

A Study of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians

Many times we look at the congregations of the New Testament and we think of them as the cream of the crop, the best of the best, the models of what we are to be. The truth is that these congregations were much more like our congregation that we think. These congregations had blessings and challenges just like we do. The apostle Paul did as much guiding, leading and rebuking as he did motivating and complimenting the people for their faith.

As we look at these congregations we pray that God leads us to see that there is much that we can learn from the guidance and teachings that God gave them through the apostle Paul. We will also pray that our congregation can also grow through that same guidance and teaching.

Introduction:

Historically, Ephesians chapter 5 is not one of the chapters of the Bible that has caused controversy, like the book of James. It is not one that is hard to understand, not like some chapters of Ezekiel, Daniel, or Revelation. This chapter has been God's Word until..... the late 20th and 21st century. Then, it is suddenly not God's Word any longer. Ephesians 5 is a beautiful chapter of the Bible that gives guidance to Christian marriages. This guidance is needed especially today, when marriage is hard to come by and harder to keep even for Christians.

As we look at Ephesians 5 we will look at the content in the same way we looked at chapter 4, as God's children, who are seeking to live a life of thanks to the Lord following what he says.

- ✦ Think back to the beginning of chapter 4. **I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ²Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.**
- In view of God's mercy, what should all Christians aspire to?

Read 4:20-5:2

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you.

¹Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children ²and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

1. Compare the thoughts of verse 20 with verse 1&2. How are they alike?

2. How are verse 1 and 2 much like the introduction of chapter 4?

3. Why is Paul trying to do for the Ephesians and for us?

Read 5:3-7.

³But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. ⁴Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. ⁵For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. ⁷Therefore do not be partners with them.

4. What is the dual purpose that Paul focuses on sexual sins so often?

5. It is not only the sexual sin itself, but other sins that also hint towards immoral living. How do the sins of obscenity, foolish talk and coarse joking also break God's command here?

6. This is a good chance to remember that when we sin against any of God's commands, we are not only breaking that individual commandment, but also which other command? How do we do that?

Read verse 8-14

⁸For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said:

“Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

7. What is the difference between light and darkness?

8. Not only have we been called to light, but we are also.....

9. What is the difference between those who live as unbelievers and those who live as children of God?

10. What are some phrases that clearly show this difference?

Read 5:15-17

¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. ¹⁹ Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

11. What are the contrasting statements in verses 15 -17?

Living Unwisely—

Living Wisely -

12. Why do Christians need to be careful how we live? What is it about our life that makes it important?

Verse 21.

²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

13. How does this verse sum up our Christian life?

- What do we do?
- What is our motivation?

Read verses 22-33

²² Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

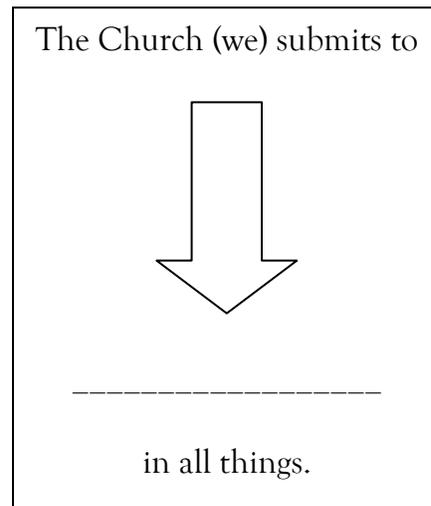
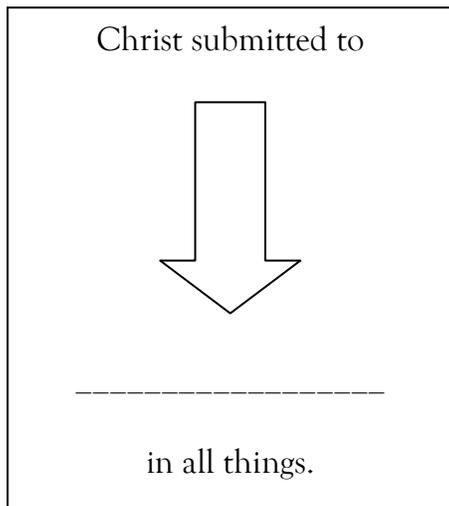
²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— ³⁰ for we are members of his body. ³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” ³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

14. What is often the issue with this section of Scripture?

15. Certainly we can do nothing to follow anything that God asks us to do on our own. What is the only way that we are able to follow any of the things that our God says?

16. Let's look at the word submit.

- What do we usually think of when we hear the word submit?
- But, what if it means something different? What if this submission is something good for us? In the Bible submission has a much different connotation than what we are used to.



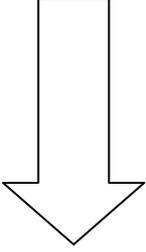
What blessings come to us because Christ submitted to his Father?

What blessings are ours because the Church (we) submit to Christ?

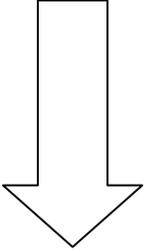
- Is there any struggle in these relationships?
- What if there was no struggle in submitting? What if submitting was something we did out of love for our God and for each other? **Submit: A new definition:**

17.

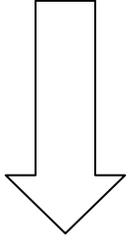
Wives/Ladies submit first of all to:



Because of the love for Jesus, wives/ladies will also submit to:

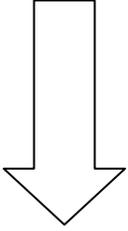


Just as. In the same way:
The Church submits to:



So also:

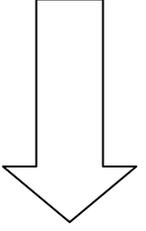
Wives/ Women should submit to:



Comparison:

18.

Husbands



Because of this love for Christ, husbands will



their

Husbands



Christ



Comparison:

19. What should the husband be willing to do for his wife since Christ was willing to do it for us?
20. Paul quotes Genesis, “the two shall become one flesh.” How should the husband treat his wife?
21. What makes marriage such a unique and blessed experience?
22. What is the difference between a husband loving his wife and a wife showing respect to her husband?