

# Ephesians

## Chapter 6:1-9

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- **Ephesians 6:1-9**

We continue to study Paul's instruction on specific relationships within the body of Christ. After speaking generally to all Christians in 5:21, he gives specific instruction to wives and husbands. Here he speaks to the relationship between children and parents as well as the relationship between slaves and masters.

*1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*

*2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise:*

*3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."*

- Again, Paul gives direct instruction where instruction is necessary. The children are instructed to obey their his wife "...as Christ loved the Church", so too the children are constrained by this same parameter. However, the children must be taught to do this very thing by their parents.
- Children are told to obey their parents by Paul because the Decalogue says that children are to honor their parents. Why the difference? Obedience is the expression of the honor. We do not show our honor in our hearts alone nor should your children think that their honor can be demonstrated only within the unseen parts of their heart. The actions are an indication of the honor in their heart.
- We have developed this notion that children are only required to submit to good parents. If parents are not being good parents, then the state must become surrogate parents. This is wrong. Instead of giving children permission to disobey their parents we should proclaim the gospel to parents.
- Children honor their parents by obeying them. When children grow up and become married, they move out from under the jurisdiction of their parents but they are stilled required to honor their parents.

*4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.*

- Paul very clearly understands that fathers have a temptation to exasperate their children. Paul instructs husbands to not do so but rather to bring them up in the teachings of the Lord. A loving, righteous father will consider the frame of his child and not demand beyond the child's capacity. Notice how the Lord does this for us:

*Ps 103:13-14 "As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. (NKJ)*

*5 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ;*

*6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,*

*7 with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men,*

*8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.*

- The "That-Was-Then, This-Is-Now" Trap is a common tool used to defend many things. Whether it's homosexuality or women priests, the purpose for the argument is to get someone to think that because times have changed it is OK for our doctrine to

change as well.

The Bible never condemns or prohibits the institution of slavery but rather it gives instruction on when it could occur. In both the Old and New Testaments instruction is given on who could be slaves and about how slaves and masters should act. So, if asked, "Do you believe in slavery?" we should respond yes, as biblically defined and as the law of the land would allow.

***Lev. 25:42-46 'For they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. 'You shall not rule over him with rigor, but you shall fear your God. 'And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have-- from the nations that are around you, from them you may buy male and female slaves. 'Moreover you may buy the children of the strangers who dwell among you, and their families who are with you, which they beget in your land; and they shall become your property. 'And you may take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them as a possession; they shall be your permanent slaves. But regarding your brethren, the children of Israel, you shall not rule over one another with rigor. (NKJ)***

***1 Cor 7:21-24 Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave. You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called. (NKJ)***

- Slaves are told to be diligently obedient to their masters as bondservants of Christ irrespective of whether their masters are harsh or not. Peter further explains the blessings of being persecuted when doing right.

***1 Peter 2:18-25 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. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness-- by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.***

***9 And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him. (NKJ)***

- As with all of the other relationships which Paul has given instruction, masters are told to treat his servants the way the Lord does, with justice and fairness. Colossians 4:1 gives us further clarification:

***Col. 4:1 Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.***