

RICH *in* GRACE

Sermon Series in Ephesians

Preparing for Small Group: Read the passage below, and answer the following questions.

- (1) What do these verses tell me about God?
 - (2) What do these verses tell me about sinful humanity?
 - (3) What do these verses tell me about Jesus?
 - (4) What does God want me to know?
 - (5) What does God want me to do?
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“Total Submission”

Ephesians 5:22-6:9

Main Point: We must submit to Christ’s authority in our relationships.

Submitting to Christ in marriage (5:22-33).

- *Role of wives in marriage*
 - Wives ought to submit to their husbands as they submit to the Lord.
 - This is a picture of Christ and the church.
 - The husband is head of the wife the same way Christ is head of the Church.
- *Role of husbands in marriage*
 - Husbands love their wives like Christ loved the church:
 - Sacrificially,
 - Sanctifying, and
 - Wholeheartedly.

This passage opens up with the call for wives to submit to their husbands. This is a continuation of what Paul said in verse 21 about believers submitting to one another out of reverence to Christ. This all happens when we are filled with the Spirit, as Paul stated in verse 18. This passage paints the picture of God's perfect plan for marriage and the way God has intended for it to be lived out daily. Both the husband and wife is called to submit to the authority of Christ and to let His love flow in and through their marriage.

1. How does the illustration of marriage as a picture of Christ and the church give purpose and hope for marriage?
2. How might a husband display “sacrificial love” practically?
3. How might a husband display “sanctifying love” practically?
4. Why do some react negatively to Paul’s instruction to wives? How would you answer their objections to the concept of “submitting?”

Submitting to Christ in family (6:1-4).

- *Role of children in the family*
 - Obey parents
 - Honor father and mother

- *Role of parents*

- Do not provoke your children to anger.
- Bring up children in discipline and instruction of the Lord.

The key to having a family that glorifies God is to submit to Christ's authority over our families. Scripture clearly outlines the way God intended for families to relate to one another. Children are to obey and to honor their parents. Parents are to raise their children in the instruction of the Lord.

1. What motivation, goals, and hope do believers have when they care for their children? How are they different from those of non-Christians?
2. Why is it important to set a Christ-like example for your children?
3. What are some ways a parent might provoke his or her child(ren) to anger? How could those same situations be handled better?

Submitting to Christ in the workplace (5-9).

- *Role of the employee*

- Obey your employer with a sincere heart.
- Work as a servant for Christ.

- *Role of the employer*

- Do not threaten employees.
- Submit yourselves to your heavenly Master.

Paul dealt with slavery as it was a huge influence in the culture of the time. About a third of the population in Ephesus were slaves. The text deals with the relationship of slaves and their masters as they were an integral part of the household. We can relate this to our workplaces today. As an employee, are you submitting and working diligently in your vocation as you are working for Christ himself? Those in leadership positions, are you treating those under your authority the way that Jesus treats others?

1. How should this passage change the way we work? Explain.
2. How can the way we work in our vocation build our relationship with Jesus and glorify Him?
3. How does this passage tell leaders to treat those under their authority in the workplace?
4. Spend some time in prayer asking God to use you in your workplace, and pray for those in the group who may be struggling in their work environment.