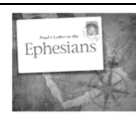




Ephesians 12 Spirit-Guided Relationships



TEXT: EPHESIANS 5:21-6:9

If we live FILLED, everything CHANGES.

→ *REVIEW: What does it mean to 'live filled?' How do we get filled? Why does it change everything?*

- * MARRIAGE changes, PARENTING changes, as employer LEADERSHIP changes, as employee SERVING changes.
- * You can have HEAVEN in your home, if it is governed by God's WORD, guided by the HOLY SPIRIT and increasingly influenced by the principles of Ephesians 4-6.

MARRIAGE

Spirit-filled homes characterised by LOVE, SUBMISSION + HOLINESS.

→ *How does this contrast with much of what was going on in the 1st Century when Paul was writing? What issues do you think he is confronting here? Have we made any progress / got any better in those areas? Any issues we're still battling with?*

- * While the disciples were arguing about who should SUBMIT to whom, Jesus was WASHING THEIR FEET (see John 13:1-17, Luke 22:24-26)

A THOUGHT: "The root of most marital problems is sin, + the root of all sin is selfishness. Submission to Christ + to one another is the only way to overcome selfishness, for when we submit, the Holy Spirit can fill us + enable us to love one another in the way Christ loves the church."

→ *Is this true, and, if so, how does it work?*

THE SEQUENCE

- a) First, we submit to the FATHER as GOD + KING.
- b) Then, we submit to JESUS as LORD + SAVIOUR.
- c) Then, we submit to HOLY SPIRIT as LEADER, GUIDE, CONVICTER, INSTRUCTOR
- d) Then we submit to ONE ANOTHER out of reverence for Christ (v21).

"To solve problems of divorce, rebellious children, problems in workplace, we've tried education, legislation, but the only answer is regeneration."

→ *Why is Eph 5:21-6:9 next to impossible without regeneration? Why do education and legislation fail? What is regeneration and why is it the only solution?*

SUBMISSION

Society has made submission about RANK, SUPERIORITY, CONTROL, DOMINATION Spirit-led submission is all about LOVE, SERVING, DEFERRING, HONOURING ... and is a beautiful, liberating, empowering thing.

→ *How does the world view submission? What jumps into your head when you hear the word submission? Why is submitting to God so liberating?*

→ *Submission facilitates agreement, partnership, harmony, then good decisions, co-operation + efficiency, flourishing of individuals + their gifts. Discuss!*

- * Submission to GOD will lead to appropriate submission ELSEWHERE in your life ... As child to parent ... worker to boss ... citizen to authorities, government, police ... church volunteer to delegated leaders ... adults to one another, as appropriate

- * If we live FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT no-one should have any problem submitting to anything, given the FRUIT the Holy Spirit produces (Gal 5:21-22).

→ *How does the fruit of the Spirit relate to submission? Why does the fruit of the flesh have the opposite effect?*

- * By nature we want to PROMOTE ourselves, but the Holy Spirit enables us to SUBMIT ourselves.

LOVE

Paul sets an IMPOSSIBLE standard, at least in our own STRENGTH (= *Husbands love your wives as Christ loves the church*).

- * In our own strength, v21-33 are UNLIKELY, good INTENTIONS perhaps, repeated FAILURE probably, potential for DEVASTATION sadly.

- * As always, it HINGES on MORE of HIM, LESS of ME.

→ *How does Christ love the church? Why is it an impossible standard? And what is our only chance of getting anywhere near it? (See Eph 5:18, Luke 24:49, Rom 5:5)*

PARENTHOOD

- * Modern version of Eph 6:1 = "Parents, OBEY your children, for this will keep them HAPPY and bring PEACE to the home."

→ *Is this accurate? Is it harder for parents now than it's ever been + if so, why? What are we up against and how might we overcome?*

- * What if we TAUGHT and MODELLED full of the Holy Spirit? What children could we raise? Champions? Prophets? Servant-Leaders? Givers?

→ *How can we teach and model full of the Holy Spirit in our homes?*

PAUL'S PRACTICAL ADVICE

1. DO NOT PROVOKE (See Col 3:21)

- * The BOOST of ENCOURAGEMENT versus the SAPPING of DISCOURAGEMENT.

- * TRAIN the WILL without CRUSHING the SPIRIT.

- * Comes down to, what we're FULL OF will CONTROL / come out of us → If it's anger, irritation, frustration OR love, joy, peace, patience, etc..

→ *How do we provoke our children and why is it damaging? What is a 'crushed spirit' and what are the consequences? How do we train the will without crushing the spirit?*

2. INSTRUCTION

- * Passed down through the GENERATIONS, the WAYS OF GOD, WORD, OF FAITH, OF THE SPIRIT ... Biblical principles, Jesus values. Integrity, Spirit-led, Word-based decisions.

→ *Is it better to teach them to 'obey mechanically' or teaching them to 'choose well?' Is it both and or either or? Do they work together?*

3. DISCIPLINE

- * Do you let the Holy Spirit INFLUENCE your discipline? Do you pray before you act? Seek that wisdom before you jump to conclusions? Is it an outpouring of love or anger/frustration? Does your discipline always have one eye on the future, rather than being caught up in the emotion of the moment?

- * How would it CHANGE for the BETTER if you were full of the Spirit?