

Lesson Five

Live a life of love

Chosen in Christ

Ephesians

Introduction

Throughout history Christians have been noted for one outstanding characteristic: their love for one another.

Jesus said, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34,35). The disciples carried Jesus' words with them, and they lived them. They gathered regularly for *agape* meals, fellowship meals where they celebrated Christian love. The Christian writer Tertullian defended Christians against the slanderous accusations that were leveled against them and made special note of their love: "See how they love one another and how they are ready to die for one another."

The Christian ethos has been a force for change throughout the centuries. Christian love ennobles and empowers women. Christian love and obedience give dignity to the work of employees and even slaves. Christian love recognizes that employer and employee, master and slave, are both under the lordship of one Master, Jesus Christ.

Search the Scriptures

Christian love, Christian submission, Christian service

Read **Ephesians 5:21-33**. How does the lead verse in this section (v. 21) set the tone for everything that follows?

Compare **Philippians 2:1-4** with what Paul writes here. What is to be our Christian attitude toward others?

Define these words:

- Humility
- Submission

How can fear prevent us from practicing humility and submission?

Why can Christians practice humility and submission without fear?

What specific instructions does Paul give to Christian wives?

What specific instructions does Paul give to Christian husbands?

What is the pattern for each of these behaviors and attitudes?

Read **Ephesians 6:1-9**. What instructions does Paul give to each of the following:

- Children
- Fathers (parents)
- Slaves (employees)
- Masters (employers)

Consider each of the specific instructions Paul gives to each group. How is society as a whole better when these instructions are followed?

The armor of God

Read Ephesians 6:10-20. Do you find anything particularly chilling about verse 12?

Paul uses a Roman soldier¹ as a picture of preparedness against evil. Describe the function of each piece of armor or weaponry. How is each effective against the devil's schemes?

- The belt of truth
- The breastplate of righteousness
- Your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace
- The shield of faith
- The helmet of salvation
- The sword of the Spirit



What notable difference do you see between the sword of the Spirit and the other pieces of armor? Why is this important?

When and for what are we to pray?

What specific prayer does Paul request from the Ephesians?

With **Ephesians 6:21-24** we close the book of Ephesians. What encouragement do you draw from these final words?

Summary

How would you summarize the book of Ephesians? What special insights did you take from our study of this letter?

For further study: Go back and read the book of Ephesians again for encouragement and strength. Meditate on it and reflect on what Scripture says to you.

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