



Week of March 1, 2020: Ephesians 6:1-9

### Discussion Questions Set #1

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:1-4)

“These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

1. Why is it significant that children are to obey, not because of a forced obedience, but because “**this is right**”? How might relying on power dynamics in our parents throw this into disarray?
2. In sermon, we did not outline this in great detail, but the phrase “in the Lord” helps us to understand that parental obedience is an aspect of Christian discipleship. Why do you think obedience to parents is an aspect of Christian discipleship?
3. Obedience to one’s parents looks different as a child ages. Discuss what the obedience dynamic might look like with a child at age 5, age 12, age 16, and as an adult.
4. Parents are encouraged not to provoke their children to anger. Why do you think this specific aspect of parenting is so important to successfully bringing up one’s children in the training and instruction of the Lord? Discuss what you think it means to exasperate another.
5. In sermon I mentioned that “*the home, and not the church, is the primary place of spiritual development for children*”. Discuss this quote. Why do you think some parents are reluctant to encourage spiritual development in the home?

### Discussion Questions Set #2

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (Ephesians 5:21)

“Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. 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. And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.” (Ephesians 6:5-9)

“All who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect, so that God’s name and our teaching may not be slandered” (1 Timothy 6:1).

1. In sermon, I suggested that if we were to take seriously the instruction to mutual submission encouraged in Ephesians 5:21, slavery of one person to another would be impossible to uphold theologically. How does mutual submission destroy the practice of slavery?
2. Think of Christ’s comment in Mark 9:35 that “**anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant [slave] of all**”. What does it encourage all followers of Jesus to become? How does it affect one’s view of power/authority within the church?
3. The follower of Jesus navigates relationships where an imbalance of power or authority actually exists using this as a guideline: “**live a life worthy of the calling [we] have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace**” (Ephesians 4:1-4). What might this look like practically in a circumstance where there is an imbalance of power (think of employer-employee or government-citizen relationships).
4. In sermon, I suggested that our advocacy (speaking into situations of power imbalance) must be measured and always matched by our walk. Why is this an important consideration for the follower of Jesus?