

ORDER AS A GIFT OF THE SPIRIT & AN IMAGE OF CHRIST & THE CHURCH

Parts II & III: Parents & Children and Masters & Slaves

Summary: Back for more order in our chaotic times! Christ himself took on human flesh as an infant and child, submitting to His parents to fulfill God's Law for us. He also made Himself a slave for our sake that we may be freed by baptismal dying and rising with Him. Order- God's Order- is a blessing!

Ephesians 5:21, 6:1-9

^{5:21}submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ...Children, *heed* your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²“Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³“that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” ⁴Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

⁵*Slaves*, *heed* your earthly masters (lords) with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, ⁶not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as *slaves* of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷*servicing* with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, ⁸knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether *slave* or free. ⁹Masters (Lords), do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master (Lord) and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

Part II: Children & Parents

v. 1 What is significant about the Apostle directly addressing the Children?

What is important about the Greek word often translated “obey”?

If this is already a Commandment (Law) why does Paul add “in the Lord”?

Dr. Winger: “Children should heed their parents not simply because their parents gave them birth or have been set over them with authority, nor because they fear punishment, but because their parents are earthly representatives of God himself. Thus, to heed parents is to heed God.”

v. 2 What commandment does Paul take them back to and how seriously did they take it?

Dr. Winger: “The orderly, submissive relationship of children to parents is assumed by the OT, which prescribes death by stoning to the unruly son (Deut 21:18-21; cf. Ex. 21:17). Such disobedience is taken most seriously in that it brings evil into the midst of the holy people Israel, and presumably because it mirrors rebellion against God himself. The unspeakable evil of children betraying their own Christian parents is part of the suffering that is brought by the radical Gospel (Mt 10:21; Lk 21:16; cf. Lk 18:29-30).”

V. 4 What is (and is not) meant by the warning not to provoke anger in the children?

What is meant by the “discipline and instruction of the Lord”?

Part III: Slaves & Lords

v. 5 – Why should we be *unafraid* to use the word “slaves” in the Bible?

Although some ancient masters treated their slaves horribly, here are some **key differences** between then and the American experience as a product of British Imperialism:

- 1) Slavery was not based on race (or skin color) as a biological characteristic
- 2) Slaves could be highly educated and hold high social positions
- 3) Many held positions as stewards, entrusted with responsibility over whole households
- 4) Some could own property and have slaves of their own

That sounds more like servanthood, so why not stick with that as a translation?

YOU are a slave! And it’s a good thing!

- (1) “All Christians are likewise ‘slaves’ of God, purchased and won from slavery to sin and the devil by the blood of Christ to be his slaves.” – Dr. Winger, if you doubt it, check: Lk 2:29; Jn 8:33-36; Acts 2:18; Rom. 6:16-20; 7:1-4; 1 Cor. 7:21-23; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 2:16; 2 Pet. 2:19
- (2) Paul the Apostle sees himself and all pastors as **slaves** of Christ- Rom. 1:1; 2 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 1:10; Phil 1:1; Col. 4:12; 2 Tim. 2:24; Titus 1:1; cf. Mk 10:44; Acts 16:17; James 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:1; Jude 1; Rev. 1:1
- (3) Christ Jesus took on the form of a **slave** to redeem us: Mk 10:43-45; Jn 13:4-5; Phil 2:7-8

v. 5- “earthly masters/lords” is even stronger in Greek “your in-the-flesh lords”

How are the slaves told to serve in vv. 6-8?

v. 9 The masters/lords round out the teaching on God’s Order- what is the key?

Dr. Winger: “In carrying out their role as masters, they are not to treat their slaves as if only to please men (whether the slave or an observer), but ‘with fear and trembling’ (toward their heavenly Lord; cf. 6:5), they are to carry out their vocation from the faith in their hearts as an act of worship to God and service to others.”