



*Every Spiritual
Blessing*

EPHESIANS - WEEK 15
The Christian Home
& Workplace

5. THE LEVITE'S TITHE (NUM. 18:26)

From the income that the Levites received from the tithe, they were still responsible for giving 10 percent off the top to God.

6. OFFERINGS AND TITHES (DEUT. 12:5–6)

The tithe was not a volitional offering. The 10 percent off the top belonged to God and the Israelites simply repaid it. But this wasn't the only obligatory tithe. They also tithed to support a special jubilee festival (Deut. 12) and took a third

tithe every three years to take care of orphans, widows, and the poor (Deut. 14). These mandatory offerings averaged out to about 23 percent a year.

On top of these compulsory tithes, there were regular opportunities for freewill offerings. These were generous gifts that expressed the Israelites' gratefulness through voluntary giving in response to their devotion.

At a bare minimum, they gave 23 percent a year, but there was no ceiling on their generosity. They

could—and frequently would—give exorbitantly out of their excess. In response to Moses' call for contributions to the building of the Tabernacle, the Israelites literally gave so much that Moses had to command them to stop giving (Ex. 36:2–7).

Opening prayer

Prayer for the persecuted church:

Here

Prayer for a local church:

This morning we pray for our brother Daniel Garcia and Emmaus Church San Bernadino.

Closing prayer

INTRODUCTION

- Bundle of Joy and That Extra Bundle

1 | Here's What We Face - There is Conflict in the Home

WHEN IS THERE CONFLICT IN THE RELATIONSHIPS IN YOUR HOME?

Ephesians 6:1-9 (NLT)

6 Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do.

First, who's Paul speaking to here? That's right — children. He's speaking to the children. This tells us something very important about church. When these letters were read to the churches they were sent to it means the children were present, not just for this part, but for the entire reading of the letter. So, in the early church the children were in the service.

And the fact that Paul addresses you as children shows that in Christianity children have a special place. You're not just the property of your parents. Your parents can't just do with you whatever they like, which was the case in the culture of Rome at that time. Your parents can't treat you however they like, because your parents are also under God's rule. They're under God's authority, which means God is the boss of your parents.

Second, what does Paul tell the children to do?
Very good. Obey your parents.

2 | What You Must Do

THE BIBLE SAYS FOR YOU TO OBEY YOUR PARENTS

What does the word obey mean? It means to do what your parents tell you to do. To obey is to carry out an order. Do you have to obey your parents at all times under every circumstance?

When parents don't follow God and they're abusive or neglectful of you, then they lose their authority over you. It's like they throw it in the trash. You don't have to listen to abusive and neglectful parents the same way you'd listen to good and caring parents. Parents are to be obeyed as long as they are following Jesus.

But if your mom or dad doesn't know Jesus you should still obey them if they are good and caring parents, especially if you know Jesus. The only time you shouldn't obey your parents is when

they tell you to do something that the Bible says is wrong.

Why do you have to obey your parents? Because they have authority over you. That means they're the boss of you. They're supposed to train and teach you how to know God and they will have to give an account to God one day about whether they did that or not.

Deuteronomy 11:18-19 (NLT)

18 “So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. 19 Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.

Now, parents, for you to do this, you have to know the Word. The fact that you will have to give an account to God at the judgment on how you taught your children about him should be

some motivation for reading the Bible.

Third, why does he tell you to obey your parents? Because you belong to the Lord.

People, whether adults or children, who do not treat other people with kindness show that they do not know the Lord, because the Lord is the One who has told all of us to “love your neighbor as yourself.” The Bible says if you don’t love your neighbor who you can see then how can you love God who you can’t see? It shows you that

your heart hasn't been changed yet. That's the question. Do you need a new heart? That's what Jesus came to do. He came to open the way for us to have new hearts.

But you should obey your parents because you are the Lords, which is another way of saying you're a Christian, that's why you should obey your parents — because Christians want to obey Jesus and Jesus said through the Apostle Paul for you to obey your parents. So, by obeying your parents you're really obeying Jesus. And

when you disobey your parents you're really disobeying Jesus.

Then Paul says to you children:

2 “Honor your father and mother.”

Honor means to respect them; to treat them and speak to them nicely.

This is the first commandment with a promise:

It's a command from God. And it comes with a promise, which means if you do this you get this result, this blessing.

³ If you honor your father and mother, “things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth.”

Now, what's the problem here? We've all broken this command.

3 | You've Missed the Mark When It Comes to Obeying Your Parents

WHY WE CAN'T DO IT

We've missed the mark. That's what the word sin means — to miss the mark. And the penalty for sin is death, spiritual separation from God. Have you ever spoken unkindly to your parents, ever talked back to them? Have you ever disobeyed them? Then you've broken this command. You've sinned against your parents, but you've

also sinned against God because He's the One who commanded you to honor your parents.

This is where the good news of the gospel comes in.

Philippians 2:8 (NLT)

8 he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

4 | There Was One Who Did Obey

JESUS OBEYED GOD AS HIS FATHER TO THE POINT OF DEATH

Thank God for Jesus, who was the true Son who lost the love of his heavenly Father so that we could have our sins forgiven and we could be brought into his family. Jesus was the true Son who lost the love of his heavenly Father for that moment on the cross when he died for our sins so we could have God as our heavenly Father. God the Father and God the Son worked together so God the Holy Spirit could make us

part of God's family.

Now, when we turn to Jesus and ask for forgiveness God gives us new hearts.

Ezekiel 36:26 (NLT)

26 And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart.

That's the only way any of us can do what is right — by getting a new heart from Jesus.

5 Only Now We Can Change

WHEN WE PUT OUR TRUST IN JESUS WE'RE GIVEN NEW HEARTS

And with these new hearts we want to obey our parents the way Paul tells us to.

Now, that's for the children. Paul then switches

from speaking to the children to speaking to their parents, but he begins with the dads, showing the special influence of the father in the home.

4 Fathers, do not provoke (excite) your children to anger by the way you treat them.

Fathers are told to be fair and kind, but that doesn't mean that sometimes they won't tell you to do things that you don't want to do. That's why Paul has to tell you to obey your parents. But fathers shouldn't be unfair or yell at you all

the time and things like that.

Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.

The two cultural extremes in parenting: one is overly harsh discipline which makes our children constantly angry and the other is a lack of discipline which also makes children constantly angry.

Now, we understand why overly harsh discipline makes children angry, because they know it's unfair. But how does lack of discipline make our children angry? Because lack of discipline means that we're always giving in to our children. They are getting their way. So, when their demands are not met, they become angry. Entitlement breeds anger. Entitlement comes from lack of discipline.

Now, Paul switches from family relationships to what we can refer to today as work relationships.

5 Bondservants,

When we think of bondservants today, what we often do is take the history of slavery that we are familiar with — slavery during the time of the Civil War — and we think that’s how all slavery is at all times, but that is not the case. If you want a deeper explanation, I wrote a blog called, “What about slavery and the Bible?” which you can read on our website.

But bondservants is a good translation. Think of a bondservant as an employee who has obligated himself or herself for a certain period of time to the employment of a person, kind of like signing a contract with an employer or a company or even the military.

And when Paul wrote this, bondservants had no ethnic distinction, so it's also very different than Civil War slavery in that sense, too.

The idea here is that basically, work is a calling from God... whatever type of work it is.

obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ,

All work is a calling from God. God has provided everything for us and He has chosen to take care of our needs through our service to one another.

So, he tells us to do our jobs as if we were doing them for the Lord.

⁶ not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,

So, notice here he equates doing the will of God with doing your job... whatever it is.

⁷ rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man,

Twice he tells you to do your job (whatever it is) as if you were doing it for the Lord.

I know of several cases (think back on your own employment record) where people could have saved their jobs if they had been doing them as if they were doing them for the Lord. But there was a breakdown in how they did their jobs and they lost them.

⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.

Now, he's telling you that you will receive a reward at the judgment based upon your job

performance. And it's no different for the employer.

⁹ Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

God does not play favorites based upon on roles of authority. Some people have more authority in life than others, but the servant or the employee can receive a greater reward from God than his employer because the employee actually did his

job as if he was doing it for the Lord whereas the employer did not.

In short, this means there are no menial jobs. It doesn't matter if you're a janitor or a doctor, each job provides a service that helps those around them. But both are commanded to do their jobs as if they were doing them for the Lord, because this is how God has chosen to take care of us — through each other. That's what jobs do. Jobs provide a service and it takes a team of people in different departments to make it all come to

pass. That is not the will of man, but jobs are the will of God.

- Example of coffee