

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



*These discussion questions are designed to extend the impact of the Sunday message. You can use them for your personal Bible study, family study, and/or small group study.*

### Overview

Sermon: *Live in Obedience*

*Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free. Ephesians 6:7-8 (NIV)*

In Ephesians 6:1-9, the Apostle Paul addresses the Christian ethics of children, fathers, slaves, and masters. Paul appeals to children to honor their parents because it is right. Fathers are not to frustrate their children but nurture them in the ways of Jesus. Slaves are to respect and obey their masters as though they are serving the Lord who gives rewards and judges what all people do on earth. And finally, masters are to mutually submit to slaves because both slave and master submit to Jesus who shows no favoritism.

Paul moves beyond the golden rule in his appeal to Christian ethics in how we are to treat each other. Instead “treat others as you want to be treated.” We are to treat others as we would treat Jesus.

### Discussion

1. Read Ephesians 6:1-9. The Apostle Paul starts with a basic ethical starting point, “honor your parents.” What does it look like for kids to honor their parents in today’s culture? What is dishonorable? How is obedience to one’s parents different for a 5-year-old and a 25-year-old? How can we honor our aging parents well? How do we “do well” and “have a long life” if we choose to honor our parents?
2. Anger is out and nurture is in. Fathers in Greco-Roman culture had supreme reign over their wives and children. How do Christian ethics shape the relationship between a father and his children? In today’s culture what are some ways that fathers can choose not to exasperate their children and instead nurture them? How can parents partner better together to care and train children in the ways of Jesus? What has worked well for you? Where do you need to grow in your parenting?
3. Paul was addressing a large group of people who had become followers of Jesus. It is estimated that nearly a third of all people in Greece and Rome were slaves. You became a slave for number of reasons (debt, war captives, abandonment) but race was not a factor like it was during modern chattel slavery in the Western Hemisphere. But to be a slave is to be a slave and many slave owners dehumanized slaves during Paul’s ministry. How does Paul “level” the playing field between slaves and masters? How might Paul’s theology have been used to later fuel the abolishment of slavery?
4. Every thought of privilege evaporates before Jesus. What does it mean for a master to “treat your slaves in the same way”?

### Application

5. How can the church honor children and parents of children?
6. How can the church participate in the eradication of every thought of privilege and bias?

**March 31, 2019**

