

## **The Epistle to the Ephesians**

Prepared by William S.H. Piper, D.D.

For Rogma International, Inc.

Copyright 2001 by Rogma International, Inc. All rights reserved.

---

---

### **THE SPIRIT-FILLED FAMILY**

Ephesians 5:1 – 6:9

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Sadly, we are living at a time when godly, biblically oriented homes are exceedingly rare. Nevertheless, thinking people everywhere readily acknowledge that a happy, well-managed home is the backbone of civilization.

It is interesting to note that the apostle Paul does not let that fact escape him. Rather, in this masterful, doctrinal Epistle to the Ephesians, he devotes almost an entire chapter to the problems and responsibilities involved in family relationships.

You will note, of course, that I am calling this lesson “The Spirit-Filled Family.” That is precisely what Paul is emphasizing in this passage. In Ephesians 5:18, he writes, “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” He then proceeds to describe the normal actions of Spirit-filled Christians in general and wives, husbands, children, fathers, servants and masters in particular.

Please understand, there is no way all the complex domestic problems and relationships in today’s society can be discussed or resolved in one comparatively short lesson. However, I believe and I pray that the lesson will prove to be an invaluable blessing to you.

#### **IMPORTANCE OF THIS LESSON**

- ❑ This lesson is being written, not simply to help you understand this chapter in Ephesians, but to help you develop and establish a truly happy home.
- ❑ The lesson does not describe how things are in today’s modern home and society but how things are supposed to be in a dedicated, mutually submissive, Spirit-controlled marriage and family.

---

### **THE LESSON**

#### **I. THE SPIRIT-FILLED WIFE**

It should be kept in mind that when Paul writes of being Spirit-filled, he has in mind every member of the family. Wives, husbands, children, fathers, servants, and masters all are to speak to themselves in Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. All are to sing and make melody in their hearts to the Lord. All are to give thanks always for all things and all are to submit themselves one to another in the fear of God.

Therefore, while Paul strongly teaches the need for wives to be submissive to their husbands, it should be kept in mind that submissiveness is a characteristic of every Spirit-filled believer.

The phrase “in the fear of God” (Ephesians 5:21), provides the basis and the reason for mutual submission. If we all held God in such reverential awe that we would not willfully displease Him in any way, we would all gladly submit to His will in every relationship of life.

A. *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord* (Ephesians 5:22).

1. Evidently, the need for absolute loyalty to one husband was prevalent in Paul’s day. The phrase your “own husband,” is found in Ephesians 5:24, Colossians 3:18, and 1 Peter 3:1, 5.

Why? Why is this need for and call to absolute devotion and loyalty to one man?

Keep before you that in this passage of scripture, Paul is likening the relationship of husband and wife to Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5:32). So, just as Christ desires His bride to be submissive, loyal and clean (Ephesians 5:27), so wives are here exhorted to be submissive and loyal to their husbands.

B. *Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing* (Ephesians 5:24).

1. The phrase “in everything” raises a problem. The phrase must be limited to everything that is not contrary to the evident will of God. In no way would or could a holy God require a godly wife to submit to unholy commands by an arrogant, domineering husband.
  2. However the Spirit-filled wife will keep in view the first part of Ephesians 5:24, “Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands....” Every Spirit-filled believer is completely submitted to Christ and this is the example the wife is to follow.
- C. *...and the wife see that she reverence her husband* (Ephesians 5:33).  
The thought here is that it is the responsibility of the Spirit-filled wife to give recognition to and show respect for her husband as the God-ordained head of the family. She should never usurp his authority or disregard God’s directives for a happy Spirit-filled family.
- D. Why are wives to be submissive?  
Man’s authority was established in the Garden of Eden.
1. Satan deceived Eve (Genesis 3:1-6).
  2. Eve gave the forbidden fruit to Adam (Genesis 3:6).
  1. Consequently, God said to Eve, ”In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Genesis 3:16).
  4. The woman was deceived, not Adam. “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For...Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Timothy 2:11-14).
  5. God made the woman to be a help to the man (Genesis 2:18, 1 Corinthians 11:9). The woman was taken out of man, not the man out of the woman (Genesis 2:23). God placed the woman in subjection because she, not Adam, was deceived by Satan and led the way to the fall and ruin of the human race (1 Timothy 2:11-14).
  6. “Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 11:11). In other words, both have need of the other, and as you will see, the man has a great responsibility toward his wife.

## II. THE SPIRIT-FILLED HUSBAND

One thing that must be kept in mind is that Paul is not dealing with improper, unscriptural marital relationships that exist in many situations today even among professing Christians, but as God intended them to be. He is stressing the need to be Spirit-filled, Spirit-led, Spirit-controlled wives and husbands. Only then can the ideal marriage be attained.

- A. *For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church...* (Ephesians 5:23).  
What a privilege! What a responsibility!
1. Just how, and to what extent, is Christ the head of the Church?
    - a. Remember that Christ purchased the Church with His own blood (Acts 20:28).
    - a. Then God raised Him from the dead, set Him at His own right hand, put all things under His feet and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body... (Ephesians 1:20-23). “And He is the head of the body, the church...that in all things he might have the preeminence” (Colossians 1:18).
  2. The phrase “even as” takes on great significance for just as Christ is head over all things to the Church, the Spirit-filled husband must assume full responsibility and leadership in the marriage relationship.
- B. *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it* (Ephesians 5:25).
1. Again, the phrase “even as” is of tremendous importance here.
    - a. Marriage is not a one way street. Yes, women are to be submissive to their husbands. A husband is to love his wife so tenderly and completely that she, in most normal situations, would gladly yield to her husband’s authority.

- b. Moreover, just how did Christ love the Church? “He gave Himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25). He made the complete sacrifice. He shed His blood and laid down His life for it. The Spirit-filled husband should love his wife to such an extent that he would lay down his life for her if need be.
  - c. Remember, that in Ephesians 5:21, Paul said “submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.” In 1 Peter 5:5, Peter wrote “...Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”
2. Submission, then, should be a characteristic of a Spirit-filled husband or wife. Each of them must recognize the God-ordained responsibility placed upon them.
- C. *So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies...* (Ephesians 5:28).
1. What an interesting, self-evident thing Paul includes here! Every man cares for his own body tediously, tenderly, and completely. Not a bruise, lump, scratch, wound or irritation goes unattended. Now note: Paul writes, “For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church” (Ephesians 5:29).
  2. With the same tenderness and completeness to which the Lord cares for the Church and men care for their own bodies, husbands are to care for their wives. In fact, God recognizes the two of them to be “one flesh” (Ephesians 5:31; Genesis 2:24).
  3. Ephesians 5:33 is an excellent closure for this section on husband-wife relationships. “Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.”

## I. SPIRIT-FILLED CHILDREN

You must bear in mind that what we are discussing here is the place and responsibility of children in a Spirit-blessed, Spirit-filled household.

You will note in the text that no age of children is mentioned. Children reared in a God-fearing, God-honoring, Spirit-directed home, often make a profession of faith and come to know the Lord early in life. Children such as Samuel (1 Samuel 2:18, 3:19), Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:5), and John the Baptist (Luke 1:41-45, 66, 76-77, 80), knew the Lord from the womb and early began to serve Him.

A. *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right* (Ephesians 6:1).

In Colossians 3:20, Paul writes, “Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”

1. Again, the fact that submission is a basic characteristic of a Spirit-filled home comes through. We all are to be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility (1 Peter 5:5). Wives are to be in submission to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22) and children are to be submissive to their parents (Ephesians 6:1).
2. Paul says emphatically, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right” (Ephesians 6:1). Obey because it is the right thing to do in the eyes of God. There is only one thing to do about anything and that is the right thing.
3. Children in a Christian home should be reminded that Christ was once a child and was in complete submission to His parents. “And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them...” (Luke 2:51). What a wonderful example for all children in a Christian home!

B. *Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise)* (Ephesians 6:2).

1. To honor your father and mother is the 5<sup>th</sup> of the ten great commandments given by God to Israel (Exodus 20:12). While, as Christians, we are not living “under the law,” the commandments reveal the righteous will of God and are to be obeyed. This should be impressed upon every child in a Christian home.
2. The 5<sup>th</sup> commandment is the first commandment that carries a special promise: “that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee” (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16).
3. It is interesting to note that in Romans 1:29-30, the apostle Paul lists “disobedience to parents” as among the vilest and worst of sins. Parents would be wise to remind their children of how God views disobedience.

4. Disobedience of children is also listed as one of the signs of the last days before His return (2 Timothy 3:2).
- C. *That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth* (Ephesians 6:3). Without question, God honors the child who honors his parents. Perhaps nothing brings greater shame and heartache to Christian parents than rebellious and disobedient children.

#### **IV. SPIRIT-FILLED FATHERS**

*And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord* (Ephesians 6:4).

- A. It is a cruel thing to bring children into this world and then fail to instruct them in the ways and Word of God.
- B. One of the greatest privileges and responsibilities parents have is to nurture, train, and instruct their children in the scriptures.
- C. While wives must certainly be involved with child training, the greatest burden is laid on the husband.
- D. Note the following:
  1. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him" (Psalm 103:13).
  2. "as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee" (Deuteronomy 8:5).
  3. "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Proverbs 13:24).
  4. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" (Hebrews 12:7).
- E. Children need teaching and discipline. Note these verses:
  1. "The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Proverbs 29:15).
  2. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15).
  3. "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).
- F. When it comes to the training and discipline of children, fathers and mothers need to remember two things:
  1. That the nurturing and admonitions must be "of the Lord." In other words under the control and direction of the Holy Spirit and done in the name of the Lord, as unto the Lord and for the glory of the Lord. Any discipline should be concluded with assurance of love and with prayer.
  2. The discipline should not be so harsh or hard to provoke the child to wrath or anger (Colossians 3:21). Discipline should be Spirit-controlled, loving, firm, and consistent.

#### **A. THE SPIRIT-FILLED SERVANTS AND MASTERS**

To close this lesson, I have put these two people together. There is little need for lengthy discussion.

In Bible days, it was quite common to have servants who worked in the home or in the fields. The master was most likely the father or head of the household.

What we are looking at here are the others who might possibly be involved in the domestic lives of Spirit-filled Christians.

##### **A. Servants (Ephesians 6:5-8)**

1. You will note immediately that again the emphasis Paul makes is on obedience. "Servants, be obedient to them who are your masters..." (Ephesians 6:5).
  - a. Children are to obey their parents, servants are to obey their masters, wives are to submit to their husbands as Sarah obeyed Abraham (1 Peter 3:6), and husbands are to be in submission to Christ.
  - b. Keep in mind that submission one to another is a mark of a Spirit-filled Christian (Ephesians 5:21).

2. “With fear and trembling” (Ephesians 6:5). The fear here is fear of failure. The fear of not pleasing your master. The fear of not fulfilling your responsibility.
  3. “In singleness of your heart, as unto Christ” (Ephesians 6:5). Regardless of the job we hold or our status in life, all that we do should be done “as to the Lord” (Colossians 3:23).  
Illustration: A story has been told about William Carey, the missionary God so mightily used in India. A man asked him in a slurring manner, “What is your business?” Mr. Carey replied “My business is serving the Lord. I make shoes to pay my expenses.”
  4. “Not with eyeservice as menpleasers” (Ephesians 6:6). Paul here has in mind employees who work only when people are watching. Such professing Christian servants must remember that they are primarily servants of Christ and are to do the will of God from the heart.
    - ◆ *It is good to remember that there is no loss of dignity in being a servant. God does not judge us according to our educational, financial, or social status but how faithfully we fulfill our responsibility in the job He has given us to do.*
  5. “Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free” (Ephesians 6:8).
- B. Masters (Ephesians 6:9)
- “And, ye masters, do the same things unto them.” In other words, Christian masters are to treat servants with the same attitude they expect to receive from servants.
1. In God’s eyes there is no “respect of persons” (Ephesians 6:9). Masters have to give an account to their “Master in heaven.” In other words, there is no favoritism with God. Every one is accountable to fulfill his responsibility as a servant of Christ.
  2. Forbearing threatening: Masters must remember that those Christian servants who work for him are not simply hired hands. They, too, are servants of Christ and responsible to God for their actions. “Masters, Give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven” (Colossians 4:1).

**Ephesians**  
**Exam – Lesson 11**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Choice – Circle the letter in front of the correct answer. Only one answer is correct unless otherwise stated.

1. The apostle Paul devoted an entire chapter of Ephesians to family relationships because: (Value 3 points)
  - a. he was a “family man.”
  - b. the home is the backbone of civilization.
  - c. he was from a dysfunctional family.
2. The distinctive characteristic of every believer is: (Value 3 points)
  - a. obedience.
  - b. faithfulness.
  - c. submissiveness.
3. The basis for mutual submission in marriage is: (Value 3 points)
  - a. the fear of God.
  - b. the need for a happy home.
  - c. the need for the believer to be “like Christ.”
4. Paul emphasized the need for absolute loyalty to one’s marriage partner because: (Value 3 points)
  - a. it is important to keep the home intact.
  - b. the relationship between husband and wife is a picture of the relationship between Christ and His Church.
  - c. polygamy was a problem in the church.
5. The meaning of “in every thing” in Ephesians 5:24 is that: (Open Bible) (Value 3 points)
  - a. the wife is to submit no matter what her husband demands of her.
  - b. the wife is to submit in everything that is not against the will of God.
  - c. the wife is to submit in everything she can agree to.
6. The phrase “reverence her husband” in Ephesians 5:33 means the wife: (Open Bible) (Value 3 points)
  - a. should obey her husband.
  - b. should recognize her husband as God’s chosen head of the family.
  - c. should never make an independent decision.
7. The meaning of “...the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church...” in Ephesians 5:23 is that: (Open Bible) (Value 3 points)
  - a. the husband is to take the leadership in the marriage relationship.
  - b. the husband can command the wife the same as Christ gives commands to the Church.
  - c. the husband is to love his wife in the same way as Christ loves the Church.

8. Christ showed His love for the Church by: (Value 3 points)
  - a. dying for the Church.
  - b. sending the Bible to the Church.
  - c. submitting Himself to the Church.
  
9. The kind of relationship that should exist between a husband and wife is that: (Value 3 points)
  - a. the husband should be in complete domination of the wife.
  - b. the husband and wife should submit to each other in the fear of God.
  - c. the wife should be in charge of the home and the husband in all other areas of the marriage.
  
10. The reason Paul gives for children to obey their parents is: (Value 3 points)
  - a. the parents are stronger.
  - b. the parents are older and have more experience.
  - c. it is the right thing to do.
  
11. The best New Testament example of obedience to parents is: (Value 3 points)
  - a. Timothy.
  - b. John the Baptist.
  - c. Jesus Christ.
  
12. The fifth commandment is: (Value 3 points)
  - a. be good to your family.
  - b. honor your father and mother.
  - c. husbands must honor their wives.
  
13. Romans 1:29-30 classifies disobedience to parents as: (Open Bible) (Value 3 points)
  - a. a sin that cannot be forgiven.
  - b. a sin listed with the worst of all sins.
  - c. a sin for which parents must punish their children.
  
14. The most important responsibility of fathers in rearing children is: (Value 3 points)
  - a. to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
  - b. to provide for their physical well-being.
  - c. to make sure they get a good education.
  
15. The three verses which show us that the husband is primarily responsible for the discipline of the children are: (Open Bible) (**Mark three** answers) (Value 12 points)
  - a. Deuteronomy 8:5
  - b. Proverbs 22:6
  - c. Psalm 103:13
  - d. Hebrews 12:7
  - e. Proverbs 22:15
  
16. Concerning the discipline of children, the Bible says: (Value 3 points)
  - a. it should not be so harsh as to provoke a child to wrath.
  - b. it should not hurt a child physically.
  - c. it should not be done with a belt.

17. The parents should discipline children under the direction of: (Value 3 points)
- a qualified psychologist.
  - the Holy Spirit.
  - the pastor of the church.
18. In Ephesians 6:5 the meaning of “fear and trembling” is: (Open Bible) (Value 3 points)
- fear of punishment.
  - fear of not fulfilling your responsibility.
  - fear of being sold as a slave to another person.
19. In Ephesians 6:6 the meaning of “not with eyeservice as menpleasers” is: (Open Bible) (Value 3 points)
- working only to please your master.
  - working only as hard as you can.
  - working only when your master is watching.
20. God will judge both the servant and the master on the basis of: (Value 3 points)
- his social status.
  - how well he fulfills the responsibility God has given him.
  - how much money he accumulates.
21. The special promise for children, found in the fifth commandment in Exodus 20:12, is: (Open Bible) (Value 3 points)
- \_\_\_\_\_.
22. In the blank after each reference, give the reason why God put the woman in a position of submission to the man. (Open Bible) (Value 12 points)
- Genesis 3:6 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Genesis 3:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Genesis 2:18 \_\_\_\_\_
23. To whom was each of the following to submit himself? **Match** the statement to the correct answer (Value 16 points)
- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| a. Children to | ___ Christ   |
| b. Servants to | ___ Parents  |
| c. Wives to    | ___ Masters  |
| d. Husbands to | ___ Husbands |

**Decision Time**

This lesson has taught me that I as a believer have not allowed the Holy Spirit to control my life. I have tried to control my own life and must confess that I have failed.

Today I am inviting the Holy Spirit to control my life. I give myself to God and promise to obey Him in everything He shows me. I am herewith asking God to work in my life through His Holy Spirit.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_