2. Relationship of parent and child 3. Relationship of master and slave. Next study, we will wrap up 5:22-33, examining the relationship between husbands and wives.

Read Ephesians 6:1-9

Eph 6:1-4 - Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. [5:21]...submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

4. The submission of 5:21 is exemplified in the command that children are to submit to the authority of their parents.

- a. How should children honour their parents and why (cf. Col 3:20)? This is the first commandment taught to children which holds a promise from God. What is this promise (cf. Ex 20:12, Deut 5:16)?
- b. Parents are to nurture their children in the Lord and not embitter them. How are parents to bring the children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (cf. Pro 22:6, Deut 6:4-9)?

Eph 6:5-9 - Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, [8] knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

5. The submission of 5:21 is further illustrated between bondservants submitting to the authority of their masters (recall the context; slaves were an integral part of the society in that age). This is a commandment from the Lord.

- a. Based on the text, how should a faithful bondservant act? Should the promise of a reward fuel us to be faithful?
- b. Paul makes it clear to the masters that the very same principles apply to them as well (v9). For the masters, they are to do well to those in submission to them and not to take advantage of them by exercising their authority unjustly. Why does Paul make this case (cf. 2 Chron 19:7)?
- c. The principles of submission outlined have parallels in to our own day, most closely witnessed in relationships between employees and employers and students and their studies. How can you practically serve God faithfully in your season of life today in light of the text?

Hosea 14:9 - Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them; for the ways of the LORD are right, and the upright walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.