

Ephesians - Division IV Primer
EMC Wednesday Night Bible Study - 12-9-15

Context:

1. New Life in Christ (1:3-2:10)
2. The New Society (2:11-3:21)
3. New Standards - unity and purity (4:1-5:21) - final section
4. **New Relationships** (5:21-6:24)

See “Chart - The First Three Divisions of Ephesians”

Flow of thought: New life in Christ → Lived out within the new society of God’s people → New standards of living - not like the Gentiles do, but with unity and purity → Now focusing on the implications of all he has been teaching for their relationships.

2 Dimensions of Christian Living - for the remainder of the letter

1. Practical, down-to-earth relationships of the home
2. The spiritual warfare we wage against our enemy and the equipment we will need

These 2 dimensions are quite different

- Home and work - husband and wife, parents and children, master and servant are visible, tangible human beings
- Principalities and powers are invisible, intangible demonic beings
- Christian faith addresses both spheres of life

The Basic Relationships of Human Existence

- 3 primary areas of relationship within the earliest Christian congregations
 - Husbands and wives
 - Parents and children
 - Masters and servants
- Every human **without exception** lives life within in the structures of these three dimensions
- See the connection of “holiness” to these spheres of our lives

Biblical Authority and Submission

Structure: V. 21 as Bridge - “Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ”

- Verb “be subject” (submitting) is a present participle (verbal adjective)
 - Connection to vv. 18-20
 - But the verb carries over into v. 22ff.

Christian Submission

“Submission” in today’s culture.

- Not fashionable to talk about submission
- Church should welcome legitimate liberation movements
- Church must acknowledge role

Jesus is our _____

- Treatment of women, children, and working class

- True _____ (cf. Phil 2:1-8; Mark 10:42-45; John 13)

4 truths we must affirm and maintain

- The _____ of womanhood, childhood, and servanthood
- The _____ before God of all human beings
- Deep _____ of all Christian believers.
- Submissive does not mean _____
 - God-given _____ vs. God-appointed _____.
 - For order within society/human relationships

2 Important Questions: Where does this authority come from, and how is it to be used?

1. Its origin: From _____

- He is a God of _____
 - *hypotassomai* ('submit') has at its heart the word *taxis* ('order')
- _____: A humble recognition of the divine ordering of society.
 - Notice the prepositional clauses in 5:21, 22; 6:1; 6:5-7
 - Behind the husband, parent, and master one must discern the Lord himself who has given them their authority
- A Caution Against Overstatement
 - There are exceptions
 - **Principle:** We must submit up to the point where our obedience to human authority would involve disobedience to God.
 - Civil **disobedience** becomes our _____

2. Its Use: To the _____ of others

- The reciprocal nature of duty
 - Warnings against improper use of authority
 - Forbids exploitation
 - Urges them to remember their duties/obligations and the other party's rights

Summary

- God has ordered human society
- Submissive does not mean inferior
 - True greatness is not in lording, but in serving. Example of Jesus himself
- Authority is not a synonym for _____. It is _____.