

## STUDY NUMBER ELEVEN - Ephesians 6:1-9

### “His Plan for the Home and Business Relationship”

#### Key Verse: 6:1, 5:

“Children be obeying your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Slaves, be obeying those who according to the flesh are your masters with fear and trembling in sincerity of heart, as to Christ.”

#### TEXT:

v. 1 Children, be obeying your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

v. 2 Be honoring your father and your mother. This is the first commandment with a promise.

v. 3 In order that it may be well with you and in order that you may live long upon the earth.

v. 4 And Fathers, do not make your children angry but be bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

v. 5 Slaves, be obeying those who according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart as to Christ.

v. 6 Not in the way of eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart.

v. 7 With good will rendering service, as to the Lord and not men,

v. 8 Knowing that each one, whatever good he may do, this he will receive from the Lord whether he is a slave or whether he is free.

v. 9 And masters do the same to them giving up your threatening, knowing that also their master and yours is in heaven and there is not partiality with Him.

#### INTRODUCTION:

##### Lawyer Joke

A small town prosecuting attorney called his first witness to the stand in a trial – a grandmotherly, elderly woman.

He approached her and asked, “Mrs. Jones, do you know me?”

She responded, “Why yes, I do know you, Mr. Williams. I’ve known

you since you were a young boy. And frankly, you've been a big disappointment to me. You lie, you cheat on your wife, you manipulate people and talk about them behind their backs. You think you're a big shot when you haven't the brains to realize you never will amount to anything more than a two-bit paper pusher. Yes, I know you."

The lawyer was stunned. Not knowing what else to do, he pointed across the room and asked, "Mrs. Williams, do you know the defense attorney?"

She again replied, "Why, yes I do. I've known Mr. Bradley since he was a youngster, too. I used to babysit him for his parents. And he, too, has been a real disappointment. He's lazy, bigoted, he has a drinking problem. The man can't build a normal relationship with anyone and his law practice is one of the worst in the entire state. Not to mention he cheated on his wife with three different women. Yes, I know him."

The defense attorney was also surprised and shocked. At this point, the judge brought the courtroom to silence and called both counselors to the bench. In a very quiet voice, he said with menace, "If either of you asks her is if she knows me, you'll be jailed for contempt!"

(Cowboy Poetry: A Gathering edited by Hal Cannon)

**JACK POTTER'S COURTIN'  
S. OMAR BARKER**

Now young Jack Potter was a man who knowed the ways of steers,  
From burr-nests in their hairy tails to ticks that chawed their ears.  
A Texican and cowhand, to the saddle bred and born,  
He could count a trail herd on the move and never miss a horn.  
But one day on a trally, back in eighteen eighty-four,  
He got to actin' dreamy, and he sure did miss the score.  
The Old Man knowed the symptoms. "Jack, you ain't no good like this.  
I'll give you just ten days to go and find out what's amiss!"  
A "miss" was just what ailed him, for he'd fell in love for sure  
With a gal named Cordie Eddy, mighty purty, sweet and pure.

So now Jack rode a hundred miles, a-sweatin' with the thought  
Of sweetsome words to ask her with, the way a feller ought:  
"I'm just a humble cowhand, Miss Cordie, if you please,  
That hereby asks your heart and hand upon my bended knees!"  
It sounded mighty simple, thus rehearsed upon the trail,  
But when he come to Cordie's house, his words all seemed to fail.

'Twas "Howdy, Ma'am, an' how's the crops? An' how's your Pa an' Ma?"  
For when it come to askin' her, he couldn't come to taw.

He took her to a dance one night. The hoss she rode was his.  
"He's a dandy little horse," she says. "Well, yep," says Jack, "he is."  
They rode home late together and the moon was ridin' high,  
And Jack, he got to talkin' 'bout the stars up in the sky,  
And how they'd guide a trail herd like they do sea-goin' ships;  
But words of love and marriage, they just wouldn't pass his lips.  
So he spoke about the pony she was ridin,' and he said:  
"You'll note he's fancy gaited, an' don't never fight his head."  
"He's sure a little dandy!" she agrees, and heaves a sigh.  
Jack says: "Why, you can have him – that is, maybe, when I die."  
He figgered she might savvy what he meant, or maybe guess,  
And give him that sweet answer which he longed for, namely "yes."

But when they reached the ranch house he was still a-wonderin' how  
He would ever pop the question, and he had to do it now  
Or wait and sweat and suffer till the drive was done that fall,  
When maybe she'd be married and he'd lose her after all.  
He put away her saddle, led his pony to the gate:  
"I reckon I'll be driftin,' ma'am. It's getting' kinder late."

Her eyes was bright as starlight and her lips looked sweet as flow'rs.  
Says Jack: "Now this here pony – is he mine, or is he *ours*?"  
"*Our* pony, Jack!" she answered, and her voice was soft as moss.  
Then Jack, he *claims* he kissed her – but she claims he kissed the hoss!  
pp. 15-17

(Coach Wooden's Pyramid of Success by John Wooden & Jay Carty)

**Coach John Wooden of Westwood  
A Messenger on Call  
by William D. Naulls**

Coach John Wooden of Westwood has a message for all.  
*Industriousness* and *enthusiasm*, the cornerstones of his call.  
Focused on *friendship* and *loyalty*, he stresses *cooperation* and mastery  
of *intentness* of *initiative* through *self-controlled* participation.  
Not to forget *alertness* and *condition* in developing *team spirit's skill*  
of maturing *competitive greatness*, *poise* and *confidence* to fulfill.  
Inspired by *sincerity* of *ambition* and an honest desire to be "as He,"  
men and women can achieve their best through responsible  
*adaptability*.

*Reliability* on the *resourcefulness* possessed in *integrity's* might is the victory of the good *fight* of *faith*, through *patience's* insight. So the message of life, of Coach Wooden's call—

SUCCESS is a reward to anyone who gives his all.

p. 29

(Middle East Burning: Is the Spreading Unrest a Sign of the End Times? by Mark Hitchcock)

Our world is on fire, and man without God will never be able to control the flames. The demons of hell have been let loose. The fires of passion, greed, hate, and lust are sweeping the world. We seem to be plunging madly toward Armageddon. The world has been in flames before, but only in a limited sense. Today our world is a common neighborhood, all of it reachable in mere hours by physical flight and in seconds over the airwaves. This accessibility increases the spread of tension and dissension. Thus when the fires of war and lawlessness break out, they leap the national boundaries and cultural differences to become major conflagrations. The whole world is filled with riots, demonstrations, threats, wars. This is the generation destined to live in the midst of crisis, danger, fear, and death. We are like a people under sentence of death, waiting for the date to be set. We sense that something is about to happen.<sup>1</sup>

BILLY GRAHAM, *WORLD AFLAME (1965)*

1. Billy Graham, *World Aflame* (New York: Doubleday, 1965), p. 1.  
p. 7

What we are witnessing could well be the embryonic, emerging Islamic caliphate that jihadists want. The tide of revolution could eventually usher into power states with radical leaders who want to establish sharia law the same way it was implanted in Iran after the revolution in 1979. These developments could light the fuse to the Middle East powder keg and trigger the military conflict predicted in Ezekiel 38-39.

p. 16

In 1967, Dr. John Walvoord wrote some timely words that look like they were taken straight from today's headlines. What he says here is clearly more applicable today than when he wrote it almost 45 years ago:

The world today faces an international crisis unparalleled in all the history of man. A tremendous revolution is under way in the international scene, in science, in economics, in morals, in theology, and in the religious structure of the church. The world is aflame with the raw passions of men ambitious for power and desperate to be freed from poverty and frustration. An ominous cloud hangs over the hearts of men and nations. The nations are indeed at the crossroads, and impending events cast their shadow on every aspect of human life. The world is moving faster and faster like a colossal machine out of control whose very power and momentum inevitably will plunge it into ultimate disaster.

36. John F. Walvoord, *The Nations in Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967), 27.  
pp. 25-26

(The Last Jihad by Joel C. Rosenberg)

“He said, and I quote: ‘The problem with you Americans is that you don’t believe in evil.’”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“That’s what I said. So he went on to explain that in his opinion, the CIA and FBI and definitely the guys at State don’t properly anticipate horrible, catastrophic events because we don’t really believe in the presence of evil, the presence of a dark and wicked and nefarious spiritual dimension that drives some men to do the unthinkable.

p. 262

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon)

I feel rebuked myself, sometimes, for not watching for my Master, when I know that, at this very time, my dogs are sitting against the door, waiting for me; and long before I reach home, there they will be, and at the first sound of the carriage-wheels, they will lift up their voices with delight because their master is coming home. Oh, if we loved our Lord as dogs love their masters, how we should catch the first sound of His Coming, and be waiting, always waiting, and never happy until at last we should see Him! Pardon me for using a dog as a picture of what you ought to be; but when you have attained to a state

above that, I will find another illustration to explain my meaning.  
p. 143

(Out of My Mind by Joseph Bayly)

Slings we have aplenty. But we use them to mow down our fellow soldiers, not against opposing giants. The brethren are bruised, the giants unmolested.  
p. 97

The apostle has just given us His Plan for the Husband and Wife Relationship, and growing out of that relationship we have a home and a family and a father pursuing some sort of a working relationship whether it be employer or employee.

Because of this it seems so natural for the apostle to turn now and reveal His Plan for the Home and Business Relationship.

Abbott observes:

Special injunctions to children and fathers, slaves and masters. Slaves are called on to regard their service as a service done to Christ; masters are reminded that they, too, are subject to the same Master, who has no respect of persons.  
p. 176

Anders points out:

In chapter 6, Paul commands the Ephesian Christians: As you continue to respond to the Holy Spirit in your life, children, obey your parents; and fathers, do not anger your children, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Slaves, obey your masters; and masters, treat your slaves as you would like to be treated if you were in their shoes. Finally, recognize that this life is a spiritual war, so take up the full armor of God; and having done so, stand firm against the schemes of the devil.  
p. 186

Main Idea: Fathers are to nurture their children while children are to obey their parents, and slaves are to obey their masters while masters are to take care of their slaves. Also, life is a spiritual war, so be sure to keep each piece of spiritual armor in place; and stand firm against the devil.  
p. 188

Arthur adds:

Read Ephesians 6:1—9 again and think of how different our society would be if we really heeded these words from God. It is our responsibility to live as God tells us to live, no matter what others do or say.  
pp. 83—84

Barker & Kohlenberger offer:

After dealing with husband-wife relationships, Paul considers the relationship between parents and children. He has the Christian family in mind; he assumes that both partners and their offspring recognize the lordship of Christ (vv. 1, 4).  
p. 780

Bickel & Jantz discern:

#### *A Crisis of Authority*

We have trouble submitting to the authority of others for many reasons: stubbornness, sin, and pride, just to name a few. None of these are valid excuses, but sometimes those in authority over us mistreat us and bring about feelings of rebellion and resentment. Husbands mistreat wives, parents abuse children, and employers cheat employees.

Some would say we have a crisis of authority in our culture, even to the highest echelons of leadership. Perhaps the abuse of power and the mistrust of leadership we are seeing on national and corporate levels have filtered down to the home and the family.

So what do you do? If you are in a place of authority, how are you supposed to lead? And if you are in a place where you need to submit, how do you do it without resentment? That's what we're going to talk about in this chapter.  
p.144

In fact, when you consider the life and actions of Jesus, who saw dignity in every person, regardless of sex, age, ethnicity, or social class, you can correctly conclude that the Bible and Christianity have set the standard of true liberation of the whole person—physically, mentally,

and spiritually.  
John Stott writes:

In the light of the teaching of Jesus and his apostles, we may confidently and repeatedly affirm at least three relevant truths: first, the *dignity* of womanhood, childhood, and servanthood; secondly, the *equality* before God of all human beings, irrespective of their race, rank, class, culture, sex, or age, because all are made in his Image; and the even deeper *unity* of all Christian believers as fellow-members of God's family and of Christ's body.

p. 146

Boice says:

It is a conviction of mine that no man has a right to tell other people how to raise their children until he has children of his own and has tried to raise them. As a corollary, I am convinced that no *wise* man will give advice even then until his own children have grown up and turned out well.

p. 210

C. Henry observes:

Children also have a part in the Christian walk; they owe reverent obedience to parents (6:1). This is both a divine commandment and a provision for their own welfare (vv. 2, 3). In return, parents owe children reasonable discipline and Christian nurture (v. 4). Employees serve both Christ and the employer. Thus due service is doubly required and twice rewarded (vv. 5—8). Likewise, human authority is tempered and made reasonable by reverence toward God (v.9).

Eadie points out:

The apostle, after expounding the duties that spring out of the conjugal relation, as one sphere in which the maxim—submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of Christ—came into operation, naturally turns to another and kindred sphere of domestic life, and addresses himself to children. And he does not speak about them, or tell their parents of them, but he looks them in the face, and lovingly says to them—“children.” It is plainly implied that children were supposed by him to be present in the sanctuary when this epistle was read, or to be able to read it for themselves, when it should be transcribed and circulated.

p. 437



Lincoln adds:

Following on from the exhortations to wives and husbands in 5:22—33, the next groups within the household to be addressed are children and parents. It should be remembered that the instructions given are to be seen both as part of the wise and Spirit-filled living that the writer had discussed in 5:15—20 and as coming under the umbrella of the exhortation to mutual submission that had introduced the household code in 5:21.

p. 395

Lloyd-Jones offers:

I have heard of some, for instance, who have a feeling that the subject of husbands and wives has nothing to do with them because they are not married. That is most regrettable because, whether married or not, whether parents or not, Christians should be interested in principles of truth. Moreover if you are not married yourself you may have a married friend who may be in trouble about his or her married life; so if you are to function as a Christian you must be able to help such a person. To do so you must know how to help, and you can only discover how to help by understanding the Scriptural teaching. No-one should sit back therefore, and feel that has nothing to do with him or her. You may be unmarried, or you may be married but without children, but you should have sympathy with and compassion for parents at the present time in this difficult modern world. It is your duty and business to help them and to assist them. These particular injunctions are not only for particular people they are for all of us.

p. 250

MacArthur discerns:

The experiment is often recounted of placing a frog in a pan of cool water on a stove and of slowly increasing the heat. Because the rise in temperature is so gradual, it is imperceptible to the frog, and he remains in the pan even when the water begins to boil. He adjusts to the heat as it rises and eventually boils to death. That process illustrates what has happened to the American family, including many Christian families. The changed values in society have been so gradual that most people have hardly noticed them. Each small change in standards and values seems insignificant in itself. And because adjustments are gradually made to those lowered standards, the danger is not noticed even when the family and society start to disintegrate and crumble. Moral and spiritual standards have gradually eroded until countless families have been literally destroyed.

p. 307

McGee says:

In the preceding chapter the church was designated as the *bride* of Christ. Now in this chapter it is to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. I have told you that my humorous friend says this sequence is to be expected—after a couple gets married, the war begins. Therefore, the church should be a good soldier. He was being facetious, of course. In the *future* the church is to be presented as the bride of Christ. This is the expectation of the church. Today is the period of the engagement and exhibition of the church before the world.  
p.272

Meyer observes:

Pick your way amid the pitfalls of the world. Gird up your flowing robes with dainty care, lest they be soiled by the filth of the street. Beware of any side paths that would lead your steps away from the narrow track. Watch and pray. Especially be careful to turn every moment of time into an opportunity of making progress in the Divine life. Take heed to the moments, and the hours will take heed to themselves.

All these injunctions, however, will baffle us, and leave us stranded on the shore, when the impulse of their stimulus ebbs, unless we blend with them the thought that God is willing to walk with us—nay, *in* us; for He saith, “I will dwell in them, and walk in them.” Abide in God, and God will abide in you, and walk in you, till you walk with Him in white, being found worthy.

p. 107

O'Brien points out:

Following the exhortations to wives and husbands, Paul now lays out the reciprocal duties of children and parents. This set of instructions in vv.1—4, like the following set addressed to slaves and masters (vv. 5—9), is considerably shorter in form than the exhortatory material on marriage (5:22—33). Structurally, the opening admonitions addressed to ‘children’ (6:1) and ‘slaves’ (6:5) to ‘obey,’ like the exhortation to wives voluntarily to ‘submit’ to their husbands (v.22), are specific examples of the submission within divinely ordered relationships that is called for in the programmatic statement of v. 21, ‘Submit to one another in the fear of Christ.’ And this submission (which is expressed by the fifth result participle that is dependent on the imperative ‘be filled,’ v. 18) concludes the list of responses that should characterize the Spirit-filled living of those in Christ (vv. 18—21). Christian

children and slaves who heed this apostolic exhortation to obey, and wives who voluntarily submit to their husbands (v.22), show that they are receptive to the Spirit's work of transforming them into the likeness of God and Christ. They demonstrate that they understand the Lord's will (v. 17), and provide concrete examples of a wise and godly lifestyle (v. 15).  
p. 439

Patzia adds:

A continuation of these rules of conduct as they apply to children and parents (6:1—6) and slaves and masters (6:5—9) appears in 6:1—9. As in the section on the husband-wife relationship, there is the specific emphasis that the ethical life of the Christian is both grounded in and directed toward the Lord.  
p. 277

Robinson offers:

VI. 1—9. 'These principles of reverence and love extend through the whole sphere of family life. Children must obey: it is righteous: and the old precept still carries its special promise. Fathers must insist on obedience, and must not make discipline more difficult by a lack of loving patience. Again, slaves must obey: with a trembling fear and a whole-hearted devotion, looking to their masters as to Christ Himself. They are Christ's slaves, doing God's will in their daily tasks; not rendering a superficial service to please an earthly lord; but with their soul in their work, serving the Lord in heaven, not men on earth: for the Lord accepts and rewards all good work, whether of the slave or of the free. And the masters must catch the same spirit: the threatening tone must be heard no more: they and their slaves have the same heavenly Lord, before whom these earthly distinctions disappear.'  
p. 210

Simpson & Bruce discern:

Our apostle is now setting the most salient earthly relationships in a heavenly framework. He has just exalted marriage to the celestial domain; now he uplifts filial obedience to the same altitude by the adjuration "in the Lord."  
p. 135

Wiersbe says:

Spirit-filled Christians will manifest Christlikeness in the home (vv. 1—4), on the job (vv. 5—9), and on the battlefield (vv. 10—20). If we do not learn to obey at home, we are not likely to be obedient on the job or in the army of the Lord. Likewise, if we have not learned to *take* orders, we will not be too successful at *giving* orders, either as parents or as employers.

The danger in the home is parents who are *authoritarian* but do not exercise loving spiritual *authority*. The danger on the job is the employee who is a clock-watcher and does not obey from the heart, and the "boss" who forgets that he is second in command and must one day give an account to the Lord.

p. 776

Wuest observes:

And the fathers, stop provoking your children to anger, but be rearing them in the discipline and admonition of the Lord. The slaves, be constantly obedient to those who, according to the flesh, are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as to the Christ, not in the way of eye service as men-pleasers, but as Christ's bondslaves, doing the will of God from the soul, with good will rendering a slave's service as to the Lord and not as to men, knowing that each one, whatever good he may do, this he will receive from the presence of the Lord, whether he is a slave or whether he is free. And the masters, be practicing the same things toward them, giving up your threatening, knowing that also their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is not partiality with Him.

p. 223

It is time now to launch into the passage itself and find what the Lord has for us in Ephesians 6:1-9.

VERSE 1: "Children, be obeying your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

Paul begins with children in verse 1. In verse 4, he turns to fathers and to slaves in verse 5. In verse 9, he speaks to masters.

*The NET bible translates verse 1:*

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right."

*Peterson in The Message paraphrases verse 1:*

“Children, do what your parents tell you. This is only right.”

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:*

The Spirit-controlled life (5:18) is necessary for having a good parent-child relationship.

Children are to obey their parents. The phrase in the Lord does not mean that children are to obey parents only if their parents are believers. As Colossians 3:20 clearly denotes, a child's obedience to his parents is pleasing in the Lord's sight. The reason for this is that it is right; it is a proper course to follow in society.

Whereas he has spoken to:

1. Wives to be putting themselves in subjection to their own husbands
2. Husbands, love your wives
3. Now, Children be obeying your parents in the Lord. You will note that this is a command. The reason given for this command is “for this is right.”

As the wife who is filled with the Spirit is submissive and the husband is loving, so children will be obeying their parents.

It is right because:

1. It is a natural thing to do.
2. The Scripture commands it.
3. The Lord, by His example, also did this.

Luke 2:51-52:

“Then he returned to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. And his mother stored away all these things in her heart. So Jesus grew both tall and wise and was loved by God and man.”

Abbott observes:

“In the Lord,” not as defining the limits of the obedience, ἐν οἷς ἂν μὴ πρόσκροῦσθαι (τῷ κυρίῳ), Chrys., but rather showing the spirit in which the obedience is to be yielded. It is assumed that the parents exercise their authority as Christian parents should, and we cannot suppose that the apostle meant to suggest to the children the possibility of the contrary.  
p. 176

Anders points out:

*Children are to be submissive to the authority of their parents while parents are to be submissive to the needs of their children.*

6:1 Children are instructed that their role in mutual submission is to obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Without learning obedience from parents, children would run wild in society. All social order depends on this. In the Lord does not mean that children only need to obey Christian parents. Rather, it means that they are obeying the Lord when they obey their parents. Sadly, we are living in a day when child abuse is on the rise. This causes us to mention that the same exceptions which wives have from obeying their husbands, children have in obeying their parents.  
p. 188

Barker & Kohlenberger add:

Paul addresses “children” directly, taking it for granted that they will be present in the congregations where the letter is being read. They belong to the total Christian family, the church.  
p. 780

Obedience by children consists in listening to the advice given by parents, an obligation supported by many passages in both OT and NT.  
p. 780

All this is “in the Lord,” as are the other relationships (cf. 5:21—22; 6:5—9). Children are invited not simply to copy the example of Jesus when he was subject to his parents (Lk. 2:51), but to realize that both they and their parents are under the authority of the living Christ. This is said to be the “right” thing for them to do, for such obedience “pleases the Lord” (Col. 3:2). Obedience to parents is part of the divine law. Children need to recognize that some things have to be accepted even though at the time they themselves cannot understand them.  
p. 780

Bickel & Jantz offer:

Because we can trust the teaching and example of Jesus regarding dignity, equality, and unity, we can also trust His teaching and example regarding authority and submission. As we consider the three sets of relationships in Ephesians 5:21—6:9, we will see that authority and submission are always in balance. Mutual submission looks like this:

- *Wives...submit to your husbands as you do to the Lord (5:22)*
- *And you husbands must love your wives with the same love Christ showed the church (5:25).*
- *Children obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do (6:1).*
- *And now a word to you fathers. Don't make your children angry by the way you treat them (6:4).*
- *Slaves, obey your earthly masters, with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ (6:5).*
- *And in the same way, you masters must treat your slaves right...remember, you both have the same Master in heaven, and he has no favorites (6:9).*

Do you see the principle of mutual submission at work here? The principle of authority and submission must be in place in order for society and the family to function. But the principle won't work if it's one-sided.  
pp. 146—147

Calvin discerns:

Why does the apostle use the word *obey* instead of *honour*, which has a greater extent of meaning? It is because *Obedience* is the evidence of that *honour* which children owe to their parents, and is therefore more earnestly enforced. It is likewise more difficult; for the human mind recoils from the idea of subjection, and with difficulty allows itself to be placed under the control of another. Experience shows how rare this virtue is; for do we find one among a thousand that is obedient to his parents?  
pp. 326—327

*For this is right.* This is added in order to restrain the fierceness which, we have already said, appears to be natural to almost all men. He proves it to be *right*, because God has commanded it; for we are not at liberty to dispute, or call in question, the appointment of him whose will is the unerring rule of goodness and righteousness.  
p. 327

Eadie says:

The love which Jesus showed to children, when He took them in His arms and blessed them, should induce them, in a spirit of filial faith and fondness, to obey their parents, and to regard with special sacredness every parental injunction. And that obedience, if prompted, regulated, and bounded by a sense of religious obligation, will be cheerful, and not sullen; prompt, and not dilatory; uniform, and not occasional; universal, and not capricious in its choice of parental precepts.  
p. 437

Nature claims it, while Scripture enjoins it, and the Son of God exemplified it. It is in perfect consistency with all our notions of right and moral obligation.  
p. 438

Fergusson observes:

In the first part of this chapter, the apostle insisteth further upon those duties, which are incumbent to Christians as they are members of families.  
p. 252

It is not sufficient that children obey their parents, either from a natural instinct or fear of their displeasure, or hope of great things to be received from them and enjoyed by them; but their obedience must flow from conscience of duty towards God, who doth enjoin it, and be regulated by and subordinated to that obedience which they owe to him; otherwise their obedience is only heathenish and natural, but not Christian: for he commandeth, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord."  
p. 253

Foulkes points out:

From the relationship of wives and husbands the apostle now turns to that between children and their parents. The former began with the call to submission, and so here *children* are first exhorted to *obey* their *parents*. Both here and in Colossians iii. 20 the 'honour' of the first commandment is given the specific direction of obedience. Then in a manner typical of this Epistle the apostle contemplates 'the situation where parental orders might be contrary to the law of Christ' (Bruce), but because it is the Christian home which is in his mind. The Colossians parallel may be taken as interpretative



when it says of such filial obedience, 'this is well-pleasing in the Lord' (RV). Even a child in his simple way can know what it means to love *in the Lord*, and to obey for His sake.  
p. 163

Gaebelein adds:

Children are to obey their parents in the Lord. And the fathers are not to provoke the children to wrath, "but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." And how much wisdom this takes! Parents must show constantly to the children the love and patience of Christ and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Then the promise will be made good. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi:31).  
p. 267

Hendriksen offers:

Were Paul to be present with us today he would be shocked at the spectacle of children attending the Sunday School and then going home just before the regular worship service. He has a word addressed directly and specifically to the children. The implication is clear that also today sermons should be such that even the children can understand and enjoy them, at least to some extent, varying with age, etc., and at times the pastor should direct his attention *especially* to them.

What the apostle tells the children is that they should obey their parents. This obedience, moreover, should flow not only from the feeling of love, gratitude, and esteem for their parents, though these motivations are very important, but also and especially from reverence for the Lord Jesus Christ.  
p. 258

Paul says that it should be an obedience in the Lord, and he adds, for this obedience is right. The proper attitude of the child in obeying his parents must therefore be this: I must obey my parents because the Lord bids me to do so. What he says is *right* for the simple reason that *he* says it! It is he who determines what is right and what is wrong. Hence, when I obey my parents I am obeying and pleasing *my Lord*.  
p. 258

Henry discerns:

The duty of children to their parents: to obey their parents (v. 1). That

obedience which God demands from their children includes an inward reverence, as well as the outward expressions and acts. Obey in the Lord. “Obey your parents, especially in those things which relate to the Lord. Your parents teach you good manners, and therein you must obey them. They teach you what is for your health, and in this you must obey them: but the chief things in which you are to do it are the things pertaining to the Lord.” p. 1857

Hughes says:

What is the divine wisdom for children? In a word, it is to honor and obey parents, as verses 1 through 3 so clearly say: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’—which is the first commandment with a promise—‘that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.’” There are two reasons for this call to honor and obedience.

First, because such a call accords with *natural law*—as Paul says, “for this is right.” Virtually every culture and every society recognizes and is indeed built on the premise that children are to respect and obey their parents. When this is absent, it is a sign of decadence and degeneration. In Romans 1:30 Paul places disobedience to parents at the very nadir of the decadence to which people go as God gives them over to a depraved mind” (Romans 1:28). To disobey and dishonor parents, however naturally such behavior may come to a child, is to live against the natural order of every civilization. It is “right” to honor and obey one’s parents. p. 198

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown observe:

Obey—stronger than the expression as to wives, “submitting,” or “being subject” (ch. 5:21). *Obedience* is more unreasoning and implicit; *submission* is the willing *subjection* of an inferior in point of order to one who has a right to command. In the Lord—Both parents and children being Christians “in the Lord,” expresses the *element* in which the obedience is to take place, and the *motive* to obedience. p. 1297

Lange points out:

The verb coming first has the emphasis: this one precept comprises the main part of filial duty in itself. p. 210

Quickly, briefly Paul presses the proof forward. “This” refers to the whole: the obedience of children to their parents in Christ.  
p. 210

Lenski adds:

Childhood obedience is to be the fruit of the child’s entire relation to the Lord. This evidently implies that those who are thus to obey “in the Lord.”  
p. 646

Lovett offers:

Obey. The word is very strict in the Greek, stronger than the one referring to the wife’s obedience above. Here is unquestioned, unreasoning, implicit obedience. “In the Lord,” continues Paul’s thoughts of the home where loving parents provide a Christian environment. God accepts a child’s obedience to his parents as He accepts the wife’s submission to her husband. Children, learning to submit at home, adjust well to governmental authority and graduate to God’s rule over them. Submission, rather than self-assertion, lets us skirt many serious problems. It is always better to roll with punches than absorb them. The stiff-necked rebel usually finds life hard and doesn’t last long. Submission brings reduced anxieties, permitting one to live better, happier and longer.  
p. 128

MacArthur discerns:

6:1 *Obey...in the Lord*. See Colossians 3:20. The child in the home is to be willingly under the authority of parents with obedient submission to them as the agents of the Lord placed over him, obeying parents as if obeying the Lord Himself. The reasoning here is simply that such is the way God has designed and required it.  
p. 1703

Ephesians 6:1—4 continues Paul’s teaching on the mutual submission of believers (5:21) by moving to the family. Verses 1—3 focus on the submission of children and verse 4 focuses on the submission of parents.  
p. 311

McGee says:

The first part of the chapter opens with instructions to children, parents, servants, and masters. This may seem foreign to the life of a soldier. However, a soldier's training does not start in boot camp; it begins when he is a child in the home.

p. 272

It is right because it is according to the will of God. It is actually more than right; it is just. It is a righteous thing to do because it is God's way.

The first lesson that a soldier must learn is obedience to those in authority. He must follow orders. This basic training is learned in the home. After the soldier has learned to obey, then he is in a position to be promoted to the rank of an officer where he gives commands to others. To know how to give orders depends largely on how the soldier learned to obey.

p. 272

The word for "obey" here is different from the word found in verse 22 of chapter 5. The wife is to submit. The wife occupies a place of equality with the husband, and submission is merely a question of headship. Here the child is to obey as the servant is to obey—the same word is used in verse 5.

Disobedience to parents is the last and lowest form of lawlessness to occur on this earth. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy" (2 Tim. 3:1—2). Disobedience to parents is one of the characteristics of the last days.

p. 273

O'Brien observes:

Paul passes from the reciprocal duties of wives and husbands to those of children and parents (vv. 1—4), and then to those of slaves and masters (vv. 5—9). It is obvious from these exhortations that the apostle thinks of local congregations as consisting of whole families who come together not only to praise God but also to hear his word addressed to them. As the household tables are read out, children, too, would learn of their own Christian duties as well as those of other family members.

p. 440

Patzia points out:

Although the author is following Colossians 3:20—21 rather closely, there are some significant differences in this epistle. Children are exhorted to obey their parents because this is right. Obedience to parents is considered to be a self-evident and morally acceptable thing to do.

Thus, obedience to parents is considered to be a self-evident and

morally acceptable thing to do for all families (the statement does not specify that only Christian parents are meant).  
p. 277

Radmacher, Allen & House add:

The Greek word for *submitting* does not refer to being under the absolute control of another but, in this context, to voluntarily placing oneself under the authority of another.  
p. 1539

Westcott offers:

The exposition of the relation of the wife to the husband is followed naturally by an exposition of the relation of children to parents. Obedience (1—3) is met by loving education. (4).  
p. 87

Wuest discerns:

“Obey” is *hupakouo*, the simple verb meaning “to hear,” the prefixed preposition, “under,” the compound verb meaning, “to hear under,” that is, “to hear under” authority. It speaks of the one hearing as being under the authority of someone else. Thus, the verb comes to mean, “to hearken to a command, to obey, to be obedient to, submit to.” The verb is in the present imperative, which construction commands habitual, constant obedience here. The phrase, “in the Lord”: is to be construed with “obey.” That is, as Expositors says; “It defines the quality of the obedience by defining the *sphere* within which it is to move—a Christian obedience fulfilled in communion with Christ.” Vincent says: “The children being with their parents in the Lord, are to be influenced by religious duty as well as by natural affection.” The word “right” is *dikaios*, “not in the sense of *befitting* merely, but in that of *righteous*, what is required by *law*—the law that is at once founded on the natural relation of children and parents and proclaimed in the divine commandment (v.2)” (Expositors). “Honor” is *timao*, “to estimate, fix the value.” To honor someone therefore, is to evaluate that person accurately and honestly, and treat him with the deference, respect, reverence, kindness, courtesy, and obedience which his station in life or his character demands. Expositors says: “Obedience is the *duty*; honor is the disposition of which the obedience is born.”  
p. 136

This is our first of two key verses, verses 1 and 5, in His Plan for the Home and Business Relationship.

Verse 1 addresses the children with the word, “obey.” “Be obeying your parents in the Lord for this is right.”

The child is demonstrating a Spirit-filled relationship with the Lord by expressing the horizontal obedience to his parents.

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon)

The best education is education in the best things.  
p. 131

(A Search for Charismatic Reality by Neil Babcox)

Even Jack became hysterical tonight when we decreed bedtime before the "Drummer Boy" television special was over. The story always makes him cry anyway. How is it that a child can muster such compassion for a puppet and then "cream" his own brother for knocking his toothbrush into the toilet?

Kristin Armstrong quotes:

“Woe to the obstinate children,” declares the Lord, “to those who carry out plans that are not mine.” Isaiah 30:1

Every year in late December I have a date with my brother for us to make our New Year’s resolutions together. They range from serious to frivolous and funny. It occurred to me that, fun as this annual session may be, it is inherently flawed.

Why do I make my lists and then ask the Lord to bless my hands? Shouldn’t it be the other way around? Shouldn’t I be praying, asking for guidance in my goal setting and wisdom in placing my priorities, and then make my plans? Or maybe I can evolve enough so that I can quit making my lists and plans entirely, and trust the Lord to reign in my life.

Lord, help me not to be an obstinate child. Help me to turn to You first, not last. I desire what You have in mind for me because I trust that You know best. Help me to quiet my spirit so I can clearly hear Your voice.

(Every Day is a New Shade of Blue: Comfort for Dark Days from Psalm 23 by David Roper)

Howard Butt, in an article entitled “The Art of Being the Big Shot,” said this:

It is my pride that makes me think I call my own shots. That feeling is my basic dishonesty. I can't go it alone. I can't rely on myself. I am dependent on God for my very next breath. It is dishonest of me to pretend that I am anything but a man, shallow, weak, limited. So living independent of God is self-delusion. It is not just a matter of pride being an unfortunate little trait and humility being an attractive little virtue. It is my inner psychological integrity that is at stake. When I am self-dependent, I am lying to myself about what I am. I am pretending to be God and not man. My independence is the idolatrous worship of myself, the national religion of hell.

p. 118

(I Never Thought I'd See the Day!: Culture at the Crossroads by David Jeremiah)

To employ the human body and psyche in ways they were not created to be used will lead to the same kind of disaster as trying to use your automobile as a motorboat. You may feel exhilaration and freedom as you fly through the air after driving your car off the pier, but it will not float for long when it lands in the water.

pp. 112-113

Another author said it this way: “It may seem a gratuitous paradox, but the truth is that marriage is more important than love. Marriage is more important than love because it is the normal situation out of which true and abiding love arises. The popular notion, much encouraged by light fiction and the motion picture, is that love is primary, marriage being a dull anticlimax. But this is vast error.”

God brought two perfect, sinless people together in the Garden of Eden, a man and a woman who knew the perfect love of God. They

did not get married to find love but to walk together in the unity and purpose God created them to fulfill: the primary task of birthing and raising the next generation. And in the process, love happened.

33. Elton Trueblood, *Foundations for Reconstruction* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946), 76.  
p. 116

VERSE 2: “Be honoring your father and your mother. This is the first commandment with a promise.”

Command #1 was in verse 1: “Children, be obeying your parents in the Lord for this is right. Now in verse 2 is Command #2: “Be honoring your father and your mother. This is the first commandment with a promise.”

*The NET bible translates verse 2:*

“‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the first commandment accompanied by a promise, namely,”

*Peterson in The Message paraphrases verse 2:*

“Honor your father and mother’ is the first commandment that has a promise attached to it, namely”

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:*

Paul then quoted the fifth commandment (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16) to support the need for children to obey parents. The parenthetical clause states that this is the first commandment with a promise. But this is actually the second command with a promise (Ex. 20:6). Some say Paul meant that this is the first command that children need to learn. But the first, not the fifth, of the Ten Commandments should really be learned first. More likely, Paul meant that this is “first” in the sense of being “a primary commandment,” that is, of primary importance for children and it also has a promise.

The first command in verse 1 is “to be obeying your parents in the Lord” and



now the second command is verse 2 is “be honoring your father and your mother.”

Eadie points out:

Honor comprehends in it all that respect, reverence, love and obedience which the filial relationship so fully implies.

Wuest points out:

To honor someone therefore, is to evaluate that person accurately and honestly and treat him with the deference, respect, reverence, kindness, courtesy and obedience which his station in life or his character demands. Obedience is the duty, honor is the disposition of which the obedience is born.

Colossians 3:20:

“You children must always obey your fathers and mothers for that pleases the Lord.”

“This is the first commandment with a promise.” Here the apostle is pointing out the fact that obedience to this particular commandment carries with it a promise.

Barclay observes:

The honour that Paul demands is not the honour of mere lip service. The only way to honour parents is to obey them, to respect them, and never to cause them pain.

p. 210

Barker & Kohlenberger point out:

This is said to be “the first commandment with a promise.” If we connect “first” and “promise,” a difficulty arises because the fifth commandment is not the first of the ten to which a promise is attached. The second commandment against making idols also contains one. We should therefore separate “with a promise” from “first” and insert a comma after

“commandment.” But in what sense can this commandment be regarded as “the first”? It seems most likely that “first” here means first in importance. The rabbis regarded this commandment as the weightiest of all. Perhaps Paul meant to convey the fact that this is the most important commandment for children. Another likely explanation is to note the absence of the article before “first,” suggesting that this is a primary commandment, i.e., one of foremost significance.  
pp. 780—781

Bickel & Jantz add:

*Honor Your Father and Mother*

Paul instructs children to not only obey their parents but to honor them as well. Obeying and honoring are two different things. In general children must obey their parents as long as they are living in their household. Honor goes beyond obedience, both in scope and in time. When you respect and love your parents no matter what, you are showing them honor, and this should never stop. God blesses those children who honor their parents throughout their lives.  
p. 149

Eadie offers:

Honour comprehends in it all that respect, reverence, love, and obedience, which the filial relation so fully implies.  
p. 438

Fergusson discerns:

Whatever God hath commanded in his word, is most righteous, equitable, and just: for he proveth that it is right for children to obey their parents, because the law of God enjoineth, “Honour thy father and mother.”  
p. 254

Henry says:

*For this is right*, there is a natural equity in it, God has enjoined it. It is the order of nature that parents command and children obey. The apostle quotes the law of the fifth commandment. *Honour thy father and mother (v. 2), which is the first commandment with promise.* The promise is, *That it may be well with thee*, v. 3. Outward prosperity and long life are blessings

promised to those who keep this commandment. Obedient children are often rewarded with outward prosperity. Not indeed that it is always so; but *ordinarily* obedience is thus rewarded.  
p. 1857

Hughes observes:

The final reason a child who obeys and honors his or her parents will prosper is that such a person will be far more likely to develop healthy character traits, whereas a disobedient child is much more likely to develop harmful patterns. The Scriptures repeatedly state this principle: “Listen, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many” (Proverbs 4:10); “The fear of the Lord adds length to life, but the years of the wicked are cut short” (Proverbs 10:27); “The eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures” (Proverbs 30:17).  
p. 199

Much of this is a matter of attitude. We are not to be like the little boy who misbehaved and was told by his teacher to sit in the corner, which he did with grudging obedience, all the while saying to himself, “I’m sitting down on the outside, but I’m standing up on the inside!” The call to honor our parents goes beyond mere outward obedience. To honor our parents means to love them, to regard them highly, to show them respect and consideration. While we may outgrow the call to obey our parents, we never outgrow the obligation to honor them. This is where our culture is fast failing. The aged are shelved and patronized, but not respected. Grown-up children dishonor their parents by forgetting them and neglecting them.  
p. 199

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown point out:

The “promise” is not made the *main* motive to obedience, but an incidental one. The main motive is, because it is God’s will.  
p. 1297

Lenski adds:

This shows that God is concerned about the honor which children should show their parents. Humanly speaking, he offers them a special inducement, he makes it more easy for them to obey. The family is the basis of all society. Hence there must be the right relation between husband and wife, the founders of the home and the family (5:22—32), next the right

relation between children and parents (6:1—4).  
p. 648

MacArthur offers:

Honor. While verse 1 speaks of action, this term speaks of attitude, as Paul deals with the motive behind the action. When God gave His Law in the Ten Commandments, the first law governing human relationships was this one (Ex. 20:12; Deut.5:16). It is the only command of the ten that relates to the family because that principle alone secures the family's fulfillment.  
p. 1703

Obey has to do with action, and honor has to do with attitude. Although, as Paul has just mentioned, men and women are no longer under the authority of their parents once they themselves marry (5:31), special respect and concern for their parents should continue as long as they live. The child who is brought up to obey and honor his parents will always be sensitive to their wisdom, counsel, and welfare.  
p. 311

Patzia discerns:

By **the first commandment with a promise** the author must mean first in importance with respect to children, because the second commandment, which prohibits idolatry, is followed by God's promise to show his steadfast love to those who love him and keep his commandments.  
p. 278

Westcott says:

Obedience must be founded on honour and find expression, not only in act but in feeling.  
p. 88

The interpretation of ἐντολή πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελία is extremely uncertain. The words may mean 'seeing it is a commandment of primary importance accompanied also by a promise.'  
p. 88

'A primary commandment, carrying with it the promise—the offer and the benediction—*that it may be well with thee and that thou shalt live long upon the land.*'  
p. 88

(Life on the Highest Plane: A Study of the Spiritual Nature and Needs of Man by Ruth Paxson)

There was something wondrously beautiful in the thought that the Lord of glory could ever have need of me. I knew only too well how desperately I needed Him. Moment by moment I needed to draw all my life from Him as the branch lives in the life of the vine. But to think that He needed me! That there was fruit to be borne that could only be borne on a branch! That some life somewhere would need to see Christ in me! It was a marvelously convincing appeal, yet I am ashamed to record it even not so many years afterward, I hesitated to yield.

Was my life not my own? Was it not asking a great deal to turn it over to the absolute sovereignty of another? Should I relinquish *all* right to its possession and control? Was it safe to do so? Was it reasonable? Was it needful? Oh! the feasible, plausible arguments that self advanced to retain the kingship over my life!

All this reluctance was anticipated by the Lord and He was prepared to meet it. *“What? Know ye that ye are not your own?”* Like a sharp two-edged sword these words penetrated to my innermost being and lodged there. How they cut into shreds every argument advanced against such a wholesale yielding of myself to God! *“Know ye that ye are not your own?”* How they served the undergirding beneath all my thinking concerning my rights in myself! *“Know ye that ye are not your own?”* How they brought to light the hitherto disguised hypocrisy of my profession as a Christian in saying that I belonged to Jesus Christ yet all the while retaining in my own hands the reins of government! *“Know ye that ye are not your own?”* How these words went straight to the very heart of the issue like an axe laid at the root of the tree—the enthronement of Jesus Christ as Lord over my life or the continued reign of self!

p. 329

VERSE 3: “In order that it may be well with you and in order that you may live long upon the earth.”

The promise is defined by two purpose clauses in verse 3:

1. It may be well with you
2. In order that you may live long upon the earth

*The NET bible translates verse 3:*

“that it may go well with you and that you will live a long time on the earth.”

*Peterson in The Message paraphrases verse 3:*

“so you will live well and have a long life.”

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:*

The promise for those who obey their parents is that they enjoy a prosperous and long life on the earth. This states a general principle that obedience fosters self-discipline, which in turn brings stability and longevity in one's life. (Stated conversely, it is improbable that an undisciplined person will live a long life. An Israelite who persistently disobeyed his parents was not privileged to enjoy a long, stable life in the land of Israel. A clear example of this was Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas [1 Sam. 4:11].) Though that promise was given to Israel in the Old Testament, the principle still holds true today.

There are two parts to this promise and they are given in the form of purpose clauses.

The first purpose for honoring your father and mother is “so that it may be well with you,” that you may have a good life, that you are in a position for God to bless and prosper you.

The second purpose clause is “in order that you may live long upon the earth.” Longer life is the second promise attached to this commandment of honoring your father and mother.

Eadie observes:

Obedience secures wellbeing, and this being the case, “thou shalt live long on the earth.” The longevity is the result and development of its being well with thee.  
pp. 440—441

Obedient children are guided and guarded by their very veneration for

their parents, and prevented from these fatal excesses; whereas the “children of disobedience” are of necessity exposed to all the juvenile temptations which lead to vice and crime. God does not bribe the child to obedience, but holds out this special and blessed result to “tender understandings” as a motive which they can appreciate and enjoy.  
p. 443

McGee points out:

Samson and Absalom are two examples in Scripture of boys who did not follow this commandment, and their lives were short. Samson, a judge, died when he was a young man. Absalom rebelled against his father David, and he was killed when he was a young man.  
p. 273

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon)

**EARLY DEVOTION 39**

A smile from Jesus in the morning will be sunshine all the day.  
p. 128

(The Seeking Heart: Volume 4: The Library of Spiritual Classics by Fenelon)

Suffering is necessary for all of us. You will be purified by dying to your own desires and will. Let yourself die! You have excellent opportunities for this to happen—don't waste them!  
p. 18

God never makes you suffer unnecessarily. He intends for your suffering to heal and purify you. The hand of God hurts you as little as it can.

Anxiety brings suffering. Sometimes you are simply unwilling to suffer, and you end up resisting God's work. If you put away all your restless longings and your anxiety, you will experience the peace and freedom that God gives to His children. The yoke that God gives is easy to bear if you accept it without struggling to escape. You make life more painful for yourself when you resist God in the least way.  
p. 30

(Eggstra Courage for the Chicken Hearted: More Humorous & Inspiring Stories for Confident Living by Becky Freeman, Susan Duke, Rebecca Barlow Jordan, Gracie Malone, and Fran Caffey Sandin)

God cares about our pain. He only wants to change our focus from inward to outward and upward. I am content, knowing that He is always working to make me more like Himself.

(From “Too Pooped to Cluck” by Rebecca Barlow Jordan)  
p. 162

VERSE 4: “And Fathers, do not make your children angry but be bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

*The NET bible translates verse 4:*

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but raise them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

*Peterson in The Message paraphrases verse 4:*

“Fathers, don't exasperate your children by coming down hard on them. Take them by the hand and lead them in the way of the Master.”

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:*

Fathers are addressed because they represent the governmental head of the family on whom rests the responsibility of child discipline. Fathers are not to exasperate (“provoke to anger”; used only here and in Rom. 10:19; Col. 3:21) their children by unreasonable demands, petty rules, or favoritism. Such actions cause children to become discouraged (Col. 3:21). Instead, fathers are to bring them up, that is, rear or nourish (“provide for physical and spiritual needs”) them in the training (“child discipline,” including directing and correcting; “training” in righteousness and God’s “discipline” of believers) and instruction of the Lord. Children are to obey “in the Lord” and parents are to train and instruct “in the Lord.” He is to be the center of their relationships and of their teaching and learning.



Paul now turns from the children to the fathers. He gives them a negative and a positive command. Negatively, “do not make your children angry,” but positively, “be bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Colossians 3:21:

“Fathers, don’t scold your children so much that they become discouraged and quit trying.”

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12:

“We talked to you as a father to his own children, don’t you remember, pleading with you, encouraging you and even demanding that your daily lives should not embarrass God but bring joy to Him who invited you into His kingdom to share His glory.”

It is a father who is *exhorting*, *encouraging* and is an *example*.

The positive command is: “to be bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

The two words, “discipline” and “instruction,” take us back in the passage to 5:29 where we read, “for no one ever yet hated his own flesh but is nourishing and cherishing it.”

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8:

“But we were as gentle among you as a mother feeding and caring for her own children who loved you dearly, so dearly that we gave you not only God’s message but our own lives too.”

It is the father’s responsibility to duplicate in the home, what Christ does for the church.

## 1 Samuel 12:23:

“As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right.”

“A godly man was obliged to spend long periods of time away from home. Returning on one occasion to his family, he went out into his vegetable garden to pull weeds from a patch of beans. One of his small children, a little girl four or five years of age, came out to “help daddy.” While he was on his knees moving down a row of beans, the little darling worked along behind him calling out from time to time, “I’s e a helpin’ you, Daddy.” The affectionate father would call back, “All right, darling,” and go on with his work. Reaching the end of the row, he turned about, and what did he see? His willing little helper had come along behind him and instead of pulling weeds, she had pulled up all the beans! What did he do? Become angry and give the child a good beating? No! He gathered her in his arms, gave her a good hug to show his gratitude for her good intentions to “help Daddy,” and carried her to the house where she would be kept from giving him further “help.” The child had a perfect heart, but a faulty head. Her motive was faultless but not her service. Many times we are like that in the service of our Heavenly Father. And be it said to His praise that He judges and rewards us not according to the perfection or otherwise of our intelligence and service, but according to the purity of intent and the quality of spirit back of it.”

Anders observes:

The father’s role is not to exasperate his children but to bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Growing up in a Christian home is intended to be a very positive experience for both parent and child when each plays his proper role.

p. 189

Verse 4 instructs us not to “exasperate your children.” The Bible does not tell us what this means. Both *wrath* and *exasperate* come from the root word *anger*. A study of human and family behavior can shed some insight on how we might exasperate our children and provoke them to anger. The following examples will give us a good starting point for understanding this instruction.

1. Overprotecting children: Parents who do everything for their children and do not let them gain any degree of independence or self-determination.

2. Overdisciplining children: Parents who overly restrict where children can go and what they can do, who never trust them to do things on their own, and who continually question their judgment. Certainly, a proper amount of this is necessary. We are talking about overdoing it.
3. Expecting more than the child can ever perform: Perfectionistic parents for whom the child's decisions and dreams—never approving, affirming, or encouraging.
4. Expecting less of them than they can perform: Parents who discourage the child's decisions and dreams—never approving, affirming, or encouraging.
5. Failing to sacrifice for their children: Parents who make the children feel as though they are an intrusion and burden.
6. Verbal and/or physical abuse: Parents who abuse their children, either by actions, negligence, words, or attitudes.
7. Legalism: Parents who use the Bible, religion, or God to browbeat the children into behavior that is not required by scriptural teachings.
8. Imbalance: Parents who fail to balance affirmation and discipline, who affirm without discipline, who discipline without affirmation, or who do neither.

These eight things will provoke a child to anger; they will exasperate a child, and we would be well-advised to avoid them.

p. 195

Barclay points out:

It is a strange thing that Paul repeats this injunction even a little more fully in *Colossians 3:21*. "Fathers," he says, "provoke not your children to anger, *lest they be discouraged*." Bengel says that the plague of youth is a "broken spirit," the discouragement which can come from continuous criticism and rebuke and too strict a discipline.

p. 210

There are three ways in which we can do injustice to our children.

(i) We can forget that things do change, that the customs of one generation are not the customs of another. Elinor Mordaunt tells how once she stopped her little daughter from doing something by saying, "I was never allowed to do that when I was your age." And the child answered, "But you must remember, mother, that you were *then*, and I'm *now*." Parents can do infinite damage by forgetting that times change and customs alter.

(ii) We can exercise such a control that that very control is an insult to our own upbringing of our children. To keep a child too long in leading-strings is simply to say that we do not trust him, and to say that we do not trust him, is simply to say that we have no confidence in the way in which we ourselves have trained him. It is better to make the mistake of too much trust than of too much control.

(iii) We can forget the duty of encouragement. Luther's father was very strict, too strict, strict to the point of cruelty. Luther used to say: "Spare the rod and spoil the child—that is true; but beside the rod keep an apple to give him when he has done well." Benjamin West tells how he became a painter. One day his mother went out leaving him in charge of his little sister Sally. In his mother's absence he discovered some bottles of coloured ink and began to paint Sally's portrait. In the doing so he made a very considerable mess of things with ink blots all over. His mother came back. She saw the mess, but she said nothing. She picked up the piece of paper and saw the drawing. "Why," she said, "it's Sally!" and she stooped and kissed him. Ever after Benjamin West used to say: "My mother's kiss made me a painter." Encouragement did more than rebuke could ever do.  
pp. 211—212

Barker & Kohlenberger add:

Fathers must not make unreasonable demands. Otherwise children, being overcorrected, may lose heart (cf. Col 3:21). Children should be treated with tenderness.  
p. 781

Bruce offers:

As in Col. 3:21, fathers (or parents) are urged not to assert their authority over children in a manner more calculated to provoke resentment than ready obedience. The verb expressing such unreasonable parental conduct is different from that in the parallel passage, but the general sense is the same. Where Col. 3:21 adds the clause "lest they be disheartened," the Ephesians injunction recommends a better course of action: "bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." The training and instruction of the Lord: would involve following Christ's example, with due regard to his "meekness and gentleness" (2 Cor. 10:1), as well as putting into practice his precepts.  
p. 398

Calvin discerns:

Parents, on the other hand, are exhorted not to irritate their children by unreasonable severity. This would excite hatred, and would lead them to throw off the yoke altogether. Accordingly, in writing to the Colossians, he adds, "lest they be discouraged." (Col. iii. 21).  
p. 328

Dunham says:

Of course, honor of parents is an essential virtue and certainly in need of cultivation. The unthoughtful and irresponsible emphasis on permissiveness has created a desperate need in modern America to return to a strong emphasis on discipline and obedience in the home. Yet, the word of Paul, so radical in his day, and still the key to making the family what Christ would have it be, is reciprocal respect between parents and children.  
p. 232

Eadie observes:

The paternal reign is not to be one of terror and stern authority, but of love. The rod may be employed, but in reason and moderation, and never from momentary impulse and anger. Children are not to be moved to “wrath” by harsh and unreasonable treatment, or by undue partiality and favouritism. If they be uniformly confronted with paternal frown and menace, then their spirit is broken, and the most powerful motive to obedience—the desire to please—is taken from them.  
p. 444

Henry points out:

Your children are pieces of yourselves, and therefore ought to be governed with great tenderness and love. When you caution them, when you counsel them, when you reprove them, do it in such a manner as not to *provoke them to wrath*, endeavouring to convince their judgments and to work upon their reason.  
p. 1857

Hughes adds:

The prohibition is most clear: “Fathers, do not exasperate your children” (v. 4a). Literally this means, *do not provoke your children to anger* so that they begin to seethe with resentment and irritation like sap swelling in a tree on a hot day. Such “exasperation” can be done in a number of ways.

*Unreasonableness* is very common. Some parents ask things beyond the child’s capability, or load the child with so many demands that frustration is inevitable.

Then there are *fault-finding* parents. Every year when we decorate our Christmas tree and I place a tiny red-and-green glass-beaded wreath on the

tree, I think of the little boy who gave it to me when I coached soccer—and his sarcastic, demeaning father, the only parent I ever told to be quiet or leave the field. I wonder how that boy, now a man, has fared.

Another avenue to exasperation is *neglect*. This was King David's great sin, which drove Absalom to rebellion, treason, and attempted patricide (2 Samuel 14, 15).

Another common provocation is *inconsistency*. I recall one of my college friends, who had deep personal problems, telling me how when he was a child his father left his mother so that she became so destitute she placed my friend in an orphanage, where his father would periodically call to say he was coming to visit. My friend told how he would with welling expectancy climb up on the orphanage's iron gate and wait all day for his father, who never once came.

p. 200

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown offer:

Fathers—including *mothers*; the fathers are specified as being the fountains of domestic authority. Fathers are more prone to passion in relation to their children than mothers, whose fault is rather over-indulgence. Provoke not—irritate not, by vexatious commands, unreasonable blame, and uncertain temper [Alford]. Colossians 3:21, “lest they be discouraged.”

p. 1297

Lincoln discerns:

The exhortation to fathers in Col. 3:21 remained in the negative, “Do not provoke (embitter) your children, lest they become discouraged,” and the first part of Eph. 6:4 is similar in thought but employs different terminology. “Do not make your children angry” continues this writer's concern with anger from earlier in the paraenesis. The verb *παροργίζω* is used elsewhere in the NT only in Rom. 10:19 of God making Israel angry, but the noun *παροργισμός* occurs earlier in this letter in 4:26, where it denotes anger that has been provoked and that can give the devil opportunity if it is not dealt with quickly. Fathers are made responsible for ensuring that they do not provoke anger in their children. This involves avoiding attitudes, words, and actions which would drive a child to angry exasperation or resentment and thus rules out excessively severe discipline, unreasonably harsh demands, abuse of authority, arbitrariness, unfairness, constant nagging and condemnation, subjecting a child to humiliation, and all forms of gross insensitivity to a child's needs and sensibilities.

p.406

Lovett says:

Fathers. Since the mothers are submitting to their husbands, the fathers become fully responsible for the cultivation of the children. This in no wise restricts the mother's rights or influence. It simply reminds fathers they carry the full load as far as God is concerned. Often prone to passion and over-indulgence with the children, they are the ones needing this reminder. "Discipline," in the Greek has to do with teaching responsibility, using punishments as needed. The word "admonish," refers to counsel and exhortations leading to their improvement. The child-like obedience God desires is easier gained if first learned at home. Indifferent fathers will have much to account for at the Judgment Seat of Christ.  
pp. 128—129

MacArthur observes:

The Christian psychiatrist Dr. Paul Meier gives a similar list of factors that produce right parent-child relations: genuine love of the parents for each other and for the children; firm, consistent discipline; consistency of standards for parents and children; the right example by parents; and the father as true head of the home. He also comments that the vast majority of neurotics have grown up in homes where there was no father or where he was dominated by the mother (*Christian Child-Rearing and Personality Development* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980], pp. 81—82).

McGee points out:

There is the story of the father whipping the little boy and saying, "Son, this hurts me more than it hurts you." The boy replied, "Yeah, but not in the same place!"  
p. 2

Patrick & Lowth add:

By disinheriting them, by laying heavy burdens upon them, and using them rather as slaves than sons, but "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." For it is not, saith Aristides, a thing of a small consideration, what principles are put into them in their youth; but it is, τὸ πᾶν, the foundation of all they do hereafter.  
p. 764

Patzia offers:

Negatively, fathers are exhorted not to exasperate (from *parorgizo*, “provoke to anger”) their children. Obedience can be expected, but it cannot be demanded by provoking and irritating children, or causing them to be angry (Col. 3:21 adds “or they will become discouraged”). Positively, parents are urged to bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

The verb for “raise” (*ektrepho*) has the meaning of nourish. Though it can be used for bodily nourishment and care (5:29), it applies also to the care given to the entire person. This nurture is given through Christian discipline (*paideia*) and instruction (*nouthesia*).

p. 279

Simpson & Bruce discern:

The father as the paterfamilias is singled out by the apostle for admonition. His sway must comprise a positive and negative element, a blend of firmness with gentle treatment. The child must be taught the lesson of obedience betimes, if it is ever to become fit to bear rule itself. Susannah Wesley makes the subjugation of a child's will the first element in its training. But that delicate operation must not be performed in such a fashion as to exasperate.

p. 136

Wuest says:

(6:4) “Provoke” is *parorgizo*, to rouse to wrath, to provoke, exasperate, anger.” Expositors says: “The parental duty is given first negatively, as avoidance of all calculated to *irritate* or *exasperate* the children—injustice, severity and the like, so as to make them indisposed to filial obedience and honor.” Bring up” is *ektrepho*, “to nourish up to maturity, to nurture, bring up, to rear up.” The word is not confined to the nourishing of a child physically, but includes its bringing up or rearing in the various departments of its life.

“Nurture” is *paideia*, “the whole training and education of children which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose, now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment” (Thayer). “Admonition” is *nouthesia*, “exhortation, admonition.” Trench says of this word, “it is a training by word—by the word of encouragement, when that is sufficient, but also by that of remonstrance, of reproof, of blame, where these may be required, as set over against the training by act and discipline which is *paideia*.”

Translation. *And the fathers, stop provoking your children to anger,*



*but be rearing them in the discipline and admonition of the Lord.*  
p. 137

(Thirsting for God: Spiritual Refreshment for the Sacred Journey by Gary L. Thomas)

Earlier in my life, I couldn't have been as honest as I have been in sharing some of my own history and failings in this book. Slaying the glittering image has been incredibly freeing! The story of my life could be summed up like this: God has done some very good things in my life and I have done some very bad things, but through it all, God's grace has prevailed.  
p. 257

(The Best of A. W. Tozer: Book 2 compiled by Warren W. Wiersbe)

The church at this moment needs men, the right kind of men, bold men. The talk is that we need revival, that we need a new baptism of the Spirit—and God knows we must have both; but God will not receive mice. He will not fill rabbits with the Holy Ghost.

We languish for men who feel themselves expendable in the warfare of the soul, who cannot be frightened by threats of death because they have already died to the allurements of this world. Such men will be free from the compulsions that control weaker men. They will not be forced to do things by the squeeze of circumstances; their only compulsion will come from within—or from above.

This kind of freedom is necessary if we are to have prophets in our pulpits again instead of mascots. These free men will serve God and mankind from motives too high to be understood by the rank and file of religious retainers who today shuttle in and out of the sanctuary. They will make no decisions out of fear, take no course out of desire to please, accept no service for financial considerations, perform no religious act out of mere custom; nor will they allow themselves to be influenced by the love of publicity or the desire for reputation.

p. 145

(Joni & Ken An Untold Love Story by Ken & Joni Eareckson Tada)

It seemed to go on and on. A veritable catalog of pain and

suffering and loss and multiplied indignities, all spoken in that calm, clinical voice. And then he excused himself for a moment to check on another patient, left the room, and closed the door behind him.

For Joni, the closing door opened up a floodgate. Suddenly, it crashed in on her. All of it. The cancer. The surgery. The cancer-and-surgery-on-top-of-endless-pain-on-top-of-paralysis. The exhaustion. The loss of her breast. Going back to the hospital. A port in her chest—for *poison*. Losing her hair. Death, somewhere back there in the shadows. She collapsed into convulsive sobbing, weeping for all the losses and pain and disappointments here and now and long, long ago. The unshed tears of departed years.

“I can’t do this...it’s too much...I can’t,” she sniffed, her eyes and nose running.

Immediately, Judy walked over to Joni’s chair, put her arms around her, and let her friend fall against her shoulder. Judy gave her a squeeze as sobs wracked Joni’s frail body. She held her like that, murmuring words she might have whispered to a lonely heartbroken child.

And then something unusual happened.

Ken stood up and said, “I’ll do that.”

Judy, more than a little surprised, looked up at him, uncertain at first about what he intended, and whether to let Joni go.

“Let me take over,” he said quietly. And just like that, he did. Ken, her husband, *took over*. He put his strong arms about Joni, let her rest her head against his broad chest, and held her like that for a long time.

Joni, crying so hard she’d seemed oblivious to everything, wasn’t oblivious to this. Something in her noted this...change. This alteration in long-established realities. Through twenty-eight years of marriage, when it came to anything medical, Ken deferred to Judy. Judy was always there. Judy was a nurse. Judy had done it a thousand times. Judy knew the better way. Judy didn’t mind.

Had he really just said, “Let me take over?” When had she heard him say that before? And somehow, this felt like something more than an impulse. She’d heard steel in his voice. This was something new. Possibly something wonderful. Perhaps even a gift.

And in that instant a new thought knifed through a fog of emotion and weariness.

*I don’t want to die.*

pp. 34—35

(Voices from the Past: Puritan Devotional Readings edited by Richard Rushing)

If you can be assured in your own soul that God has taught you as well as chastened you, you are a blessed man. O brethren, it is sad when men come out of affliction the same as they went in—when they continue to be just as ignorant, proud, worldly, impatient, unsavoury, and as much strangers to Christ and their hearts as before—how exceedingly sad! When affliction does not lead to correction, men come out of the furnace with the dross intact. There are many blessings to be learned in the furnace of affliction. It teaches us compassion for others in a suffering condition, and to value our earthly comforts more without doting upon them. We are blessed when sufferings conforms us to Jesus Christ, and leads us to prayer. Man is never in a happier condition than when his heart is in a praying frame. Affliction makes us more acquainted with the Bible, and teaches us to weep over grieving God's Holy Spirit. Affliction teaches us to long for heaven, and to redeem the time. A teaching-affliction is a part of the covenant of grace. It does not contain freedom from affliction, but from the evil of sin. The rod and Word are blessed.

p. 326

(Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Books: Being a collection of sentences, illustrations, and quaint sayings from that renowned Puritan, Thomas Brooks by C.H. Spurgeon)

It is sad to see a man fight against his friends; it is sadder to see him fight against his relations; it is saddest of all to see him fight against his prayers. And yet this every Christian does, who murmurs and mutters when the rod of God is upon him.

p. 51

(Take My Heart, O God: Riches from the Greatest Christian Women Writers of All Times by Sarah Young)

*After a person encounters God, she should be changed. It is not enough for us to talk about what we have experienced. We should be living it out flamboyantly.*

—PRISCILLA SHIRER

## WRESTLING WITH GOD

Talk is cheap. Experiences may make for nice stories, but true change comes from an encounter that touches our heart and erupts into freedom.

We can't have an encounter with God and walk away unscathed. This isn't goose bumps and gold dust. This is going toe-to-toe with God and wrestling out our questions, discussing our hurt feelings, and dealing with our unforgiveness, pride, jealousy, addictions, or other besetting problems. Our heavenly Father loves us enough to confront us. He tells us the truth in love. We listen. We think. We challenge. We learn. We experience the only One who can change us from the inside out.

Such an encounter is more than just a good story to tell; it must cause you to live differently, to live in flamboyant joy! You are loved, so live like it!

p. 1/27

VERSE 5: "Slaves, be obeying those who according to the flesh are your masters with fear and trembling in sincerity of heart as to Christ."

*The NET bible translates verse 5:*

"Slaves, obey your human masters with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart as to Christ,"

*Peterson in The Message paraphrases verse 5:*

"Servants, respectfully obey your earthly masters but always with an eye to obeying the real master, Christ."

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:*

Paul then discussed a third group. Whereas the first two groups were directly involved in family relationships (wives and husbands, children and parents), this group was outside the immediate family. Slavery existed in Paul's day and he did not try to overthrow it. Apparently these were Christian slaves under Christian masters.

Slaves' responsibilities to their masters are outlined here. Slaves were to obey their masters with (1) respect, (2) fear ("trembling"), (3) sincerity, and (4) as a service rendered to Christ (just as you would obey Christ . . . like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God . . . as if you were serving the Lord).

This verse and verse 1 are the key verses in this study: His Plan for the Home and Business Relationship. We have noted together that it is the children's responsibility "to be obeying and honoring their parents and it is the father's responsibility "to be careful not to make the children angry but to be bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

We now come to the employee-employer relationship.

We will note in verses 5-8 that there are four guidelines that he gives for the employees and then in verse 9 he speaks to the employers.

The first guideline that is given is, "be obeying those who according to the flesh are your masters with fear and trembling in sincerity of heart as to Christ."

He refers to these matters according to the flesh because their obedience is to be like that which they give to their master in the spiritual realm even Jesus Christ.

This obedience is to be given "with fear and trembling and in sincerity of heart." It was "with fear and trembling" that Paul came to Corinth to minister and it is "with fear and trembling" that we are commanded to work out our salvation. In Philippians 2, what he is saying here in this context is to be obeying with an anxious care not to come short of that which is required. This is to be done "in sincerity of heart as to Christ."

Here in verse 5, we have **Command 5** from the apostle Paul:

**Command #1**: "Children, be obeying your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

**Command #2**: "Be honoring your father and your mother."

**Command #3**: "And Fathers, do not make your children angry, but"

**Command #4**: "be bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

**Command #5**: "Slaves, be obeying those who according to the flesh are your masters."

The way to do this is described in seven future phrases in the passage. The first three are in verse 5:

1. With fear and trembling
2. In sincerity of heart
3. As to Christ

We will see three more in verse 6:

4. Not in the way of eye-service as men-pleasers
5. As servants of Christ
6. Doing the will of God from the heart

The last will be in verse 7:

7. With goodwill rendering service as to the Lord and not of men

Abbott observes:

These words are similarly associated in 1 Cor. ii. 3; 2 Cor. vii. 15; Phil. ii. 12, expressing only anxious solicitude about the performance of duty, so that there is no allusion to the hardness of the service.  
p. 178

Barker & Kohlenberger point out:

“Respect and fear” must not be confused with craven servility but represent a sense of one’s shortcomings and a desire not to make any mistake. “Sincerity” (GK 605) is the opposite of duplicity in thoughts or action. It implies openness and concentration of purpose, especially in the context of generosity. The Christian slave has one goal before him: to obey his human master as an expression of his commitment to the divine Lord.  
p. 781

Calvin adds:

*With fear and trembling;* that is, with the careful respect which springs from an honest purpose. It can hardly be expected, however, that so much deference will be paid to a mere man, unless a higher authority shall enforce the obligation; and therefore he adds, *as doing the will of God.*  
p. 330

Eadie offers:

The slave is ever tempted to appear to labour while yet he is loitering,

to put on the seeming of obedience and obey with a double heart.  
p. 448

Gaebelein discerns:

The servants exhorted were slaves. Slavery existed throughout the Roman Empire at that time. Nowhere is slavery attacked in the New Testament, nor is there a statement telling believers that it was a sin to own slaves and incompatible with the gospel. Paul wrote a courteous letter to Philemon and sent it by Onesimus, the runaway slave, who probably had stolen money from Philemon, his master. The Gospel is not here to reform the world, to meddle with social conditions and politics.

The slaves here exhorted were Christians. They all belonged to the one body where there is neither Greek nor Jew, bond nor free. They were in Christ, saved by grace and seated in Christ in the heavenly places. What did it matter if they were but slaves! Did not God's well beloved Son walk on this earth as a servant, yea, the servant of all! In all their bonds they were the servants of Christ. Their service was to be rendered as unto the Lord and not unto men. The Lord would give them their reward. How happy these believing slaves must have been! And the Christian masters were to remember the one Master in Heaven, with whom there is no respect of persons.  
pp.267—268

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

Fear and trembling—not slavish terror, but (1 Cor. 2:3, *Note*; 2 Cor. 7:15) an anxious eagerness to do your duty, and a fear of displeasing,  
p. 1297

MacArthur observes:

With fear and trembling. This is not fright, but respect for their authority. Even if an employer does not deserve respect in his own right (see 1 Pet. 2:18), it should nevertheless be given to him with genuine sincerity as if one was serving Christ Himself. To serve one's employer well is to serve Christ well.  
p. 1704

In this passage Paul gives his final illustration of the principle of Spirit-produced mutual submission, “and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ” (5:21), applying it to relations between slaves and masters—and, by extension, to all employer-employee relationships.

p. 321

Patzia points out:

Respect and fear appears to be a common expression in connection with obedience (2 Cor. 7:15; Phil. 2:12). To some, this may connote cowardice or submission occasioned by severe oppression. But more likely reverence and respect for those in authority is meant. Slaves, in spite of their newly found freedom in Christ, need to remember that they have not been freed socially from the institution of slavery. Disobedience to one's earthly masters could still result in severe punishment (cf. 6:9, "Do not threaten"). Service to earthly masters is to be rendered with the same kind of sincerity of heart that governs one's service to Christ.

p. 280

Radmacher, Allen & House add:

6:5 A very large percentage of the population of the Roman Empire was made up of bondservants or slaves. These people were considered mere property and could be abused and even killed by their masters with no resulting investigation by the state. In the church, wealthy slave owners and their slaves broke bread together at the Lord's Table as equals. No doubt some slaves were gifted spiritual leaders and ministered the word to people far above them on the social ladder.

p. 1540

Westcott offers:

The third typical relation in the household was that of servants (slaves) and masters. The servant must remember that he renders his service to Christ (5—7), and that he will receive his reward from Him (8). The master must remember that in heaven the servant's Master is his own also (9).

p. 89

Wuest discerns:

The Greek order is, "Be constantly obedient to those who according to the flesh are your masters." The word "masters" here is *kurios*, while *despotes* is used for "masters" in 1 Peter and the Pastoral Epistles. Expositors suggests that the phrase "according to the flesh" was used to distinguish these masters (*kurios*) who were masters of their slaves only so far as material and earthly consideration are concerned, while Christ is



*Kurios* (Lord), Master in a spiritual relation as well.” As one wise monarch once said, “My dominion over my subjects ends where that of God’s begins.”  
p. 138

The words “in singleness of heart,” qualify “be obedient,” not “fear and trembling.” “It states the spirit in which the obedience was to be rendered, - not in formality, pretence, or hypocrisy, but in inward reality and sincerity, and with an undivided heart”  
p. 138

(Beautiful Outlaw by John Eldredge)

We chitchat. We spend our days at a level of conversation as substantive as smoke. We dance around one another like birds in a mating ritual, bobbing, ducking, puffing out our chests, flapping our wings, circling one another, now advancing, now retreating. If we filmed a week of it in time-lapse photography, it would make the Discovery channel.

Let’s be honest—why *aren’t* we more honest with each other?  
p. 70

(When God Interrupts: Finding New Life Through Unwanted Change by M. Craig Barnes)

We do not live by faith in God’s intervention. We live by faith in God’s grace when there is no intervention.  
p. 100

VERSE 6: “Not in the way of eye-service as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart.”

*The NET bible translates verse 6:*

“not like those who do their work only when someone is watching—as people-pleasers—but as slaves of Christ doing the will of God from the heart.”

*Peterson in The Message paraphrases verse 6:*

“Don't just do what you have to do to get by, but work heartily, as Christ's servants doing what God wants you to do.”

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:*

Consistently (5) (not only . . . when their eye is on you, but all the time), (6) with inner motivation, and from your heart.

There are seven phrases that describe the slaves or employees relationship with the employers. This is a seven-fold job description.

1. With fear and trembling in verse 5
2. In sincerity of heart in verse 5
3. As to Christ in verse 5
4. Not in the way of eye-service as men-pleasers in verse 6
5. As servants of Christ in verse 6
6. Doing the will of God from the heart in verse 6
7. With goodwill rendering service as to the Lord and not of men in verse 7

There is a negative and a positive statement in this verse. Negatively, “not in the way of eye-service as men-pleasers,” but positively, “as servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart.”

This is the second guideline for employees. What Paul is saying here is, don't work like mad while the boss is around to avoid being chewed out when he's not around, but instead as servants of Christ, look on your work as doing the will of God from the heart.

Colossians 3:22-25:

“You slaves must always obey your earthly masters not only trying to please them when they are watching you but all the time. Obey them willingly because of your love for the Lord and because you want to please Him. Work hard and cheerfully at all you do just as though you were working for the Lord and not merely for your masters, remembering that it is the Lord Christ who is going to pay you, giving you your full portion of all He owns. He's the One you are really

working for and if you don't do your best for Him, He will pay you in a way that you won't like for He has no special favors who can get away with shirking.”

MacArthur observes:

Eyeservice. This means working well only when being watched by the boss. Menpleasers. Working only to promote one's welfare, rather than to honor the employer and the Lord, whose servants we really are.  
p. 1704

Patzia points out:

“The Christian's ideal is for his daily work, seen or unseen by men, to be accepted as the *will of God*, rejoiced in and done not by constraint or carelessness but because it is his will” (Foulkes, p. 168).  
p. 281

Radmacher, Allen & House add:

Not for eyeservice: Servants and employees should serve faithfully even when no one is looking. After all, God sees all that we do.  
p. 1540

Robertson offers:

*But as servants of Christ (all' hos doulio Christou)*. Better “slaves of Christ” as Paul rejoiced to call himself (Phil. 1:1). *Doing the will of God (poiountes to thelema tou theou)*. Even while slaves of men.  
p. 549

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon)

#### TRANSPARENCY

We are watched by a thousand eagle eyes; let us so act that we shall never need to care if all heaven, and earth, and hell, swelled the list of spectators.

p. M-552

(The Beautiful Fight: Surrendering to the Transforming Presence of God Every Day of Your Life by Gary Thomas)

The gospel of transformation calls me to progress from not lusting to having eyes that honor, respect, and generate compassion. God wants to transform my eyes from being selfish possessors and consumers to being his servants of selfless love.

p. 63

(The Glorious Pursuit: Embracing the Virtues of Christ by Gary L. Thomas)

Saints agree they are sinners;  
only sinners think they are saints.

PETER KREEFT

The truth is this—pride must die in you,  
or nothing of heaven can live in you.

ANDREW MURRAY

p. 47

(The Perfect Love by Ruth Myers)

I would be simply used,  
Spending myself in humble task or great,  
Priest at the altar, keeper of the gate,  
So be my Lord requireth just that thing  
Which at the needful moment I may bring.  
O joy of serviceableness divine!  
Of merging will and work, dear Lord, in Thine,  
Of knowing that results, however small,  
Fitly into Thy stream of purpose fall.  
I would be simply used!

p. 132

(The Great House of God by Max Lucado)

The next time your plate has more broccoli than apple pie, remember who prepared the meal. And the next time your plate has a portion you find hard to swallow, talk to God about it. Jesus did. In the garden of Gethsemane His Father handed Him a cup of suffering so sour, so vile, that Jesus handed it back to heaven. “My Father,” He prayed, “if it is possible may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will.” (Matt. 26:39)  
p. 105

VERSE 7: “With good will rendering service as to the Lord and not men.”

*The NET bible translates verse 7:*

“Obey with enthusiasm, as though serving the Lord and not people,”

*Peterson in The Message paraphrases verse 7:*

“And work with a smile on your face, always keeping in mind that no matter who happens to be giving the orders, you're really serving God.”

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:*

The latter phrase being lit., “from the soul”, and (7) wholeheartedly (“with good will or a peaceable spirit”).

In verse 7, we come to the seventh point of the employee’s job description. We have considered the other six in verses 5 and 6.

1. With fear and trembling
2. In sincerity of heart
3. As to Christ
4. Not in the way of eye-service as men-pleasers
5. As servants of Christ
6. Doing the will of God from the heart
7. Now in verse 7, with goodwill rendering service as to the Lord and not of men

Here is the third guideline for employees. It will transform your work if you look upon it as “work to the Lord and not to men.”

1 Corinthians 15:58:

“So my dear brothers, since future victory is sure, be strong and steady, always abounding in the Lord’s work for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever wasted as it would be if there were no resurrection.”

Bickel & Jantz observe:

Respect your employers and serve them as you would serve Christ. No matter where you are, live out your Christian life with love. Worry less about making yourself look good, and concentrate more on making your boss look good. Don’t be a slacker. Work just as hard when the boss isn’t looking as when he or she is because the Lord is always watching.  
pp. 149—150

Bruce points out:

Eye-service may muster for a time when one is working for an earthly master, but the Lord judges by the heart and not by outward appearance. Even if the work to be done for an earthly master were tedious and burdensome, if the Christian slave looked on it as a service rendered “to the Lord and not to human beings” that would transform his attitude to it and enable him to do it with “the ready good will, which does not wait to be compelled” (J. A. Robinson).  
p. 401

Patzia adds:

This verse essentially repeats—and thus reemphasizes—the thought in the two preceding ones. Work that is done cheerfully (*eunoia* carries the idea of zeal and enthusiasm) has to come from the heart. That inner conviction brought about by a new relationship to Christ and new attitude toward work enables the slave to perform his or her responsibilities with enthusiasm.  
p. 281

(31 Days of Praise: Enjoying God Anew by Ruth Myers)

I praise You that "Jesus Christ is able to untangle all the snarls in my soul, to banish all my complexes, and to transform even my fixed habit patterns, no matter how deeply they are etched in my subconscious" (Corrie ten Boom).

p. 74

(Life on the Highest Plane: A Study of the Spiritual Nature and Needs of Man by Ruth Paxson)

The spiritual man has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him, filling him, leading him, teaching him, empowering him. Through the new birth God's own life, eternal and uncreated, has been imparted to him and now Jesus Christ is his very life.

p. 15

The spiritual man has *accepted* Christ as his *Saviour*.

The spiritual man has *yielded* to Christ as his *Lord*.

The spiritual man has *appropriated* Christ as his *Life*.

Jesus Christ and he are one as the vine and the branch are one.

Christ is the supreme need of his life and has the supreme place in his affections. Christ is all and in all to him.

p. 16

(Coach Wooden's Pyramid of Success by John Wooden & Jay Carty)

As the director of a Christian camp, I spent five years helping young people become the best they could be. The greatest challenge of the years was teaching summer staff members to apply Ephesians 6:7: "Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people."

Few tasks are as taxing as serving campers for nine weeks. The hours are long and the work is hard and thankless. The last three weeks separate the cream from the milk. Those who keep their commitments and give it their all willingly cover both for the slackers and for those who can't cut it and leave early. The staff members who endure learn that there is much more inside them than they ever imagined. They are the ones who are more apt to become all they are capable of becoming. They are the ones who are more likely to find success as Coach Wooden defines it. Working hard, digging deep and

bringing out the good from within us are the keys.  
p. 32

*There is no substitute for work. Worthwhile results  
come from hard work and careful planning.*

p. 34

Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts  
lead to poverty (Proverbs 21:5).

p. 35

(A 3rd Serving of Chicken Soup for the Soul: 101 More Stories to Open the  
Heart and Rekindle the Spirit compiled by Jack Canfield & Mark Victor  
Hansen)

#### An Act of Kindness

***“You must give time to your fellow men—even if it’s a little  
thing, do something for others—something for which you get no  
pay but the privilege of doing it.”***

Albert Schweitzer

President Abraham Lincoln often visited hospitals to talk with  
wounded soldiers during the Civil War. Once, doctors pointed out a  
young soldier who was near death and Lincoln went over to his  
bedside.

“Is there anything I can do for you?” asked the President.

The soldier obviously didn’t recognize Lincoln, and with some  
effort he was able to whisper, “Would you please write a letter to my  
mother?”

A pen and paper were provided and the President carefully  
began writing down what the young man was able to say:

“My dearest mother, I was badly hurt while doing my duty. I’m  
afraid I’m not going to recover. Don’t grieve too much for me, please.  
Kiss Mary and John for me. May God bless you and father.”

The soldier was too weak to continue, so Lincoln signed the  
letter for him and added, “Written for your son by Abraham Lincoln.”

The young man asked to see the note and was astonished when  
he discovered who had written it. “Are you really the President?” he  
asked.



“Yes, I am,” Lincoln replied quietly. Then he asked if there was anything else he could do.

“Would you please hold my hand?” the soldier asked. “It will help to see me through to the end.”

In the hushed room, the tall gaunt President took the boy's hand in his and spoke warm words of encouragement until death came.

The Best of Bits & Pieces

pp. 49-50

(Same Kind of Different as Me: A Modern-day Slave, an International Art Dealer, and the Unlikely Woman Who Bound Them Together by Ron Hall, Denver Moore, and Lynn Vincent)

“Well, when Denver heard about Miss Debbie, he told me she had a lot of friends that would be praying for her all day. But he figured she needed someone to pray all night, and he would be the one to do it.”

My eyes widened as he went on. “So he goes outside at midnight, sits down next to the Dumpster, and prays for Miss Debbie and your family. When I get up and come down here at three in the morning to get breakfast going, he comes in for a cup of coffee and we pray here in the kitchen for her until about four. Then he goes back outside and prays till sunup.”

Ashamed, I realized again how deep grew the roots of my own prejudice, of my arrogant snap judgments of the poor.

p. 138

(Just Give Me Jesus by Anne Graham Lotz)

### **Jesus Makes Suffering Understandable**

He guards the young.

He seeks the stray.

He finds the lost.

He guides the faithful.

He rights the wronged.

He avenges the abused.

He defends the weak.

He comforts the oppressed.

He welcomes the prodigal.

He heals the sick.

He cleanses the dirty.  
He beautifies the barren.  
He restores the failure.  
He mends the broken.  
He blesses the poor.  
He fills the empty.  
He clothes the naked.  
He satisfies the hungry.  
He elevates the humble.  
He forgives the sinner.  
He raises the dead!

*Just give me Jesus! He makes suffering understandable!*  
p. 173

(When Life and Beliefs Collide by Carolyn Custis James)

This is why it is so crucial for us to develop and test our theology within earshot of the dying cries of Jesus. At the foot of the cross, we begin to understand that God’s plan, shaped and propelled by his love and goodness, includes pain and tragedy—for Jesus and for us. Strange as it seems, God’s goodness and love become more vivid in the tragedy itself.  
p. 75

(A Place of Healing: Wrestling with the Mysteries of Suffering, Pain, and God’s Sovereignty by Joni Eareckson Tada)

As you may know from your own Bible study, that word “workmanship” in the original language, Greek, is *poiema*, from which we get our English word “poem.”

He has a plan and purpose for my time on earth. He is the master artist or sculptor, and He is the one who chooses the tools He will use to perfect His workmanship. What of suffering, then? What of illness? What of disability? Am I to tell Him which tools He can use and which tools He can’t use in the lifelong task of perfecting me and molding me into the beautiful image of Jesus? Do I really know better than Him, so that I can state without equivocation that it’s always His will to heal me of every physical affliction? If I am His poem, do I have the right to say, “No, Lord. You need to trim line number two and brighten up line three and five. They’re just a little bit dark.” Do I, the poem, the thing being written, know more than the poet?

p. 67

**VERSE 8:** “Knowing that each one, whatever good he may do, this he will receive from the Lord whether he is a slave or whether he is free.”

*The NET bible translates verse 8:*

“because you know that each person, whether slave or free, if he does something good, this will be rewarded by the Lord.”

*Peterson in The Message paraphrases verse 8:*

“Good work will get you good pay from the Master, regardless of whether you are slave or free.”

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:*

The reason for such service is that the Lord will reward them. He is the One who can accurately and impartially judge their performance and motivation (1 Peter 1:17).

This is the fourth guideline for employees. This guideline says there is a day of examination coming, and we will receive from the Lord for our faithfulness in work down here whether we are slave or free.

2 Corinthians 5:10:

“For we must all stand before Christ to be judged and have our lives made bare before Him. Each of us will receive whatever he deserves for the good or bad things he has done in this earthly body.”

Foulkes points out:

Not only good is mentioned since the apostle's purpose at this point is encouragement rather than warning. He knows what it will mean to his readers who are slaves to live out what he has said, so he reminds

them that nothing is unwitnessed by the Lord in heaven. Nothing well-done is ever done in vain. There may be no thanks on earth, a man may reap only criticism and misunderstanding but he can know that there is an unfailing reward for faithful service.

Patrick & Lowth offer:

*The same shall he receive of the Lord.* So that though he be not rewarded for the good he doth by his earthly and unbelieving master, he will, most certainly, be recompensed by his Lord Christ.  
p. 764

(Sacred Marriage: What if God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More than to Make Us Happy? by Gary Thomas)

I realized that I was being deluded by my sense of self-righteousness. Instead of focusing on what Lisa could improve, I should have been on my knees, begging God to change *me*. This thought was magnified one morning when I awoke and started praying through Scripture. All of a sudden, a question startled me: "Does Lisa feel like she's married to Jesus?"

I almost laughed out loud, until I was shaken by another thought. I am told over and over in Scripture that my duty as a Christian is to become more and more like Jesus Christ. Over time, my wife *should* start to feel like there's at least a family resemblance. I realized how pitifully short I had fallen in my task of improving myself for my wife's sake.  
p. 64

(Tender Warrior: God's Intention for a Man by Stu Weber)

Coaching legend Vince Lombardi, no New Testament theologian by any stretch, but a man who knew men, certainly understood this truth. His Green Bay Packers ran over the top of everybody in professional football in the sixties. And they did it TOGETHER. Connected by "fond affection." Lombardi, their leader, insisted upon it. He said it straight forward:

You've got to care for one another. You have to love one another. Each player has to be thinking about the next guy. The difference

between mediocrity and greatness is the feeling these players have for one another. Most people call it team spirit. When the players are imbued with that special feeling you know you have yourself a winning team.

p. 76

(Charity: A Collection of Poems by Gail T. Burton by Gail T. Burton)

### THE JOY OF HIS EMBRACE

When the problems of my earthly life  
are more than I can stand,  
And I learn what is required of me  
is a heavy harsh demand.

I find my Lord is ever near  
with comfort for the day,  
And problems that have plagued my life  
so quickly fade away.

Tho' He comforts me along my path  
this world will not relent,  
Each day I face anew the threat  
of problems life has sent.

But when the silver cord of life  
has finally reached the end,  
The glory of His perfect love  
Will make me comprehend.

Every problem, care, and threat  
will be conquered by His grace.  
And I'll spend a grand eternity  
in the joy of His embrace.

p. 23

(A Place of Healing: Wrestling with the Mysteries of Suffering, Pain, and God's Sovereignty by Joni Eareckson Tada)

It's been a long time since I've actually kneeled in prayer. Those long-ago days at that little Reformed Episcopal Church seem so far away, softened and made more beautiful in the golden haze of memory.

But the day is drawing near, isn't it? It's drawing so close to the time when I, and so many others who cannot walk, will be able to kneel. I know it. I can feel it. Heaven is just around the corner.

If you sense His coming is soon, would you please do me a favor? Do what so many of us who are paralyzed or too lame or too old or disabled can't do. Would you open your Bible to Psalm 95:6, read it aloud, and then do what it says?

I can't kneel, but if you can, do.

Kneel before the Lord God, your Maker and mine. And while you're down there, if you feel so inclined, thank Him for being so good to a paralyzed woman named Joni.

p. 208

VERSE 9: "And masters do the same to them giving up your threatening, knowing that also their master and yours is in heaven and there is not partiality with Him."

*The NET bible translates verse 9:*

"Masters, treat your slaves the same way, giving up the use of threats, because you know that both you and they have the same master in heaven, and there is no favoritism with Him."

*Peterson in The Message paraphrases verse 9:*

"Masters, it's the same with you. No abuse, please, and no threats. You and your servants are both under the same Master in heaven. He makes no distinction between you and them."

*The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:*

Masters were to treat their slaves in the same way, that is, to please the Lord in their dealings with them. Slaves owners were not to keep threatening them but to treat them justly and fairly because they themselves were servants, with a Master who is an example to them. This, of course, is the Lord and He is the Master over both earthly masters and slaves. He shows no partiality, regardless of one's rank.

In conclusion, only a Spirit-controlled believer is able to fulfill the obligations given in this section. Many of these verses emphasize

selflessness, which results in harmony, one evidence of the Spirit's work.

Here in verse 9, we have the sixth and final command in this section from the apostle. **Command #6**: "Masters do the same to them giving up your threatening, knowing that also their master and yours is in heaven and there is not partiality with Him."

It helps to trace through the passage to review the six commands.

**Command #1**: "Children, be obeying your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

**Command #2**: "Be honoring your father and your mother. This is the first commandment with a promise."

**Command #3**: "And Fathers, do not make your children angry, but"

**Command #4**: "be bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

**Command #5**: "Slaves, be obeying those who according to the flesh are your masters."

**Command #6**: "Masters do the same to them giving up your threatening, knowing that also their master and yours is in heaven and there is not partiality with Him."

Paul now has a word to say to the employers. Because with the "Master" you have authority. It is possible for that authority to be misused and thus, the admonition they are told to do the same things to the employees, plus giving up threatening.

Pentecost points out:

The reason that the slave owner is asked to forbear this threatening is given in the latter part of verse 9, "knowing that also their master and yours is in heaven and there is not partiality with Him." When God judges, actions will not be excusable because a man was a master, according to the flesh. God will judge that master as to whether what he did was right or wrong and therefore the master, as well as the slave, will stand before God on the same equal plane for there is no respect of persons with Him.

Barclay points out:

But Paul has a word for masters too, his word for them is quite simple. The master of men must remember that although he is master of men, he is still the servant of God. He too must remember that all he does is done in the sight of and in the presence of God and above all he must remember that the day comes when he and those over whom he was set, will stand before God and then the ranks of the world will no longer be relevant. They will both simply be men in the presence of God.

Colossians 4:1:

“You slave owners, must be just and fair to all your slaves, always remember that you too have a master in heaven who is closely watching you.”

Barker & Kohlenberger observe:

Christian masters as well as Christian slaves (v. 8) know that they all serve a heavenly Lord to whom they equally belong. With him no “favoritism” (GK 4721) exists. This word means deciding how to treat that person. God has no “teacher’s pets.” Slaves are as precious in his sight as masters, and more is expected from those who are entrusted with greater responsibilities. p. 782

Bickel & Jantz point out:

What a beautiful picture of how human relationships should function when husbands and wives, parents and children, and masters and slaves relate in the way the Bible teaches. Order, harmony, and truth abound. And what a witness to the world! When you display this kind of biblical harmony and teamwork at home and at work, others will want to know the secret of your success. And you will be able to point to Christ, who showed us how to live. pp. 150—151

Boice adds:

In the final analysis this is what matters to most people. It is not the



position we hold, whether it is high or low, management or labor, or even (in a certain sense) slave or master. What matters is whether we are treated with dignity, whether we are regarded as having real worth. Christianity declares, *“You do have real worth! You are made in God’s image! What you do does matter!”* If so, we should do our own work well and value others.  
p. 222

Lincoln offer:

“And masters, do the same to them, abandoning the use of threats, knowing that both their and your Master is in heaven, and there is no partiality with him.”  
p. 423

Lovett discerns:

Masters. Since earthly titles have no weight with God, servants are equal with masters. They are brothers in God’s sight. If slaves must forbear complaints against their masters, masters must forbear threats against their slaves. As the wife looks to the husband for blessing, so may the slave look to his Christian master. He stands in God’s place of authority and under obligation to bring out the best in them, even as he does his children. Today’s Christian employers inherit these instructions. The way a man fulfills his role on earth, whether boss or employee, determines his role in glory. The doctrine of Christian reward is vital to the interpretation of this passage.  
p. 130

MacArthur says:

There should be mutual honor and respect from Christian employers to their employees, based on their common allegiance to the Lord. Giving up threatening. The Spirit-filled boss uses his authority and power with justice and grace—never putting people under threats, never abusive or inconsiderate. He realizes that he has a heavenly Master who is impartial.  
p. 1704

Radmacher, Allen & House observe:

Christian masters should not use threatening language to their servants but should remember that they too are servants of a much higher Master...in heaven, who is completely fair.  
p. 1540

Robertson points out:

*And forbear threatening (anientes ten apeilen).* Present active participle of *aniemi*, old verb, to loosen up, to relax “Letting up on threatening.” *Apeile* is old word for threat, in N.T. only here and Acts 4:29; 9:1. *Both their Master and yours (kai auton kai humon ho kurios).* He says to “the lords (Hoi kurioi) of the slaves. Paul is not afraid of capital nor of labour. *With him (par’ autoi).* By the side of him (God).”  
p. 549

Simpson & Bruce add:

But life’s poor distinctions vanish when they are scanned from “the heavenly places” of spiritual insight. Let the master in turn ponder his accountability to his and his servant’s Overlord, who cannot be biased to award a partial sentence, like so many of this world’s tribunals. Instead of truculence or resort to threats, the common expedient of arbitrary power, let him exercise lenity and kindly consideration towards those amenable to his control, and abstain from scolding severity.  
p. 140

The Navigators offer:

Optional Application: Even if you have no formally established subordinates, you probably oversee other people from time to time—such as baby sitters, newspaper deliverers, repairmen, housekeepers, people in your church or in a small group Bible study, and so forth. How can you show the attitudes taught in 6:9 to those you supervise?  
p. 104

(Shepherding the Church into the 21st Century by Joseph M. Stowell)

Recently I stood on that bend in the river where in 1956 five brilliant, savvy, committed men gave their lives to the spears of Auca warriors who dumped their bodies into the Curaray River. I thought of the kind of faith that it took for Nate Saint, Jim Elliot, Pete Fleming, Roger Youderian, and Ed McCully to walk into the jaws of danger, knowing full well that it might be their last trip down that river but knowing as well that their God was the kind of God who could take suffering and loss and transition them to great gain. After all, isn’t

that what God did through the cross and death of His Son? And, sure enough, those five men died in faith. But like trick candles on a birthday cake, the extinguished torches of their lives soon began to spark, flutter, and flame as hundreds of young people across America gave their lives to missionary work, to go and take their place. And then the killing tribe opened its doors to welcome Nate Saint's sister and Jim Elliot's wife and daughter Valerie into the village to learn the language and tell them of Jesus Christ.

When we landed in the Auca Village on our way down to that historical site in the jungle, our plane was met by Indians who came not with spears but smiles on their faces. Most of the villagers today are believers in Jesus Christ. The head of the killing party, now old and a believer himself, was asked what he would do when he gets to heaven and sees Nate Saint, the missionary that he had killed on that day. He responded that when he gets to heaven he will look for Nate Saint, throw his arms around him, and thank him for bringing the good news of the Gospel to his village. And then he said, ". . . and Nate Saint will throw his arms around me and welcome me home." pp. 176-77

(He's Gonna Toot and I'm Gonna Scoot: Waiting for Gabriel's Horn by Barbara Johnson)

As Joni Eareckson Tada said,

Suffering hurries the heart homeward.<sup>11</sup>

11. Joni Eareckson Tada, quoted in *A Place Called Heaven*, comp. Catherine L. Davis (Colorado Springs: Chariot Victor, 1997). p. 11

(The Journey Home: Finishing with Joy by Bill Bright, *Afterward* by Vonette Zachary Bright)

The sermon of your life in tough times ministers to people more powerfully than the most eloquent speaker.  
p. 81

In this period of sickness, in what are probably my final earthbound days, I am more aware than ever of two realities: the first to emerge is the dark depravity and utter unacceptability of my sinful self before a holy God, and the second is the wonderful, embracing love and mercy of our Savior.

(The Late Great United States: What Bible Prophecy Reveals About America's Last Days by Mark Hitchcock)

Charles H. Dyer, a well-known Bible teacher, wrote in 1991 (referring to that time's lower census figures):

Today as many as half of all Americans claim to be "born again," or believers in Jesus Christ. If only one-fourth of that number have genuinely made a personal commitment to Christ, then over 28 million Americans will suddenly "disappear" when God removes his church from the earth.

Can you imagine the effects on our country if over 28 million people—people in industry, government, the military, business, agriculture, education, medicine and communications—disappear? That is approximately double the entire population of New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Houston all rolled together!

The economic fluctuations of the eighties and even the Great Depression will pale in comparison to the political and economic collapse that will occur when our society suddenly loses individuals who were its "salt and light." America could not support an army in the Middle East because the military would be needed at home to control the chaos!

The Rapture may well be the end of America as we know it. Those who miss out on the Rapture in the United States will be left behind to pick up the pieces. America will no longer be the world's superpower. The mighty USA will move from being a leading nation to a following nation.

8. Charles Dyer, *Rise of Babylon: Sign of the End Times*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1991), 168.  
pp. 113-114

(Faith & Doubt by John Ortberg)

I have become aware,  
not by my own wish, almost against my will,  
of an existence of another life of far, far greater importance  
and beauty than this physical one.

**HUGH WALPOLE**

(The Prayer Factor by Sammy Tippit)

There are two poisonous and deadly attitudes that the Christian can harbor: guilt and bitterness. Guilt is the result of our failure; however, bitterness is much more subtle. Bitterness is the result of the actions and words of someone who has failed us. Guilt is the result of our wrong, but bitterness is the result of someone else's wrong.

p. 108

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon)

PARTIALITY\*

To see ministers of different sects fluttering around a wealthy man, like vultures around a dead camel, is sickening.

p. M-529

CONCLUSION:

We have been considering together, His Plan for the Home and Business Relationship. The apostle had commanded the children to be obeying and honoring their parents, and the fathers not to be provoking their children to anger, but to be bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

The employees have four guidelines to operate by:

1. To be obedient.
2. Not in eye-service as men-pleasers but as servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart.
3. With goodwill, serving the Lord and not men.
4. Recognizing that God is going to reward the good whether the person is an employee or an employer.

We then noticed in the last verse that he has a word for the employers to follow the same guide lines in their relationship with the employees, also giving up threatening knowing that also their Master and yours is in heaven

and there is not partiality with Him.

Galatians 6:7-9 (TLB):

“Don’t be misled; remember that you can’t ignore God and get away with it: a man will always reap just the kind of crop he sows! If he sows to please his own wrong desires, he will be planting seeds of evil and he will surely reap a harvest of spiritual decay and death; but if he plants the good things of the Spirit, he will reap the everlasting life that the Holy Spirit gives him. And let us not get tired of doing what is right, for after a while we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t get discouraged and give up.”

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

Lessons:

1. Submission, love and obedience are the ingredients of a godly home.
2. Fatherhood involves encouragement, exhortation and example.
3. A job is transformed when you see it as serving the Lord.
4. Leaders are held responsible for the right use of authority.
5. Children are to be obeying their parents in the Lord for this is right. They are also to be honoring their father and their mother.
6. To the obedient heart will come the response from the Father that it will be well with you and you may live long upon the earth.
7. Fathers be careful to not make your children angry, but be bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
8. Employees are challenged to be obeying their employers.
9. The obedience of employees as a job description is to be:
  - a. With fear and trembling
  - b. In sincerity of heart
  - c. As to Christ
  - d. Not in the way of eye-service as men-pleasers
  - e. As servants of Christ
  - f. Doing the will of God from the heart
10. Colossians 3:23: “Whatever you do, do your work heartily as for the Lord rather than for men.”

11. The employee is to do his work with goodwill, rendering service as to the Lord, and not men.
12. It is a comforting thought to know that the Lord is having his eyes upon us. He sees what we do in a good way and we will receive a reward from the Lord.
13. Command #6 is for the employers. Do the same thing to them, giving up your threatening, knowing that also their Master and yours is in Heaven.
14. It is comforting to know that the ground is level at the cross of Christ.

(Take My Heart, O God: Riches from the Greatest Christian Women Writers of All Times by Sarah Young)

*Letting go of our grip on predictable results and trusting God with our heart offering is one of the most challenging choices we make.*

—CAROL KENT

#### INVITING UNCERTAINTY

Our days can become routine if we let them. The alarm clock squawks loudly, we make coffee, get dressed, and go through the motions . . . again and again. Maybe it's boring but at least it's safe. We like the predictability of our mundane days.

But God just might have something better. What if we let go of our grip, set aside our desire for control over every portion of our lives, and let God take the wheel? Can we trust him with our heart offering—that which is nearest and dearest? Are we willing to open ourselves up to God's unexpected blessings?

By stepping out of our worn path and trying something new, we risk stumbling and falling flat. But as we ask the Lord where *he'd* have us go—stretching out an open hand to let him lead us into new territory—we will find his surprises.

It's a challenging choice. Can you trust God that much? Will you?

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(The Spiritual Combat by Lorenzo Scupoli)

## WHAT GOD DOES EVERY DAY FOR MAN

THERE is not a day, nor a moment, in which man does not receive from God some fresh benefit; for every day and every moment God creates him by preserving him in being. Every moment God ministers to him through His creatures, through heaven, air, earth, sea, and all things therein.

Every day He gives him His grace, calling him from evil to good, guarding him from sin, and when he has sinned, helping him that he may sin no more. He waits for him, calls him to repentance, and when he comes to Him, is more ready to forgive than he to desire forgiveness. Every day He sends him His Son, with all the riches of the Mysteries of the Cross, rendering Him ever present with him in the Sacrament of the Altar.

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(Beautiful Outlaw by John Eldredge)

If you have never given your life to Jesus Christ, now would be the perfect time. This is the moment he chose for you. Time for you to come home to the heart of God. This prayer will help you:

*Jesus, I need you. I need your life and your love. I believe you are the Son of God. I believe that your death on the cross was for me—to rescue me from sin and death and to restore me to the Father. I choose right now to surrender my life to you. I turn from my sin and my self-determination and I give my life to you. Thank you for loving me and forgiving me. Come and take your rightful place in my heart and in my life. Be my Savior and my Lord. Live in me; live through me. I am yours.*

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