

Ephesians

Week Eleven : Submit to One Another

Big Idea:

Jesus Christ has so loved us, giving himself on our behalf, that our response in relationships should be to submit to the other person's good, regardless of our position or authority, for Jesus' glory – "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." (v.5:21)

Fallen Condition Focus:

I believe only I can, and only I will truly take care of me. As a result I do not trust Jesus, or anyone else, and in relationships I seek to my best. Under authority I seek to get the other person to do what I want and think is best. In authority I seek to use authority to get what I want from the other person.

Introduction:

- * Describe a time when you had a disagreement with your parents. What was the situation? How did you feel? What was the outcome?
- * Why was getting your own way so important?

Passage: Ephesians 5:22 – 6:9

Eph. 5:21:

- * This passage expounds on 3 examples of living out v. 5:21 from last week: "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."
- * From the passage we looked at last week (Eph. 5:15-21), what enables us to live out submitting to one another?

Being filled with Holy Spirit

Eph. 5:22-33:

- * In this section, Paul compares the husband wife relationship to the relationship between Jesus and the body of believers, the church.

Christ:

- * According to this passage, how did Christ love us, the church? And why did he do that?
Jesus died for us. He did so to wash us, to make us pure and holy and clean.
- * Why do you think Jesus died to make us pure and holy and clean?
So we could have a relationship with him. He gave all of himself for our best. He died to take away our sin and give us a relationship with himself, the only thing that would truly satisfy and meet our deepest needs.

The Church:

- * How are we as believers, the church, are to respond to Christ's love?
We are to submit to Christ, to seek His best & yield to his direction & instruction.
- * What allows us to submit to Jesus' direction and instruction?
His love for us. That He has demonstrated that all He does is for our best, and He is not trying to manipulate us to do something only for His own benefit, but He has our best interest at heart.
His Holy Spirit, who enables us to submit and follow Jesus

C o n t i n u e d ...

Husband and Wives:

* In the husband and wife relationship, who is the person in authority and what instruction does Paul give to this person?

The Husband – to sacrificially love his wife, to give himself for her best just as Jesus gave himself for our best.

* Who is the person under authority in this relationship what instruction does Paul give that person?

The Wife – to submit to her husband in all things and respect husband, who loves her sacrificially, just as we as believers submit to Jesus who has loved us sacrificially

Leader please explain:

Other phrases for submit are to align under, yield to, go along with, seek the other person's honor. This does not mean the person submitting is a doormat, to just be walked on. It means after providing your input, giving preference and honor to the other person who is seeking to act in your best interest.

Eph. 6:1-9:

Children and Parents – verses 6:1-4

Who is the person under authority in this relationship what instruction does Paul give that person?

Children – obey and honor parents

* Who is the person in authority in this relationship and what instruction does Paul give to this person?

The Father – not to exasperate their children, making them angry by the way they treat the, and to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of Jesus

Slaves and Masters - verses 6:5-9

* Who is the person under authority in this relationship what instruction does Paul give that person?

The Slave – Obey masters as they would obey Christ

* Who is the person in authority in this relationship and what instruction does Paul give to this person?

The Master – Do the same, stop threatening

* What is common among the directives given in each of the relationships?

Both the person in authority and the person under authority submit to the other's best interest. Each is to serve the other in a way that points to the Lord.

Notes to leader:

1. In all cases Paul is addressing the ideal situation here, where both parties are seeking to honor Christ. If the direction or actions of one person to another is not honoring to God and in accordance with his word, the other person has a greater obligation to submit to Christ. (ref. Acts 5:29 “We must obey God rather than men.”)
2. If questions regarding slavery come up, the following information from the Holman Bible Dictionary might be helpful.....

C o n t i n u e d ...

Slave / servant - Person totally responsible to and dependent upon another person. Slavery was prevalent and widely accepted in the ancient world. The economy of Egypt, Greece, and Rome was based on slave labor. In the first Christian century, one out of three persons in Italy and one out of five elsewhere was a slave. Huge gangs toiled in the fields and mines and on building projects. Many were domestic and civil servants. Some were temple slaves and others craftsmen. Some were forced to become gladiators. Some were highly intelligent and held responsible positions. Legally, a slave had no rights; but, except for the gangs, most were treated humanely and were better off than many free persons. Domestic workers were considered part of the family, and some were greatly loved by their masters. Canaan, Aram, Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia had fewer slaves because it proved less expensive to hire free persons. Still, the institution of slavery was unquestioned” “ A person could become a slave as a result of capture in war, default on a debt, inability to support and “voluntarily” selling oneself, being sold as a child by destitute parents, birth to slave parents, conviction of a crime, or kidnapping and piracy. Slavery cut across races and nationalities.”

Application:

Relationship with God

- * In what ways do you find yourself trusting in your own ability to meet your needs and desires instead of trusting in Jesus?
- * How does it make you feel to realize that Jesus gave everything to meet your deepest need to be clean and to have a relationship with Him?
- * How does it make you feel to realize Jesus only wants your best, that His direction, instruction, and provision for you are all to provide the best possible life for you?
- * How does that impact your ability to trust Him? How can that practically make a difference in the things you worry about?

Relationships with others

- * In what relationships do you find it hard to trust the other person has your best interest at heart? Why?
- * Have you ever experienced a relationship where someone who consistently sought what was best for you? Describe what that was like? How did that make you feel? Did you trust that person? Why or why not?
- * In what relationships do you currently find yourself under someone else’s authority?
- * In what way can you submit to their best interest by yielding to their authority in order to point them to Jesus?
- * What can enable us to follow through with this direction that God gives us in his word?
 1. *Knowing Jesus has my best interest at heart & this is His instruction for me in this text. Ultimately, trusting Jesus to take care of me rather than myself.*
 2. *The Holy Spirit – He alone empowers us to live out the instruction of Jesus*

Conclusion

Pray for each other asking the Holy Spirit to enable you to trust in Jesus to take care of you rather than yourselves. Pray that you will live out that trust by in your relationship with God and with others. With God, by depending on him to meet your needs and not worrying and scheming to take care of yourself. With others, by submitting to their best interest, both when you are in authority and when you are under their authority. All for the glory of Jesus Christ.