

Devotional Guide
Submission and Authority
Ephesians 6:1 – 9

Monday

Ephesians 6:1-3; Exodus 20:12;

This passage describes the responsibility of children to obey their parents. The Greek word translated “obey” means “to listen, attend to, heed, obey”. The Greek word translated “honor” comes from a word meaning “to affix the value or price”.

Think about it: Why should a child obey his or her parents? What are the benefits of doing so? Are children instructed to obey their parents only if the parents are believers?

Prayer: For a submissive spirit that honors parents. Pray for our church families, that they would be full of love and respect.

Tuesday

Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21; Proverbs 19:18; 29:17; Hebrews 12:5

In Ephesians 6:4, fathers are instructed not to provoke their children to wrath; in the parallel passage in Colossians 3:21, fathers are warned not to exasperate their children. However, fathers are to exercise discipline in the Lord.

Think About It: What are some ways that fathers exasperate their children and provoke them to wrath? What characterizes discipline “in the Lord”, in contrast to just “discipline”? What should be the intent of discipline?

Prayer: for wisdom in the exercise of discipline in the Lord.

Wednesday

Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 11:19; Psalm 78:4; 2 Timothy 3:15

Fathers are to instruct their children in the Lord. A Swiss study conducted in the 1990’s emphasizes the importance of the father’s example in instructing children: *The Demographic Characteristics of National Minorities in Certain European States*, edited by Werner Haug: It is the religious practice of the father of the family that, above all, determines the future attendance at or absence from church of the children. If both father and mother attend regularly, 33 percent of their children will end up as regular churchgoers, and 41 percent will end up attending irregularly. Only a quarter of their children will end up not practicing at all. If the father is irregular and mother regular, only 3 percent of the children will subsequently become regulars themselves, while a further 59 percent will become irregulars. . . if the father is regular but the mother irregular or non-practicing. . . the percentage of children becoming regular goes up from 33 percent to 38 percent with the irregular mother and to 44 percent with the non-practicing, as if loyalty to father’s commitment grows in proportion to mother’s laxity, indifference, or hostility.

Think About It: The study quoted above was conducted in Switzerland in the 1990’s. Do you think it has any relevance to American culture? Why or why not? What would account for the strong effects of a father’s example?

Prayer: For fathers in our church to teach by precept and example.

Thursday

Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22

The modern day equivalent of “master-slave” relationships is found in the workplace. Today we call it “Employer-employee” or “labor-management.”

Think about it: What imperative verbs govern the relationships between servants and masters? Based on the Scripture references for today, what does a godly employee look like? What spiritual challenges are involved in following the biblical imperatives for being a good servant? Am I following the biblical imperatives?

Prayer: For the grace to be a good testimony in the workplace.

Friday

Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:23 – 4:1; Leviticus 25:43; Job 31:13 - 15

Masters – bosses – are to do the same for those under their authority as they expect to have done for them: namely, the will of God, as servants of Christ.

Think About It: What makes a godly “boss”? How does an employer best serve his or her employees? Why should an employer be concerned about this?

Prayer: For those in authority to recognize and fulfill their responsibility to those under their authority, and to God.

Saturday

Colossians 4:5-6; Matthew 10:16; Mark 4:11

Colossians 4:5 – 6 adds to the relationships described in Ephesians 5 and 6 the dynamic of the relationship between those inside the church (believers, Christians) and those outside (unbelievers, the unchurched.)

Think about it: What imperatives are placed on me as an “insider” in my relationships with outsiders? Are there any imperatives placed on outsiders?

Prayer: For my speech to be seasoned with salt in my conversations with unbelievers. Pray for the evangelistic outreach of our church that goes on through the ministry of each member in contact with unbelieving friends.

Sunday

Ephesians 5:21; Philippians 2:3; 1 Peter 5:5

Ephesians 5:21 introduced the topic of relationships between husbands and wives, children and parents, slaves and masters covered in the latter verses of Ephesians 5 and the first section of Ephesians 6. Their key word is submission.

Think about it: do I have a submissive spirit? Where are my areas of rebellion?

Prayer: For the “peace of Zion” – the unity and fellowship of our congregation.