

## **Pastor Josh – Sunday Sun 30th June**

### **A study in Ephesians – Chapter 5**

#### **Where The Rubber Meets the Road.**

Reminder of the intent of the book of Ephesians

Paul has spent the first three chapters talking about what Christ has accomplished for us.

- That God has created a whole community by his gift of faith.
- A gift is grace in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- The members of the community have been chosen by God.
- Adopted as son of God, through faith in Jesus Christ.

After laying the theological truth to who we are – know he says...

“This is what God has saved us for”.

This is the purpose – this is the expectation.

[Ephesians 4 Christian Standard Bible](#)

#### **Unity and Diversity in the Body of Christ**

[4 Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received,](#)

- He is saying this is why God has saved you.
- This is the purpose for which God has called you.

[Ephesians 4:17 Christian Standard Bible](#)

#### **Living the New Life**

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, I say this and testify in the Lord: You should no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thoughts

- He is saying you are going to live radically different lives to society.

## **Ephesians 4:23-24 Christian Standard Bible**

<sup>23</sup> to be renewed<sup>[a]</sup> in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and to put on<sup>[b]</sup> the new self, the one created according to God's likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.

- We live differently because we think differently, because God has rescued us.

Then he says this – a command – “Be filled with the spirit”.

There were 5 marks of being filled with the spirit.

- 3 have to do with how we worship.
- 1 giving thanks for all things
- 1 how we interact with those that are closest to us – in our closest relationships.

Just as this was counter cultural in Paul's day – so it is in our day.

## **Romans 12:2 confirms**

<sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

We need to be reminded that God's plan is radically different than the world.

- If we are going to follow God, it is going to look radically different to the world's thinking.

**This week's scripture.**

## **Ephesians 5:21-6:9 Christian Standard Bible**

<sup>21</sup> submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.

Wives and Husbands

<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit<sup>[a]</sup> to your husbands as to the Lord, <sup>23</sup> because the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives are to submit to their husbands in everything. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave

himself for her <sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing<sup>[b]</sup> her with the washing of water by the word. <sup>27</sup> He did this to present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and blameless. <sup>28</sup> In the same way, husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hates his own flesh but provides and cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, <sup>30</sup> since we are members of his body.<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>31</sup> **For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.**<sup>[d]</sup> <sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, but I am talking about Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup> To sum up, each one of you is to love his wife as himself, and the wife is to respect her husband.

#### Children and Parents

**6** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, because this is right. <sup>2</sup> **Honor your father and mother**, which is the first commandment with a promise, <sup>3</sup> **so that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life in the land.**<sup>[e][f]</sup> <sup>4</sup> Fathers, don't stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

#### Slaves and Masters

<sup>5</sup> Slaves, obey your human<sup>[g]</sup> masters with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as you would Christ. <sup>6</sup> Don't work only while being watched, as people-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing God's will from your heart. <sup>7</sup> Serve with a good attitude, as to the Lord and not to people, <sup>8</sup> knowing that whatever good each one does, slave or free, he will receive this back from the Lord. <sup>9</sup> And masters, treat your slaves the same way, without threatening them, because you know that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

Paul introduces his point and then shows submission in action in three very different scenarios.

Very controversial ones in our day and age.

Husband and Wife.

Child and father.

Slave and master.

When we hear the word submit, we have tendency to react against it.

Question – when you hear the word submit does it make you feel joyful or angry?

- Potential title for this message was “Joyful submissions” but unsure whether that would resonate with us!

The bible says... Your commands are my delight!

We may be saying – “How dare you make me submit to another, when they maybe a worse sinner than me”!

We sometimes start out on the right foot when it comes to us doing what God tells us to do.

- If we don't start lined up properly, down the road we will end up way off.

Which we have done many times with the word of God.

Story told about lining up roof shingles and how that needs to be accurate for them all to be in a straight line and how that didn't go well for Pastor Josh with a roofing job he once had to do. Then not wanting his name associated with the work done!

And also, the building of a church where the foundation was off by 6 inches at the start.

When we start off with the wrong and then when we add Jesus commands into it, we build something that is very ungainly, something that is unusable, something that is harsh.

We are going to look at Sacred Submission and the principles laid out in this passage.

Jesus illudes that he does things differently and that he starts in a different place and therefore ends up in a different place.

[Matthew Ch 25 – 28.](#)

Jesus said – You know what some of those in leadership above you do. They force you to follow them, obey to them, to take care of the and submit to them.

He says it should not be that way with you – the greatest among you in my kingdom will be the servant of all.

- Jesus thinks radically different about this.

If we think about submitting and that value comes from our abilities – value comes from how well, we contribute and how well we are noticed – that getting to the top of the authority structure will be very important.

But if our value comes from being created in God's image then our varying God given rolls are merely different ways, we work to serve others, not statements of value.

- There are many ways that if we start off on the wrong foot, we will end up way off.

### **Title – Sacred Submission**

Idea of sacred – belonging to religious practice rather than secular.

Want to look at the text and say – What does God say submission looks like and why does he say it is so.

### **Point # 1 – Sacred Submission is the calling of every believer.**

#### **Ephesians 5:21-6:9 Christian Standard Bible**

<sup>21</sup> submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.

Who does that? – Paul is talking to the believers in Ephesus – ultimately everywhere.

Society today says – no one is going to look after you, so you are going to have to look after number one.

Assert yourself – stand up for your rights – get a lawyer to fight for your rights.

- But God says you need to submit to one another.

**Question** – What do we mean by submission?

Submission in English – means – submission which means to have secondary mission that yields to a greater mission.

Greek word – put under – military word – lower ranking officials aligning themselves to the directions of the higher ranking official.

Some people would look at this and say that to submit to one another is a selective group depending on who you are because the inherent idea of submission is used to your authorities.

In the next paragraphs we have people that are submitted to certain authorities so he's only saying really submit yourselves to one another, in other words if you're in these categories you need to be submissive.

For instance...

- Wives submissive to husbands
- Children to their fathers
- Slaves to their masters

However, the added command to fathers, husbands and masters – looks to be weird as to the bible trying to be politically correct.

- We know due to the fact that this is in here, that the bible isn't trying to be politically correct.

Paul said we are to submit to one another – we are to take it plainly – good hermeneutical principal.

Some people take this too far and say that Paul is abolishing any hierarchical distinctions based on gender in the church and at home.

Quoting [Galatians 3:28 Christian Standard Bible](#)

[28 There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus.](#)

If we look really carefully at the text that's not what Paul saying because immediately after you submit to one another he makes distinctions.

- Wives submit to your husbands etc.

Nowhere ever does Christ submit to the church.

**Question** – If we are called to submit to each other equally how does that work? What does God mean by that?

If we are called to submit equally then it is like Maritimers coming to a 4 way stop at the same time!

In the next few verses Paul says what he actually means.

Submit to one another – he says this is what mutual submission looks like for the wife, for the husband.

- For the child.
- For the father.
- For the slave.
- For the master.

Calling it the employee and the employer – slave and master we think about the 1800's – based on kidnapping a particular ethnic group – this not what slavery in the bible is talking about.

- There are many reasons that you can be a slave – so in our context better for us to say – employee and employer.

Mutual submission for every person is this...

- Jesus
- Others
- And then me

**Point # 2 – Sacred submission is a result of being filled with the spirit.**

Verse 21 – is as a result of verse 18 – “but be filled with the holy spirit”

- Being filled with the holy spirit – is being under the holy spirit's control.

Every spirit filled Christians is inherently a submissive Christian – because they are following the commands of Christ.

Even in the eternal God Head we see submission.

John 14:26 reminds us...

**John 14:26 Christian Standard Bible**

<sup>26</sup> But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.

The holy spirit submits to the father – because he sends them – we should be thankful for the ministry of the holy spirit in our lives.

Bruce Ware - author of father son and Holy Spirit says ...

this the most marked characteristic of the trinitarian relationship is the presence of an internal and inherent expression of authority and submission.

- The trinity submits to one another.

So, if we are filled by the holy spirit – then we will value submission.

- On the other hand, we see that Satan fell – why – because he said, “I am not going to submit to God”.

This was the basis of his temptation to Eve – so that she would have the right and ability to choose for herself what was right and wrong.

- “I don’t want someone else telling me what I need to do”!

By God or as God passed on the information to tell me – “I want to make up my own choice”!

- He influenced her to resist Adams authority – because the demand came through Adam from God.

Satan’ appeal was – you don’t have to obey your authorities – make your own decisions.

- This has been his appeal to human beings and a fallen society ever since.



Safe to say – That all defiance against God given authority originates from Satan.

- Putting people who resist authority in opposition with God himself.

God says that one of the fruits of the presence of the holy spirit is that it will bring about sacred submission in our life.

### **Point # 3 – Sacred submission submits to Christ First.**

#### **Ephesians 5:21 Christian Standard Bible**

<sup>21</sup> submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.

Last phrase – in the fear of Christ.

#### **Ephesians 5:23 Christian Standard Bible**

<sup>23</sup> because the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of the body.

- There is no higher authority than Christ.

#### **Ephesians 1:20-22 Christian Standard Bible**

##### **God's Power in Christ**

<sup>20</sup> He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens— <sup>21</sup> far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given,<sup>[a]</sup> not only in this age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And **he subjected everything under his feet<sup>[b]</sup>** and appointed him<sup>[c]</sup> as head over everything for the church,

In the final analysis submission is the acknowledgement that of order and authority.

- Because Christ is the authority we submit to him.

We will follow God's design by submission as he lays out.

### **Romans 13:1 Christian Standard Bible**

A Christian's Duties to the State

**13** Let everyone submit to the governing authorities, since there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are instituted by God.

As we come to verse 22 – it says this...

### **Ephesians 5:22 Christian Standard Bible**

Wives and Husbands

<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit<sup>[a]</sup> to your husbands as to the Lord,

Then it says this...

### **Ephesians 6:1 Christian Standard Bible**

Children and Parents

**6** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, because this is right.

- Little tag again – “In the Lord”

Then we read...

### **Ephesians 6:5 Christian Standard Bible**

Slaves and Masters

<sup>5</sup> Slaves, obey your human<sup>[a]</sup> masters with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as you would Christ.

- Tag – as you would Christ.

He keeps adding this tag in why?

- The tag makes a big difference.

We obey and we submit because God calls us to – but it also reminds us that there are limits to our submission.

- As you would Christ
- In Christ we submit

This reminds us that we don't participate in sin because an authority tells us to.

- We always obey the higher authority – we always obey God.

The Apostles would say to the authorities – there are some things we will do – but – we will not stop preaching because, the bible says we must obey God first.

- Obeying God rather than man.

Authorities cannot call you to participate in sin.

- Or to be an accomplice.

Or yield to criminal abuse.

In the Lord – as to the Lord – in light of God as the highest authority.

Josh - the things that God is not clearly spelled out as wrong we choose to set aside our mission and our agenda and support those in authority over us.

Notice it is not only the wives, children and employees that are given commands.

But also, the husbands, the fathers and the masters.

A point we need to notice from this.

Leadership according to God is not about privilege but responsibility.

- It is about submitting to the needs of those in our care

So, to be a husband, to be an employer, to be a father it is about submitting and making sure that the needs of those that are in our care are taken care of.

- This is a significant point – if we take the child father relationship and go back to Paul's day this was radical thinking.

In Paul's day fathers had absolute authority over the family.

- If a child was born into the Roman family – it was brought and laid before the father – if he picked it up the child would be accepted – if he left it alone, it meant the child would be rejected, often left out to be killed. The power of life or death was in the fathers – sold or even given away.

God reminds us in this passage that he is the final authority – so fathers are not the absolute authority in the home – Christ is.

- As an employer you are not the absolute authority – Christ is.

As a husband we are not the absolute authority – Who is? – Christ is.

Fathers are under orders and the orders are to lead well.

Point to be made.

### **Ephesians 5:23 Christian Standard Bible**

<sup>23</sup> because the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of the body.

Paul doesn't say that the husband ought to be the head of the home – he says that he is the head of the home.

- A stated fact – not a command.

Some husbands are useless and weak and lead in their homes, but they are still in that position of authority.

Think about this husband – fathers!

You are in a position of inescapable leadership. God says the husband is, not the husband ought to be the leader of the home.

- God never accepts our letter of resignation.
- You will give an account before God on how you lead your home.
- The responsibility of your home lies with you.

You are not able to hide in the “we made a group decision” God will hold you accountable.

In the garden of Eden Adam reneged on this!

Think about the garden.

God said - you guard the garden, you protect the garden, you tell everyone the command don't eat of the fruit of the tree.

On the day the Satan comes what's Adam doing?

“I'm not going to lead in this. I'm just going to sit back and let my wife figure out the best choice”.

Who did God hold responsible on that day Adam.

God said “you shouldn’t have just farmed out this decision and i'm holding you responsible for this.

- This is how God designed marriage.

In the same way Dad’s – You have been tasked as it says in Ch 6...

### **Ephesians 6 Christian Standard Bible**

[4 Fathers, don’t stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.](#)

- There may be a desire to check out.
- At times it may be tough.
- But you will stand before God for the correction and training you did or didn’t do.

Correction – refers to verbal correction – it means correct or warn or strongly encourage Somone to change from behaviours or attitudes that are sinful and destructive.

Training in what is right – correction of chastisement when wrongdoing happens.

Our responsibility as dads is to teach our children a proper world view.

- Not to make the world suitable for how our children want the world to be.
- That they are able to operate and navigate in the world that they are entering into.

This is our responsibility.

We can make all sorts of worlds for our children, but one day they will stand before God and find out that no matter world they created they will have to give account for the decisions and choices that they made before a holy God.

- So, we prepare our children – we train them in that way.

In a culture that has gone to the extreme of what Warren wiersbe once quoted the Duke of The Duke of Windsor saying...

Quote - the thing that impresses me most about America is the way parents obey their children.

We have gone to a very extreme of this in North America.

God will hold you accountable fathers for your leadership not just in the what but the how.

### **Ephesians 6:4 Christian Standard Bible**

<sup>4</sup> Fathers, don't stir up anger in your children,

- Accountability that we will be held to on judgment day – not just on what we did but how we did it.

Fathers – don't be unreasonable – unpredictable – show favouritism – don't hold perfectionism – or criticism without praise – don't be a hypocrite before your children.

Employers are not necessarily in a position of inescapable leadership – but the same rules apply.

- We are all under Christ.

The particular call for husbands.

God takes a lengthy time to talk to husbands about his call upon our life in the marriage and how they lead in the marriage.

- Your marriage is to make the gospel beautiful.
- Your marriage ought to be a picture of Christ and his bride the church.

Quote by Steven Cole

Very instructional for husbands he says this...

Quote “When a husband treats his wife poorly and puts her down, he is proclaiming heresy, that Christ abuses and puts down His bride. If he is a dictator over his wife, he tells the world that the gentle, loving Christ is a cruel tyrant. When a man abdicates his headship and lets his wife lead, he preaches that Christ does not lovingly shepherd His church and that the church is free to live out from under submission to Christ, again heretical lies. If a husband deserts his wife, either through unfaithfulness or indifference or by being married to his career or hobbies, he preaches that Christ abandons His church, another falsehood. So as married Christians, our witness to a watching world is very much entwined with how we relate as husbands and wives.” — Pastor Steven J. Cole

We need to remember this that our ultimate submission is to Christ first.

#### **Point # 4 – Sacred submission Applies a Confidence in The Sovereignty of God.**

This is where it gets hard.

- If not careful we can get to thinking about this passage as just facts.

Some of the questions will be this...

What if my authority isn't being submissive, loving or righteous?

What if they don't have my respect?

What if they never ask my opinion?

What if he continually makes dumb decisions?

Do I have to submit to him as the text says everything?

Do you know the high price I will pay for his failures he will wreck us.



**Important** – There is a personal cost to submission.

- Even to the perfect father.

Just think about Christ.

- Christ was submissive to the father.

**Question** – What did the father call him to do?

- Suffer unjustly.

Do you remember the cross of Gethsemane?

Where Jesus says make this cup pass from me.

**Question** – What did the father call the son to be submissive to?

- Bearing the crushing weight of the sin of the world on his shoulders.

Jesus said to us – “If you want to be my disciples you have to pick up your cross deny yourself and follow me”.

- There is a cost to submission.

Story told about Lottie Moon.

She wrote this...

I hope no missionary will ever be as lonely as I have been.

Why? – Because there is a cost to submission.

- Even to a perfect father.

To submit to Christ is one – but to submit to broken leaders – how can I?

Sarah – 1 Peter 3:5

### 1 Peter 3:5 Christian Standard Bible

<sup>5</sup>For in the past, the holy women who put their hope in God also adorned themselves in this way, submitting to their own husbands,

- There were a few times when Abraham made some dumb decisions.

Going to down to Egypt and putting her at risk.

- The second he decided to leave she probably said to him “Abraham that’s a dumb decision – why would you do that – this is a terrible idea”.

**Question** – Why did she submit to him?

Because trusted in that Abraham would do the right thing? No!

- She trusted that God would make something good out of it – her confidence was in God to make the right thing happen.

### Romans 8:28 Christian Standard Bible

<sup>28</sup>We know that all things work together<sup>[a]</sup> for the good<sup>[b]</sup> of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

- Even an authority that is making a dumb decision – Yes

Tony Evans – Quote.

Spiritual leadership is God telling the woman to duck so that he punches the man!

- Sarah ducked so that God could address Abraham.

Close.

Close with this little story I think it kind of provides some clarity.

When Tim and Kathy Keller were deciding whether to move to New York City so they could plant a church. He felt like they should go, and his wife said it felt like they shouldn't go and so it was kind of like an impasse. Tim says we need to do this and she's like I don't want to do this and so functionally they had to make a decision. Because if they make no decision meaning that they are not going. So, Tim finally says or concedes it is OK if you don't want to go, we won't go. Kathy replies so brilliantly she says Oh no you don't you're not putting this on me you have to make the decision and bear the responsibility, you are going to make the decision you it's on you because you'll be held account anyways.

**Point # 5 – Sacred Submission believes that what we do matters for eternity.**

This is where it gets to the heart of – Why do we do this?

**Ephesians 5:26-27 Christian Standard Bible**

<sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing<sup>[a]</sup> her with the washing of water by the word. <sup>27</sup> He did this to present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and blameless.

**Ephesians 6:8 Christian Standard Bible**

<sup>8</sup> knowing that whatever good each one does, slave or free, he will receive this back from the Lord.

God says – when you look to the future – why do you submit present – because you look to the future. And believe that what we do matters for eternity.

Paul repeats this phrase in Eph 6:8 twice –

Because the slave would be asking this hypothetical question -

Why do I toil day after day in a difficult job that has no financial rewards for me?

Paul in verse 8 says - <sup>8</sup> knowing that whatever good each one does, slave or free, he will receive this back from the Lord.

Then the master asks the question – Why should I treat my slaves decently and not threaten those no-good lazy employees who aren't working hard?

Paul says – you know I have already taught you this.

- Your master and there's is in heaven – there is no partiality in this answer.

This is a neglected doctrine in our day!

**Question** – I wonder how much we did last week that will matter in eternity?

When we think through our schedule – how much we did will one day matter in eternity?  
– Because we are motivated by the thought that this will really matter.

Hebrews 11 – Moses left the riches and power of Pharaohs court and endured ill treatment with the people of God, because the text says this.

- Because he was looking for a reward – He allowed himself to go through mistreatment – definitely not his plan to lead a million complainers into the desert!

He said – I will endure this because I know there is a reward ahead.

- This is what Hebrews Ch 11 is all about.

The people of faith saying – I believe God – I believe this will matter – so I am submitting to the call of God upon my life.

**Important** - Live for the line not for the dot!

Our life on earth being like a dot – most people live for a little line after the DOT which is what we call retirement.

- But our life goes and spans for ever – a line that goes and goes and goes.

We all live in that DOT and for a little line – retirement or we can live the line that goes on.

This is what Paul is saying...

Listen this is what submission looks like for those who live their life for Christ – as they submit to the needs and the call of God towards other people that are around them.

**Question** – Where is God calling you to submit?

The truest measure to this is how you submit – at home – at work – in the relationships closest to you.

**Question** – When you get to heaven will God say – well done my good and faithful servant?

He will say this to Christ one day and has actually already said it to him.

That Jesus was equal to God but took himself in the form of a servant – and submitted to the cross – and God has highly exalted him and said Well done my son, I am pleased with you in your sacred submission.

- This is what God is calling us to today.

