

Big Picture Relationships (Eph 5:22-6:9)

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[0 : 0 0] For wives, this means submit to your husbands as the Lord. For a husband is the head of his wife, as Christ is the head of the church. He is the saviour of his body, the church. As the church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything.

For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word.

He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies.

For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. No one hates his own body, but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church. And we are members of his body.

As the scripture says, Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord.

[1 : 1 7] Well, this is the right thing to do. Honour your father and mother. This is the first commandment with a promise. If you honour your father and mother, things will go well for you and you will have a long life on the earth.

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord. Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear.

Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart.

Work with enthusiasm as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free.

Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Don't threaten them. Remember, you both have the same master in heaven and he has no favourites. Cool.

[2 : 1 9] Also, quickly, there is Slido. So, any questions, not only from today's sermon, but from previous sermons that you remember and you want to ask our Pastor William?

Yes, lots of questions. Please text, oh, the number's not there, but please go on slido.com and you'll find it. Thanks, Fran.

Hello, everyone. Guten Abend. Sorry, I mean, hello. Only Alana laughed at that one. So, sorry.

Yeah, I'd love to encourage you. Yeah, meet Yortam.

Yortam's a friend of ours from college. And he's flying over before he had home to Munich in Germany. And if you've never met a German, now's your time. Like, you know, to meet someone who also has a heart for serving the gospel in Germany.

So, he's actually quite tall. He's taller than Ross. So, yeah. So, there you go. Lots of things to look forward to. And we'll have some German snacks as well. So, today, I discovered that there's such a thing as a donut that's filled with jam.

[3 : 2 6] I mean, ooh. Called the Berliner. So, anyways, you have to be there tomorrow to find out more. Why don't we pray? And let's hear from God's Word.

Our great God and Father, in Jesus Christ, you have made us one family. A family of all kinds of people. Some of us are married.

Some of us are single. Some of us are young. And some of us are old. Some of us are working.

Some of us are not. In whatever situation you've placed us in, oh Lord, would you help us to draw from you today the power of the gospel of your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

His death and resurrection. So that we have the pattern and the power to live out in all these relationships how you want us to live. So, Father, be with us now, we pray.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. All right. So, today we're going to talk about big picture relationships. I've been married to Cheryl 11 years.

[4 : 34] We'll talk a bit more about that later. And as a family, we've been all kinds of places. This is a travel photo. And I know some of you are really having, like, withdrawals from, you know, overseas trips.

So, this is a really special one of ours. We, as a family, went to, we just call it Central Asia. And one of the most amazing places I've ever been in the world. So, I don't think we'll ever get the chance to go again, but who knows.

And one of the things we loved about traveling through this country, rich of history, just part of the old Silk Road. I don't know if you've read that part of your history before. East meets West. So, kind of like huge kebabs as well as nice dumplings, you know, like, you know, in one meal.

Yeah. So, we had a lovely time. One of the things we loved while we were there was just all the architecture and the artistry and the care they put into every single building and every tile.

One thing they loved doing was mosaics. So, let me show you an example. This is just like the wall of a random building, right? One of their madrasa. And, you know, look at it, you know, hand-painted, right?

[5 : 38] Every single detail there, hand-painted. And you look, zoom in, right? And look, even more detail comes through, okay? All right. You can start to see kind of the yellow around the flowers and then individual little floral pieces.

And then you zoom in a bit more. And then, wow, okay. Even more detail, okay? It was just amazing. And we just, you know, some days we just had time just to look and look.

And you could just keep zooming in and zooming in. But, I mean, man. And that was all done by hand. So, we just loved it. But what happens is that if you zoom in too far on something, you actually, you start to miss the big picture, okay?

And this is what the full building looks like. It's beautiful, isn't it? It's beautiful. But if you look too close, we're going to miss the big picture. And I want to mention this because I think we do this too as Christians, right?

We often are looking too close and we miss the big picture. I wonder, right, if during Fran's Bible reading, you zoomed into something specific, right? Maybe it was husbands and wives, right?

[6 : 40] Or maybe it was work. Maybe it was the family section. Or maybe you had a specific question, right? What's Paul telling my wife to do? What's all this about?

How does it mean anything to me if I'm not even married, okay? Or how do I honour my mum and dad, okay? You probably have lots of specific, specific questions.

And I'm sure the Ephesian church did too when Paul wrote this letter. But what I love most about this passage is that it's not just about me or you, okay? When we zoom too far in, we miss the big picture, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Did you notice how often Paul mentions Christ or the Lord in our passage that we just read, okay? Have a look, all right?

To the Lord, in the Lord, as Christ did. You see, what Paul is doing, and he's been doing this the whole book we've seen, he is grounding these instructions about the house, all right?

[7 : 37] The household, and who Jesus is and what he has done on the cross for us, right? We've seen him do this time and time again. And that's how we want to read it, okay? We need the big picture because marriage is tough, okay?

We need the big picture because, you know, parenting, just being kids in your home, it's hard. It's tough. And we love, right, okay, work, but it gets tiring. And it doesn't help that we're sinful people. And often in all of these relationships, we start to make it all about us, don't we? All right? Marriage becomes, you know, it's my way and not your way. And then we fight, or we turn our kids or even our nieces and nephews into kind of bragging rights, right?

Or social media trophies. Or maybe we slack off at our jobs or we have no motivation in our work. In all our relationships, we need help from the Lord.

All right? So this is where we're heading. We're going to have a look today at the big picture of all our relationships. So far in chapter 5 of Ephesians, remember, our Heavenly Father called us to walk, right, in love.

[8 : 42] That was the start of chapter 5, verse 1. Sacrificial love, right? Not loving ourselves. And we're then to walk as children of light, right?

That was from last week what we heard. And then also to walk in wisdom. Okay? I want to point this out. You might have to read your Bibles here. Actually, our section kind of comes in after we've heard about a very important command.

And that was not to get drunk, but to be filled with the Spirit. Remember? From last week. Because one of the results of Spirit-filled living, we heard last week, is that we will live in submitting to one another, right?

In reverence and fear of Christ. And if you were wondering, when we heard it last week, what does it look like to submit to one another, okay, in fear of Christ? Paul then says, well, let me tell you. And that's why. This is the context of all these household commands. And surprisingly, I think, Paul gives way more than just a checklist of do's and don'ts, doesn't he, right? He actually offers us three pictures, right, of mutual submission so that we can magnify Jesus, right, in our day-to-day relationships.

[9 : 48] So that's how I want to go through this passage. We're going to think about three big pictures of mutually submitting for Jesus, right? And obviously, the three pictures, one's in marriage, one's in family, and one's in work.

All right, let's have a look. The first thing Paul wants us to see today is that marriage pictures Christ's love for the church. I'll say that again. Marriage pictures Christ's love for his church. Verse 22 says this, Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church's body, of which he is the saviour.

Now, as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. I was once helping out at a wedding, and this was at a previous church, and as this passage was read out by the reader, the bride's family burst out laughing.

Okay, they couldn't believe it. Okay, they just heard this S word. Okay, for them it was a joke. But I wonder what comes through your mind when you hear that word, right? Submit. Okay.

[10 : 53] We live between two cultures, don't we? Okay. On one hand, okay, maybe you live in a part of a world. Maybe your Chinese culture might say, no questions asked, right? And then on another part of your world, okay, we've grown up in a Western culture where this word is like a dirty word, right?

Well, maybe it's old-fashioned or repressive or maybe even dangerous. We've got to wrestle through this. What does it mean when he says submit? Okay. Sadly, even Christian leaders can take a verse like this, turn it into a weapon, right?

You've got to hold this verse out when you want your wife to obey you to do sinful things, okay, or maybe to even abuse them. If that's what submission leads to, okay, why should we keep this teaching?

But can I encourage us to give Paul the benefit of the doubt? Let's assume he did not mean to say this as a trigger word or to picture something negative.

I think, let's assume that he wanted to paint a positive picture like he's been doing all through this book, okay? Something countercultural, yes, but something beautiful. So let's look at the text.

[11 : 58] Let's notice what Paul cannot mean, okay? Verse 22, submitting can't mean you're not a person, okay? Here, Paul is addressing wives directly, okay? Paul is talking to wives directly, not to anyone else, okay?

He's addressing you as people, okay? Able to think, able to think through and reason, and maybe assess this for yourselves, okay? The word submit cannot mean you're forced to obey.

The Greek verb that kind of is implied here and actually borrowed from previously in verse 21 in some passages, the Greek verb, it's in this kind of special tense where it kind of has a meaning more like submit yourselves, okay?

Some of you at translation might even say, submit yourselves willingly, okay? It's a kind of verb where you have to do it. No one else can force it on you. Thirdly, the word submission here, it cannot mean to all men, right?

Because it doesn't say that. It doesn't say that. It just says submit to your husbands, your own husbands, all right? And fourthly, it doesn't say submit without question. What does it say? What's the qualification?

[13 : 02] Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. This passage should never, ever justify domestic abuse or very selfish demands where you just want to get your way from your spouse, okay?

Because verse 23 says this, the husband is head over her wife just as Christ is head over the church. And so there, when he makes the analogy, we want to ask, what is Christ like?

What is Jesus like as a husband? He's not a tyrant with a fist. What have we heard already in Ephesians? What is Jesus like? He lavishes kindness on us.

He gives us his fullness. He grows us in maturity. That's the kind of head we want to follow and we should look for in a husband, okay? Dating advice was free.

Ladies, okay, the Bible does not call you in marriage to just put up or shut up. It's not there in the text. You're not a doormat or mute or inferior, okay? The text does not say that.

[14:06] But in marriage, God does invite you to see the bigger picture, okay? And to live out, okay, if you're married, to live out the church submitting to Christ, to picture that and to follow that picture, to paint that picture as you follow your husband's lead.

There's limits to what I can explain. So once I asked Cheryl, how would you explain, okay, what this verse kind of looks like or means, right?

And she reminded me, okay, once. It's like ballroom dancing, okay? In ballroom dancing, someone has to lead. Someone has to follow, okay? Otherwise, we trip over each other's toes.

I think Cheryl loves to bring up this analogy because for a couple of years, we actually did take ballroom dancing classes, okay? Yes. Learning the steps for me was half the struggle.

I think what was harder, though, okay, was the fact that Cheryl was very smart. She got all the steps really quickly and I'm just like, it was tricky, right?

[15:05] I'll admit, there's some things I'm not good at. And I think what was the hardest of all, I think, for me was actually leading, okay? Leading and then following, okay? I think we found that really hard.

But when Cheryl and I worked hard at it, when we kind of figured it out, right, there was beauty in motion, I think. And submission and leadership can work like that, okay?

That's what it can look like. And so from Paul, Paul from verse 25 then, he moves on. He's going to describe what headship looks like. And so we see that from verse 25.

Have a look, right? And now the first thing we see in verse 25, right, is to notice that it doesn't mention submission, okay? So guys, right, if you were thinking, ha-ha, okay, Paul's going to say, husbands, make your wives submit.

No, you're stupid. Read your Bible. It doesn't say that. What does it say? Verse 25 says this, husbands, love your wives. We just talked about submission as a difficult word to understand.

[16:06] I wonder, I wonder if love is actually the more misunderstood word. Because in our day and age, right, in a time when love is love, love has kind of become more like an aerosol.

You just spray it, okay? And it means whatever to whoever. I love bubble tea. I love school holidays, right? I love Netflix. Is love a battlefield, right?

Is love an open door, a piece of paper, an illusion? Who knows, right? Thankfully, Paul does, right? The Bible does not teach us society's picture of love, but a far better one.

This is love. But verse 25, Christ, what does it say? Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. A picture of promise-keeping faithfulness, of a groom who keeps his vow to love his bride at the cost of his own life.

That's true love, guys. That's true love. Paul paints with more colours, right? In verse 26, he keeps moving. He starts to bring in Old Testament colours to remind us again, God's people, we, are like a radiant bride.

[17:18] He's drawing from Isaiah 60. And just as Jesus wants his bride to be rescued and perfect without spot or wrinkle, holy and blameless men, to love our wives is to want the same for her.

And that's true headship. That's true leadership, isn't it? To deny ourselves for her good, okay? And to give up ourselves so she looks good, okay? So think of headship that way, please.

Work out in your lives what costly loves look like. You can practice now, even when you're dating, okay? When I'm tempted to, I don't know, just be selfish and do what I want on a date, let her go.

Go with what she wants, okay? Let her choose a movie. I don't know, in my life, when I'm tempted to leave the dishes in the sink, right? Okay, it's a tiring night, you know? We're tired. But I just remember Christ was willing to die for his church.

And a little soap in my hands is not that bad, okay? I'll do the dishes, okay? Maybe what does it look like? Maybe Cheryl's tired, okay? And the best thing to do, right, is not just to sit around and do nothing, but actually to take the kids out and give her a chance to just chill out, read the Bible, have

a nap.

[18:26] I don't know. You've got to work it out with your own wife or husband, okay? What does that look like? So I mentioned Cheryl a lot. I'm so sorry. We were married on the 6th of February, 2010.

There's our wedding photo. You might even recognize some people that came to our wedding. There's Pastor Albert, just in the corner with Seymour. I won't bore you with all the things that went wrong that day, okay?

11 years ago. A lot of things that didn't quite go to plan. But the most important thing we did that day, right, happened. We relive the story of the very first wedding, okay?

Some of you mentioned Genesis, which is your favorite book. Well, in Genesis chapter 2, okay, is what Paul quotes right here, right now, okay? Ephesians 5.31, he quotes, all right? He says, For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.

He's quoting straight from Genesis 2.24, describing the first wedding, okay? Paul quotes this. But in the very next verse, he says something profound, okay?

[19:32] I think it's one of the most profound verses in the Bible. He says this, verse 32. This is a profound mystery, but I am talking about Christ and the church. He is Paul.

He's single, remember? And what he loves most about marriage is that it's not just about us. Marriage is a pointer, okay? Every wedding that you've been to, you are just joining in and pointing to something even better.

Christ's love for his church. And so this is good news. This picture is good news for all of us. For those of you who are single, like Paul, you can just marvel and enjoy this picture, right?

Because even if you don't enjoy it right now yourself, every wedding you go to, you are just celebrating your deep, fulfilling marriage with Christ, your union with him through faith, and you lack nothing in him.

Because every human marriage actually ends one day, right? But yours with Jesus, ours with Jesus is forever, okay? The end goal of marriage, okay, is Christ and the church.

[20:42] At his wedding reception, everyone here is included. Or maybe you're dating right now, okay? Or you're thinking about marriage you haven't even committed yet, okay? Or maybe you just, you're engaged and you're overwhelmed by the, what's at stake, okay?

How am I gonna be the perfect, you know, so-and-so? I don't know if I can do it. Remember the big picture. It's not about you, okay? One author puts it this way, okay?

In marriage, all you're doing is, you do for your spouse what God did for you in Jesus, and then the rest follows. If you can live out that Jesus picture, okay, everything else will make sense. Many of you are like me and you think, man, I am such a failure at painting this picture.

Remember, Jesus gives us the pattern for marriage, as we've just read, but the power to live it out through the gospel, okay? And ladies, if some of you are anxious about the tough choices marriage brings, maybe at some stage you'll have to choose between continue a career or having children. Maybe there's pressure from others, you know, aunts or parents to be baby machines, whatever, okay? Pressure all around. Remember Jesus. Remember Jesus. He willingly submitted to his father's will.

[21:57] He took up a cross to gain a crown. That's the picture of marriage that you're invited to live out as well. And I don't know. Sometimes we kind of box the talk about marriage just to marry people, but I think all of us should value and love and cherish godly, healthy marriages.

If we want PCBC to grow and win the lost, we preach the gospel. We never stop doing that, but we work hard to at growing marriages. Because I think just as preaching makes Jesus heard, our marriages, when they are gospel-shaped, they can help make Jesus seen, right?

That's what we want. As people, and our friends and family, as they see women loved like Jesus, and as our friends and family see men serve and lead like Jesus, marriage becomes an invitation. Come. Come see what it's like to be in Christ as he loves his church. Man, such a powerful, awesome passage.

I wish we could just spend all evening on it, but we have to move on. In chapter six, Paul moves on, doesn't he, to the second picture, I think, that he wants to paint. In our next pair of relationships, from chapter six, verse one to four, we see this.

[23 : 11] We see family pictures the son's obedience and the father's nourishment. I'll say that again. Family pictures the son's obedience and the father's nourishment. Paul shifts focus, doesn't he, from marriage to Christian families, children and parents.

And again, he doesn't give a long parenting book. I think some of the books in our library, they're much longer than these three, four verses, aren't they? Because all he needs to say is this, okay? Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Okay? In the Lord. Did you notice that phrase? There's our big picture again. Okay? This is not just optional advice.

This is critical to following Jesus. I wonder if you've ever thought about that, you know, how you treat your parents. It's critical to following Jesus in the Lord. Okay, Paul's pretty clear.

He calls children to obey both their parents, right? And then in these verses, after he gives us reason why. Firstly, it's the right thing to do. Okay? Perhaps he's pointing out that, you know, just having, being an obedient child is a right and proper thing in the society.

[24 : 13] More likely, I think he's saying it in connection with the verse that he quotes next, right? Verse two, he says, honour your father and mother. Where's that from? Someone help me out.

Ten commandments. That's right. Okay? Actually, Paul's been alluding to the Ten Commandments all throughout. I wonder if, when we talked about lying and stealing, I wonder if that Ten Commandments radar kicked in. Here, he's very explicit, isn't it?

Okay? Once you've brought the Ten Commandments in, okay, you've actually raised the stakes. Okay? I don't know how you feel about the Ten Commandments. Are they just a list of rules to follow? Yes and no.

Okay? For God's people, for God's people, the Ten Commandments is an act of worship. Okay? Following God's law is a response to what God has done.

What did God do? He rescued graciously a whole people from slavery. Do you remember the story? In Exodus. Okay? In Exodus. That's the context where the Ten Commandments and other commands come in.

[25 : 10] Okay? So, Paul is painting a far bigger picture than just do as you're told. Okay? Just obey your parents. He's saying, you've been rescued. Now live this out in how you treat your parents.

Okay? And think about it this way too. Okay? Think about Israel. Israel, right, was kind of like God's firstborn child. Okay? Precious possession.

Okay? Looked after, adopted into his family. All right? Rescued from slavery by a good father.

Okay? Israel was called to live rightly as God's people. And one of the ways they needed to do that was to honour their parents.

And yet, if we read through the Bible, I don't think Israel did a very good job over and over again.

Okay? They turned to false idols. They mistreated their families. Okay? We see in pictures of some of the kings how poorly they treated even people in their family.

Yet when Israel failed, Jesus, okay, God's grace of firstborn comes to earth. He rescues us from slavery by his perfect obedience to his father.

[26 : 17] Did you know that? Did you know that? To get salvation for us, he had to obey his father. Father. That's the pattern. All right? In the Lord. So under the surface of Paul's instructions here, okay, to children, in the Lord, okay, remember we have a son who fully obeyed his father when it was hard even.

And he offers that perfect record in our place. Right? That's the gospel. That's the gospel. We serve and we follow and we are in Jesus, the obedient son.

Okay? Again, do you see this? In Jesus, we have the pattern and the power to live this out. Okay? I know it's hard for some of us. Okay? Some of us have parents who aren't Christians.

Some of us, our parents are overseas. Some of us, our parents don't even speak our language anymore. That's hard sometimes. But each of us, the way to work at, what does it look like to honour my mum or my dad or whoever else?

Start with, what does it look like to imitate Jesus, the obedient son? That's where we start. Okay? Look to Jesus, the obedient one, so you have the pattern and power to obey your parents and the Lord.

[27 : 28] If you have a more specific question, put it on the slider and then we can, yeah, we can explore that. But that is the big picture. Look to Jesus as we obey. Verse four.

Fathers, don't exasperate your children. Instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Okay, who are the dads here? It's not many of us. I guess we're just preaching to ourselves for a little bit.

Feel free to join in, okay, as we just kind of beat ourselves up. We all know the basics, right?

There's a negative command right here, if you can see. Don't exasperate, don't provoke your children to anger, another translation says.

This is a hard passage to preach because my kids are here and they know all the times I've really upset them when I didn't need to. And the positive, right, instead of doing all that junk, bring them up, okay, in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

I think the secret to this part, to understanding this part, is that our English translations, they're a little bit too tame when they say bring them up. In the Greek, when it says bring them up, he chooses the same word he used earlier, okay, in 529, okay?

[28 : 35] So in 529, it's talking about, you know, husbands, right? No one ever hated his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it. The same word for nourish there is used here. Fathers don't provoke your children to anger. Instead, nourish them in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Have you ever thought of parenting as nourishing your kids? Okay, that's our job. That's our job. If you're a dad one day, if you're a mum one day, your job is to nourish your kids like our Father nourishes us, okay?

And nourishing means what? Providing nutrients physically, mentally, spiritually too, okay? Creating space for our kids to laugh, to cry, to feel cared for. Christian parenting is more than just cooking meals and kind of trying to get our kids into the best schools, right?

It's more than that. We have to nourish them, okay? Nourish them. And we nourish them, Paul says, by two things, right? First, by discipline and second, by instruction.

Okay, kind of like two sides to the same coin. Discipline, like loving correction, okay? Imagine a father who disciplines his children for his good. That's what we should be like.

[29 : 42] Never in sinful anger. We read that earlier. Always trying to get back to forgiveness. We also read that earlier, you see? And instruction, okay?

I think sometimes we feel too scared as parents. We try to outsource everything, right? Tutoring school can cover that, okay? Ah, you know, send them to Badminton Club, they'll sort that out.

We do too much outside of the home, right? And some of you have lived through that experience. I don't know. Maybe when you guys become parents, I want you to back yourselves, okay? Don't outsource everything away because actually your children can be instructed by you, okay?

It will look different, okay? No one has to do it exactly the same way. But back yourselves as parents, okay? Because your goal is not to get them to become Einsteins. Your goal is to nourish them, okay?

With the discipline and instruction of the Lord. And I take it to, as a church, we all play a part, okay?

This is talking to fathers, you know, very specifically, but actually as a church, you know, he was writing to a whole church.

[30 : 45] Everyone can get involved. I love it when, you know, some of you come alongside our kids, you know, and teach them and encourage them. Who else can you do that with, okay? We have, we are blessed with so many young adults here who have time and talent and skills and love, okay?

Think about it. Who else in this church family could you look after, bless, okay? Parent, okay?

Because we all have a call to tell the next generation the wondrous deeds of the Lord.

It's actually impossible for me to teach my kids what it looks like to be a faithful uni student who lives for Jesus, right? Because I'm not a uni student. It's impossible for me to show them what it looks like to be a high schooler, right?

And to try and navigate the challenges there and still be faithful to Jesus. Our kids need you and you need everyone else, okay? This is the picture of parenting in a church, right?

And it's God's vision, isn't it? All right? Discipline and instruction, yes, but because we want to nourish our kids, nourish the next generation. I wonder what that will look like for PCBC, okay?

[31 : 55] Maybe as we live this out, people will notice again. They will ask, wow, man, your kids, they're so polite. What's the secret? You know? Oh, wow, okay, your teenagers, you know, they actually look like they're having fun with you, okay?

What's the secret? Behind your parenting, you can picture the son's obedience and the father's nourishment. All right, one last picture. One last picture.

Paul tells us how work pictures our service to our Lord Jesus, right? From verse six to, from verse five to nine, he kind of has this little bit, right? He talks about slaves and masters.

Bit tricky here. In this last section, he's addressing slaves and masters and slavery in first century Rome, it could be pretty harsh, okay? Often when Rome expanded, they caught a lot of people and they kind of just got pressed into service, you know?

Some of them would be manual laborers, that sort of thing. So it was pretty hard, okay? And definitely illegal today, right? Sometimes, actually, in Roman culture, you could choose to be a slave.

[33 : 00] I know it sounds weird, but you could actually say, I want to learn from, say, a doctor. And actually, you could actually put yourself into service as a slave, okay? So sometimes, some of your translations actually say, instead of slave, bond servant.

So, okay. So in Paul's time, that also happened. You could actually choose to be a slave. So I want you to think, it's a very imperfect analogy. What Paul is saying here is an imperfect analogy to being an employee, right?

Okay? You're working for a boss. Or maybe you're an apprentice, you're learning a trade. Or maybe you're a student, okay, learning in a school environment. Okay? And yet, whatever your kind of work, work can be hard, can't it?

Okay? Maybe there's so much of it, maybe it never ends, maybe we put in so much effort and then it's wasted. I want us to think, though, before we zoom too far again into our own work situations, what is the big picture?

What vision did Paul want the Ephesians to have about work? Have a look at verse five, right? It says this, Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear and with sincerity of heart just as you would obey Christ.

[34 : 13] Whoever thinks when they are at school or when they're at uni that they are serving the Lord Jesus Christ. You are. You should be. That's what it says here, isn't it?

Right? Okay, you have two masters, right? Sure. Okay, you've got a lecturer, you've got to hand an essay to or you've got a boss, you've got to submit something to but you are also serving the Lord Jesus. That's what it says.

Christians in the workplace, at school, wherever, should be different. We used to work as though Jesus is our true boss. Okay? And when we get this principle, when we get this big picture, then it will free us.

Okay? We'll start not idolising our work. Okay? All right? If I don't do this perfectly, I'm a disaster, I'm a failure, I have no worth. We won't do that if Jesus is our boss.

Okay? And also, it will free us from fearing it. I don't want to work. You know, I'm scared of making a mistake. All right? There's grace when Jesus is your boss too. Okay? It will free us, right, to work with something that Paul says, a sincere heart or literally a generous heart.

[35 : 16] Okay? Imagine being employees in your workplace that just are generous with their time, their talents. Okay? Their attention. Whether you're changing spreadsheets or nappies, whether you're writing essays or shopping lists, whatever your work is, I don't care.

You are serving the Lord Christ. That's what the Bible says. Let that big picture, that thought, actually change the way you think about your job. And I find these words from Paul in the very end, right, for even bosses, even more shocking.

All right? Verse 9. And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Don't threaten them since you know that he who is both their master and yours is in heaven and there is no favoritism with him.

There was a Roman philosopher. His name was Seneca. He lived during Paul's time and he once had this, said something and I quote, all slaves are enemies. Okay? A pretty common view at the time where, you know, masters versus slaves.

Okay? You know, two different groups of people. You kind of don't talk to them, you don't treat them well, you don't give them time of the day. Okay? I wonder if something, I don't know if some of your workplaces are like that, where like, you never get to see the CEO or whatever.

[36 : 25] That's pretty brutal. And yet, here Paul says to Ephesian slave masters, do the same to them. In other words, treat your slaves in the same way that you treat Jesus.

Wow. Whether slave or master, both give an account to the Lord who judges fairly. Wherever you are on the job tree, okay, some of you are here, maybe some of you one day will be here, you are serving the Lord Jesus.

That never changes. He is your real principal, he's your real boss. And when Jesus is our master, we stop worrying about working to please others. Okay? We're free to work hard.

Okay? Not to please another person. All right? Not to curry favour, just to work hard for Jesus.

Okay? Because we're already slaves of Christ. And he's a good master because he knows what it's like to be a servant.

Because he loves us. Because he'd even die for us. And one day he judges without partiality, with fairness. So that is a big picture that should inspire us as we work.

[37 : 29] Okay? So friends, work hard. Don't skip class. You know, fill in your time sheets when you're serving someone. Do it with gratefulness. Because every time you're working hard, you're serving Jesus.

Okay? You're painting a bigger picture. You're serving Jesus. And friends, I know walking the Christian life, it's not always easy. Okay? We have so many different relationships, right? Networks that we are living in. Okay? I'm a husband or a wife or a son or a daughter. Right? I'm a koko, a tete, whatever. Okay? Whatever your situation right now, can I encourage you in all your relationships, look for the big picture.

Right? That's what Paul teaches. Marriage is a minefield, but Jesus loved his church. So we can submit to his dance, right? Families, aha, they're broken, but the Father nourishes us.

And so we can live to obey the obedient one. And work sucks sometimes, but remember this, Jesus is our servant king and master.

[38 : 30] and we are freed to work for him. Let's pray. Oh, Jesus, we thank you.

We thank you that in so many different ways you are everything to us. You are the promised one who came to this earth and lived fully human yet fully God.

Perfect in every way. And yet, you loved us and died for us. And Father, we confess as we look at the life of Jesus, we feel like chipped tiles, we feel like broken mosaic pieces before him in comparison to him.

But would you work in us? Would you work in us as a church, as people, piece by piece, would you put us together in beautiful ways so that we would be a mosaic of holiness, of righteousness, of goodness, so that people who look at our church see broken pieces, but a beautiful picture of you. Father, would you help us in all of this, we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you. Cool. So can I please invite Pastor William up as we go through some questions on Slido.

[39 : 48] And I will encourage you guys to, you know, as we discuss this question to post your own questions up because this is probably the last opportunity you get to ask questions on Ephesians.

So quickly, quickly type whatever your questions are. But our first question to Pastor William, and it's pretty interesting, is from one week ago but still relevant. What does godly rest look like?

Can godly rest mean secular entertainment? And just adding on to that, like, what's god's view on secular entertainment? Can we, like, not watch K-dramas at all?

Or, like, you know? It sounds like a very personal question from you. Yeah. Alright, so I think there's two questions in there, right? You know, what does rest mean? And what does, how do we view secular entertainment?

Okay, so rest, we need it. Even creation tells us we need it, right? God created the world in six days and then he rested on the seventh day. Okay, it's built into the fabric of life.

[40 : 47] So, if you're, like, the workaholic that never takes a day off, okay, and I'm speaking to myself too sometimes, we need rest, okay? Either you will burn out and it will kill someone that you love or hurt someone you love or you'll rest, okay, and you'll be in it for the long haul.

What that rest looks like is different. God has called us to rest one way by being with God's people to remind each other, okay, of who we are, right, as we've just sung, okay, and how we're to live. So, rest is good, okay? At the same time, there are a lot of you who have lots of free time, okay, and your rest, okay, is probably, you know, using up a lot of time on things that actually probably won't benefit you in the long run, okay?

So, there's a balance, isn't there? I think with, in terms of what we do with our time, Paul, as we've read in Ephesians, he doesn't give you a list of movies you can't watch and movies you can't watch, right?

He wants us to walk in wisdom, okay? So, there'll be some things which you should not even have a hint, okay, not even have anything to do with, sexual immorality, things that are crude choking, okay?

[41 : 53] You've got to be careful, right? You've got to ask yourself, can I watch this and say, I thank you, Lord Jesus, that I was able to watch this today, alright? Those are good questions to ask. And at the same time, one, so I think, two things, pieces of advice, one is, one, I would say, don't be wasteful in your rest, so don't just spend the whole day and then you're like, oh, I never did anything useful, okay?

Yeah. And then also, when you're resting as well, make the most of it, okay? We heard last week, right? Make the most of every opportunity because the days are evil.

Maybe use your rest time to watch something that benefits someone else, okay? Or to invite someone for a coffee or something. Find things that are restful for you and blesses someone else, okay?

There are lots of ways to do that. So those would be some quick tips. I think with the terms of like what to watch and K-dramas and stuff like that, one thing that I find that is helpful, okay? If in good conscience you can watch it, you know, there are some things I think you shouldn't watch, but there are lots of shows which you should watch.

But ask yourself, what does this show, what is the gospel of this show? Okay? I know it's an interesting question, but what is the gospel of Crash Landing on You?

[43 : 07] Okay? What is the gospel of Frozen? Okay? As you watch, then you're not just switch mine off, okay? Just absorb another, okay, gospel.

You're actually asking, okay, what does this say the good life is? Let me talk about it with the person I'm with, that sort of thing, with my kids, okay? So, you know, when we watch, you know, I've got the remote in my hand and they're annoyed sometimes when I pause it, but I'll ask a question or two, because we want to keep on track, you know, what is the gospel of this particular show?

I think that can be helpful, yeah? And actually quite fun as well when you do it, get used to it. So those are my tips, yeah. Totally agree, because, yeah, I found some gospel things in K-dramas.

There you go.

Every good story, all right, of the greatest story. So there are a lot of what actually missionaries called redemptive analogies, which means, you know, in their world, there's something about what God has done, you know, you just have to find it.

So, yeah, worthwhile, worthwhile. One more question, or probably two more. First one, why do the wives submit instead of the husbands?

[44 : 12] And what does submitting involve? Good question. Again, we want to say, this can be a hard topic for some people, all right? There's ungodly behaviors that shouldn't happen, so we want to be wise about this.

But in general, the reason why, I think Paul says, wives submit to your husbands is because, again, he's trying to paint the picture, okay? All right? It's not Jesus submits, you know, to the church and the church died for Jesus, right?

It's a one-way picture that we're trying to paint. Yeah, we're trying to paint, okay? So, there are, you know, and there are good Christians, okay? And they'll probably politely disagree and say, no, the submission only is only mutual, all right?

We can paint the picture of Jesus in lots of other ways and that's not what Paul's saying. But I think he brings it up, doesn't he? He makes such a close connection, right? Submit to your husbands just like Christ, just like the church submits to Christ, okay?

I think that's why, right? There's a, you know, what you're doing, even though it's hard, you're pointing, okay, to the greatest marriage, okay? When Jesus, the bridegroom, laid down his life for his bride at the church.

[45 : 21] So, what does it look like? Great question. You've got to ask Cheryl this. Ask, ask, yeah, just ask Brenda, a lot of the other, yeah, other wives here.

I think they'll give you lots of good advice on what it is and what it isn't, okay? And, you know, we talked about a little bit of what it isn't in the sermon, so there are lots of bad reasons and bad, you know, kind of ideas of what submission looks like.

Yeah. But yeah, come chat with us and we can flesh that out for you. And one more question is, you know, a lot of us here live in a family that our parents are not Christians and sometimes it can be

very hard to follow some of the things that they tell us to do.

For instance, if they're from another religion, such as like, you know, other religious, you know, ceremonies and things like that. So, what is your advice with that? When I told my mum that I'd become a Christian, when I started going to church, yeah, she flipped.

She flipped. Why was it, why is it Christianity? Why couldn't it be anything else? You know, I think there's a good reason that Jesus says, anyone who loves me sometimes must hate his father and mother.

[46 : 29] There's that to balance out with. There are so many ways I can still honour my mum and dad. I think one of the things that we make a mistake with, if you're like me, you've got unbelieving parents, is that they think that you following Jesus means you hate your family, okay, or you've rejected them in some way.

Because sometimes, you know, the religion and culture are very intertwined. So what you want to do is find lots of ways, even if you are committed to your first love, Jesus, to show them lots of ways where, because you follow Jesus, you're a more obedient son or daughter, you're more helpful, you're more loving in your family, you know, you're the peacemaker, not the one that starts all the arguments, that sort of thing.

There are lots of ways, yeah, but, yeah, definitely it's hard, you know, it's a hard road, and, yeah, we can pray about it later as well.