

Ephesians: God's Spiritual People

By LifeWay Press

Blessing in Christ

Jesus told a parable about a tenant farmer whose plow turned up buried treasure in a field (Matt. 13:44). The man immediately sold his possessions in order to buy the field. By owning the field, he owned the buried treasure. Once in possession of the field, the man could spend his days discovering how rich he had become. Believers are in possession of a great treasure, the indwelling Christ. We came into possession of a great treasure the day we were saved. We will spend the rest of our days discovering how rich we are in Christ. Studying the Book of Ephesians will bring many of God's spiritual blessings into focus and help us to benefit from them in everyday life.

Spiritual Relationships

Read Ephesians 5:22-6:9 (NIV)

Wives and Husbands (v.22-33)

Responsibility of Wives (5:22-24)

Why is Paul's words to wives one of the most misunderstood and misapplied verses in the Bible?

Responsibilities of Husbands (5:25-33)

Paul carefully described the relationship of a godly husband toward his wife. What should be the nature of the wife's response to her husband in light of this analogy?

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How can a self-centered husband abuse Paul's exhortation to wives? How can wives miss the posing of submission as Paul presented it?

How does agape describe the husband's love for his wife? How is agape superior to family affection or sexual passion? What example does Christ's love for the church set for the husband?

What specific things did Christ do that made His bride, the church, presentable? What is the basic lesson for the husband in analogy?

How is it possible for husbands to love their wives "as their own bodies" (5:28; Gen. 2:24)? How does this compare with Christ's love for His church?

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Children and Parents (6:1-4)

Responsibilities of Children (6:1-3)

Why do you think Paul was dealing only with children whose parents were believers?
How did Jesus deal with children and unbelieving parents in a family? (See Matt. 10:21)

How do children obey their parents “in the Lord”?

Paul supported his statement to the children that it was “right” for them to obey their parents. How would you explain the promise attached to the Fifth Commandment, “Honor your father and your mother” (Ex. 20:12)?

Responsibilities of Parents (6:4)

When Paul spoke specifically to fathers, was he absolving mothers of the admonition not to stir up anger in their children unnecessarily? If not, why didn't he say, “parents”?

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How can parents unwittingly “stir up anger” in their children? Explain why approach proves to be unhealthy both socially and spiritually?

What distinction would you draw between the “training” and the “instruction” of children?

Masters and Slaves (6:5-9)

Responsibilities of Slaves (6:5-8)

What is the difference between our concept of family and the New Testament term household in regard to slave and masters?

In verse 5 Paul specified “human” masters in his instructions to slaves. What was the one goal a Christian slave should have had in regard to his human master?

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How did Paul's instruction that slaves serve their masters "with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of heart" translate into the employer-employee relationship today?

Responsibilities of Masters (6:9)

How does God rank individuals, whether they are employers or employees?

What is absent in heavenly justice that was prevalent in Roman law?