Lesson 12

Ephesians 6:1-12[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Verses 1-3**

**Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), 3so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.**

1. **Paul now addresses children.[[2]](#footnote-2)**
   1. Paul assumed that children would be reading or hearing his letter.
   2. Unlike the word “submit” used in reference to the body submitting to each other and the wives to their own husbands, Paul uses the word “obey” for children and bondservants because they are truly in a situation where their obedience is required. They are under authority.
   3. It is right for children to obey their parents.
2. **We who understand that the Old Covenant is obsolete might find it strange that Paul would quote from it in teaching on children. Keep in mind that the Bible we hold in our hands did not exist in his day. The apostles taught using Genesis-Malachi (the Scriptures) to convince the people that Jesus is the promised Messiah. They did not teach believers to follow law, however. Yet, they did use the Scriptures to teach New Covenant principles. Here are some examples.**

***Acts 17:1-2***

*Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. 2 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ.”*

[***Romans 4:3***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+4:3&version=NKJV)

*For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”*

[***Romans 10:8***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+10:8&version=NKJV)

*But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach):*

[***Galatians 4:30***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+4:30&version=NKJV)

*Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.”*

1. **He points out that this commandment to obey one’s parents came with a promise, but he is not saying that we are still under the Old Covenant.**
   1. If the Old Covenant promised long life to someone who honored their parents, how much more shall our “better covenant based on better promises” (Heb. 8:6) give long life to us?
   2. Honoring our parents as adults does not mean we must obey them as we did when we were under their authority. We “leave our faith and mother” and cleave to our wife. Honoring our parents as adults has to do with supporting them financially as they become incapable of supporting themselves.

***Matthew 15:3-6***

*He answered and said to them, “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? 4 For God commanded, saying, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ 5 But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God”— 6 then he need not honor his father or mother.’ Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.*

***1 Timothy 5:3-4, 8***

*Honor widows who are really widows. 4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.  8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

**Verse 4**

**Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.**

1. **Fathers are not to antagonize (anger, provoke to wrath) their children, but as always, Paul gives an alternate behavior which is to bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.** 
   1. If earthly fathers are admonished to not antagonize their children, but rather to train them, shall not our heavenly Father train us in the same way, as a loving, caring Father?

**Verses 5-8**

**Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; 6not by way of eye service, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. 7With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.**

1. **Bondservants were those who worked for their masters. That had few rights. Some of them sold themselves into slavery and others became slaves when they could not pay a debt. Some, after they paid their debt would choose to stay out of love. Slavery was common in this time and culture. This is not an endorsement of slavery. It simple dealt with the facts of that society. How were Christian slaves to live in respect to their masters?**
2. **They were to obey not just when their master was watching in order to please men, but to labor as if they are serving Christ, as the will of God and from their hearts.**
3. **They were to give their service with good will as to the Lord.** 
   1. This passage is NOT intended for employees and employers. It was directed at slaves and slave masters.
   2. However, we can gather some important wisdom for employees here.
      1. ***Do the job you are being paid to do.***
      2. ***Cooperate with your employer.***
      3. ***See your work as unto the Lord and not unto your employer.***
      4. ***Do your work from your heart as unto Christ.***
4. **Whether one is a slave or free, the good that we do we will receive back from the Lord (either in this life or the one to come).**

**Verse 9**

**And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.**

1. **God is no respecter of persons. Both servant and master are held accountable to good for how they treated the other.**
   1. **Masters were to “do the same things”; in other words, be as Master as unto the Lord with good will.**
   2. **They were not to threaten their slaves (with punishment or death).**
   3. **They were to keep in mind that there is a divine Master in heaven who is Lord over both slave and masters, and that He shows no partiality.**
      1. **This meant that God views slaves and master equally. No special treatment would be given to the masters.**

***Colossians 3:22-25***

*Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. 23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.25 But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.*

***Galatians 3:26-29***

*For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

* + 1. **Thankfully, we do not have slave masters in our society, though some might see their employer as behaving as if he/she is one. However, it is fair to take from this how an employer should view and treat his/her employee.**
       1. Treat them with the same kindness show to you by God.
       2. Deal with them as unto the Lord.
       3. Pay them fairly, even generously.
       4. Don’t threaten them.
       5. Remember you are equal, not superior to your employees.

**Verses 10-11**

**Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.11Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.**

1. **In Whom are we to be strong? In the Lord. In the strength of whose might are we to be strong? In the strength of His might.**

***AMPLIFIED***

*In conclusion, be strong in the Lord [be empowered through your union with Him]; draw your strength from Him [that strength which His boundless might provides].*

* 1. **Are you so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are you now fighting Satan in the strength of your own flesh (through your own efforts, through your own disciplines, through your own holiness)?**

1. **When we wear the full armor of God we are able to stand firmly against the schemes of the devil.**
   1. **The schemes of the devil should be no mystery to us. 2 Corinthians 2:11 says that we are not ignorant of his devices.**
      1. **He comes to steal, kill, and destroy.**

[***John 10:10***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+10:10&version=NKJV)

*The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

* + 1. **He lies.**

[***John 8:44***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+8:44&version=NKJV)

*You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*

* + 1. **He challenges the veracity of God’s word.**

[***Genesis 3:1***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+3:1&version=NKJV)

*Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”*

* + 1. **He sows tares among the wheat.**

***Matthew 13:37-39***

*He answered and said to them: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked*one.*39 The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.*

* + 1. **He snatches the word of the kingdom from the hearts of those who do not understand.**

***Matthew 13:19***

*When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart.*

[***Luke 8:12***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+8:12&version=NKJV)

*Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*

* + 1. **He transforms himself as an angel of light and his ministers as ministers of righteousness.**

***2 Corinthians 11:13-15***

*For such*are *false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*

* + 1. **He accuses us day and night before God (to no avail).**

[***Revelation 12:10***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+12:10&version=NKJV)

*Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.*

Romans 8:33

***Who*** *shall bring a charge against God’s elect?* It is*God who justifies.*

* + 1. **He condemns.**

***Romans 8:34***

***Who***is*he who condemns?*It is*Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.*

* + 1. **He tries to separate us from the love of God.**

***Roman 8:35***

***Who*** *shall separate us from the love of Christ?*Shall*tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

* 1. **We need to know that Satan is not and equal opposite power to God’s power.**
     1. **He is not all-knowing (omniscient).** 
        1. **He does not know what you are thinking.**
     2. **He is not all-powerful (omnipotent).** 
        1. **There is only ONE God. Only God is all-powerful.**
        2. **Satan’s authority is limited and for a limited time (Rev. 12:12).**
        3. **He has been defeated by Jesus in our lives (Heb. 2:14-15).**
     3. **He is not everywhere present (omnipresent).** 
        1. **This is a huge misconception. Satan can only be one place at one time. He is not an evil deity. He is only a fallen angel.**
  2. **To “put on” the full armor of God is to clothe ourselves with it.**

***Enduo:*** *From G1722 and G1416 (in the sense of sinking into a garment); to invest with clothing (literally or figuratively): - array, clothe (with), endue, have (put) on.*

* 1. **We Christians are gloriously dressed. Here are some other things with which we’ve been clothed, things we are to put on, and things we shall put on (enduo).**
     1. **Christ**

***Galatians 3:27***

*For all of you who were baptized into Christ have****clothed yourselves*** *with Christ.*

* + 1. **Power from on high**

***Luke 24:49***

*And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are* ***clothed*** *with power from on high.”*

* + 1. **The Armor of light**

***Romans 13:12***

*The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and* ***put on****the armor of light.*

* + 1. **The New Self**

***Ephesians 4:24***

*Lay aside the old self…24 and****put on*** *the new self, which in*the likeness of*God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*

***Colossians 3:9-10***

*Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and* ***have put on*** *the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him*

* + 1. **We are to put on a heart of love for each other.**

***Colossians 3:12-14***

*So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved,* ***put on*** *a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 Beyond all these things*put on*love, which is the perfect bond of unity.*

* + 1. **We will put on immortality and the imperishable.**

***1 Corinthians 15:53***

*For this perishable must* ***put on****the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

***2 Corinthians 5:2***

*For indeed in this house we groan, longing to* ***be clothed*** *with our dwelling from heaven.*

**Verse 12**

**For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.**

1. **We do not fight against people. They may exasperate us by teaching things that are not true. They may persecute us for teaching what is true. But the enemy behind it all is not flesh and blood.**

1. Unless otherwise noted, this study uses the NASB. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Numbers correspond to the verse number. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)