

FAMILY MATTERS

EPHESIANS – PART 10

Introduction – As Christians we live out our faith in the most intimate ways as part of a family. First century society had strict codes of conduct for husbands, wives, children, and household slaves. Paul brings a Christ-centered and creational perspective to these relationships.

A. Mutual Submission Is the Controlling Principle

Ephesians 5:21-24

1. The idea of mutual submission undermines a purely hierarchical and authoritarian view of these relationships.
2. Our reverence for Christ gives us the motivation not to be selfish or controlling.
3. Wives are called to mirror their loving submission to Christ in their relationship with their husbands.
4. Marriage is not a democracy where we demand our rights, but a place of Christ-like service.

B. A Husband Is Called to Lead His Family Like Jesus Leads

Ephesians 5:25-33

1. Christ led by serving, not exercising authority over others.

Matthew 20:25-28

2. Christ, as head of the Church, leads by example and says “Come follow me.”
3. The goal of Christ is to transform the Church into a radiant spouse, which is the model for a husband’s leadership.
4. The creational purpose of marriage is for the two to become one. This requires leaving our family of origin and becoming united to one another (Genesis 2:24).
5. Male culture speaks the language of respect while the female culture speaks the language of love. We must learn each other’s language.

C. The First Great Commission Was for Couples to Have Children They Rear to Be Rulers of Creatures and Creation (Genesis 1:27-28)

Ephesians 6:1-4

1. Children are to honor and obey their parents.
2. The fifth commandment states *Honor your father and mother, as the Lord your God commands you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you* (Deuteronomy 5:16).
3. Fathers need to play a more active role in childrearing. They must have reasonable expectations for their children and not exasperate them. They must train their children to have a disciplined mind, attitude, and behavior. They must accompany discipline with instruction that teaches children the “why” of things.

D. Treatment of Those Outside the Nuclear Family That Work for Us (Household Slaves)

Ephesians 6:5-9

1. Slaves were challenged to have a Christ-like attitude and behavior toward their master/employer, instead of a bitter and resentful one.
2. We must remember to choose a godly work ethic, since we are all slaves of Christ who seek his approval and reward.
3. Masters/Employers must treat slaves/employees in a Christ-like manner also, which means no threatening or favoritism.

Conclusion – The fundamental building block of all societies is their families. This is especially true for the Church. As Spirit-filled people we are in the character-shaping business, and our families are the finished product.