

A new way of relating – Ephesians 5:21–6:9

This Bible Study has been prepared by Bishop Stephen Hale and it is with thanks to him that I am able to share it in our Connect Groups. This section of Ephesians is a tricky passage and one that has been poorly treated by Christians. Stephen has prepared a great study that follows and I am sure that with God's blessing and your careful preparation the group will benefit greatly.
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July 2021

Introduction: (5 mins)

Which members of your family are you most like and least like?

Paul has been dealing with the new attitudes and behaviour that should be evident amongst the people of God. He now moves on to see how our new life in Christ and our membership of God's new humanity should affect some of our most important relationships.

Note!

Verse 21 'Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ,' stands as the introduction to the verses that follow in Ephesians. These sections are examples of Christian submission. As we submit to Christ we need to be willing to submit to one another. To submit to another is to give them due respect and put them before yourself.

Questions 1-6 (15 mins)

1. What is to be the basic principle for Christian relationships? Why are we to have this attitude?

Wives and Husbands

2.
 - a. What is involved in submitting for the wife in marriage?
 - b. What are husbands called to do in marriage? Who is their role model (25, 28, 29)?

The question of submission has nothing to do with superiority or inferiority. It is about humility, service and love out of reverence to the Lord. When marriage partners serve and love one another in this way then their marriage will be deeply enriched

Children and Parents 6:1-4

3. Why is it 'right' to obey our parents?
4. Why do you think Paul highlights 'exasperating your children'? what significant responsibility does he give parents?

Employees and Employers 6:5-9

Note:

Paul was addressing a particular situation of slaves and masters. The principles can be applied to work relationships today.

5. Why should employees respect and obey their earthly bosses?
6. Does obeying your boss mean putting up with everything?

Questions 7-9 (20 mins + prayer)

Looking at yourself

7. How do you respond to the statement – 'the hardest place to be Christian is at home'? is that true for you?
8. What should I do when I fail my spouse or my child or my parents?
9. Identify some issues that people are facing in their home and work situations. Make this the focus of your prayer time together.