

ONE

A STUDY OF EPHESIANS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

March 13 & 14, 2010
Pastor Jeff McNairn

THE 'S' WORD

Read Ephesians 5.15-6.9

Open It

- Is there a couple or a family that you know who, in your eyes, are doing things right in either their marriage or raising their kids? What is it about this relationship that you admire?
- Briefly describe what you believe goes into making the ideal marriage, family(parent/child), or co-worker relationship? How many of you would include submission in that?
- In first part of our text – Paul commands the church “to be filled” with the Spirit – What does that mean in your life?
- What’s the connection between verses 18 and 19? Why does Paul use drunkenness as a comparison with being spirit filled?
- In the Greek the verb ‘be filled’ is a present tense imperative in the passive voice – what does that tell us about being filled with the Holy Spirit?

Dig Into It

- According to verses 19-21 what are four characteristics of being filled with the spirit?
- In 5.22-6.9 Paul addresses 3 kinds of relationships – husband/wife, parent/child, boss/employee. In verse 21 (the fourth characteristic of being filled with the spirit) he prefaces his instruction with a general overriding instruction – what attitude does Paul expect us to have towards others?
- Why does the word ‘submit’ or ‘submission’ cause so much tension among people?
- Read verses 22-24 – why do these verses in particular cause so much tension – when you read these words what comes to mind? Other than the word ‘submit’ what other word in these verses causes tension? Why?
- What does the word ‘submit’ mean? (discuss before reading on)
- The word submit literally means – “to arrange under”
- Another way of looking at it is we are to ‘yield’ to others.
- Why are we called to arrange ourselves under others? How is Jesus an example of this for us?
- Philippians 2.5-8; Gal.5:13; Mark 9.35; 10.42-45; Matthew 20.26-27
- Having looked at the above verses how would you define ‘submission’
- Why is ‘submission’ such an important part of the Christian life?

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- Why is ‘submission’ such an important part of the Christian life?

- Paul tells us to submit to others out of 'respect for Christ' – does that help and what does that mean? (v.21)
- It's interesting that in Paul's instruction to men (vs.25-33) – which incidentally is much longer than his instruction to the women – he doesn't begin with the word 'rule' (see verse 25) just after instructing women to 'submit', but he begins by instructing men to 'love' their wives – in fact he tells them to love their wives many times. I don't know about you but this tells me that 'ruling' is not what Paul has in mind. Husbands are told not to rule their wives but to offer self-giving love (this was a radical statement in the first century). Read v.23 – Does this verse cause tension for you?
- Is headship best understood as 'responsibility for' or 'position of privilege'? Is headship an issue of 'control' or 'care', 'authority' or 'self-giving love'?
- How does Jesus' life demonstrate headship? Read Matthew 20.26-27
- How would this look in the home?
- 6 times in this short passage Paul uses the Greek word 'agape' which is translated as love – what is 'agape' love? (discuss before reading next bullet)
- Agape love is unconditional love – agape love is self-sacrificing love – agape love is looking out for others first – agape love is dying to self for the sake of the other – agape love is emptying yourself for another
- Having looked at the command for women to 'submit' and the command for men to 'love' – is love and submission really two sides of the same coin? Discuss. If we practiced 'submission' and 'love' in our relationships what kind of impact do you think it would have?
- How does what we just talked about play into the other two relationships that Paul addresses – i.e. parent/child and boss/employee?

Apply It

- Has the above discussion changed at all how you look at 'submission' and 'headship'? Would you now include 'submission' as an important characteristic in healthy relationships?
- We need to remember when we look at verses 22-33 that verse 21 is intricately connected – we are all called to mutual submission. Having looked at what 'submission' means are there any areas in your life (marriage, family, work, etc) where you need to apply this Christ-like quality?
- This whole discussion comes out of Paul's command to be filled with the spirit – mutual submission is not the only characteristic of a spirit filled life but so is thanksgiving (v.20) – if being thankful is evidence of a spirit filled life – how are you doing in this category? Will you strive to make 'thankfulness' part of your daily routine?
- Close in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to fill you anew.

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