

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on March 31, 2019:**

**"Transforming Life Lessons
for the Church Today from Ephesus:
Part 14 (Ephesians 6:1-9)
Duties of Parents, Children, Masters, Slaves"**

[In today's sermon, Pastor Craig Kuhlman shows that parent-children relationships as well as employee-employer relationships need to reflect the unity, purity and the love that we've been given as believers.]

Notes

Introduction:

- We need to remember that in the first couple of chapters of Ephesians, Paul takes detailed time to establish the fact that there is a new humanity formed in Jesus and that believers represent that new humanity as family in the church collectively.
- And as we reflect our new humanity in Jesus, the church is to grow both in unity and purity.

- Then, Paul is moving into the family household to show how husband and wives should live together in that unity and purity.
- And now, today, Paul moves on to talk about the interaction between children and parents and the interaction between slaves and masters – in today's context between employees and employers and how they should reflect that unity and purity.

- But, first let's recap what we looked at in last week's message.

Recapping Transforming Life Lessons from last week (Ephesians 5:21-33):

1. Believers are to yield to each other reflecting Jesus Christ.
2. Wives are to yield to their husbands as they would to Jesus.
3. This yielding is a reflection of the church yielding to Jesus.
4. Husbands are to love their wives as Jesus does his church.
5. Believers as the church have been purified by Jesus and are holy and blameless through his objective eyes.
6. Husbands are to love their wives as they would their own body.
7. Jesus reflects this same love of the church because we are members of his body.
8. In marriage two become one, just as the Father, Spirit, and Son.

Beginning our text and time in rhyme:

*Whether child, parent, master or slave,
we have a yielding-loving role, that God gave.
In that role, reflect God's soul,
on the road of love we pave.*

Duties of children and parents (Verses 1-4):

First, the duty of children (Verses 1-3):

- Based on Nature
- Based on Law
- Based on the Gospel

Ephesians 6:1 (NASB), Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2) Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), 3) so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.

- What's important to notice is that Paul expands the blessing of the Promised Land given under the Old Covenant to now the whole earth under the New Covenant because we honor our fathers and mothers.
- Now, as parents, it's always easy to look back on the mistakes you made with your children.
- But the comfort, pastor Craig gains from this verse is that even though he have messed up from time to time, they are always children of the Lord.
- As parents, we are kind of like stewards in that respect.
- And whatever we may have fallen short on, the Father, Son and Spirit, as our children's eternal Father, Son and Spirit have redeemed them.

Ephesians 6:1 (Mirror), The way children respond to their parents give evidence to their righteousness in the Lord. 2) The first commandment that includes immediate and long term incentive is in reference to children honoring their father and mother. 3) Both quality and duration of life on earth is impacted by the way children relate to their parents.

- Also, we need to notice that Paul ties the obedience and response of children to their parents with their relationship they have with Jesus.
- It's interesting to note that civilizations down through the centuries would not have flourished and continued to grow unless the family structure was in place.

The duty of parents (Verse 4):

- Don't exasperate or frustrate
- Do train (discipline) and instruct
- Stay focused on the Lord

Ephesians 6:4 (NASB), Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4 (Mirror), Fathers, your role is not to exasperate your children. You are rather to awaken their minds in an environment conducive to draw every virtue that is in them in the Lord.

- We have to realize that the only authority that a parent has is given to them in a Godly fashion.
- This verse doesn't tell children to obey in a blind-will sort of way if this authority given to the parents is abused.
- If parents are discouraging their children from living out their God given role, then their authority is negated.
- Parenting needs to reflect the unity, purity and the love that we've been given as believers.

- Now, parents always want to do the best things for their children, but in the heat of the moment, that doesn't always happen.
- But, we need to realize that we have an Eternal Father who supersedes that relationship and redeems any of the negative things that our children may experience.
- As a parent, it's always easy to look back and regret that we didn't do for our children all the things that we should have done.

- Today, it's tough being a parent, because we're expected to be super-parents.
- If you aren't at every sport or social event your children are involved in at school, then you are a lousy parent.
- But, it's not always possible to do, because of work schedules and other commitments.
- So, as parents, we shouldn't beat ourselves up, but accept what we have done and move forward.

- And if, as a child, you didn't have the best father or mother, it's time to move on and to realize that they probably had challenges and difficulties in their lives.
- You can't replay your childhood tape again. It is what it is, so move forward in your life.

- How many of you remember Harry Chapin's hit song, "Cat's in the Cradle"?
- It's a 1974 folk rock song that's about lack of relationship between father and son.
- Now, many times when we think that we've done badly, our kids often have a completely different view of it.

- We need to realize that our mistakes in child rearing are, first of all, redeemed and taken care of in Christ and that we are forgiven, if we need to be.
- And secondly, God has a way of redeeming things that allow our children to see things differently than we, as parents do.

- Pastor Craig then showed the congregation a family book, which his wife and kids put together that shows this.
- It contains photos but also comments from the kids answering the question about their favorite memory with their father.
- Here's the comment by Quentin, the oldest son: "My favorite memory with you dad, right after my X-Box 360 was stolen at the YMCA, is not because you bought me a new one but simply because it made me feel that no matter what happens to me, you will always love me and take care of me and that you are always there to help me and guide me."

- Here's Morgan's comment: "My favorite memory with my dad is about all the times we traveled together in the BMW and had a blast doing it."
- Here's the comment from his daughter, Chloe: "My favorite memory with my dad is about all the times we would sit at the kitchen table and you would tell us funny stories until we were all crying laughing."

Duties of slaves (employees) and masters (employers) (Verses 5-9):

- Based on the socio-economic culture of the time, Paul was speaking radically different about this subject.
- At that time, it was estimated that there were some 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire. It far out-numbered the Christian population.
- Also, slavery at that time was not just those prescribed to menial tasks – there were doctors, educators, and lawyers who were considered slaves subject to their masters.
- Today, we can see what Paul is saying in context of employee-employer relationships.

The duty of slaves (employees) (Verses 5-8):

- Be respectful
- Be sincere
- Be conscientious
- Be wholehearted

Ephesians 6:5 (NASB), Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; 6) not by way of eye service, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

- Paul says that as we relate to those in authority over us, we are to do it as if we were doing it to the Lord.
- Remember, Paul calls himself a servant or a slave of Christ.
- It's not wrong to think of ourselves as a slave to Christ because that's who we are as Christians in some context even though Jesus calls us "friends."
- This is not a negative concept to think that.

7) (NASB), With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8) knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.

Ephesians 6:5 (Mirror), The next level of relationship equally implicated includes the heart attitude of a slave towards their owner; because of your devotion to Christ, you are now able to give your boss the same undivided respect and devotion.

6) This is not a matter of merely trying to put up a front in order to impress your boss; you are in essence slaves of Christ, addicted to the desire of God to find expression in you; now slave life becomes Christ life.

- It was an in-human culture at that time.

7) (Mirror), However menial the task, put your heart and mind into it as you would to the Lord; he is your real boss, no-one else. 8) It is a well-known fact that it is impossible for

good deeds to go unnoticed. It makes no difference whether someone is free or a slave; every single good deed equally enjoys the favorable attention of the Lord.

- So these verses reflect our heart, our attitude, as employees, to give our all.
- We know that not all employee-employer relationships are good.
- Usually bosses or supervisors are not well liked.
- Even though supervisors are not always considerate, as a Christian believer, Paul is telling us to take it up a notch.
- We need to think that we are working for Jesus Christ, instead of an employer, because that is what, in essence, the Gospel tells us.

The duty of masters (employers) (Verse 9):

- Apply the golden rule
- Don't threaten
- Don't look down on

Ephesians 6:9 (NASB), And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Ephesians 6:9 (Mirror), If you're the boss, love's initiative applies to you on exactly the same terms; the way you treat your slaves with respect rather than threats, even when they do stupid things clears the air immediately. Take it from your heavenly Master; he does not judge people or circumstances on face value.

- The Gospel was in the process of changing the whole view toward slavery, both in terms of the master and the slave.
- People have often wondered why Paul didn't speak out against slavery and ask for its elimination right then.
- Eliminating slavery would have disrupted and shattered the whole socio-economic structure at that time.
- As we said, there were 60 million slaves within the Roman Empire.
- But, Christianity started the process of eliminating slavery.
- And we know from Scripture, especially the Gospel that slavery is in-human and that it doesn't reflect the relationship we have with Jesus.
- It's interesting to note that once Christianity started, Romans started to routinely free slaves and that slave conditions began improving.
- The Gospel undermined slavery through equality, justice, and brotherhood.
- We all know the verse from Galatians (3:28), "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
- Christians are always to be yielding, loving and caring and that's what the church is continually to be doing.

Conclusion:

- Let's conclude our text and time in rhyme together as a family:

Whether child, parent, master or slave,

*we have a yielding-loving role, that God gave.
In that role, reflect God's soul,
on the road of love we pave.*

Amen!

Closing prayer