

LifeGroup Discussion
August 4, 2019
Scripture: Ephesians 6:1-9

Overview: Taken from NIV Life Application Commentary – see footnote.

Parents and children (6:1–4)

Humility, tolerant love, and mutual submission belong first of all in the family. Unfortunately, too many people, including Christians, have a public and a private persona. They appear as warm, congenial, righteous people in public, but are demons at home. We are our worst selves with the people closest to us. Christians should have only one persona, or we are no longer living in truth. We need to live tirelessly the humility, tolerant love, and mutual submission of the gospel both in private and in public. The most important witness we have is at stake—the witness within our families.

Life is painful when children turn their back on the Christian faith of their parents, but it is tragic when the misconduct and hypocrisy of their parents has caused them to do so. Integrity of faith starts in the family.

Slaves and masters (6:5–9). The application of the teaching on slaves and masters is obviously relevant for work relations, but it actually involves every relation and act. No relation is merely a relation; it is a context for relating to Christ. No job is merely work; it is a context for serving Christ.

Relations with people. The first application of this text concerns the way we understand ourselves and others. Society sends signals that declare our relative value and tell us where we fit in the hierarchy, but this text gives a different system of valuing. The hierarchy does not exist. We all have roles and tasks, but they do not render people more or less valuable. We all have the same Lord and face the same judgment. Arrogance and feelings of inferiority are out of place, as is favoritism. If God does not show favoritism, neither should we. We typically show favoritism to the rich and powerful, but little respect for the poor and powerless. Both are sins.

It is so easy for us to demean people we consider to be “low on the totem pole.” We do not have slaves, but we do have “service personnel” and people who “do not count.” It is easy to dehumanize and tyrannize them. We “chew them out” when we are unsatisfied. We view them as faceless numbers when the time comes to downsize. By lack of attention, body language, or attitude we communicate to them, “We do not really care about you.” Yet such people are as important as any “star” or power-broker, and our Christian witness depends on how we treat them. We must relate to them as if we were relating to Christ.¹

¹ Snodgrass, K. (1996). [Ephesians](#) (pp. 329–332). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Bible Study: Ephesians 6:1-9

1. What are some ways children can honor their father and mother?
2. How do fathers exasperate their children?
3. Look up and discuss first century slavery. How is it immensely different than the history of slavery in the United States?
4. The way you treat others is a reflection of your relationship with God. Why is it important to treat everyone with love and respect?
5. Why does our society place a connection between value and roles people have? Example – consider a politician more important than a teacher. Why is this wrong?
6. What does mutual submission look like in a family?