

Submission at Home and Work

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Preacher: Matt Huckins

[0 : 0 0] Thank you, Carolyn.

I've never heard that about keeping track of the books of the Bible like that. Now, I can't remember what the acronym was I was supposed to remember, so I struggle with both, but that's good.

So, as we approach the end of our series in Ephesians, I just wanted to do a quick review.

Ephesians, overarchingly, is about our identity in Christ. So we have the first half of Ephesians, which is about our belief, our calling, and the second half is the behavior that goes along with that, and that's the section that we're in now, chapters 4, 5, and 6.

Last week, we heard from Paul Rocha about marriage and what that means, and we'll be digging into more areas of that this morning.

[1 : 0 5] But before we get into that, we see a progression in these last couple chapters that help us get ready for this area of love and submission, which is what we're talking about today.

So, the beginning of chapter 4, Paul urges us to bear with one another in love. In chapter 5, in the beginning, he says, Be imitators of God as beloved children and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us.

And then right before last week's message, chapter 5, verse 21 says, Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. So, we are to walk in love as Christ loves us, and we're to submit to one another for his sake.

But how do we do that? What does that look like? And this is what our current section in Ephesians is going to teach us. So, again, last week, Dan Rocha hit on marriage and love and submission, how a man and a woman should be a reflection of the relationship between Christ and the church.

How does that happen in marriage? Well, you have a wife that submits to her husband with respect, not as a lesser person, as an equal, allowing him to lead the family, to nurture and grow the family.

[2 : 1 9] So, the wife submits to her husband, being a reflection of the church submitting to Christ. And then also, as the husband should love his wife as his own body, protecting and cherishing her, loving her sacrificially as Christ loved the church.

So, there we have the perfect picture of the relationship between Christ and the church. So, today's message is a follow-up of that, because it follows verse 21 that says, to submit to one another at a reverence of Christ.

So, we have husbands and wives submitting and following Christ's order and design, and now we have a few other categories that we'll get into. So, our message this morning, I entitled Love and Submission Part 2.

So, but before you hear submission and start rolling your eyes thinking, I kind of heard enough about submission. It's not really something I enjoy to listen to.

It's kind of old. It sounds restrictive. I would just encourage you to listen to what the Word of God has to say about submission, and see really how it fits into our life as Christians, and how it really fits into God's big picture for us.

- [3 : 28] Because without that, without that submission and love, that's really what makes the church, it's what makes marriages and families stand out to a world.
- It's what God's big plan is for each one of us. So, if we look at submission, and in some of these cases, it's going to come out in the area of obedience.
- If we look at those, it doesn't take long before we see how they really are needed in every aspect of our life. Last week, Dan talked about a company who tried to run itself according to a model that kind of did away with hierarchy.
- There wasn't really any boss. Everybody kind of was their own boss, and they led accordingly. And what they found out was things fell apart. People needed that management type of role.
- They needed to report to somebody. They needed structure. And so, it didn't work. And we also know that if we look at a lot of other areas of life, it won't work.
- [4 : 33] Professional sports is not going to go very far if you have all the good athletes or the cocky athletes deciding they want to do things however they want. They'll show up when they want. They'll play when they want.
- They'll work out when they want. Because they're that good, they can just do that. It would never work. The team wouldn't go far. There's no winning. There's no team aspect when it's all self-centered and personal focused.
- So, we know that that won't work. And it's the same if we look at companies, if we look at governments, branches of the military, or whole nations themselves.
- If there's no structure, if there's no ownership, if there's no leadership, then it's going to crumble. It's going to fall. So, that's what we're going to be looking at today.
- Now, we're going to be looking at these different areas this morning that covers parents and children and slaves and masters in the Bible.
- [5 : 39] But for us, it's going to be employees and bosses. So, when we get to each one of these sections, they may feel like they don't pertain to you. So, I would submit to listen anyway because they do pertain to you.
- They pertain not only because it might not be where you are now, but it might be in the future. So, you might be thinking, well, I'm not a child.
- I don't have any kids. I'm not married. And I don't work. So, that takes me out of all the categories. And to that, I would say, you're kind of in the perfect spot where you could encourage those around you, those in the family of God, who are in all those categories because you have a little bit more time or experience or whatever to encourage those around.
- And that's what we're all called to do, right? We're called to encourage and help one another. So, there's that aspect of it. There's also, it may be helpful in your workplace as you come across an unsaved friend who is in a difficult marriage.
- It could be a co-worker who is struggling as a mom with kids who are rebellious and don't obey. It could be co-workers that complain about their boss and they try to pull you in on that.
- [6 : 59] These are all areas where we know where God tells us to stand, where God tells us to live. And we're able to speak into that, into those other people's lives in an encouraging way and in a way that could bring the word of God, the word of truth, to an area they've never known about before.
- So, I would say, listen as we go through this part. Sorry. Sorry. So, the first part.
- Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. It only happens, like, right before I come up to speak.

Like, I sang great. I mean, nobody could hear me, but I sang great this morning. Yeah. Maybe it was because nobody heard me that I sang so great. So, verse 1.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Right? Obeying is something that we do for someone else when we don't necessarily want to do that thing.

[8 : 04] Right? We'd rather be doing something else. So, why is it that we tell children to obey their parents? Well, we pretty much know the answer to that, but there are a couple reasons.

The first one is because God said that's what they should do. The second reason is because children learn and they grow, but they don't start out knowing what to do.

They don't know what's right or wrong. They don't know what's safe or what's not. I was thinking of our youngest, Juliet. She's learning how to crawl very well, and in her eyes, as she's moving across the carpet, everything she wants.

It doesn't matter if it's a toy. It also doesn't matter if it's a furry hairball. It's on the floor, and she'd like to have it. So, sometimes we have to take that away, and she's not real happy about it, but we know she doesn't need a hairball.

Right? We know she doesn't need a small button that could choke her, but there are toys that she can play with. So, as we'll see shortly, parents are to teach and guide their children, and that can't be done with some obedience.

[9 : 12] So, we have to start to teach that in our kids, even when it's something that they don't want to do. Sometimes it requires us to be a little forceful, and that isn't always fun for the child.

It's not always fun for the parent, because it's easy for us to want to be their friend. It's easy for us to want to keep them on our side. And it's not always possible if you want to be a parent who wants to protect their child in a good and loving way.

So, while this obedience is taking place between children and parents, ultimately, it's obedience to God. That's what we're looking to teach our children. We want them to obey us, but as they grow and get larger, we want them to see that it's conforming to God's desire and His commands.

That's why we're doing this, and that's what makes it right, because it falls under God's commandment. And in the next two verses, verses 2 and 3, We honor your father and mother. This is the first commandment with promise, that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land.

This is a direct quote taken from the Ten Commandments in the book of Exodus. And as we look at the Mosaic Law, those first five books of the Old Testament, we see there's a very great seriousness on the command for children to obey and to honor their parents.

[10 : 37] In chapter 21, just following the Ten Commandments, it says, Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death. Following that, whoever curses his father or mother shall surely be put to death.

He has cursed his father or his mother, and his blood is upon him. So we see that disobedience and dishonor is taken very seriously and dealt with very seriously in the Old Testament.

And the reason for that is because God is raising up for himself a people who will stand out to the world. The Israelites were his people, his chosen family, and disobedience among his family starts to just wreak havoc.

You have kids that grow and want to do their own thing. They don't want to follow after God. And it doesn't take very many generations before you have a whole family, a whole generation, a whole nation that is no longer following after God.

And that's something that was being watched in on from all the other countries, all the other nations at that time. But here in Ephesians, we see Paul quoting the same commandment, but the focus is more on the positive aspect of God's command.

[11 : 46] He says, Honor your father and your mother. Then he draws attention to the promise. Remember, this is the first and only commandment that has a promise connected to it. Now, this promise in the Old Testament was a portion of the promised land that God was given his people.

So to honor and to obey your parents meant a share of that inheritance. For those in the New Testament, for us on this side of the cross, part of the new covenant in Christ, it means that life may go well and that you may live long, taking about, that's talking about the promise of eternal life.

So not necessarily that we're going to get land, land or money for obeying our parents, but a promise of a better life and eternal life with Jesus Christ.

Now, first you might be thinking, well, wait, that sounds a little bit like work salvation. If you obey and honor your parents, then things will go well and you'll get to go to heaven. But that's not what I'm saying here.

What is happening is if Christians know that that isn't true, that they're going to have an easy life. And Jesus tells us that.

[13 : 00] But what we're saying is if you disobey, if you bring dishonor to your parents, then you can be sure that life will not go well. And it's an indication of you being a child of God that brings about your desire to want to obey and follow after your parents.

On occasion, I'll give some authority to one of my children. I might ask Daniel, my youngest son, to go tell his older brother that I want him to go do something.

And it's expected that that older brother is going to go do it. Why? Because I'm sending Daniel with my authority to tell him as if I went and told him myself. And this really is a picture of God giving authority to parents for their children.

God gives them authority to teach and instruct them. And the children are to obey that and to listen to their parents. So for a child to disobey and fight against their parents, ultimately it's a fight against God and what God has laid out in his design and his rules.

And we also know that as the problem continues, as the child just doesn't want to obey his parents and is rebellious, that as they leave home, being at odds with their parents means that they're going to continue to be at odds with God because that's how it started out.

[14 : 24] And as they start their own life on their own, they're putting themselves in that position of authority where God used to be and they're becoming their own God. And at no point in history has there been a way of, that's never going to go well for someone.

It's not going to, it may look well in their life successfully from the world standards, but it won't end there because it's a life that's void of God.

And if it continues, if they don't correct that path, then what happens, the end is separation from God. And that is tragic. So God loves us.

He wants to protect us from that. So he gives us commands for us and to pass on to our children. So Colossians 3, 20, children obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

As children learn to obey their parents, they fall under God's authority and this is pleasing to him. So living a life pleasing to the Lord does make your life easier because you're not on your own side, you're on God's side.

[15 : 32] You're pleasing to him and he's with you and that's what makes life easier. So children, obey and honor your parents and that means to submit and to love them.

The next section is fathers, but also to parents. Chapter 6 starts out addressing both. It says that children, obey your parents in the Lord.

So it's important to remember that God's design was never to separate and only have one parent, but that both parents together work to raise their children.

Does that ring into you guys or just me? Is it ringing? It's okay? Okay. Never mind what I said. But as we come to verse 4, we see that fathers are addressed directly.

It says, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. So as Paul has done before, he starts with a negative action to avoid and he follows it up with a positive action that we want to improve on.

[16 : 39] He says, do not provoke your children to wrath, but do bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. So first we have this command to do not provoke your children to wrath. We know that in disciplining our children, they're not going to like that.

They're going to get mad when they can't have or do what they want to do. That's not what Paul is talking about here. Sorry, kids. But he's talking about provoking your children to anger because of discipline that's done out of anger or giving them commands or rules that are too restrictive and don't have any reason.

It's basically discipline without love. And in that way, you're going to provoke your children to wrath or to anger. So I just want to hit those sections, kind of break them up a little bit because I think they're important.

Not only for if you have kids now, but if you have kids in the future, this will kind of set the foundation, the framework for what is going to be helpful to you as you study God's word and how to be a parent.

But Ephesians 4.31 says, be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God and Christ forgave you. So even before this section to fathers, Paul is concerned about the anger that is coming out of us.

[17 : 56] And once it comes into parenting, that can be passed on to our child. Usually that takes the form of yelling or some type of exaggerated action or speech that we lash out at our child when they're not doing what they're supposed to or they failed to do something that we required of them.

And when it comes to parenting, these outbursts can get out of control. These fits of anger can be damaging, not just physically damaging, but they can be emotionally damaging to your child as well.

And this type of behavior is worse for fathers. I think we can all agree that anger when it comes to men is worse than women. Now, women or mothers in this case do struggle with anger.

They're not perfect like the rest of us and they get mad. But in general, if we look at extreme destructive behavior, if we look at domestic violence, road rage, acts of terrorism, all these are far more likely to happen from a man than a woman.

So Paul, it makes sense, is pointing out here that fathers don't provoke your children to anger. You need to control your anger. James 1.20 says, For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

[19 : 15] Over our years of raising kids, this has been a great verse for Cheryl and I to use. Not just me, for her in raising kids, in every aspect of life.

Because you can take that verse and put your name in it. It says, For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. But you can put in, For the anger of Matt does not produce the righteousness of God.

The anger of mom does not produce the righteousness of God. The fit of anger of dad will never produce the righteousness of God. If you're trying to raise your kid to love and obey God, it's never going to happen if you're using your wrath, your madness to make it come about.

It will never produce the righteousness of God. That's James 1.20. So if you're taking notes, you can write that down. That'll be real helpful now and for years to come. So parenting with anger leads to frustration and discouragement on your child's part.

Colossians 3.21 says, Fathers, do not provoke your children lest they become discouraged. It also leads to more anger.

[20 : 28] Proverbs 15.18 says, A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, and he who is slow to anger quiets contention. So anger is only going to lead to more anger. It's not going to lead to the righteousness of God.

It's not going to lead to contentment or anything like that. One of the problems with anger is anger is like a cannibal in that it's going to eat all the other emotions up.

So a child taught by an angry or violent father usually will pass that down to their child. And as anger is allowed to remain, it grows, and it becomes the dominant trait of all the other traits that that child might have had before.

If you think of kindness or tenderness, thoughtfulness, forgiveness, where is the place of those when anger is in control? They don't fit. You can't be thoughtful while you're being angry.

You can't forget while you're angry. So we see that those don't go together. So the more anger is allowed to grow, the other ones will die off.

[21 : 30] And those are traits that we as Christians are trying to develop. So Paul's warning us against parenting with anger because it teaches the opposite of what God wants us to learn. It also paints a picture of a father who's not like your heavenly father.

Psalms 86, 15 says, But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

So an angry father on earth does not give his child a picture in any way of what a loving father in heaven is like, which is what we want to do. We want to give that example to them of what a loving father looks like.

And as I go through this, I understand that there are different families and different situations where a mother and father might not be in place, in which case the mother takes that role.

There may not be a mother and the father takes that role. And mothers can be that example of a heavenly father even though there isn't a father there.

[22 : 34] So when they come up, just keep that in mind that this still pertains to you, that God still loves you and where you are.

And if you don't have a perfect situation, if your children are older and run away, you don't have children or you don't have a spouse or you're divorced, God doesn't expect you to perfect yourself and get yourself in the right place before he can love you and work with you.

He works with you where you are. So like anger, being too restrictive or having boundaries that are too small can also lead to this causing our children to provoke them to wrath.

And what I mean by that really is if you're parenting with an iron fist, if you're locking your kids in too tight and there really isn't a lot of reason for what you're doing about that or why you are doing that.

So like anger, the child feels like there's no way out, like they can't be good enough for what's happening. And if we parent this way, it's really opposite of how God teaches us because God is not oppressive.

[23 : 53] God does not command us to do things that we are incapable of doing. Instead, he lays down for us. He submits to us, Jesus Christ, who died out of love for us.

And that's the picture that we have. So we need to get rid of anger in our parenting. As for rules and restrictions, that they are necessary.

We're raising kids they don't know. This is why they are put under our authority. But, and I'm not going to give you a list of all of the rules and restrictions you should have on your child because it's going to change.

It's going to change based on family, on situation, and on child. Every child is different. But restrictions are good and necessary. So you need to think about them.

You need to pray about them. Seek God's word. And you need to lay them out and explain it to your child. You don't always have the opportunity to tell them why you're telling them no. They need to, they need to obey when they're told to obey.

[24 : 49] But in general, you need to explain to them why you, why you're doing certain things, why they can't do certain things. And this leads to the second part. That was all under the don't do this.

This is under the do. We want to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. This is discipline that is tempered with love. It's knowing what's best and knowing that it may not always be what the child wants at the time.

And really, if we look at it, this is similar to how God is to us, right? There's things that we want. God knows what's best and we don't always get it. And we have to understand that he's God, we're not.

He knows what's best and we don't and we're okay with that. Hebrews 12, 5 through 11 says this, My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him.

For the Lord disciplines the one he loves and chastises every son whom he receives. For it is for discipline that you may have to endure.

[25 : 54] God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom the father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them.

But he disciplines us for our good that we may share his holiness. For the moment, all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant. But later, it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

It's teaching and correcting according to God's plan, according to God's word. The same way we are learning to live as Christians from his word with his strength and through prayer, we begin teaching that to our children.

So that's what it means to raise them up in the discipline and the instruction of the Lord. It's starting with that cute little adorable, precious, selfish little sinner and it's teaching them about who God is.

[27 : 08] This starts by pointing to the most important thing and that is that we realize that there's a God who loved us. There's a God who sent his son Jesus to die for us in our place because we couldn't do it.

We couldn't have a relationship with God until Jesus died for us to cover up the sins that was the barrier between us and God. That was done and we get to know God. We get to have a relationship with him and we get to spend eternity with him.

That's the foundation of what we're trying to teach to our kids. Without that foundation, everything falls apart. Everything will leave them empty if you leave God and eternal life out of the question.

Without telling them there's a God that created and loved them, there isn't any lasting hope. So if you don't know God, you're not going to be able to teach your kids what it is to know God.

So I would encourage you if you're struggling with that, if you're struggling with whether you are saved or not saved, who God is and if he loves you, then I would suggest that you come and talk with one of us.

[28 : 15] Talk to Sean. Talk to myself. Come up and have prayer. Spend time seeking the word and just seeking God to show himself to you because you can't lead someone down a path that you've never been.

Our next section is on servants or bond servants. This is verses 5 through 8. Bond servants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart as you would Christ, not by the way of eye service as people pleasers, but as bond servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bond servant or whether he is free.

In the time around where Ephesians was written, slavery was a normal part of life. There was somewhere between a fourth and a third of the population of Ephesus was made up of servants.

So if their estimated population was about 250,000 people, then it would be safe to say that 60,000 plus of those would be slaves. So it makes up a large group of the existence.

It became a normal part of everyday life for the people of Ephesus. And for that reason, we find it quite fitting that Paul is talking to us here about servants and masters in this section.

[29 : 44] Immediately, you might be thinking, well, I think Paul should be preaching against slavery and against the system that is allowing it to continue. And that might be true to an extent.

God did create people equal and slavery was wrong. And that's true and that's right. But there's a couple things to keep in mind. First is that in the society that Paul finds himself, slavery and ownership of humans was legal and accepted.

So it wasn't that it was an illegal thing that he would be stepping in to stop, but it was normal and accepted. Secondly, and probably most importantly, is that God did not choose Paul to end slavery.

Fighting to end slavery would be a noble task, but God called Paul to preach the gospel. He called him to bring the good news of salvation to Gentiles, right, to start churches, to preach the word of God, to make disciples, to encourage Christians to live for the glory of Christ.

That's why he wrote this book for us. That's what Paul's mission was. It wasn't to end slavery. It's also helpful to keep in mind that as Christianity grows, slavery doesn't find its place.

[31 : 03] As people grow in their knowledge of Christ and how they should live for Christ, it starts to become obvious that slavery has no place. So, and we could also see that from Ephesus is as Christianity grew, the rights of slaves and how they were treated also improved, even to the point where they were able to buy their own freedom and to own businesses so they were no longer slaves anymore.

So, Paul's speaking to slaves in his time. He's also talking to us in our time. So, you might be thinking, well, I'm not a slave. That doesn't seem to apply. And that's true.

We're not. But the work ethic that Paul is laying out here is the same work ethic that applies to us, right? We get paid by someone because we do work for someone.

Yesterday, I was thankful to be able to go to a hair-cutting place and get my hair cut. It was looking pretty bad and I was thankful for someone to do that because I can't do it myself.

But for a time, I paid the lady money and she became a servant to me in the area of cutting my hair. And that's normal. That happens all throughout life. God calls us to work, whether it be at home or outside.

[32 : 21] And while working for someone, we come under their leadership. We become under their ownership for a time and we do that with godly obedience. Why? Because regardless of whoever we work for, whoever the person or company that we work for, whoever signs our checks that gives us the money, ultimately, we're working for God, not just that person.

That's just the first layer of that. So as we look at these verses, notice the number of times that our working is connected back to God. Verse 5, obey your earthly masters as you would Christ.

Verse 6, as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. Verse 7, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord. Verse 8, whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord.

As we work and fulfill our earthly obligations, it's actually a service we're doing for the Lord. This is what he calls, this is a good and right thing to do. Verse 5, obey your earthly masters with fear or your earthly masters with fear and trembling with a sincere heart as you would Christ.

We are to work for employers. We do our job as if we're doing them for Christ himself because he's called us to that job. And while there's nothing wrong with getting praise for doing something, that isn't what we want to be working for, right?

[33 : 48] We want to be, we don't want that to be the driving force behind what we're working for. That should be to please Christ in our work. He's the one that saved us. He's the one that's placed us in that job.

He's the one that we're working for. So in verse 6, not by way of eye service as people pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ doing the will of God.

Don't work for the purpose of looking good to please people, to get personal recognition. We work out of a desire to please Christ. If we work for making ourselves look good, what happens is we get pulled into a number of sins that pull us away from God.

So if we think about working for yourself, you start to pull in pride and self-centeredness. Could be deceit. Could be lying as you try to get your way in the workplace and make yourself look good maybe when you messed up and you don't want to get blamed.

Those should not be characteristics of how we work for the Lord. But if we're working for the purpose of pleasing Christ, it helps us avoid those things because we put on traits like kindness to others and thoughtfulness, honesty, integrity.

[35 : 04] Those things should describe how we work and by working that way, we avoid the sins that will pull us away from being a child of Christ. I think of an example of particle board.

Does everybody know what particle board is? If you've bought nice wood-looking furniture for a fairly cheap price, it's probably made of particle board. Wood chips, shaving stuff that they've pulled together and they put some glue, some adhesive to it and they heat it and squish it together and put it in the shape that they want.

And it's strong. They can make it look like wood, but it's not wood. If you ever chip the corner of your furniture, it doesn't chip like wood does.

It starts to look bad and come apart. And I think the biggest thing is if it gets a little bit wet, you might as well throw it away. You know, I could leave a nice piece of wood out in the rain, bring it in, and wipe it off.

It'd be okay. If I did that with particle board, I might as well just take it to the dump. It's just going to start to fall apart and it'll be useless. This is the same with our working for Christ.

[36 : 16] It should be something we're doing from the heart and not just for the outside so that we look good. And this thought continues on into verse 7 as it says, rendering service with a goodwill as to the Lord and not to man.

If we were to reword that, change the words a little bit of that verse, it would be obeying or being devoted to with kindness and enthusiasm as to the Lord and not to man.

So we are to be obeying and we are to be devoted to our job and doing it in a Christ-like way, in an enthusiastic way because we're doing it not to man but to the Lord.

And then in verse 8, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or he is free. We should serve with good actions coming from a good heart.

Those who bless others will be blessed by the Lord. Colossians 3.24 says, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward.

[37 : 25] You are serving the Lord Christ. So Christian workers are to demonstrate by their example what love and submission according to God looks like.

And that's really the theme that I'm trying to press in each one of these areas. It's how we demonstrate what God calls us to in the areas of love and submission and what that means.

The next section starting in verse 9 is about masters. Christians at that time who had slaves like Philemon he owned a slave.

They were charged to treat their servants or they're charged to treat their servants different than how the rest of society treated them. They weren't called to be overbearing and violent or mean or fill in the blank.

I'm sure there was a lot of things that were just done overboard in the area of slaves and ownership or slave and ownership.

[38 : 28] But here in this case in this passage Paul is calling them to act differently. Stop threatening them. He's telling them to treat them just like they were told to treat their masters.

So the same principles that we just talked about with fear and trembling serve them with a sincere heart not with eye service with a good will as to the Lord not to man knowing that whatever good anyone does he will receive from the Lord.

Do all these things just like I'm calling them to do to you. Oh and add to that knock off your threatening because it's not Christ honoring. And remember that God is no respecter of persons so if you think that you're going to come and say well he's my slave I'm his master I can do that.

Paul says no God is an impartial judge. So it doesn't matter if you're a slave or a master if you're a worker or a boss a male or female poor or rich it doesn't make any difference in the eyes of God.

He rules over them equally and he requires of them the same obedience. So by their example masters or in our case employers or owners of companies they can demonstrate how God our master in heaven rules over us and that is with patience and forgiveness.

[39 : 54] So if you're a Christian master if you're a Christian owner or manager and there's people that are under you you're called to treat them the same way. So what's the point of all that?

In case you missed some of it in case it still didn't like okay that's great all that sounds good but what do I do with it? What's the point of that passage? What's the point of our passage last week when we were talking about marriage?

How does it fit into Ephesians? Again Ephesians is about our identity in Christ who we are in Christ our identity in everything else is going to fail our identity in our job in our kids in our workplace in our money all that is going to fail at some point so if you have your identity in there then it's going to let you down at some point if your identity is in Christ that will last forever so Ephesians is about that our identity in Christ as part of that identity God has a plan for each one of us whether it's a husband or wife whether it's a child whether it's an employer or a worker you have a job given to you by Christ and that fits into his framework of submission and love that's how this that's how this is practical that's how this means anything to us because we each have a job that fits into this framework it starts with God at the top God and Christ the one who died for us who died for his church and then from there we see love and submission come down and it falls into the church it falls into your workplace it falls into your family and if we fight against that we find that life gets very difficult life won't match up with God's plan because it's outside of God's plan it's outside of that framework so we love one another as Christ loved us and we submit to one another according to the authority and the order that God is laying out for us and that we do for his glory we do that for his glory we do that for our good thank you let me close in a word of prayer and then we'll have some prayer time

Lord we thank you for Ephesians we thank you for identity in Christ that we can have that matches nothing else we thank you for a hope that we can have that nothing else can touch we thank you for a God who loves us like no one else can love us Lord we ask that you would help us to take these commands to heart not as heavy commands that we have to do them but commands that are given to us out of love to make our life better to make our life more in tune to what you have for us to make us more Christ-like that we would reflect your glory Lord we ask for your help in these things and we ask for these things in Jesus' name Amen Amen