

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

June 2013

Ephesians: God's Plan for His Church

Lesson #11: Relationships

INTRODUCTION

When has your kindness to a subordinate not worked out?

EXPLORATION

Read Ephesians 6:1-4

1. What does God command of children? Col 3:20; 2 Tim 3:2
2. What if the parents ask them to do something wrong? Acts 5:29
3. What is the promise? Dt 5:16

Note: Missing in the parallel verse Ex 20:12 is the implication that Christians are not just to live a long time, but live well (in the Lord).

4. How can fathers discipline their children without “exasperating” them? Col 3:21; Pr 13:24; 3:12; Heb 12:6
Note: The typical Roman father was harsh and had the legal power of life and death over his children.

5. What are some other ways (beside discipline) that children become “exasperated” by their fathers?
Gen 27:32

6. How would a community be influenced by a home where both children and parents seek to apply the truths found in verses 6:1-4?

Read Ephesians 6:5-9

Note: Many slaves became Christians – children of God and joint heirs with Jesus. Societal regulations concerning situations such as slavery and divorce were not condoned, but practical ways of dealing with the reality of the day. Punishment was the typical way to control slaves as well as children. Paul is suggesting another revolutionary concept – applying the golden rule to slave owners. To get service and respect, give respect. “Sometimes we think that if Jesus were the boss of a work project, he would be so kind, gentle, and gracious that he wouldn’t expect any work. But just a cursory glance at the New Testament, where Jesus is constantly urging his people to be productive and diligent in their labor, would show Jesus to be a demanding superintendent. He would expect those who were under his authority to give honest effort and a full day’s work. Yet at the same time, there would be no partiality, no injustice, no petty criticisms, and no demeaning attacks on people’s dignity. He is the perfect Master who treats all those under his authority with love, tenderness, gentleness, justice and righteousness. He is the model for anyone who is in a position of authority.”¹

1. How can you give and receive respect without losing perspective of the relationship (i.e. boss and subordinates)?
2. How is the slave/master relationship affected when both are obedient to the Word?

APPLICATION

How can you know if your relationships with your subordinates and bosses are in line with scripture?

As a dad, you need to ask yourself, “What essential information about life do I want my son to leave home with at the end? How do I want him to handle his money, moral challenges, dating, his job, his social life, his dreams?” Decide now to model and instruct your son in these ways.

Quest for Authentic Manhood Bible, Session 22

¹ Sproul, R. C. (1994). *The Purpose of God: Ephesians* (143–144). Scotland: Christian Focus Publications.