

Studying the Letter to the Ephesians

Ephesians is about learning to let who we are in Christ, shape how we perform in life.

Ephesians Study 10 (⊕ 45 min.)



Warm Up (⊕ 4 min.)

1. Greeting / Welcome

2. Prayer Requests (try to balance the amount of time between prayer and / or testimony by limiting the amount of prayer requests and/or time for testimony sharing.)

3. Testimony Sharing (*Optional* - prior to the group study time, ask one person to share for 3-5 minutes on how the recent truths being studied have impacted their life. Remember: *authenticity is the key* - What have you (or a group member you've asked to testify) shared lately that gives insight into your journey? Try to share things pertaining to the recent themes of the study.)



Overview of Today's Study (⊕ 1 min.)

Text: Turn to Eph. 5:22 – 6:4

Lesson Title: *Christ-like Family Relationships*

Lesson Theme: As Christians mature in their relationship with Christ, the way they relate to immediate family members will be transformed.

By the End of the Study today, we want to be able to answer:

Today's Key Question



How do Christian families make their homes feel like a place where they can "let their guard down"?

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Connecting the Studies (⊕ 7 min.)

In chapters 4 and 5 we have been studying the transformation process of the growing Christian's behavior. We have looked at how the individual believer can become freed from their own flesh habits and more consistently model a godly lifestyle.

In our next portion of Ephesians, we will study the area where Christians struggle the most to let their identity in Christ shine: *the home*.



Bible Passage Study (⊕ 15 min.)

Read Eph. 5:22 – 6:4



Study Topic 1 – A Godly Wife's Submission

Paul Instructs Wives to Be Surrendered to Their Husbands in a Similar Fashion As They Are to Christ. Eph. 5:22-24

A. What do these verses tell us? 5:22-24

1. Paul instructs Christian wives to be submissive to the will of their husbands as they are toward the will of the Lord in their life.
2. The reason they are to be submissive is because God has ordered things to be this way and this submissive relationship mirrors Christ's relationship to the church as its authority.
3. The submission of the wife to the husband covers all matters.

B. What do these verses mean? 5:22-24

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1. When followed, God's design for a family's chain of command provides love based order and unity within a family's household.
2. When seeking a model for how to structure family relationships, Christians can study Christ's relationship to the church and His unconditional love for and protection of His bride.

C. How should these verses impact my life? 5:22-24

1. Wives can quickly evaluate their behavior in the area of submission to their husbands by comparing their level of submission to Christ with their level of submission to their husbands.
2. If I conclude I am submissive to the Lord but not my husband, why is this? What can I do differently?



Study Topic 2 – A Christ-like Husband's Love

Paul Provides a Model for Christian Husbands to Use to Address Their Own Behavior in Their Family. Eph. 5:25-33

A. What do these verses tell us? 5:25-33

1. Husbands are to love their wives in a similar fashion as Christ loved the church. The natural question that follows is, "How did Christ love the church?"

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2. Christ gave Himself for the *whole* church: His love was *sacrificial* and *unconditional*.

3. Christ's love for His church had a purpose: the result of the demonstration of His sacrificial, unconditional love was that the church would be sanctified and cleansed by the "washing of water by the word."

4. And this would have the final result of a glorified product: His church, spotless, no wrinkles, holy and without blemish.

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B. What do these verses mean? 5:25-33

1. The Greek word the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to use when instructing husbands to love their wives is *agapao*. It is the imperative verb form of the word *agape* and means "seeking the highest good for another person."

2. Christ's sacrificial demonstration of love made the church holy and separated from the rest of the world. Believers were made holy by their acceptance of the truth of God's Word and were "cleansed and washed" when they believed in it. When a husband and/or father upholds God's Word as the standard in the household, the result is that the family becomes distinct and separated from the world. The natural benefit from separation from the world is that we do not have to endure being at war with God and live in consequential guilt that comes with behaving like the world.

3. As a human bride prepares herself for her groom, Christ's unconditional, sacrificial love prepares His bride, the church for presentation to Himself. Husbands are to partner with Christ in the **objective** of presenting his wife and family to Christ as **holy** and **non-worldly**.



4. Husbands are to show their love with the same fervor that they look out for their own interests. Husbands are to make their wives feel **safe** and **taken care of** like Christ makes us as believers feel **safe** and **taken care of**.



5. The result of this level of commitment on the husband's part will result in respect coming from the wife. There is an old saying that goes like this, "Those who want respect, give respect." There is no example in Scripture of Christ ever "talking down to" or demeaning believers. Yes, He is the rightful head of His bride, the church, but He never belittles her or flaunts His place of authority over her. Husbands having difficulty **earning respect** within the family must evaluate how well they are **copying Christ's** conduct toward the church versus their own conduct at home.



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C. How should these verses impact my life? 5:25-33

1. Proper family relationships according to God's Word start with the husband/father closely modeling Christ's behavior toward the church.
 - a. Am I "*agapao*-ing" my wife and children the way Christ did?
 - b. As a husband attempting to model Christ's example, am I remembering the objective of presenting my family as holy and unworldly to the Lord?
 - c. As a husband, how selfish am I? Do I give equal time and care and attention to my wife and her interests as I do to myself?
2. As a godly wife, am I reciprocating the respect I am being shown by my husband or am I withholding respect for some personal reason?



Study Topic 3 – Developing Obedient Children

Growing Up Children by Nurturing and Warning Them Promotes Godly Obedience. Eph. 6:1-4

A. What do these verses tell us? Eph. 6:1-4

1. Children are instructed to obey their parents. This would seem like "no brainer" but in our culture today parents are being sued by their children because the children's "rights" have been infringed upon.
2. Responsibility is again placed on fathers. There are some do's and don'ts.
 - a. Fathers are *not* to: exasperate their children by unreasonable demands, petty rules, or favoritism. Such actions cause children to become discouraged (Col. 3:21).

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b. Fathers *are* to: bring children up, that is, rear or nourish (*provide for physical and spiritual needs*) them in the training (*child discipline, including directing and correcting*) of the Lord.

B. What do these verses mean? Eph. 6:1-4

1. Children will not naturally obey their parents, otherwise they would not be commanded to do so.
2. There is a right way and a wrong way to develop obedience.

C. How should these verses impact my life? Eph. 6:1-4

1. Rather than taking the time to talk through a conflict with my children and find a godly solution, do I instead attempt to just enforce my rules "because I said so"?
2. How often do I intentionally "push my kids' buttons"?
3. When I "push their buttons", what does that do for their trust in judgment on things or their respect for me?
4. Have I found a fair method of correcting my children and consistently apply it as needed? Does this method need adjusting?



Group Discussion (⌚ 15 min.)

(Try to facilitate the group's discussion and not do most of the talking during this time.)

1. How does the instruction for wives to be submissive to their husbands match up with our society's women's rights position?
2. Eph. 5:24 says wives are to submit to their husbands in "every thing", does it really mean *every* thing? Is there ever a time when a wife should not go along with the direction of her husband?
3. What are some ways a husband can earn the respect of his wife?

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4. What are some ways a father can earn respect from his children and develop godly obedience in them?
5. What are some of the characteristics of the world that parents should not want their children to model?
6. How do parents “cleanse” worldliness from their children?
7. How do parents “cleanse” worldliness from their households?
8. How important is it for family members to feel like they can discuss things with each other without being “pounced on”?
9. How do families develop a level of trust and security in their communication with each other?

Key Question (⊕ 3 min.) (What is the group learning to do that they can repeat when they are away from the group or this study is completed?)



How do Christian families make their homes feel like a place where they can “let their guard down”?

Parents, having the responsibility of being the **example** of Christ in the home, **choose** to show each family member unconditional, sacrificial love and respect.

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