

Get a Life!

Ephesians

Life

Relationships

Lesson Twenty-One

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Ephesians

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Ephesians 4:1

Life Relationships

Lesson Goal: To allow students to see that God has given us guidance in how best to relate to one another.

Scripture: Ephesians 5:21—6:9; Colossians 3:12—25

The bottom line for relating to other humans is revealed in the English word “submit.” It is found in the twenty-first verse of chapter five. In the lengthy teaching which is recorded in the latter part of the fifth chapter and the first part of the sixth chapter, we find regular reference to the relationship of humans and Christ. The introduction of this teaching is verse twenty-one. The apostle Paul tells the church at Ephesus that they should submit to one another because of their respect for God. *The Message* version translates the word submit as “be courteously reverent” to one another. Is that not how we are to God? That is what Jesus was talking about when He said, “Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.” (Matthew 18:4) Humbling yourself is being submissive to others.

Colossians 3:12-17 is Paul’s preface to another list of relationship teachings. In those verses, He encourages everyone to clothe themselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. He urges everyone to be forgiving, as the Lord has forgiven us, and above all love one another which is the glue of all relationships.* Submission is not cowardly, it is being strong enough to allow others to be first when necessary.

With the strong ideas of submission, or placing yourself in a position to support the other person; and love, which is promising everything that you are to another person, we have Paul’s plan for success in relationships. He begins with the challenge for all of us to submit ourselves to others. Then, he follows with telling wives that they have the privilege, under God, to support their husbands. Just as the church, the people of God, give themselves completely to Jesus; just as they proudly tell the world that Jesus is their Savior; just as the people of God do everything they can to see that God’s will, as revealed in Jesus, is carried out, so wives are to submit, to be fully supportive of their husbands.

Paul continues in verse twenty-five by telling husbands that they are to love their wives like Christ loved the church, the people of God. What did Jesus do for the church? He left Heaven, humbled Himself, Philippians 2:6-8, and gave His life for the good of the church. Husbands are to love their wives and care for them like they care for their own body. Paul reasons that no human male, in his right mind, is stupid enough to hurt his own body. Instead, Paul says, males care for their body. And, he indicates, the better they care for their wives, the more they are like Christ. Paul ends the fifth chapter with, “each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.” Ephesians 5:33

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In chapter six, Paul has some words for children. He says that children are to obey their parents, because it is the right thing to do. He points out that in the original Ten Commandments, (Exodus 20:1-17) God said that children should, “Honor your father and your mother that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” Paul says that this is the first commandment with a promise. The promise was made to the Hebrews who had just escaped from Egypt and were going into Canaan, the land that God had promised their ancestors. God made respecting parents a prerequisite to good living, and lengthy life in Canaan. And, if God thought it was that important to the Hebrews, He certainly would think it is of very great importance right now. God expects children to submit to, be supportive, and to love their parents.

Remy was a very active little girl. She was always into something. One day, mom and dad decided to take a weekend trip, leaving Remy with her grandmother. They said, “Now Remy, you must behave yourself and be very careful while you are at Nana’s house. Misbehaving is not only hurtful to you, but also to us, because you are our daughter and what you do tells people what kind of parents we are. So, Remy did what her parents asked her to do and was very careful and very good all through the weekend. When her parents came back home, Nana told them what a good girl Remy was and what a wonderful time they had enjoyed over the weekend. When they were driving home, Remy’s father said, “Remy, I am so proud of you. The way your grandmother bragged on you lets us know that you love us and want us to be proud of you.” Remy understood, then, an important reason for being good. It was a way of thanking her parents for all they did for her.

Finally, in chapter six, verses five through nine, Paul talks to slaves and masters. We no longer have slaves, but this teaching has been applied to employees and supervisors. He says in verses seven and eight that those who have a job to do should do it like they were serving God. He says that those who supervise should not threaten or play favorites with those they supervise. They should treat their employees like God treats them.

So, good relationships are the result of submission, being supportive in the role God has assigned you, and loving people just like God loved you and sent His Son, Jesus, to live perfectly and die for your sins.

Memory Verse: “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” Ephesians 5:21

*Underlined sentences in the Teacher’s Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher’s Guide.

Student Worksheet

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Memory Verse: “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” Ephesians 5:21

>He encourages everyone to clothe themselves with compassion, _____, _____, gentleness and patience. He urges everyone to be _____, as the Lord has forgiven us, and above all _____ one another which is the _____ of all relationships.

>He follows with telling wives that they have the privilege, under God, to _____ their husbands.

>Paul continues in verse twenty-five by telling _____ that they are to _____ their wives like Christ _____ the church, the people of God.

>He says that children are to _____ their parents, because it is the _____ thing to do.

>God expects children to _____, be supportive, and to _____ their parents.

>In verses five through nine, Paul talks to _____ and masters. We no longer have slaves, but this teaching has been applied to _____ and supervisors.

>So, good relationships are the result of submission, being _____ in the _____ God has assigned you, and _____ people just like God loved _____ and sent His Son, Jesus, to live perfectly and die for your sins.

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be ready to live for him all the rest of your life.