

KEY PASSAGE:

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." [Eph 5:21]

GROUP DISCUSSION:

- Read Ephesians 12:1-2. What is the believer's part in submission to God? If submission to God in this context is a form of worship, what does it say when we conform (or submit) to this world?
- Read Matthew 11:28-30. What are some of the unnecessary burdens people are carrying in regards to submission. What is the imagery being used in 11:29? How can we become yoked with Jesus?
- Read Romans 13:1-4. Using your favorite Bible translation, find the word "if" in Romans 13:1. Did the Apostle Paul (author of Romans) omit the word "if" or have we given ourselves permission to determine the conditions by which we submit to authority?
- Under what conditions should we ever consider NOT submitting to authority (carefully read Daniel 1:8-21)
- Submission to one another is the expression of our submission to the lordship of Christ. How is God challenging you in your relationships to submit to others as you are submitting to Christ?

THE DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS:

Spiritual Infant – The language/behaviors of a spiritual infant are characterized by lack of understanding. Submission issues often come up when we do not understand the role we play. An infant in a position of authority may believe that they must demand submission of those under them. They do not realize that submission of both parties is appropriate in the relationship. Infants need to learn to create an environment, and have an attitude of, servant hood that fosters voluntary submission.

Spiritual Child - The language/behaviors of a spiritual child are characterized by self-centeredness. There is a fine line between views on submission between infants and children. Often the issue of submission comes up in the marriage relationship, where a gross mis-application of Paul's writings on the husband/wife roles has led to abuse. Self-centeredness leads to "battles" between spouses. Love does not demand its own way. Children need to be educated in correct interpretation of Scripture and encouraged to focus on their part of the relationship.

Spiritual Adolescent - The language/behaviors of a spiritual adolescent are characterized by a search for identity. Adolescents may be struggling with cultural messages: "gain all you can for yourself", "look out for #1" vs. the message of the Gospel. As adolescents are encouraged to immerse themselves in relationship with authentic people who model submission, and see the blessings that ensue, the lie of the cultural model will be clearly seen.

Spiritual Parent - The language of a spiritual parent is characterized by intentionality and strategy. Parents bring up those who are spiritually younger, modeling and encouraging others by their actions. Parents make mistakes. The difference between a parent and one who is spiritually younger, is that the parent will not make excuses for their mistakes but will learn from them and encourage others by using their stories of faith (trusting fully in God) to bring spiritual balance and maturity. The testimony of a mature Christian who has stumbled, learned from their mistakes, and pushes forward to trust and obey God is powerful.

ADULT STUDY / HOMEWORK: (For your personal daily study time)

Day 1

- Write out Ephesians 5:21
- Refer back to 5:1 & 8. Who is Paul writing to?
- Read Job 28:28, Psalm 111:10, Proverb 1:7, 2:1-5, 9:10
- List the other godly character traits are linked with the Fear of the Lord in these verses?
- Read 2 Chronicles 19:6,7,9, Psalm 112:1, Proverbs 8:13, 16:6
- What does it mean to "Fear the Lord" from these verses?

Day 2

- Read Ephesians 5:21-6:9. In the verses below: What is the command? Who is the command directed to? How is each an application of verse 21?
- 5:22 _____
- 5:24 _____
- 5:25 _____
- 6:1 _____
- 6:5-6 _____
- 6:9 _____

Day 3

- Biblical submission is voluntary and originates from inside the heart. It is always motivated by trust and faith. It means "choosing to yield oneself to the authority or will of another." It is not an issue of equality and it does not mean following another into sin.
- Read 1 Peter 3:5. What did the holy women of the Old Testament learn that helped them to yield to their husbands' lead?
- Galatians 2:20, 3:11, 5:13,14,16, 25. What do these verses say is required of us as Christians in order to submit to our God?

Day 4

- From the following verses, write out how we are to treat others.
- Matthew 6:14, 7:12, Colossians 3:8-24, Romans 12:18, 14:13, 19, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, Ephesians 4:25, 32, 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 5:17-18, 1 Timothy 4:12, Hebrews 10:24-25

Day 5

- According to Ephesians 5:32, marriage is a picture of what?
- Read Ephesians 6:10-18. Who is trying to destroy our relationships, (especially with those closest to us)?
- Write out a prayer for your family (parents, siblings, spouse, children, etc.) from Ephesians 5:21-6:18.

FAMILY STUDIES / HOMEWORK (For 1st Grade and up):