



EPHESIANS 5 PART 4

In our culture, we often view relationships through a lens of power and personal fulfillment, asking what we can get out of them. But God's design flips this worldly script entirely upside down. The biblical model for our connections isn't about power; it's about a mission—the mission to be a living example of Christ and the Church. Pastor Steve reveals a profound truth: "what looks like power and authority turns out to be responsibility and accountability". This isn't a call for one person to dominate, but a call for sacrificial leadership modeled after Jesus, who is the "Savior of the body". God isn't concerned with who cooks the meal or fixes the car; He is concerned with our godliness and our willingness to take responsibility for the spiritual health and unity of our relationships. This transforms leadership from a position of control into a posture of service, where the ultimate goal is to protect and care for the other person.

This mission of responsibility is fulfilled through a love that actively purifies rather than passively permits. We are called to love as Christ loved the church, giving of ourselves to "sanctify and cleanse...with the washing of the water by the Word". This means our love isn't meant to expose and criticize flaws, but to gently wash them away with the truth and grace of Scripture. It's a love that, as 1 Peter 4:8 says, "will cover a multitude of sins". This is a supernatural task, one we cannot accomplish without the power of the Holy Spirit working in us. When we embrace our God-given responsibility and love with a cleansing, Word-filled love, our relationships—whether in marriage, friendship, or family—stop being about us and start becoming a powerful demonstration of the Gospel in action.

Study Questions:

1. "Headship does not mean dictatorship". Reflect on a time you've either seen or personally experienced leadership (in the home, church, or work) that was dictatorial. How does Christ's example of servant leadership challenge that model? (Mark 10:45)
2. "what looks like power and authority turns out to be responsibility and accountability". How does this re-framing from "power" to "responsibility" change your perspective on your roles in your family and community? (Luke 12:48)
3. We are called to "wash each other with the word of God". How can you be more intentional about bringing Scripture into your conversations with loved ones in a way that is cleansing and encouraging, not judgmental? (Colossians 3:16)
4. The sermon highlights "mutual submission...in the fear of God". How does the book of Proverbs connect the "fear of the Lord" with wisdom, and why is this reverential respect essential for healthy relationships? (Proverbs 9:10)
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