

Ephesians Ch 6 Vs 1-9

(Submitting to one another) Part 3

This morning we'll be concluding the section that deals with mutual submission one to another, submitting to one another in the fear of God as the results of or the outcropping of being filled with the Holy Spirit. and The 2 key scriptures that set the context of particular biblical principal in our current text being Ch 5 vs 18 and 21.

We find that the Holy Spirit through Paul the apostle upon commanding believers not to be drunk with wine but rather in contrast "be being kept filled" with the Spirit that He immediately began to show how that would work out right down where the rubber meets the road in the everyday practical workings of our lives right where we spend the majority of our time that being in the home and in the work place.

So far we've examined the role that God has ordained for the wife as her service unto the Lord, as an aspect of her worship of the Lord, that being submission to her husband, allowing him out of her love for the Lord to function in the role that God has called him to as the head of the home, the priest of the home, the one who will stand to give an account for the home. Being compassionate with him understanding that he's been given the call to die to self and live not for his own best interest and well being but rather for the eternal best interest of his wife and family.

We've studied the role of the husband and how it is that he is to submit to his wife, not by removing himself from the office that God has ordained for him but through loving her as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her. When Paul wrote to the wives under the unction of the Holy Spirit commanding the wives to be subject to their own husbands in everything, he didn't then command the husbands to order them in what to do.

The natural mind would work that way, OK guys you have their submission, now tell them how to live or what they're supposed to be doing, but that's not the way the Lord develops the balance of the home life at all. Because there is no balance in that, there's only dictatorship, what the Lord says is rather Ok guys you have their submission and their full attention, now *love them* even as I have loved you and given My life away for you. Love her sacrificially, love her sanctifyingly, love her so as to nurture her and care for her, and love her faithfully and unbreakably, no matter what she is or isn't, how she looks or doesn't look, or does or doesn't do. Because even as the church submits to me and I love the church so your relationship is to be with your wife, it's not based upon merit, it's based upon grace. It's a great mystery but marriage demonstrates the intimate unbreakable union that Christ shares with His church. So love your own wives as yourself and wives see that you respect your husbands.

So the relationship concerning the husband and wife in the home has been dealt with, which necessarily had to be 1st because how can you raise your children in a way that's proper and godly unless you've been trained in what's proper and godly 1st. and So having dealt with the parental roles a little bit in regards to the husband wife relationship and their mutual submission one to another and establishing godly order in the home the Holy Spirit through Paul turns His attention to the children; the family and the job, the work environment.

The focus for children is on obedience to their parents, and honoring their mother and father, the focus for the parents in the relationship (in light of submitting to one another) being not provoking or exasperating their children but instead to lead them and train them up in the admonition of the Lord. Godliness in child raising, that's what this passage speaks of for parents, in today's western world secular philosophies for raising children is the dominating ever-increasing pressure that we are confronted with. "Don't suppress little Johnny's ego let him express himself. You're snuffing out his personality and creativity."

The bible doesn't teach that, the bible teaches that children need to learn obedience, not indulgence. God has no desire to suppress anyone's ego, He wants to crucify them and give a whole new way to think and reason to live, and in short a whole new life all together. Because when a child is left to his or her own to "develop" how ever it seems best to him or her, to do what's right in their own eyes, the end result of that is going to be along the lines of disobedience, rebellion, and contempt, or disrespect. Which then begins to result in the moral degradation, and breakdown of that particular society. Because the bible says, "*There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*" "*The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.*" and Again Prov 30:12, "*There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness.*"

Surely we're living in America in such a generation as this, everyman doing what seems right in his own eyes, society pressuring parents to not snuff out the personality of the children through discipline and the results have been utter chaos and a country that leaves you scared to walk the streets alone at night. But what is all of this pointing to? The Lord's soon return, 2 Tim 3:1-4, "*But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.*" Sounds like everyday in the good ol' U. S. of A. doesn't it? So look up brothers and sisters, for your redemption is drawing near.

So let's plunge into these 1st 4 vs and then we'll take a look at the believers place in the working environment.

Vs1-3

Children obey your parents in the Lord; this is the child's aspect of worship and service to the Lord, his or her obeying of their parents. and Who qualifies as a child? Well certain aspects of this would apply to anyone who has parents that are still alive as we'll see, but in respect to this command I believe that it would pretty much include from 0 on up right into and through the majority if not all of the teen years (as much as teen-agers despise hearing that) and possibly in some cases even longer.

If you're still living with mom and dad and they are providing for you, then you need to be obedient to them. Now obviously in some respects the line begins to blur a little bit as your child begins to grow a little older in the upper teen yrs and all, due to the fact that they are growing increasingly accountable in their own personal lives before the Lord. and So even though you've been placed over your child as God's agent in their lives and the children are to see you as such, though again many times children see their parents as a hindering force in their lives. But God would have you to see your parents as key strategic influence in your life, to instruct you in ways that will ultimately culminate in your own personal walk of holiness and godliness before the Lord.

Parents need to understand that as your child grows older there is an increasing responsibility *and* freedom that comes into their lives whereby even though they're still to honor you (as we'll see in a minute) as they approach adulthood God will hold them personally accountable. We need to be sensitive to that lest we even unintentionally begin to prohibit something God is dealing with them on or leading them in as individual young adults. But the command to children is very simple to understand, "*children, obey your parents in the Lord.*" Now, let's consider this word "obey", it's the Greek word, "hupakouo (hoop-ak-oo'-o);" which literally means, "to hear under" and it carries with it the meaning of listening intently with the intentions of responding positively to the instruction given.

Or to understand it another way it simply means that children are to put themselves under the authority and instruction of their parents. Now once again (not to over emphasize it) because I don't believe that in can be over emphasized, understand that the qualifying phrase in this vs by which the children are to obey their parents is "in the Lord." Unfortunately we're living in a time as we mentioned earlier that the scriptures regard as "perilous". A time where people have given themselves over to unnatural affections and as a result there are many children who live in completely ungodly homes.

So we deal with children who have been sexually abused by their parents (a sin whereby if there were varying degrees would have to be one of the worst that could be committed). and This is the type of trauma that can scar a person for their entire lives and only the love and grace and mercy of Jesus Christ can alleviate and erase the pain and hurt and damage that takes place in a sexually abused child. Or you come across people who's parents may've used them to traffic drugs for them, and or have many times in similar environments brought home various partners to have relations with with the kids right there in plain sight.

We also come across kids who come to church and receive the Lord and then the parents begin to punish them because they're Christians, they don't know how to handle it, "before my child was on drugs but at least I knew what was wrong with him, and I could relate to him, but now I can't even understand him." This is one that for the life of me I've never been able to reason through, we come across parents (Christian parents mind you) that punish their kids by not letting them come to church. and They say things like, "well, that's something my child really enjoys and so that's what we're using to punish them." So you're child has done something deserving of punishment, that wasn't godly in it's happening and so to deal with it you're going to remove them from further godly influence and the teaching of the word of God? That just doesn't register to me, if you're worried about what's going on before or after the service or the youth group meeting drive them up here stay with them until the meeting starts. and Be here waiting for them when their services are over, but many times it's just that that's too much of an inconvenience for the parents and rather than just crucify the flesh it's easier just to say, "you can't go."

But again to get back to the main point children (just like employers to employees or governors to governed) are to be obedient to their parents "in the Lord" as is fitting, "in the Lord." If they make ungodly demands of you then you must obey God over man, now if you're grounded from youth group I'm not saying run away from home on Tuesday night and tell your folks that you have to obey God, because their intent isn't to damage your spiritual walk. But what I am saying is that you're by no means bound to subject yourself to any form of sexual abuse, drug trafficking, or watching and or being apart of any other ungodly morally debased activity.

There is a higher law and a higher word than your parents and that's God's. But you're to obey your parents "*in the Lord.*" Why? I would venture to say that there is nearly a universal question and answer forum or discussion that takes place at some point in every home between a child and a parent and it runs virtually the same worldwide. The parent gives the child an instruction and tells him or her to do what they say and the question follows, why? Then the universal answer is given, "because I said so!" and Man that used to grade on me as a kid and irritate me and waited for years to become a parent so that I could exercise the right not to have to explain myself and tell my child to do something "because I said so!"

But you know, the Lord has been showing me (as slow of heart to receive that I am) that that's really, though not invalid, but it's really not accurate or the best response as a parent. There's a reason you're child needs to follow your direction and my child needs to follow my direction and I need to explain that reason why to them, and the reason is this simple according to the scriptures, "*for this is right.*" You see God gives a reason so we needn't withhold that from them, Col 3:20 says, "*Children, obey your parents in all things, (why) for this is well pleasing to the Lord.*"

You see this is your service as unto the Lord, now again I remind you that the word “obey” here isn’t the same word that’s used in vs 22 that’s been translated as “submit” in vs 22 for the wives. The wives are co-equal; the children are more or less on a sub-servant level, the parent more or less standing in the gap (for lack of a better term) between their child and the Lord until such time as the child matures to a level whereby they have developed a full personal relationship with the Lord themselves.

But your obedience as a child it “right” that is, it’s the right thing to do, it’s righteous behavior, it’s what’s right in the sight of God. Now the opposite of righteous behavior is unrighteous behavior, which is in this context *disobedience*, it’s what’s wrong in the sight of God. and Under the OT law the break down of society through the rebellion of the children to their parents was vehemently dealt with in a radical way. Turn with me to Duet ch 21 (Vs 18-21) (read).

So rebellion to parents as far as God was concerned under the law, was a capital offense, so thanks be to God that we’re under grace and not law. But the point is, is that God considers rebellion to be a very serious offense, because the *right* position of a child is to be in obedience to the godly edicts or instructions of his or her parents. What makes it right? The fact that God commands it and any command of God is a right command simply because it’s God who commanded it. Ps 19:8 says, “*The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.*” Ps 119:75 “*I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are right.*” and Again, Hos 14:9 “*Who is wise? Let him understand these things. Who is prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the LORD are right; The righteous walk in them, But transgressors stumble in them.*”

Now, parents that means (on the flip side of this whole thing) that if they are to be obeying you, you are to be instructing them and we’ll talk a little more about that in a minute, but they need to learn obedience, and there’s a big picture here in regards to training them up in holiness and godliness. That’s that It’s absolutely essential that a parent teach their child obedience, even when they don’t understand, or it may not seem right even though you know otherwise and they can’t understand it or even when they don’t want to. Why, so that the child will grow knowing how to obey God even when he doesn’t understand everything or doesn’t want to, or it doesn’t make sense or seem fair. Because obedience is right.

Vs2

So not only are children to be obedient to their parent, but their also to have the right attitude in the act that they’re being instructed in. We’re speaking here about respect, we’re to honor our father and mother, hold them in high regard. Again respect for parents is of such importance to the Lord that under the Law we read in Ex 21:15, “*he who strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.*” How many talk shows today hold interviews with families where the mother or in some cases even the father is terrified of their 12yr old child because they’re always threatening them or hitting them, calling them names and cursing at them.

Lev 20:9 says, “*Everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood shall be upon him.*” When God 1st introduced His written Law in the form of the 10 Commandments the 1st 4 dealt with mans relationship with God. The next set of 6 dealt with mans relationship with fellow man and the 1st law given in regards to human relationships was, “*honor your father and your mother that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*” and The person who grows up with a sense of respect for and obedience to his parents will have the *foundation* for respecting the authority of other leaders and the rights of other people in general.
(MacArthur)

So as to where obedience has to do with action, honor has to do with attitude. and In that we’re to honor our parents all the days of our lives, and in the latter years of a parents life your honoring them may result in actions on their behalf. You may need to financially help your parents as they get older and are no longer really able to support themselves, that’s one way that you honor them, as they grow older.

Paul told Timothy in regards to the church, “*Honor widows who are really widows. (In other words tend to their financial needs) But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.*” and Then he goes on to define who qualifies as a widow. You remember that Jesus rebuked the Pharisees concerning not taking care of their parents. We Read in Matt 15 where the Pharisees were reprimanding the Lord because his disciples weren’t properly washing their hands according to tradition. and They said, “*Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.*” He answered and said to them, “*Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God"-- then he need not honor his father or mother.' Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.*”

So in other words by you not taking care of your parents if they have need and you have the means to tend to it, you’re in effect dishonoring them. But to bring it all back into perspective the children need to learn obedience and honor from their parents, the parents are called to teach them these things. and Parents the proverbs are just full of practical lessons for you to teach your kids, Prov 1:8 “*My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother.*” Not that parents are infallible, but they’re God’s primary source for training and authority for the child.

Again Prov 4:1-4, *“Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding; For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law. When I was my father's son, Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother, He also taught me, and said to me: "Let your heart retain my words; Keep my commands, and live.”* You see the father taught his son what his dad had taught him, and that's what God desires, that one generation be faithful to the next in passing on His word and desires for our lives. One more Prov 3:1-2, *“My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you.”* Which leads us into the 2nd aspect and benefit of honoring your mother and father, because we read that it's the 1st commandment with promise.

Vs3

and It's not that this is some supernatural mystical guarantee, nor is it saying that every person who dies young has had a disorderly relationship with their parents. It just means that your life will be lived out to the degree which God intended not being cut short due to the reaping of seeds sown in rebellion. Because often times when children don't obey and honor their parents it can become chaotic, and many times it can lead to a strained relationship making for many unfortunate circumstances in life. Things not good and things don't go well, and at times due to the fact that they grow up unbridled they wind up doing things that had they heeded their parents they wouldn't have done, be it in criminal behavior or whatever and as a result, how many times are the lives of young people cut short due to that fact. Well (Vs2-3 read)

So this is the role for the Spirit filled child, obedience and honor to their parents, you recall that Samuel's relationship with the Lord started when he was very young. David was the same way and we read that John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit from the womb and so God desires to fill young people with His Spirit and begin to conform them to the image of *His* Son and use them in mighty ways. Now for parents role.

Vs4

Now the word that's been translated “fathers” here is the same word that was translated in Heb 11:23 as “parents”. Now in the context here with the father being the head of the home we see the reason and understandably so for the translation to fall to the fathers. But mothers don't think that you're exempt here both parents can easily be party to provoking their children. The word “provoke” meaning to anger or enrage, it carries the idea of a “repeated on going pattern of treatment that gradually builds up a deep-seated anger and resentment that boils over in outward hostility.” (MacArthur)

A Number of things can result in provocation be it in holding something just out of their grasp and every time they reach for it you snatch it away until they just get so mad they're ready to explode. and Many times it's done just for a laugh, yet the bible says it's wrong, be it in showing favoritism or comparing one child with another. It might come through pushing certain goals and achievements on them that you never were able to reach and their just unrealistic for your child. Inconsistent instruction can provoke a child. A child can be provoked by being continually condemned and never commended, always being discouraged and never encouraged, always put down and never praised. Physical and or verbal abuse, there are many, many ways that you and I can provoke our children, the bottom line is that we're not to do it, you might just simply understand it as don't be in anyway cruel to your children but rather... (2nd 1/2).

So the contrast is given, don't entice them into the flesh, but rather encourage them and exhort them unto the Lord. Deut 6:7, Concerning the statutes of God's word, "*You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.*" Bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord, this is how the parents serve the children, by bringing them up, meaning to nourish and care for them, it's the same word that's been translated in vs 29 of ch 5 as "nourish" so nourish them and tend to them not through being cruel but rather by training (that word carrying the idea of disciplining) and instruction of the Lord.

Tend to them; if they need the board of education brought to the seat of learning then bring it to them in the fear of God. Prov 29:15 says, "*The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.*" Now I would tell you that I do not believe that it is wise to discipline your child while you are in a fit of rage or all heated up yourself. A man once said, (D Martin Lloyd Jones) "*When you are disciplining a child, you should have first controlled yourself. . . What right have you to say to your child that he needs discipline when you obviously need it yourself?*"

But there are times when a child needs discipline Prov 22:15 "*Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him.*" Prov 29:17 "*Correct your son, and he will give you rest; Yes, he will give delight to your soul.*" Prov 13:24 "*He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.*" and Of course Prov 22:6, "*Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.*" and So even as the Lord chastens and disciplines those whom He loves, there are times when your child will need proper (and I emphasize proper) discipline.

The bible doesn't give a license to beat children or to strike them wherever you feel like it, God has designed a cushy little pad on children where proper discipline is to be administered, and again that's not striking them with assault type force, but they need to know that improper behavior brings about unpleasant results. and Again ultimately it's to lead them in obedience and proper respect even to the Lord and the word of God, they are to be trained through discipline and instruction in both word and deed by their parents, parents are to be examples of godliness to their children. (Let's briefly consider these last few vs.)

Vs5

Now we would liken this to the employee/employer relations, and understand that Paul's ministry wasn't to overthrow the political position of the Roman institutions and government, but rather to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and Bring lost souls into the kingdom and so to him, slavery wasn't the main issue, people knowing Christ and being conformed into His image and desires was, and when people come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ all the peripheral issues will be worked out.

But for us the point is that as employees we're to show proper respect to our employers, the emphasis being "in sincerity of heart" why because it's the employee's service as unto Christ. The work place is where (other than in the home) they're to serve the Lord. How? By serving their employers, even if their not good bosses 1 Peter 2:18-19 "*Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.*"

Vs6

Don't only give it your all while the boss is watching, because the Lord is always watching and He's the one we're aiming to please, it just happens to be a bonus for our earthly bosses. and Not only that I'm sure you noticed that being submissive and subservient to your boss is the will of God for you and He would have you function and serve in His will from the heart.

Vs7

Not with bad attitude, bemoaning every minute of it, but with goodwill, again because it's to the Lord that you serve not to men.

Vs8

Maybe you think you're not getting the pay you're worth, Paul is encouraging you here to know that God will reward you absolutely accurately eternally, your true pay will be given to you in heaven.

Vs9

We'll maybe talk a little more about these scriptures next week but the main thrust is that employers need to understand that God has placed them there in order that they might be a blessing to those who are under them. You see "do the same things unto them" if you want the best out of your employees, then you need to do your best for them, you want them to respect you, then you need to respect them, and don't throw your weight around because your Master is in heaven and it wouldn't be good if He began to toss His weight around with you.

So do what's right by your employees, give them a proper wage and don't play favorites, again knowing that there's no partiality with your Master in heaven. If you want quality work, treat them like quality employees. and So that's the basic balance of how mutual submission one to another in the Christian arena is to be lived out in the home and the work place as the result of being filled with the Spirit of God.