

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE**Who Do You Work For?**

EPHESIANS 6:5-9

OVERVIEW

Everything—literally everything—in heaven and on earth is being united in Christ (1:10). Only when we understand who Christ is can we begin to understand who we are. We often read Paul’s letters thinking about all Scripture calls us to do. But before Ephesians calls us to do anything, it reminds us what God has done in Christ.

Our identity is not based on what we do, but who we are. Our identity is not earned and achieved but declared and received. Our identity, as Christians, is found “in Christ.” We are united to Christ—and that changes everything about us! Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus explains what we were (apart from Christ), who we are (in Christ), and then how we should live as followers of Christ, all for the glory of Christ.

APPLY // EPHESIANS 6:1-4

1. Read Ephesians 5:1-2; 6:1-9.
2. Again...Why is it important to remember these first two verses as we begin to apply all that follows?
3. Observe the basic building blocks of civilization that are being addressed in 5:22-6:9 Marriage, family, and work. Why do you think Paul gives instructions on these things?
4. Why is obedience “right?” And how does it benefit us and cause us to “live long in the land?” Conversely, consider how disobedience accomplishes the opposite.
5. What are some ways we could provoke our kids to anger? Give some examples of how this happened in your own life (either as child or parent).
6. What are some ways we could provoke kids up towards delightful discipline? Give some examples of how this has benefited you in your own life.
7. What do we learn from Jesus as a child? What do we learn from the Father as to how to parent? Give examples and worship.
8. Pray the children in RKids come to know and enjoy Jesus. Pray parents raise their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Pray all members of Restoration help point our kids to Jesus.

STUDY // EPHESIANS 6:5-9

Study the passage of Scripture aiming to faithfully interpret and apply what you observe. Remember we study God’s word not just to increase our knowledge, but to increase our trust in and treasuring of Jesus Christ.

1. Read Ephesians 6:5-9.

2. To whom is this passage addressed? What does this relationship look like?*
 3. Discuss all the ways Paul says bondservants are to obey their earthly masters. What are God's commands to bondservants? How are they to serve?
 - a. "With fear and trembling."
 - b. "With a sincere heart."
 - c. "Not by the way of eye-service as people pleasers."
 4. Notice the repetition of obedience out of reverence of Christ – "as you would Christ," "as bondservants of Christ," "as to the Lord." What does this tell us about the bondservant's obedience?
 5. How does Paul address heart-level motivation in this passage?
 6. In verse 8, discuss Paul's motivation for bondservants to obey their earthly masters.
 7. How does Paul say masters should view and treat their bondservants?
 8. What does Paul warn masters about? Why?
 9. What does Paul mean when he says "there is no partiality with him"?
 10. Discuss various ways this passage is rooted in and enabled by the gospel.
- General Bible study questions:
 - **God:** What does this passage teach me about the character of God?
 - **Humanity:** What does this passage teach me about myself and my need for God?
 - **Christ:** How does this passage teach me that God has met my needs in the person and work of Jesus Christ?
 - **Response:** How should I respond with my affections and my actions?
 - **God:** How does this passage help me hope in heaven?

*From ESV Study Bible

It is estimated that slaves (or bondservants – vastly different than the Western institution of chattel slavery) composed about one-third of the population of a city like Ephesus. They were considered an integral part of a family, so Paul's instructions for bondservants were a natural part of his dealing with family relationships. In both Greek and Roman culture, bondservants had limited rights and were subject to exploitation and abuse. Paul does not condone the existing system of servitude but instead provides instructions to believing masters and bondservants regarding their relationship to each other in the Lord, and how this should be lived out within the bounds of their social and legal culture. The result, as is often observed, is that this kind of servitude slowly died out in antiquity through the influence of Christianity. The principles in this passage apply today in terms of submission to any lawfully constituted authority, the only exception being if such a lawfully constituted authority were to require a believer to disobey God's Word or to fundamentally compromise one's commitment to Christ (as in the case of Acts 4:19, 20).

ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other apply the gospel to your lives.

QUESTION: How's your view of God has your heavenly Father?