

EPHESIANS 6 | *The Armour of God*

Children and Parents

1 Children, obey (ὕπακούω, pres.) your parents in the Lord [Jesus], for this is right/just (δίκαιος).

2 Honour (τιμάω, pres.) your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise (ἐπαγγελία) [of reward]), 3 that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.¹

4 Fathers, do not provoke (παροργίζω, pres.)² your children to anger, but bring them up [from childhood] in the discipline (παιδεία)³ and instruction (νουθεσία)⁴ of the Lord [Jesus].⁵

Servants and Masters

5 Servants (δοῦλος), obey (ὕπακούω, pres.) your earthly masters (κυρίοις) with respect (φόβος) and trembling (τρόμος),⁶ with a sincere (ἀπλότης)⁷ heart, as you would Messiah, 6 not by the way of eye-service (ὀφθαλμοδουλία),⁸ as people-pleasers (ἀνθρωπάρεσκος),⁹ but as servants (δοῦλος) of Messiah, doing the desire of God from the heart,¹⁰ 7 rendering service with a good attitude (εὐνοία)¹¹ as to the Lord [Jesus] and not to man, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord [Jesus], whether he is a

¹ **Ex 20:12** 12 Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you. See *Childhood* and *Blessing*.

² “Make angry” (BDAG, 670). **Col 3:21** 21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. See Plato, Leg. 7, 823cd on effective nurture through praise rather than threats.

³ “[T]he act of providing guidance for responsible living, *upbringing, training, instruction*, in our lit. chiefly as it is attained by *discipline, correction*” (BDAG, 748).

⁴ “[C]ounsel about avoidance or cessation of an improper course of conduct, *admonition, instruction* (BDAG, 679).

⁵ See *Fatherhood* and *Parenthood*.

⁶ **2 Co 7:15** 15 ...[Titus] remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with fear and trembling. **Php 2:12** 12 ... Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling....

⁷ “[P]ersonal integrity expressed in word or action (... ‘what you see is what you get’) *simplicity, sincerity, uprightness, frankness* (BDAG, 104). See *Integrity*.

⁸ “[S]ervice that is performed only to make an impression in the owner’s presence, *eye-service*” (BDAG, 744).

⁹ “[O]ne who tries to make an impression on others, *fawner, timeserver* of slaves who practice obsequious obedience when their owner is watching” (BDAG, 80). **Ga 1:10** 10 For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Messiah.

¹⁰ See *Heart*.

¹¹ “[A] positive attitude exhibited in a relationship, *good attitude, willingness*” (BDAG, 409).

servant or is free.¹² 9 Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening (ἀπειλή),¹³ knowing that he who is both their Master (κύριος) and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.¹⁴

The Full Armor of God

10 Finally, be strong (ἐνδυναμόω, pres.) in the Lord [Jesus] and in the strength (κράτος) of his might (ισχύς). 11 Put on (ἐνδύω, aor. midd. imper.) the whole armor (πανοπλία) of God, that you may be able to stand (ἵστημι, aor. act.) against the schemes (μεθοδεῖα) of the devil (διάβολος). 12 For we do not wrestle (πάλη) against flesh and blood, but against the rulers (ἀρχή), against the authorities (ἐξουσία), against the cosmic powers (κοσμοκράτωρ) over this present darkness (σκότος), against the spiritual forces of evil (τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας) in the heavenly places (ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις). 13 On account of this take up (ἀναλαμβάνω, aor. act. imper.) the whole armor (πανοπλία) of God, that you may be able to resist (ἀνθίστημι) in the evil day, and having done (κατεργάζομαι, aor.) all, to stand firm (ἵστημι, aor.).¹⁵ 14 Stand therefore, having girded your (pl.) waists with truth (ἀλήθεια), having put on (pl.) the breastplate of righteousness (τὸν θώρακα τῆς δικαιοσύνης), 15 and, as shoes for your (pl.) feet, having put on the readiness (έτοιμασία) given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith (τὸν θυρεὸν τῆς πίστεως), with which you can extinguish (σβέννυμι, aor.) all the fiery darts of the evil one (τὰ βέλη τοῦ πονηροῦ [τὰ] πεπυρωμένα). 17 And grasp (δέχομαι, aor.) the helmet of salvation (τὴν περικεφαλαίαν τοῦ σωτηρίου) and the sword of the Spirit (τὴν μάχαιραν τοῦ πνεύματος), which is the word (ῥῆμα) of God, 18 praying (προσεύχομαι, pres. pl.) at all times in the Spirit,¹⁶ with all prayer and supplication (δέησις). To that end, keep alert (ἀγρυπνέω, pres. act.) with all perseverance (προσκαρτέρησις), making supplication (δέησις) for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words (λόγος) may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly (παρρησία) to make known (γνωρίζω) the mystery (μυστήριον) of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador (πρεσβεύω) in chains (ἄλυσις), that I may express myself freely (παρρησιάζομαι, aor.), as I ought to speak.

¹² See *Servanthood* and *Work*. **Ga 3:28** 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Messiah Jesus. **Col 3:11** 11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but Messiah is all, and in all.

¹³ **Le 25:43** 43 You shall not rule over [your Israelite brother-servant] ruthlessly but shall fear your God.

¹⁴ **Ro 2:11** 11 For God shows no partiality. **Col 3:25** 25 For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality. **Job 31:13-15** 13 If I have rejected the cause of my manservant or my maidservant, when they brought a complaint against me, 14 what then shall I do when God rises up? When he makes inquiry, what shall I answer him? 15 Did not he who made me in the womb make him? And did not one fashion us in the womb? See *Leadership, Judgment Seat of Messiah, and Rewards*.

¹⁵ A soldier standing victoriously at the end of a battle is pictured.

¹⁶ **Jude 20** 20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,

Farewell

21 So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord [Jesus] will tell you everything. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.

23 Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Messiah. 24 Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Messiah with love incorruptible.

Discussion Questions | *Ephesians 6:1-9*

1. Review.

- a. Who is the author of *Ephesians* and what are his circumstances?
(1) What are the three other letters Paul wrote during this imprisonment?
- b. Who are the recipients of *Ephesians* and what are their circumstances?
- c. How do chapters 1-3 relate to chapters 4-6?
- d. Let's recite our chapter themes.

2. *Ephesians 5:15-6:9*.

- a. Do you view these verses as a segment?
- b. If so, what is the big idea of this segment?
- c. How many times is Jesus mentioned in this segment? Why does Paul mention him so often?
- d. Does the filling of the Spirit (Eph 5:18) and the command to submit to one another (Eph 5:21) relate to Paul's commands to children, fathers, bondservants, and masters?

3. Children (*Eph 6:1-3*).

- a. What are the chief reasons for the breakdown of the family in Western nations, including New Zealand?
- b. What are some challenges Christian parents in New Zealand are facing?
- c. Why is right for children to obey their parents?
- d. What are some practical ways adult children are to honour their parents?
- e. What is the promise to those who obey their parents?

4. Fathers (*Eph 6:4*).

- a. Why does Paul mention fathers and not mothers?
- b. What are some common ways fathers provoke their children to anger?
- c. What do "discipline" and "instruction" mean in the Greek?
- d. What are some practical tips on bringing up our children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord?
- e. Does Dt 6:1-9 add any insight?
- f. Did any verses in Proverbs stick out to you?
- g. What if our children aren't responding very well to our discipline and instruction?

5. Bondservants (*Eph 6:5-8*).

- a. What is a bondservant?
- b. We don't have bondservants and masters in New Zealand today. So how may these verses apply to us?
- c. Let's list together what Paul says to bondservants.
- d. What do "eye-service" and "people pleasers" mean in the Greek?
- e. As Christians, how are we to behave towards our employers, supervisors, and customers?
- f. What is the place of servanthood in the Christian life? Consider Mk 10:41-45.
- g. What if your boss is extremely difficult to work with? Consider 1 Peter 2:18-25.

h. What is the stated reason why bondservants are to obey their earthly masters?

6. Masters (Eph 6:9).

- a. What are Paul's commands to masters? How do these commands apply to us?
- b. What is the reason masters are to do good to their bondservants?
- c. How does being "in Christ" effect the relationship between master and bondservant? Consider Galatians 3:28.
- d. Given what you know about Greco-Roman culture, how revolutionary would this be?
- e. How does Paul handle the issue of Onesimus, the bondservant who ran away from his master, the believer Philemon?

7. Application.

- a. If these principles were followed throughout New Zealand society, how would it change?
- b. What is your life application from these verses?

Discussion Questions | Ephesians 6:18-24

1. Review.

- a. What is the key verse of Ephesians, in your opinion?
- b. What is your Ephesians book theme?
- c. What were the circumstances of the author and recipients?

2. Ephesians 6:10-18.

- a. List the seven pieces of the panoply of God from memory.
- b. What further insights has God given you about spiritual warfare and the armour of God?

3. Ephesians 6:18-20.

- a. Based on these verses, for whom and for what should we pray?
- b. When it comes to prayer, how do we pray “at all times” and “keep alert with all perseverance”?
- c. How bold are we in proclaiming the gospel? According to these verses, how may we develop in the area of boldness?

4. Ephesians 6:21-24.

- a. What do we learn about Tychicus in this and other Bible passages?
- b. What does this tell us about Paul’s organisational structure?
- c. What sort of things do you suppose Tychicus will share verbally with the Ephesians?
- d. How do vv. 23-24 compare with the opening lines of the letter?
- e. What are some reasons why we should love Jesus with “love incorruptible”?
- f. How practically do we love Jesus with “love incorruptible”?

5. Ephesians Summary.

- a. What remaining questions do you have from your study of Ephesians?
- b. What are the thoughts, attitudes, emotions, and purpose of the author, Paul?
- c. Provide a brief summary of the key ideas of Ephesians. What is Paul’s primary message to the Ephesians, in your own words?
- d. Why is Ephesians one of the 66 books of the canon of Scripture? What does it provide that no other book of the Bible provides?
- e. How does Ephesians compare with Paul’s other letters?
- f. Do you fully accept/agree with what Paul says in Ephesians?
- g. How does Paul’s message apply to us today? How does God want you to apply this epistle in your daily life?

Commentary

1. Introduction.

a. Big Idea.

(1) We are to please our Lord Jesus by treating people with proper respect in the home and in the workplace according to God's divine institutions, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

b. Reality.

(1) We spend most of our time at home and at work, not at church or in Bible studies. How we treat people at home and at work is a true reflection of our spirituality.

c. Power.

(1) It is only through the filling of the Spirit (Eph 5:18) we are able to fulfil our Christian duties as wives, husbands, children, parents, workers, and employers.

d. Motivation.

(1) The motivation to fulfil our Christian duties in the home and at work is pleasing our Lord Jesus. These duties are Jesus' will (Eph 5:17). Jesus expects us to bring him into all of our everyday relationships. Notice how often Jesus is mentioned in Paul's instructions on marriage, family, and the workplace (Eph 5:22-27, 29-30, 32; 6:1, 4-9). In the 21 verses between Eph 5:22-6:9, Jesus is specifically mentioned in sixteen. When it comes to human relationships, our hearts and minds are to be occupied with Messiah Jesus. All our relationships are to be transformed because we now do all things "in the Lord."

e. Divine Institutions.

f. Respect for Authority.

g. Servant Leadership.

h. Distinction.

(1) At home and at work, we are to be noticeably different from non-Christians. We live by a totally new paradigm and operate by a totally new power.

(2) Christianity introduced a new paradigm to Greco-Roman society. The Church was to live according to the precepts of Jesus rather than the customs of Greco-Roman society.

(3) See Rodney Stark.

2. Children and Parents (Eph 6:1-4).

a. Eph 6:1-2 1 Children, obey (ὁπακούω, pres.) your parents in the Lord [Jesus], for this is right/just (δίκαιος). 2 Honour (τιμᾶω, pres.) your father and mother...

(1) Note.

(a) The fact Paul addresses children shows they are a real part of the Christian community.

(2) Reality.

(a) In *Genesis*, God established the divine institutions, the traditional family, and the principle of respect for authority for human flourishing.

1) The divine institutions are personal freedom and responsibility, marriage, family, church, and state.

2) The traditional family/whanau consists of a father and mother, married for life, with their biological children, and extended family nearby.

- 3) Each divine institution functions on the principle of respect for authority.
 - 4) Each divine institution is to respect the *sphere sovereignty* of the other institutions.
- (b) Obedience to parents is foundational to a healthy society. It is training for the rest of our lives. In the home we learn obedience, respect, and submission to God-established authority.
- 1) It's part of "natural justice." Virtually all civilisations have regarded parental authority as indispensable to a stable society, both in the West and the East.
 - 2) It's also the fifth of the Ten Commandments.
- (c) Reverence for parents is an integral part of reverence for God.
- 1) **Lk 2:51** 51 And [Jesus] went down with [his parents] and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them.
 - 2) **Col 3:20** 20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
- (d) Under the Mosaic law, the penalty for cursing or persistently rebelling against one's parents was the death penalty. These provisions do not apply today, but they do show the seriousness, in God's sight, of rebellion against parents.
- 1) **Le 20:9** 9 ...Anyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be **put to death**. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood is on him.
 - 2) **Dt 21:1-21** 18 If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them, 19 then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives, 20 and they shall say to the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey our voice. He is a glutton and a drunkard. 21 Then all the men of the city shall **stone him to death** with stones. So you shall **purge the evil** from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear.
- (3) Problem.
- (a) Western culture, including New Zealand, is rejecting the doctrine of of divine institutions, the traditional family, and respect for authority, with dire consequences.
- 1) Examples are Cultural Marxism, Defund the Police, New Zealand's anti-smacking law, children calling adults by their first name, and child-centered education.
 - 2) It is typical for Christian parents to "lose" their children when they go to university. Professors routinely ridicule or dismiss the beliefs of students' parents and churches.
- (b) Disobedience to parents is an indication of a decadent society and the end times.
- 1) **Ro 1:28-30** 28 And because they **did not see fit to acknowledge God**, God gave them up to a **debased mind** to do what ought not to be done. 29 They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are

gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, ***disobedient to parents***....

- 2) **2 Ti 3:1-2** 1 But understand this, that in the ***last days*** there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, ***disobedient to their parents***, ungrateful, unholy....

(4) Solution.

- (a) See *Children*.
- (b) Children must develop the habit of obedience to parents from an early age.
- (c) Children ask two questions: Do you love me? and Can I do whatever I want? Our answers to them must be a clear yes and a clear no.
- (d) Children are not required to do absolutely everything their parents tell them to do. They are to obey their parents “in the Lord” (v. 1). Obedience to parents should be the norm and disobedience the rare exception.¹⁷
- (e) When do children cease to be such? Law and custom in every society recognises a measure of independence for youth, either when manhood or womanhood is reached, when they attain a certain age, or when they leave home or marry. Christians should follow the accepted custom of their own culture in this matter.¹⁸
- (f) Even when we are no longer under obligation to obey our parents, we must still continue to honour them. We must not neglect or forget them. If they must enter an assisted living home, we must ensure they are safe and cared for.
- b. Eph 6:2-3 2 ... (this is the first commandment with a promise (ἐπαγγελία) [of reward]), 3 that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.**
- (1) Respect for parental authority leads to a life of blessing.
- (2) This promise is true for both believers and unbelievers. If unbelievers abide by the divine institutions, they experience temporal blessing, though not eternal blessing.
- c. Eph 6:4 4 Fathers, do not provoke (παροργίζω, pres.) your children to anger, but bring them up [from childhood] in the discipline (παιδεία) and instruction (νουθεσία) of the Lord [Jesus].**
- (1) Note.
- (a) The Greek phrase οἱ πατέρες can be used for fathers and mothers.
- (2) Reality.
- (a) The Bible emphasis the importance of parenthood, and especially fatherhood.
- (b) Social science confirms fathers have a bigger impact on the direction of children than mothers. Fatherhood is a vital issue in every society.
- (3) Problem.
- (a) In the West, including New Zealand, fatherhood is in crisis.
- 1) The problem in the African-American community is not white police officers but fatherless homes.
- (b) There is something in men, call it toxic masculinity, that causes them to throw their weight around in sinful ways. I personally struggle sometimes with anger

¹⁷ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 241-42.

¹⁸ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 243.

toward my children, especially if they are getting in the way of a goal I want to accomplish or if they break something I don't feel like fixing.

- (c) Many fathers abuse, provoke, ridicule, or tease their children, almost by habit. They may have received such treatment from their father.
- (d) Many fathers are self-focused, emotionally distant, immature, lazy, and at work for long hours.

(4) Solution.

(a) Fathers, we must realise the leadership style we use is crucially important.

- 1) Paul pictures fathers as self-controlled, gentle, patient educators of their children, which starkly contrasts to the norm of his day. The Roman *pater familias* had a full right of disposal over his children, absolute power over his family. Completely different was the Christian father.¹⁹

(b) Paul focuses on one not-to-do item for fathers. Don't provoke your children to anger! It's an interacting choice. In Colossians, Paul tells us why. We will discourage them.

- 1) **Col 3:21** 21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.
- 2) See Plato, Leg. 7, 823cd on effective nurture through praise rather than threats.
- 3) "Parents can easily misuse their authority either by making irritating or unreasonable demands which make no allowances for the inexperience and immaturity of children, or by harshness and cruelty at one extreme or by favouritism and over-indulgence at the other, or by humiliating or suppressing them, or by those two vindictive weapons sarcasm and ridicule. These are some of the parental attitudes which provoke resentment and anger in children. How many 'angry young men,' hostile to society at large, have learned their hostility as children in an unsympathetic home?"²⁰

(c) We are to bring up our children in the discipline (*παιδεία*) and instruction (*νουθεσία*) of the Lord Jesus.

- 1) Discipline (*παιδεία*): "[T]he act of providing guidance for responsible living, *upbringing, training, instruction*, in our lit. chiefly as it is attained by *discipline, correction*" (*BDAG*, 748).
- 2) Instruction (*νουθεσία*): "[C]ounsel about avoidance or cessation of an improper course of conduct, *admonition, instruction* (*BDAG*, 679).

(5) Application.

- (a) Parents, what changes do you need to make by the Spirit?
- (b) Fathers, be more involved, more present, more watchful? No one can replace you.
- (c) Are you anger your children or exasperating them? Do you feel resentment boiling up inside any of your children? Look out! Course correct.

¹⁹ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 245.

²⁰ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 245.

- (d) Have your adult children abandoned the Christian faith? Don't live in guilt. Confess any known personal sins, then move on. Redeem the time. Begin pray fervently for your adult children. See what God does.

3. Servants and Masters (Eph 6:5-9).

a. Introduction.

(1) The translation of the Greek word *doulos* into English is difficult.

- (a) "...[A] particular difficulty is presented when words in biblical Hebrew and Greek refer to ancient practices and institutions that do not correspond directly to those in the modern world. Such is the case in the translation of 'ebed (Hebrew) and *doulos* (Greek), terms which are often rendered 'slave.' These terms, however, actually cover a range of relationships that requires a range of renderings—"slave," "bondservant," or "servant"—depending on the context. Further, the word 'slave' currently carries associations with the often brutal and dehumanizing institution of slavery particularly in nineteenth-century America. ... In Old Testament times, one might enter slavery either voluntarily (e.g., to escape poverty or to pay off a debt) or involuntarily (e.g., by birth, by being captured in battle, or by judicial sentence). Protection for all in servitude in ancient Israel was provided by the Mosaic Law, including specific provisions for release from slavery. In New Testament times, a *doulos* is often best described as a "bondservant"—that is, someone in the Roman Empire officially bound under contract to serve his master for seven years.... When the contract expired, the person was freed, given his wage that had been saved by the master, and officially declared a freedman. The ESV usage thus seeks to express the most fitting nuance of meaning in each context. Where absolute ownership by a master is envisaged (as in Romans 6), 'slave' is used; where a more limited form of servitude is in view, 'bondservant' is used (as in 1 Corinthians 7:21-24); where the context indicates a wide range of freedom (as in John 4:51), "servant" is preferred."²¹

(2) In Christianity, servanthood his honourable. Jesus himself was a servant.

- (a) **Mk 10:43-45** 43 ... Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

(3) In other letters, Paul stresses the unity of masters and bondservants in Jesus.

- (a) **Ga 3:28** 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Messiah Jesus.
(b) **Col 3:11** 11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but Messiah is all, and in all.
(c) This unity stands out especially in Paul's letter to Philemon

(4) We don't have masters and bondservants in New Zealand. The application for us today lies in the area of work and employment.

b. The command to Christian servants (vv. 5-8).

(1) The command to obey (v. 5).

²¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016).

- (a) **Eph 6:5 5 Servants (δοῦλος), obey (ὑπακούω, pres.) your earthly masters (κυρίως)....**
- (b) Paul doesn't advocate for or defend the Greco-Roman master-servant system, nor does he suggest servants should rise up and destroy that system in a sort of Marxist-Leninist or Maoist revolution.
- (c) Rather, he focuses on Christlike character and treatment between masters and bondservants within the system that in fact exists.
- (d) Significantly, servants who believed in Jesus were accepted as full members of the early church and were responsible for their own thoughts, words, and actions to the Lord Jesus.²² This was a huge paradigm shift.
- (e) See Rodney Stark.
- (2) The manner of obedience (vv. 5-7).
- (a) **Eph 6:5-7 5 ...With fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Messiah, 6 not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as servants (δοῦλος) of Messiah, doing the desire of God from the heart, 7 rendering service with a good attitude (εὐνοία) as to the Lord [Jesus] and not to man....**
- (b) The standard of attitude and behaviour for Christian servants is impossibly high. It definitely requires the the filling of the Spirit (Eph 5:18).
- 1) With fear and trembling.
 - 2) With a sincere heart.
 - a) ἀπλότης: “personal integrity expressed in word or action (... ‘what you see is what you get’) *simplicity, sincerity, uprightness, frankness* (BDAG, 104).
 - 3) As you would Jesus.
 - a) This is regardless whether the master is a believer or unbeliever.
 - 4) Not by way of eye-service (ὀφθαλμοδοουλία), as people-pleasers (ἄνθρωπάρεσκος).
 - a) ὀφθαλμοδοουλία: “service that is performed only to make an impression in the owner’s presence, *eye-service*” (BDAG, 744)
 - b) ἄνθρωπάρεσκος: “one who tries to make an impression on others, *fawner, timeserver* of slaves who practice obsequious obedience when their owner is watching” (BDAG, 80).
 - 5) As servants of Jesus.
 - a) We are to treat our earthly boss in the same way we treat our heavenly boss, Jesus.
 - 6) Doing the desire of God from the heart.
 - a) We often ask, “God, what is your will for my life?” Here we get a big part of the answer—to stay right where we are and render service with a good attitude.
 - b) Service to our early masters is a special form of our service to God.²³

²² William W. Klein, *EBC*, 12:158.

²³ F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 123.

- 7) Rendering service with a good attitude (εὐνοία: “complete earnest commitment: free from all reserve or hesitation”) as to Jesus (repeated three times!) and not to man.
 - a) Jesus is watching all the time and is never deceived by shoddy work.²⁴
- (c) Paul gives a similar command to the Colossians:
 - 1) **Col 3:22-25** 22 Servants, obey ***in everything*** those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord [Jesus]. 23 Whatever you do, ***work from the soul (ἐκ ψυχῆς)***, as for the Lord [Jesus] and not for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord [Jesus] you will receive ***the inheritance as your reward***. You are serving the Lord Messiah. 25 For the wrongdoer will be ***paid back*** for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.
 - a) We are to obey our earthly masters in everything, except when it violates Scripture or conscience.
 - b) We are to work from our soul, giving our full effort and attention.
 - c) Jesus will pay us back at his judgment seat. The pay back will be completely fair and just. We believe this in faith. The presupposition of Marxism is that there is no afterlife. But we know better.
- (d) FAQs.
 - 1) What if our employer, boss, or customer is cruel or unreasonable?
 - a) Our employment situation will never be as bad as slavery in the Roman empire.
 - b) Peter advises on this:
 - 1) **1 Pe 2:18-23** 18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle ***but also to the unjust***. 19 For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. 20 For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. 21 For to this you have been called, because Messiah also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. 22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. 23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return. When he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued ***entrusting himself*** to him who judges justly.
- (e) Application.
 - 1) As Christians, we are to have a servant attitude toward our employers, bosses, and customers—really toward anyone we interact with at work or in the marketplace.
 - 2) We are to provide outstanding customer service and display an exemplary work ethic.
 - 3) We are to treat everyone we meet in the marketplace as Jesus himself. We are to bring Jesus with us to work.

²⁴ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 253.

- a) Our great in need in contemporary work and employment is the clear-sightedness to see Jesus and to set him before us. When we're at work, we are serving our Lord Jesus.²⁵
- 4) Questions:
 - a) Are we sincere in all our work pursuits?
 - b) Do we do anything for show? Do we take short cuts on the job site or with a patient or customer?
 - c) Are we relying on the filling of the Spirit at work, so that we are supernaturally empowered to do our best work and treat everyone like Jesus?
- (3) The reward of obedience (v. 8).
 - (a) **Eph 6:8 8 ...Knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord [Jesus], whether he is a servant or is free.**
 - (b) This refers to future rewards at the judgment seat of Messiah.
 - 1) **2 Co 5:10** 10 For we [believers] must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.
 - 2) **Re 22:12** 12 Behold, I [Jesus] am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.
- c. The command to masters (v. 9).
 - (1) The command to do good to one's bondservants (v. 9).
 - (a) **Eph 6:9 9 Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening....**
 - (b) How shocking Paul's instruction would have been to first-century masters!
 - (c) Today, this command applies to business owners, employers, and supervisors.
 - (2) The reason for doing good to one's servants (v. 9).
 - (a) **Eph 6:9 9 ...Knowing that he who is both their Master (κύριος) and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.**
 - (b) Job, the first book of the Bible written, includes this principle!
 - 1) **Job 31:13-15** 13 If I have rejected the cause of my manservant or my maidservant, when they brought a complaint against me, 14 what then shall I do when God rises up? When he makes inquiry, what shall I answer him? 15 Did not he who made me in the womb make him? And did not one fashion us in the womb?
 - (c) Paul's command to masters in Colossians is similar:
 - 1) **Col 4:1** 1 Masters, treat your servants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.
 - (d) In *Philemon*, Paul appeals to Onesimus, a master, on behalf of Philemon, a runaway slave who has come to Rome and become a Christian. He treats both Philemon and Onesimus as very important people, God's image-bearers (v. 10). Onesimus means the world to Paul though he is a slave (v. 12). In Jesus, masters and slaves are brothers (v. 16).

²⁵ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 252.

- (e) Earthly masters have a heavenly Master who is not impressed by human power and status.²⁶
 - (f) Like Christian bondservants, Christian masters will appear before the judgment seat of Jesus.
- d. Summary.
- (1) As Christians, we are in a class of our own. We are under a higher government—a theocracy where the God-man Jesus reigns and where our obedience to him is supreme.
 - (2) The precepts and values we live by are supernatural and require the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.
 - (3) These are the new values we live by and stand for in love and without compromise.

4. The Armour of God (Eph 6:10-20).

- (1) The big question is how do we stand against the schemes of the devil?
- b. **Eph 6:10** 10 Finally, be strong (ἐνδυναμόω, pres.) in the Lord [Jesus] and in the strength (κράτος) of his might (ἰσχύς).
 - (1) Might/power/strength is a key thrust of Paul's letter.
 - (a) **Eph 1:19** 19 ...And what is the immeasurable greatness of [God's] power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might....
 - (b) **Eph 3:7** 7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.
 - (c) **Eph 3:16** 16 ...That according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being....
 - (d) **Eph 3:18** 18 ...May have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, length, height, and depth....
 - (e) **Eph 3:20** 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us....
 - (2) Without Jesus, we can do nothing. With Jesus, we can do anything.
 - (a) **Jn 15:5** 5 ...Apart from me [Jesus] you can do nothing.
 - (b) **Php 4:13** 13 I can do all things through him [Jesus] who strengthens me.
 - (c) "We are weak, but he is strong."
 - (d) "Not I, but Thou in me."
 - (e) "Yet Not I, but Christ in Me."
- c. **Eph 6:11** 11 Put on (ἐνδύω, aor. midd. imper.) the whole armor (πανοπλία) of God, that you may be able to stand (ἵστημι, aor. act.) against the schemes (μεθοδεία) of the devil (διάβολος).
 - (1) Remember what happen when Paul was in Ephesus (Ac 19).
 - (a) Demetrius was not the enemy, Satan was.
 - (2) Remember also that Paul is now chained to a Roman soldier (Ac 28).
- d. **Eph 6:12** 12 For we do not wrestle (πάλη) against flesh and blood, but against the rulers (ἀρχή), against the authorities (ἐξουσία), against the cosmic powers (κοσμοκράτωρ) over this present darkness (σκότος), against the spiritual forces of evil (τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας) in the heavenly places (ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις).

²⁶ William W. Klein, *EBC*, 12:160.

- (1) Paul is about to appear before Nero, but Nero's not the enemy. Nor are his Jewish antagonists. Satan and the demons are the real enemy. See *Satan*.
- (2) We are definitely engaged in a spiritual war. See *Spiritual Warfare*.
- (3) Satan and the demons currently inhabit the first and/or second heavens, but not the third heaven, where God dwells.
 - (a) **Eph 1:21** 21 ...Far above all rule, authority, power, and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.
 - (b) **Eph 2:2** 2 ...In which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air....
 - (c) **Eph 2:6** 6 ...And raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Messiah Jesus....
 - (d) **Eph 3:10** 10 ...So that through the Church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.
- e. **Eph 6:13** 13 On account of this take up (ἀναλαμβάνω, aor. act. imper.) the whole armor (πανοπλία) of God, that you may be able to resist (ἀντίστημι) in the evil day, and having done (κατεργάζομαι, aor.) all, to stand firm (ἵστημι, aor.).²⁷
 - (a) We live in an evil day.
 - 1) **Eph 5:16** 16 ...Making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.
 - (b) Isaiah multiple times speaks of the body armour of the coming Messiah.
 - 1) **Is 11:5** 5 Righteousness shall be the belt of [Messiah's] waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.
 - 2) **Is 49:2** 2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword. In the shadow of his hand he hid me. [Messiah]. He made me a polished arrow. In his quiver he hid me away.
 - 3) **Is 59:17** 17 [Yahweh] put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head. He put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak.
 - (c) The Roman panoply was a unit. All aspects of the armour were necessary. We need the whole armour on, not just a part.
 - 1) See G. R. Watson, *The Roman Soldier*.
 - (d) We are to be stable in the fight against the principalities and powers of evil.²⁸
 - 1) **Mt 16:18** 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
 - (e) We need to remember to do our "buddy checks." Do our Christian mates around us have their full armour on and ready to go?
- (2) **Eph 6:14** 14 Stand therefore, having girded your (pl.) waists with truth (ἀλήθεια)....
 - (a) Truth versus deception is the heart of the war between good and evil.
 - (b) Take in the Bible more than you take in mass media.
- (3) **Eph 6:14** 14 ...Having put on (pl.) the breastplate of righteousness (τὸν θώρακα τῆς δικαιοσύνης)....
 - (a) Righteousness has its past, present, and future aspects, just like salvation.
 - (b) Install an internet filter on your computer.

²⁷ A soldier standing victoriously at the end of a battle is pictured.

²⁸ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 25.

- (4) **Eph 6:15** 15 ...And, as shoes for your (pl.) feet, having put on the readiness (έτοιμασία) given by the gospel of peace.
- (5) **Eph 6:16** 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith (τὸν θυρεὸν τῆς πίστεως), with which you can extinguish (σβέννυμι, aor.) all the fiery darts of the evil one (τὰ βέλη τοῦ πονηροῦ [τὰ] πεπυρωμένα).
- (a) Every day Satan throws lies and half-truths our way. He is a master of deception.
- (b) The shield of faith refers to Christian doctrine/theology, not subjective faith.
- 1) **Eph 2:20** 20 ...Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Messiah Jesus himself being the cornerstone....
 - 2) **Eph 4:11-12** 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Messiah....
- (6) **Eph 6:17** 17 And grasp (δέχομαι, aor.) the helmet of salvation (τὴν περικεφαλαίαν τοῦ σωτηρίου)....
- (a) The verb δέχομαι indicates the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit must be received not grabbed. The armour bearer must hand the soldier the helmet and sword. This indicates salvation and the word of God are things we receive. We don't bend down and pick them up.
- (b) Jesus put a helmet of salvation on his own head. We accept our helmet of salvation from him.
- 1) **Is 59:17** 17 He put on righteousness as a breastplate and a helmet of salvation on his head....
- (c) In Hebrew, the name Jesus means "salvation."
- (d) In spiritual warfare it's crucial we have assurance of our own salvation. If there is any doubt we are saved, we cannot fight. We must never panic about our salvation, though Satan accuse us.
- 1) **Re 12:10** 10 ...For the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.
 - 2) **Php 1:6** 6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Messiah.
- (e) Salvation has past, present, and future aspects. We are saved, we are being saved, and we will be saved.
- (7) **Eph 6:17** 17 ...And the sword of the Spirit (τὴν μάχαιραν τοῦ πνεύματος), which is the word (ῥῆμα) of God....
- (a) The μάχαιρα was a short sword designed for close hand-to-hand fighting. Roman soldiers struck with the sword's point, not the edge. It was used for both offense and defense.
- (b) In *Isaiah* and *Revelation*, Jesus' words are likened to a sharp sword.
- 1) **Is 49:2** 2 [Yahweh] made my mouth like a sharp sword (רֶבֶרֶת)....
 - 2) **Re 1:16** 16 In his right hand [Jesus] held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword (ῥομφαία), and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.
 - 3) **Re 2:12** 12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The words of him [Jesus] who has the sharp two-edged sword (ῥομφαία).

- 4) **Re 19:15** 15 From [Jesus'] mouth comes a sharp sword (ῥομφαία)²⁹ with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty
- (c) The word of God pierces our angelic enemies, but also our own souls.
- 1) **Heb 4:12** 12 For the word (λόγος) of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword (μάχαιρα), piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
- (d) Here it is the spoken ῥῆμα word of God, not the λόγος word of God. The ῥῆμα word of God is not the entire Scriptures, but a specific Scripture spoken at the right moment in the right context. Thus we must verbalise the word of God for it to pierce. The greatest sword in the world is useless if not used.
- (e) In this regard it is important to know that Satan and his demons, though they can observe us, cannot read our minds. They are creatures. They don't know exactly what we are thinking. Thus we have to verbalise the word of God in battle with them.
- (8) **Eph 6:18** 18 Praying (προσεύχομαι, pres. pl.) at all times in the Spirit,³⁰ with all prayer and supplication (δέησις). To that end, keep alert (ἀγρυπνέω, pres. act.) with all perseverance (προσκατέρησις), making supplication (δέησις) for all the saints....
- (a) Prayer is how we keep alert and situationally aware in spiritual warfare.
- (b) We are invited to participate in the inter-communal life of the Trinity.
- (c) Prayer is only open to the sons and daughters of God.
- (d) We need to pray with the grain, in accordance with God's will.
- (e) There are multiple ways to pray.
- (f) We are to pray for all the saints, not just some.
- (g) We are to educate ourselves so we may pray intelligently.

5. Farewell (Eph 6:19-24).

- a. **Eph 6:19-20** 19 ...And [pray] also for me, that words (λόγος) may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly (παρρησία) to make known (γνωρίζω) the mystery (μυστήριον) of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador (πρεσβεύω) in chains (ἄλυσις), that I may express myself freely (παρρησιάζομαι, aor.), as I ought to speak.
- (1) Through Paul is a relatively courageous ambassador for Jesus, he still asks for prayer to be courageous.
- (2) He wants the Spirit to give him the exact words to say to the Roman officials before whom he is appearing, including Nero. In speaking, Paul relies on God and not on his own eloquence or talent.
- (a) *Luke* and *Acts* were written by Luke with Paul's help. So this prayer would apply to those works.
- (3) He desires to make known the mystery of the gospel, the one Church consisting of Jewish and Gentile believers, despite severe Jewish opposition.

²⁹ This was a large and broad Greek sword (*BDAG*, 907).

³⁰ **Jude 20** 20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,

- (4) As Jesus' ambassadors, we are to express ourselves freely, instead of what is considered politically or culturally correct.
- (5) Whether in chains or not, we are ambassadors.
- b. **Eph 6:21-22** 21 So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord [Jesus] will tell you everything. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.
 - (1) Paul has trusted lieutenants whom he trusts to carry out important ministry tasks.
 - (2) Tychicus will inform the Ephesians about Paul's condition, his ministry, the status of his appeal to Nero, and the writing of *Luke* and *Acts*. Tychicus will have more freedom to speak than what Paul can write in a letter which may be intercepted by Roman officials or Jewish enemies.
 - (3) Though Paul is in chains, he doesn't want the Ephesians to lose heart.
 - (a) **Eph 3:13** 13 So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.
- c. **Eph 6:23-24** 23 Peace be to the brothers and sisters, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Messiah. 24 Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Messiah with love incorruptible.
 - (1) The letter begins and ends with grace and peace from the Father and the Son.
 - (a) **Eph 1:2** 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Messiah.
 - (2) The Father and the Son are the source peace, love, and faith.
 - (3) The term "Trinity" is not used, but the three persons of the Trinity are found throughout the letter.
 - (4) Peace, love, faith, and grace are what our Christian lives are all about. It's so simple!
 - (5) Jesus first loved us. We are now to love him with an incorruptible love.
 - (a) **Eph 5:2** 2 And walk in love, as Messiah loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
 - (b) **Eph 6:24** 24 Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Messiah with love incorruptible.

Biblical Worldview

1. God has established structures and hierarchies in life that we are to respect and abide by. They lead to human flourishing.
2. Our spiritual maturity is proven the home and the workplace.
3. How we treat the people in the home and the workplace is super-important to God.
4. The essence of all conflict is political, economic, or racial. It is spiritual.
5. Satan, our chief opponent, operates constantly through deception. The spiritual war we fight is one over truth.
6. We need the strength of Jesus to stand courageously against our demonic opponents. We must not be wishy-washy. We must take a stand.
7. The Christian life is all about the peace, love, faith, and grace that only God can give.