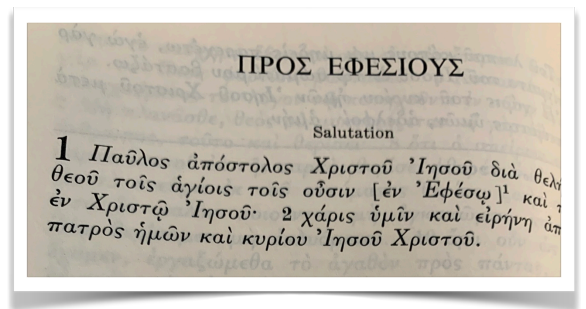


Paul's Letter to the CHURCH AT EPHESUS



EPHESIANS 6

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), ³ SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.

⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

COMMANDS FOR THE CHRISTIAN HOUSEHOLD

This section is a continuation of the context starting in Ephesians 5:21. It began with instructions for husbands and wives, including a authoritative comparison between Christ and the church and the husband and wife. But Paul's instructions for the Christian household don't stop there; they continue on to address other relationship in the home...

CHILDREN

- What is obedience?
- What is God's command toward children regarding their parents?
- How many years does this command extend to?
 - Are there exceptions?
- What makes this command unique?
 - What is the benefit of obeying this command?
 - Why is this so?

FATHERS (PARENTS)

- What is the obligation of parents (fathers in particular)?
- What must fathers not do?
 - What does it mean to provoke to anger?
- A parallel passage from Colossians 3:21 says: "Fathers, do not _____ your children, so that they will not _____."
- Putting these two passages together, what should fathers (parent) be careful to avoid?
 - Why?
- What must they do instead?

⁵ Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; ⁶ not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. ⁷ With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.

⁹ And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

- What is the “discipline of the Lord”?
 - What is the “instruction in the Lord”?
 - What sorts of things would this naturally include?
-

SLAVES

- Is slavery good or bad? Can a Christian own a slave?
 - What is a slave’s obligation to his master?
 - How is this obligation framed?
 - What is eyeservice?
 - What are men-pleasers?
 - Are only slaves “slaves of Christ”?
 - How are slaves to view their service to their masters?
 - What is the reward for such service?
 - Does any of this have application to us today? If so, what?
-

MASTERS

- How is the Christian master to behave himself?
 - What are the same things that Paul is commanding?
 - What are masters to give up?
 - Are masters also slaves?
 - To who?
- The parallel in Colossians: “Masters, grant to your slaves _____ and _____, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.” (Colossians 4:1 NAS95)

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

¹⁴ Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, ¹⁵ and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; ¹⁶ in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

- How do we become strong in the Lord?
 - How strong is His might?
- Why do you think Paul emphasizes the “full” armor of God? (in vv. 11 and 13)
- Who is our enemy?
 - Who is **not** our enemy?
 - Why should we remember this?
 - Who are these “rulers...powers...world forces of this darkness...spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places”?
- Paul has used this idea of standing and standing firm three times (vv.11, 13, 14)— what does it mean?
- What do these metaphors of the armor of God mean...
 - GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH,
 - and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,
 - and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE;
 - in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.
- And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION,
- and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, ¹⁹ and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

²¹ But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. ²² I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts.

²³ Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible love.

- Is prayer a part of this armor of God, too?
- How important would this be to fighting the good fight?
- What should we be on the alert for?
- And besides praying for ourselves, who else should we pray for?
- Why would spiritually strong Paul need prayer?
- Did Paul sometimes have temptation not to speak boldly as he ought?
- How does this apply to us today?

PAUL'S CIRCUMSTANCES

- Who is probably the messenger of this letter to the Ephesians?
- What can we know about this early Christian by looking at
 - Acts 20.4
 - Colossians 4.7
 - 2 Timothy 4.12
 - Titus 3.12

CLOSING GREETINGS AND BLESSINGS

- What is the meaning of peace in the ancient near east?
 - Who grants peace and love with faith?
- What would be another word for "grace"?
- What is an "incorruptible love"?