

Pentwater Bible Church

Ephesians Message 12

Children, Employees & Spiritual Warfare



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The Book of Ephesians
Message Twelve
Children, Parents, Employers and Employees & Intro to Spiritual Warfare
Pentwater Bible Church
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Review:

BEING FILLED BY THE SPIRIT (5:18-21)

This section of Scripture starts with one negative command and one positive command. The negative is to abstain from getting drunk on wine in which there is debauchery. In other words “excess” “riot” and “dissipation.” All these words are used in other translations and are synonyms for debauchery. They give the idea of profligate or licentious living that is wasteful. The literal sense of incorrigibility fits well here, for a drunken man acts abnormally. Rather than controlling himself, the wine controls him. Those who constantly are looking for the next drink are being controlled by the need for alcohol. Most people who are controlled by alcohol will not admit they are until an auto accident or major health problem related to drinking comes upon them. Too much alcohol will hinder the Spirit’s work keeping you from Bible study and deepening your relationship with God.

Conversely, the positive command is, “Be filled with the Spirit.” The Holy Spirit should control a believer, rather than him being controlled by himself or another agent such as alcohol. Thus in this relationship, as a believer is yielded to the Lord and controlled by Him, he increasingly manifests the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

The Holy Spirit has a strong ministry in illumination, understanding and revelation. While the Holy Spirit enters us at belief and seals us, we are filled with Him as we draw closer to God. In this sense, then, being filled with the Spirit means that we have placed ourselves under His influence and control. We have yielded to Him, letting Him take over our lives. We minimize the influence of the “Old Man” and feed the Spirit to activate Him to control us. The Bible uses the word “filled” in the same way in Luke 6:11 and Acts 5:17 & 13:45. To be filled with something, therefore, means to be *under its control*.

Each Christian has *all the Spirit*, but the command here is that the Spirit has *all of him*. The wise walk, then, is one that is characterized by the Holy Spirit’s control.

The Bible gives us the formula for filling ourselves with God’s Holy Spirit. Our recognition of God’s presence in our lives will enable us to perform six actions to stimulate the Holy Spirit in our life and fill us. This may be done alone or with others such as in a church service. These instructions for being filled with the Spirit are similar to meditation on God’s Word.

1. Speaking through the psalms.
2. Speaking through hymns.
3. Speaking spiritual songs.
4. Singing.

5. Making melodies within your hearts to the Lord.
6. Give thanks for all things to God the Father in Jesus' name.

The necessary outcome of filling yourself with God's Spirit is being in submission to each other rather than being antagonistic toward each other. We subordinate our desires to others. Because the fear of God is in you, your recognition of Him and His power to correct you makes your heart softer and more complacent toward each other. If you don't give Him the control to affect your life and you turn from Him he can remove your wealth, health and impair your relationships with others. He will do what is necessary to cause you to turn to Him first for all your circumstances.

CALLING OF THE WIFE AND THE SECOND MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH AS THE BRIDE OF CHRIST (5:22-24)

God has established a hierarchy in the world for the effective administration of His will in the Church. Paul here refers to the concept of Headship. This is the principle of governing the structure and authority in the believing community. This is an absolute hierarchical order not culturally derived as evidenced with the reference to the Godhead. The children of the world do not understand this command. The concept of headship as developed here can't mean inferiority or superiority. This denotes a functional responsibility not inferiority and /or superiority. The Father and Son are each in their essence God but each had different roles. Christ is obedient to the Father to the point of death (Phil 2:8) but none the less God Himself (John 6:38-40; 10:29-30; 14:9; I Cor 15:28; Phil 2:6). Those who would challenge this functionality and appeal to a cultural norms must therefore challenge the very nature of God Himself.

Women are subordinate to men but equal to them in their essence. Chronologically she comes after man in the creation but positionally she was created for the man's sake. She is to be his helpmeet. She was brought forth to compliment and complete him. In fact as God declared almost all aspects of the creation as "good." He declared only one "not good." That was the man being alone (Gen 2:18). She fulfills the divine complement to man as the crowning achievement of God's creation. Men and women together in mutual interdependence, complementing each other, bring glory to God. Neither should be independent nor think themselves superior to the other. Woman's subordination does not mean inferiority. Man is not superior in being to woman. Eve came from Adam, and each man born in the world comes from a woman's womb (11:12). God created them both for each other (Gen. 1:27; 2:18).

Finally, as Christ is the head of the Church so also is the man the head of the women in all things. This does not mean that she is without participation in the family decisions. It simply means that after consultation with his helpmeet he must render God fearing decisions for him family. It is his responsibility not his wife's. Doing otherwise is out side of God's will. The man must take charge and lead the family especially in spiritual matters.

CALLING OF THE HUSBAND (5:25-27)

Now the text turns to the husband's commandment for cementing the relationship

with his wife and an illustration of the Church as the “Bride of Christ” is preparing for the “Marriage of the Lamb.” Once the rapture of the Church takes place we will face the judgment then the “The Marriage of the Lamb”(Revelation 19:7) and the “Marriage Supper” (Revelation 19:9). Whereas human brides prepare themselves for their husbands, Christ prepares His own bride (the Church) for Himself by sanctifying us.

The submissive wife realizes that her husband would give up his life for her if necessary, just as it was necessary for Christ to give up His life for the Church. By us following God’s commands for us in marriage and other areas of life He works through us and sanctifies us as one who has been cleansed by water. We however do this by not using water but adhering to God’s Word. When we discharge our duties within a godly marriage we please God.

THE DESIGN OF MARRIAGE (5:28-33)

As the church is the extension of Christ, so is the wife an “extension” of her husband. No one hates his own body but takes care of it. We feed it and care for it literally, “nourishing and cherishing it.” Thus as Christ loves the church, His body (of which all believers are members; cf. Eph. 4:25), so should husbands love their wives as their own bodies (5:28; cf. v. 33). Men care for their bodies even though they are imperfect and so they should care for their wives though they are imperfect. The bond between husband and wife is greater than that between parent and child. The greatness of this union refers to the two becoming one flesh. This mystery, which was unknown in the Old Testament, is wonderful bond between Christ and the church, which illustrates the love of a husband for his wife. The Jews were expecting their Messiah. They did not realize that He would be the husband of the new creation, The Church. The Jews were known as the “wife of Jehovah” (Jeremiah 31:32). This is a restatement of the responsibilities of the husband and wife toward each other: love by the husband (cf. v. 25) and respect by the wife.

Today’s Message:

THE CALLING OF CHILDREN (6:1-3)

*Ephesians 6: 1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.
Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;
That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.*

Remember, this set of instructions only applies to saved individuals, God is expressing the goal for families to set in front of themselves as behaviors for healthy Christ like living a successful family life. Only Spirit filled believers can expect to achieve this settled family cohesion and it is through the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit that we can do these things.

The commandment is directed specifically at children. There is no age limit on children. We are always to honor our parents. Paul is reiterating the OT commandment that is to be applied under Christ’s Law in the NT. Under the New Covenant Jesus fulfilled the Old Covenant (The Law) and we are only under those commandments,

which get restated in the New Testament. This states a general principle that obedience is a product of self-discipline (a fruit of the Spirit), which in turn brings stability and longevity in one's life. Stated inversely, it is highly unlikely that an undisciplined person will live a long life. An Israelite who persistently disobeyed his parents was not privileged to enjoy a long, stable life in the land of Israel. A clear example of this was Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas (1 Sam. 4:11.) They stole for themselves the choicest of the meats of sacrifice, which belonged to the Lord. They also had sex in accord with Canaanite cultic practice with women within the Tabernacle. Though that promise was given to Israel in the Old Testament, the principle still holds true today. If you do not honor your parents with a wholesome God fearing life it is likely to end early.

THE CALLING OF FATHERS (6:4)

Ephesians 6: 4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Fathers are the spiritual leaders of the family. They are the administrative head of the family who have the responsibility for discipline. As such Fathers should not do anything that provokes their children to anger. Some examples are:

1. Showing favoritism to some of them.
2. Comparing one to another as an example to follow.
3. Making unreasonable demands upon them.
4. Enacting petty rules for them to follow.
5. Engaging in teasing which is a form of humiliation.

Fathers must not do anything to intentionally provoke their children but instead bring them up, that is, rear or nourish them which is to provide for physical and spiritual needs in the training including directing and correcting in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16) as well as God's "discipline" of believers (Heb. 12:8). A father is to provide instruction (1 Cor. 10:11; Titus 3:10) of the Lord. Children as previously stated are to obey "in the Lord" (Eph. 6:1) and fathers (parents) are to train and instruct "in the Lord." The Lord is to be the center of their relationships and of their teaching and learning. This all flows from a Spirit filled believer.

LIVING IN THE WORK PLACE (6:5-8)

Ephesians 6: 5-8-8 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ. Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Since slavery existed during Paul's time he included slaves in this commandment. It is issued to both free men and slaves as well to provide the Lord's will in carrying out

our responsibilities to those for whom we work. Just as there were slaves (indentured servants or bond servants) in the Commonwealth of Israel there were slaves in some Christian households. Therefore servants, slaves or employees should be following our Lord's will for the manner in which He would have us respond in physical action toward the requests from our employers.

1. We should obey their requests for work direction.
2. We should obey with a proper attitude, respect and sincerity.
3. This work attitude should correspond to the manner in which Christ wants us to serve Him, with focused purpose.
4. We should give our employers our dedicated focus during the time we are engaged for them and treat our activities as if we were working for the Lord. He is watching and knows what is in our hearts.
5. We should work for our employers heartily even when they are not watching.

We will receive our rewards from Christ after the Bema Seat judgment. The reason for such earthly service is that the Lord will reward them. Christ is the One who can accurately and impartially judge our performance and motivation (1 Peter 1:17).

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MANAGEMENT (6:9)

Ephesians 6: 9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

In the same way as employees are to have a responsible manner of working out God's will in the workplace, employers must act the same way. This also assumes that both are Christians. Employers must not threaten but treat employees justly and fairly because they are servants of their Master in heaven. Christ is our example of a caring Master. This Master has dominion over both earthly masters and employees. Some employers become "drunk with power" and forget that God is watching them too and He will judge them the same way he will judge the employees. God does not favor employees over employers. He does not favor rich over poor or any other different classes of people on this earth. He judges us all the same. We must keep our focus on God.

THE CHRISTIAN WALK AS WARFARE 6:10-20

TWO COMMANDS; ONE BATTLE (6:10-11)

Ephesians 6: 10-11 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Paul starts this section with two commands to make us aware of the enemy's plan of attack. The enemy wants to thwart God's plan for our families and will do whatever he

can to draw us away from God. Our protection against this enemy is to avail ourselves of all available God given resources to protect ourselves against the strategy of the enemy Satan. Christians are not to attack Satan, or advance against him; they are only to “stand” or hold the territory Christ and His body, the church, have conquered. Without God’s armor believers will be defeated by the “schemes” of the devil, which have been effective for thousands of years.

UNDERSTANDING THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE INTRODUCTION (6:12)

Ephesians 6: 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

This struggle implies hand-to-hand combat. It is not a casual annoyance that is being referred to here. Paul is describing a battle that happens in the mind and for control of the mind, which gets manifested in the flesh. The Devil and his Demons want to destroy us and will take every chance we give them to do that. These are genuine powerful beings not mere fantasies. They live outside of time and space where we will be when we leave these bodies in which we temporarily reside. Once a person becomes a believer in Jesus Christ we become their enemies and they begin their attack. The two major mistakes Christians make toward this evil empire are to ignore it or to give it too much attention.

“High Places” is Hebrew phraseology for the connecting medium to the genuine world that Christ spoke of as life (Matthew 18:8-9; 19: 17; Mark 9: 43; 45). The high places of gross idolatry are the places where interaction with demons is carried out connect to the demonic inhabitants that live there and not God. The Old Testament referred to the phallic idols of the Canaanites, which the Hebrews followed and set up on hills as “High Places.” It occurs ninety times in the OT in the exact phrase “High Places.” It always refers to an effort to thwart God’s plans. Darkness refers to the ugly nature of evil that has entered the earth’s domain when Satan caused Eve to ignore the Word of God and follow the temptation offered by Satan.

Idolatry in itself poses a terrible danger and has to be destroyed. The Hebrew’s were commanded to perform a “Herem.” Which is a total destruction of the High Places and all associated with them. These places were an affront to God, violated the first two commandments of the Decalogue as well as being demon energized.

Exodus 20: 1- 6 And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

The High Places of gross idolatry are the places where interaction with demons is carried out in the sphere of conflict between God's Spirit and Satan's minions seeking to damage and kill those who would come to God and find eternal salvation.

The principal entities which represent the demons in time and space in the OT are the:

1. Idolaters who burn incense to Baal, the sun, moon and stars and planets also known as astrologers.
2. Adorers of Asherah or sexual worship.
3. Sodomites.
4. Male and female prostitutes.
5. Offering children to Molech, which is modern day abortion.

So images and idols are intimately connected with occult and demon worship because the entity behind the idol is a demon enticing the worshipper to some desirable sensual experience.. If there were not some "charge" or excitement the worshipper would not be attracted to an inanimate object.

Please Call or e-mail with any questions or comments.
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