

Walking Worthy in Wicked Days (part 2)

2025-11-16 – Ephesians 6:1-9



We are called to walk worthy of our calling in days that are wicked. In order to make the most of our time, we must rely on the Spirit to fill us so that our walk would reflect the Gospel story we are a part of. This week, we will continue to look at how we can walk as those filled by the Spirit in our homes and as the body of Christ.

Well, good morning. If you've got your Bibles, I want to invite you to open to Ephesians chapter 6, verses 1 through 9. We are in the second to last week of our series in the book of Ephesians, **One Body, Saints Standing Side by Side**. And this is a “part 2”. If you were here last week, we talked about how to make the most of our time, how to “**Walk worthy in wicked days**”.

How to Walk Worthy in Wicked Days (part 2)

Make the most of your time in these evil days (5:15-21)

And last week, “Part 1”, we looked at Ephesians 5:15 through 21, and then looked through the rest of chapter 5. And it's important to note as we begin today, we're starting in the middle of a sermon, and we're doing this because from Ephesians 5:15 through 6:9, Paul is dismantling the commonly held worldview of his day. Paul is saying that the way you view humanity—Roman believers in Ephesus and beyond—is not the way Scripture calls us to view humanity.

Today, as we read through this passage, we are going to cover two of the biggest issues facing the modern church and its future. We're going to cover the issue of parenting in children and parents in that relationship, and we're gonna talk about slaves and masters. And today, we are going to see the two areas where I see Christians often wilt back instead of stand firm as those made in the image of God with a biblical worldview. And so my prayer for you as we dig in is that you will hear the message at hand, and it will grab hold of your heart, and you will be prepared,

- 1) to parent your children—for those of you who have them—and
- 2), to stand in a world that says the Bible is irrelevant and even problematic.

Because the passage at hand today is one of the passages that has helped shape and change the world for the better, even as the world is wicked in its ways.

To that end, I'm gonna pray, and then we will dig into our passage.

Father in heaven, we thank you for this day. God, we thank you that for those here, for those of us who are believers, you have made us saints. We are your chosen children. And it is all because of the work of your son through your immeasurable power and your immeasurable grace and your immeasurable love. I pray right now, Lord, that your spirit would be moving in our midst in mighty ways this morning, that you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear what your word has to say. And Father, I pray as we dig in that you would speak to me and speak through me, that these would be your words and not mine. And I thank you, Lord, for this time that we have, and I thank you for the example we have in your son. It is in Jesus' holy and precious name we pray. Amen.

Well, we're starting with a point already on the board. I hope you see that. **Make the most of your time in these evil days.** And that's because as we start in chapter six, it's building on what we read last week in Ephesians 5:15-21. Last week we talked about how Paul's big command—the days are evil, the world is evil—so what can you do? You can make the most of your time. And he says in verses 15-21,

Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk—not as unwise people but as wise—making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So don't be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Ephesians 5:15-17 CSB

Pay careful attention then to how you walk, not as unwise people, but as wise, making the most of the time because the days are evil. So don't be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. (Ephesians 5:15-17). Paul is saying, as you see evil in the world, it should cause you—and you should be—focused on walking faithfully. He's summarizing and adding to the big idea of the second half of Ephesians. We have been made worthy by the work of Christ. We were dead in our sins, but by his immeasurable power and grace and love, we have been made alive. We are called to walk worthy of what he has done.

And in walking worthy, the first challenge—and we looked at this in Ephesians 4—the first challenge is, well, how on earth do we do that? If the whole theme of Ephesians 1 through 3 is we were dead and unworthy of what Christ has done, how on earth do we live up to that? Well, Christ did not leave us empty-handed. He gave us the gifts of the Spirit. He gave us the body, the church, and we are called with one another to build each other up within the body that we, as the church, will walk worthy. And then we talked about we need to put off our old way of living, the things of us that were part of our lives when we were dead in our sin. We need to put those aside, take those off, put those off. Be renewed by the Spirit, and put on what we are called to do in Christ. We were children of darkness, and now we are children of light. And so we need to pay careful attention to how we walk.

And don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless living, but **BE FILLED** by the Spirit:
speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs,
singing and **making music** with your heart to the Lord,

giving thanks always for everything to God the Father
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
submitting to one another in the **fear** of Christ.

Ephesians 5:18-21 CSB

Paul's big idea, as he keeps going, is *don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless living, but be filled by the Holy Spirit. Speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music with your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and submitting to one another in the fear of Christ* (Ephesians 5:18-21). The big idea: be filled with the Spirit. It's the main command. And what Paul is saying, it's not the moment of your salvation. When you were saved, you were sealed by the Spirit. You have assurance and hope for all eternity. But being filled by the Spirit is being filled and strengthened by the Spirit to walk worthy each and every day. Making the most of our time means the way we speak, the way we worship, the way we give thanks, and the way that we interact with one another should be built on the gospel message, and we should be reliant on the Spirit to do it well.

When we talked last week, we focused on husbands and wives. Wives are called to submit to their husbands. That is a part of their calling in order to be filled with the Spirit. Husbands are to love their wives, and to love their wives at the standard of how Christ loved the church. Husbands, if you weren't here last week, don't take from what I just said—"wives submit"—take from it, lay down your life for your wife, because that is what we are called to as husbands. The marriage should be a picture of the gospel, not just for the husband and wife to see, but for all who witness the marriage to see. And marriage is a picture of the mystery of the gospel and how Christ is the bridegroom and the church is his bride.

How to Walk Worthy in Wicked Days (part 2)

Make the most of your time in these evil days (5:15-21)

Make your household a model of the Gospel for all to see (6:1-4)

This week, we're going to keep moving. We're in this same idea of being filled by the Spirit. And now as we look at how to make the most of our time and **how to walk worthy in wicked days**, we're gonna look at children and parents and slaves and masters.

To begin with, our big idea for parents and children is to make your household a model of the gospel for all to see. Some of you, if you remember what I say, you may say, "Matt, this is the same point as last week." That's not my fault; it's Paul's. Paul is building the big idea of the Christian household and what it should look like in the Roman Empire. He is speaking to a people that are radically different than us today, the way that they see the world.

As we read about children and parents and slaves and masters, I want to make sure you understand he's not talking about our modern world. The simplest way I can explain this is if you

are a fan of the Chicago Cubs. If you hear someone who's like fifteen say, "Oh, the Cubs haven't won the World Series in forever." ... If you know, 2016, the first time they won in a very long time, right? Like, we have a very different worldview about the Chicago Cubs on the other side of 2016. It's a silly little thing, but it changes and shapes, and when we read the passages today, we need to recognize this isn't just "Somebody won the World Series a few years ago." We are going back into a worldview where the very value of each human's life was different based on their order in the household. So as we read this, we're going to glean what we can take from it, but I'm also going to draw your attention to what the people of that day believed and how radical the Bible is.

Make your household a model of the gospel for all to see.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, because this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise, so that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life in the land. Fathers, don't stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:1-4 CSB

Here's what we read in Ephesians 6:1-4: ****Children, obey your parents in the Lord**** (Ephesians 6:1). And you may say, "Well, of course children should obey their parents in the Lord." And a Roman in that day would have said, "Children obey your parents; that makes sense." But the "in the Lord"—they would have been confused. "In the Lord"—those words give the idea that the child is doing it not because they have to obey their parents, but in obedience first to the Lord, and to give glory to the Lord. And you read, ****children obey your parents in the Lord****, and you go, "Okay, that makes sense." But in their day, those little words "in the Lord" were radical. Because you see a father in a household in that day—a "**pater familias**", as they would have been called, the head of a Roman household—had the right to do whatever they wanted to their children. In fact, beating their children in order to discipline them, and even if they didn't do anything wrong, but to just show them "I'm in charge"—there are accounts of that historically—and a head of a household, a father in a household who would beat his children or who would teach his children to obey with rigid authority, that was seen as a value to that father and that head of the household. Children who didn't obey were seen as terrible in every way in their culture.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord (Ephesians 6:1). These are radical words in this day because the child is not being told "obey because your father is the ultimate authority in your life," but because the Lord is. It goes on, **Children, obey your parents in the Lord because this is right. Honor your father and mother** (Ephesians 6:1-2). This is now quoting from the Ten Commandments, **which is the first commandment with a promise: so that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life in the land** (Ephesians 6:2-3; cf. Exodus 20:12). The promise in the Ten Commandments for those who obeyed their parents was that the Lord would bless them in their life in the land. The challenge for parents—if you read carefully, in Deuteronomy, the Israelites are told, **teach these**

commands to your children. Say them morning, say them night, repeat them day after day** (Deuteronomy 6:7). And if your children obey and honor these commands, their lives will be blessed in the promised land.

The passage goes on, **Fathers, don't stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord** (Ephesians 6:4). Now, for our audience here, I don't—like you're all, of course, children—but I'm mostly talking to those in the role of parent today. And I want to start with something that's incredibly radical in this passage for our modern worldview. Parents, you need to raise your children to obey you. In our modern world, that's lost. I'm speaking right now as someone who is in youth ministry. I was a youth pastor seven years, and before that I worked with youth for a very long time. And I worked with youth before smartphones, and then I went to Moody, and then I worked with youth after smartphones. And let me tell you, I used to think when I first started working with youth after graduating from seminary, the biggest issue for children was smartphones, and it's a pretty big issue. And we'll talk about it in a minute, but a higher issue and a bigger issue and a greater problem is that parents don't parent their children. They don't hold them to obey.

I can give many examples of this anecdotally. I can give many examples from social science. I could go 40 places, but I'll just tell you a story. When I was a youth pastor, there was a mom who I came to talk to because her son at Sunday school would sit in the front row and he'd play games on his phone or he'd text people. And at youth group, he would play games or he would text people and say, "Put your phone away." And I finally said, "I'm gonna talk to your mom about it." And he said, "Go for it." I was like, "Okay. Okay." And so I went to the mom and I said, "Hey, your son is being so disruptive at youth group. He's got his phone out all the time." And what I was expecting, I was like, "You know, I'm gonna have to take it away, but I'd prefer if maybe you told him not to bring it or if you talked to him about it." And so I'm thinking I'm partnering with the parent. And her response—I have to not be angry as I say it—was, "Well, how are you teaching him that he doesn't wanna listen?" She put it on me.

And we can all laugh at this. But if you talk to teachers and you talk to people that lead kids and have to interact with parents, this is not uncommon. I once had a student steal a cell phone case from someone else when he was going to the bathroom. We caught it on camera, we brought the mom in to talk about it, and the mom told us in an unironic way, she said, "Why didn't a leader walk with him to the bathroom so he wasn't tempted by that?" And good, good responses, good responses, okay?

But parents, it's easy when it's outside your household to identify this. But inside your household, is your goal with your kids' comfort, or is it to teach them to obey, to instruct them, to bring them up? I talk to parents all the time who talk about, "Oh, I wish my kids weren't on their screen so much." If your child is in your household and you don't like their screen time and you say that to other people and you don't adjust your child's screen time, shame on you. It's these devices;

they're addictive, and you're watching your child use it. That's addictive, and you're like, "I wish they wouldn't do that so much," and you're doing nothing.

Parents, your job is not for your child to be comfortable in your house. The deeper irony in our society is we start to think that kids are adults at 13. This is like a very common thing, is that parents treat their kids; they say, "Oh, they've got to make decisions for themselves at 13." But all of our data and social science says that adolescents used to be 13 to 18, but in the way we raise kids, now it's 13 to 25. We do such a disservice to kids because we do not raise them up.

In the passage it says, "**Fathers, don't stir up anger in your children** (Ephesians 6:4), but in our modern society, I want to say fathers, you probably need to stir your children up to anger more. Now don't be a jerk about it. That's what this is about. Don't do it to be petty. But in my experience with many families I've talked with, the parents need to be willing to say no and then hold the boundary. Because kids don't know what to do with that.

I will give another example. Parents, if your kids—if you tell them they need to do something and they say, "I don't want to," and you take them there and they do it and they come back after and complain. I would regularly have family say, "Hey, my child doesn't want to come to youth group." And I'd say, "Bring them anyways." And they'd say they came and they hated it. And I'd say, "No, they didn't. When they were here, they were playing, they were talking. They don't know anybody." "Well, they were sharing in their small group." "Well, my child was doing that to put on a brave face." "Okay, make them put on a brave face 100 more times." If your child says they don't have friends somewhere that you value and want them to go, make them go. They'll figure it out. What are you gonna do when they go off to college if they don't have friends at college, so they don't wanna go? What are you gonna do when they need to go out into the world? Your job is not to teach your child how to be comfortable, but how to be equipped as they go into the world.

Parents, this is an issue all across the world. It's an issue especially in Western culture. It's an issue because we give our kids so much freedom and responsibility. And then gentle parenting—we try and help them process it rather than recognize that they're not fully formed yet. Our job is to help them grow and mature.

If I can encourage you, parents, above all things, if your child has a cell phone, you should know every app on it. You should have restrictions on it. If you don't, parents, shame on you. And I mean this harshly because if your child—if you pay for their phone and you don't know what they look at on it and don't know what they do on it—all of the data says they do the things you don't want. If I can say boldly, I hate Snapchat, and I hate Snapchat because it was designed for young women to send pictures to men and for them to be deleted, and now it's how youth primarily talk to each other. Look at what our culture does. And parents, if you don't know what your children are doing on their devices, it's not, "Well, I don't know." No, they are your responsibility. Take this seriously.

If you're a parent that's sitting here thinking, "Well, I've got a 17-year-old. They're going to be out of the house in a year, and I've never wrestled through this with them. What do I do now?" Well, you start right now. It'll be painful. They'll be upset. You will provoke them to anger because they'll say, "You can't take my phone, you can't this, you can't that." Your job is not to make your child happy. It's to help them—train them up in holiness, to help them walk before the Lord. Do that. It will be a blessing.

I was at a wedding last night. And I got to do the wedding. It was a wonderful wedding. It was for a couple I've known for almost 10 years. I saw them before they got married. Of course, before they got married. I saw them before they started dating. I saw them growing up. I saw them when they liked each other and when they kind of liked each other. I saw all of that in their lives. And I saw them grow and I saw their families raise them up well in the Lord. And last night I got to sit there, and I got to do the wedding ceremony, and then after, I got to hear the parents give their speeches. And to these young 25-year-olds starting their new life together, I sat there thinking, "Well done, parents." It was such a blessing because what they put first in their kids' life was their relationship with the Lord. And it was evident in every word said at the wedding.

Parents, raise your kids up in the way they should go. Don't outsource that. Fathers, you want your daughter to date someone that follows the Lord, that loves the Lord, so take your daughter on dates. I danced with Lucy. I'm a terrible dancer. She is too. It's genetic. But do the things with your child that you want someday their spouse to do with them. I just want to insist to you, don't outsource that. You are the primary disciple maker in your child's life.

If I can say boldly, I sometimes—I was a youth pastor seven years at a church—and sometimes I get texts from kids. But most of the time, the only times I—like at the wedding—I saw other kids and got to say hi. But you know what kids do when they go off to college and when they keep moving? They don't call their old youth pastor; they call their mom or they call their dad to process. Make sure when they call you, they know they're going to hear something grounded in the word.

Bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). That is your responsibility. If the church wants to remain strong, that is our starting point. This is why we have things like Awana, children's ministry, youth ministry. It's why we put so many resources in and why we praise the Lord for those who serve down there. But parents, the church is not responsible to disciple your children above your responsibility. We will do everything we can to help you and to build you up in that. But if you're wondering when your child gets older, "Wow, the youth group didn't do enough for my child, or the youth pastor wasn't connected enough, or this or that," if any of those things are the things that you blame it on, you have missed the mark on your responsibility.

Parents, don't let someone else be the primary disciple maker in your child's life while they're in your home. That is your calling within the household.

For those of you without kids, you've been sitting here smug, thinking this doesn't apply to me.

How to Walk Worthy in Wicked Days (part 2)

Make the most of your time in these evil days (5:15-21)

Make your household a model of the Gospel for all to see (6:1-4)

But do you remember where we started in Ephesians? Before the foundation of the world, the Father who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing, he chose us and adopted us as his children. **Children, obey your Father** (cf. Ephesians 1:3-6). If you are a follower of Jesus, whether you are a parent, whether you are a child, whoever you are, you are a child of God. We just sang it. And if you are a child of God, the call that you have is to obey him. The call that you have is to follow after him. This is not just a command for children and not just a command for parents—just like the husbands and wives. Christ is the bridegroom; we are the bride. Paul is dismantling the worldview of the day even as he's reinforcing who we are in Christ. If you are a believer, you are a child of God. Obey your heavenly Father.

To obey him, you have to be in the word. You have to be with other believers using your spiritual gifts with one another. You have to be worshiping and giving thanks and submitting to one another out of reverence and fear of Christ. Make your household a model for the gospel for all to see.

How to Walk Worthy in Wicked Days (part 2)

Make the most of your time in these evil days (5:15-21)

Make your household a model of the Gospel for all to see (6:1-4)

Make sure your faith is founded on the Word of God (6:5-9)

And now we're going to move to our last point. And the point for this is make sure your faith is founded on the word of God. And this point is kind of a side point of the passage, I must confess. Because as we talk about slaves and masters today, I want to tell you, we're going to talk about the Roman worldview, and it's going to help you understand what Paul is saying here. But one of the things for me as a pastor that I do is I watch a lot of apologetics videos and debates where people are talking about their faith. And the strongest argument that people make in our modern culture against the Bible—where they say the Bible is problematic—there's a few of them, but the one that always makes people falter is “the Bible doesn't condemn slavery. In fact, it condones it.” And the reason people say that is because they read Ephesians 6:5 through 9. This passage is one of the most quoted passages by those that are seeking to diminish and bring down the authority of the Bible.

Slaves, obey your human masters with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as you would Christ. Don't work only while being watched, as people-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, do God's will from your heart. Serve with a good attitude, as to the Lord and not to people, knowing that whatever good each one does, slave or free, he will receive this back from the Lord. And masters, treat your slaves the same way, without threatening them, because you know that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

Ephesians 6:5-9 CSB

Here's what it says: ***Slaves, obey your human masters with fear and trembling in the sincerity of your heart as you would Christ. Don't work only while being watched as people pleasers, but as slaves of Christ. Do God's will from your heart. Serve with a good attitude as to the Lord and not the people, knowing that whatever good each one does, slave or free, he will receive this back from the Lord. And masters, treat your slaves the same way, without threatening them, because you know that both their master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him*** (Ephesians 6:5-9).

Now here's the problem. In the American slave trade, when that was going on, this verse—“***slaves obey your human masters***” (Ephesians 6:5)—is how many slave masters rationalized what they did. And those who were proponents of slavery, they used Ephesians 6:5 through about 7. They didn't go all the way down because that would have dismantled them. And today, when you hear debates or when you hear people saying, “You shouldn't follow the Bible,” all the time, they quote, “***slaves obey your human masters with fear and trembling***” (Ephesians 6:5). “The Bible's okay with it.”

The problem is many things. First and foremost, the assumption by many that make the claim that the Bible's okay with slavery is they think that Paul is writing this to the government of Rome. He's not. In the time he's writing in Rome, just about everyone he is writing to at Ephesus—and this letter wasn't just for Ephesus, but to be passed on and on and on—most believers in that day would have been under the category of slave. And he is telling them, ***slaves obey your human masters with fear and trembling, in sincerity with your hearts as you would Christ*** (Ephesians 6:5), because it's a part of their—it's just a part of how they are going to share the gospel in the way that they live.

Paul confronts the practical issue of how slaves can deal with their situation, not whether slavery should be abolished (an issue not relevant to his point in the context of household codes); even a violent revolution could not have ended slavery in the Roman Empire. But the way he deals with the issue leaves no doubt where he would have stood had we put the theoretical question of slavery's abolition to him: people are equals before God (6:9), and slavery is therefore against God's will.

IVP Bible Background Commentary: NT

On top of that, it's a very different world in which they live, because when Paul is writing this, *Paul is confronting the practical issue of how slaves can deal with their situation, not whether slavery should be abolished—an issue not relevant to his point in the context of household codes.*

Even a violent revolution in that day could not have ended slavery in the Roman Empire. But the way he deals with the issue leaves no doubt where he would have stood had we put the theoretical question of slavery's abolition to him. People are equals before God; masters and slaves, you serve the same master. And slavery is therefore against God's will.

We get caught up on the word “slave” here. In their day, no one would have been caught up on that word. They would have got to the word “master.” ***Treat your slaves the same way, because you know that both their master and yours is in heaven*** (Ephesians 6:9). In their day, those words were radical in every way.

Pater familias

The oldest male Roman citizen in a household was the *pater familias*, exercising autocratic authority within the household

And here we need to talk about the “pater familias”. In Roman society, the oldest male Roman citizen in a household was the pater familias, exercising autocratic authority within the household. What they said went as long as it did not go against the Roman law of the day. In a Roman household in that day, the head of the household had all the power. And you're thinking, “We have a whole bunch of heads of households here.” But there weren't that many Roman citizens in that day who were heads of households. And so what you would have is you would have a head of a household, then you would have their wife and their children, and then you would have all of these other people that were connected to a house. And they were slaves. It wouldn't be like every household when you go out here and look—house, house, house. No. The households were built in such a different way in their day. It was not that everyone could be a head of a household.

And I need to just say, some of you are thinking, “Well, in “Gladiator”, they say, ‘all men should be free’ and all these.” There is no such thing as a historically accurate movie, because every single—unless it's modern times or maybe future times, I can't speak to that—but there's no such thing as a historically accurate movie because we cannot instill the ancient worldview on ourselves as we watch it. When you watch old movies and they talk about freedom and all of these things the way that we talk about it today, we're like, “They were just like us.” They were not. They had a very different worldview.

There are famous social scientists who talk about—and they're atheists and agnostics. I didn't have time to compile all the quotes, but there is a theme where people who talk about the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence and the inalienable human rights that we have in the United States, they point out how the seedbed of all of that came from Scripture. All of the things that we today say, “Well, all men should be free.” In Roman society in 60 AD when Paul wrote this—no one was thinking about this. In fact, it's even more than that because as you think about this, if a Roman slave owner would have said, “I'm going to free my slave,” he would have

put the slave in a worse situation. If a Roman slave owner, a pater familias in a house would have said, "I'm going to free all my Christian slaves," they would have had to go find new households to attach to, because that was their day. They didn't have rights the way we have rights today. Their entire worldview was different. We read back into this and we have no idea how radical it was in its day.

Pater familias

The oldest male Roman citizen in a household was the *pater familias*, exercising autocratic authority within the household

The *pater familias* was of a higher class of soul than those beneath them in the household

The pater familias in their day—this isn't what the Bible says, but what the Romans believed—was that the pater familias was of a higher class of soul than those beneath them in the household.

The Pater familias was the greatest in the household in both power and "substance"

Head, Wife, Kids, Slaves

Now what this means in practical terms is that the head of the household—he was a very good soul. If you're the head man in your household, if you were in ancient Rome, everyone would look at you and say, "No, that guy, that guy's a fully formed; he is divinely above these other people. Look at how amazing his soul is." I'm not buttering you up because Scripture says this isn't true. But the wife would be lesser. And everyone agreed with this, that only the head in the household had a fully formed soul. Read Aristotle; he's got a work called "Politics". He talks about the wife as a helper to the husband. She's pretty good, but her soul is not complete. The children have lesser souls. And then the slaves have even lesser souls. Aristotle, a famous philosopher, he talked about slaves as tools in the hands of their masters. And they were less than and less than and less than.

And Paul—think about what we've heard. Paul says, ****wives submit to your husbands as unto the Lord**** (Ephesians 5:22), not because your husband is greater than you, but because created order, the husband is the head of the wife. ****Children obey your parents**** (Ephesians 6:1) because of how God designed the child-parent relationship. ****Masters, treat your slaves as equals**** (cf. Ephesians 6:9), because they are, because you have the same master in heaven.

Pater familias

The oldest male Roman citizen in a household was the *pater familias*, exercising autocratic authority within the household

The *pater familias* was of a higher class of soul than those beneath them in the household

Above the *pater familias* was the Roman emperor, the *pater familias* over all of Rome

These words were radical, and they become even more radical when you read and consider the whole picture of the Roman Empire, because each *pater familias* was a head connected to the Roman emperor who was the head above all heads.

The *Pater familias* was the greatest in the household in both power and “substance”

Caesar, Head, Wife, Kids, Slaves

Caesar was the head head, and then everyone was connected. And you read this and go, “Okay, what does this mean for us?” When people say “the Bible's okay with slavery; the Bible's okay with all of these things,” what's happening in Ephesians 5:15 through 6:9 is Paul is saying the entire human worldview that Romans have in this day is wrong. Because who is the true head? Christ! And if you are connected to the body, you are a child of God. He is the head. You are the bride. He is the bridegroom. If you're a slave, you're a slave to he who is your master.

Slaves, obey your human **masters** with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as you would Christ. Don't work only while being watched, as people-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, do God's will from your heart. Serve with a good attitude, as to the Lord and not to people, knowing that whatever good each one does, slave or free, he will receive this back from the Lord. And **masters**, treat your slaves the same way, without threatening them, because you know that both their **Master** and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

Ephesians 6:5-9 CSB

Paul is dismantling in his day each and everything in the worldview of the day that would make people think that they are more than or less than one another. He is saying you are equal in the eyes of God. He is saying you are equal because of the work of Christ.

How to Walk Worthy in Wicked Days (part 2)

Make the most of your time in these evil days (5:15-21)

Make your household a model of the Gospel for all to see (6:1-4)

Make sure your faith is founded on the Word of God (6:5-9)

And by the way, when we talk about this—this is, I get goosebumps saying this. Okay, so you remember when we were in Ephesians 1. In Ephesians 1, you're a chosen child of God. And then it talks about God displayed his immeasurable power because he raised Christ up and seated him in the place that is above every other place. And then in Ephesians 2, it talks about us and we were dead in our sins, but we were raised with Christ because of his immeasurable grace. And he

seated us with him. We're not scaled down. We've been brought up to equality with Christ. This worldview is so radical. We live in a world that has been blessed and shaped by it for 2,000 years, where even as the world scoffs at the Bible, people do not understand that the inalienable rights that they feel entitled to did not exist before God put them in his word. It is such a wonderful thing for us to realize.

And when you start to see this, you realize that the word is our foundation and it is not something we should not shrink from. It's not when somebody says, "Well, it's okay with this or it's okay with that." We should say, "Friend, you have no idea." You may not be able to explain all of that on your own. You may not have all the quotes from Aristotle or all the old ancient Roman laws related to this, but I want to encourage you: The Bible is not a book that says humans are slaves and it's good for some to rule others. We were all made in the image of God. The one thing humanity was not commanded to rule in the garden, was, each other. We were to rule over the beasts of the earth and subdue the earth and control it, not subdue one another. The first sin was to try and be like God. The next sin—Cain, Abel—what did Cain do? He wanted favor from God, so he dominated and put power over his brother. But you look at this and start to see it, and you see how because of the fall, the world is so distorted, and yet the gospel seeks to write it.

And for all who believe, the Bible is not something that is outdated and problematic; it builds us up in Christ into the one true family that is good and the one worldview that is truly righteous. My friends, I want to encourage you: We are in a world that tells us "let your kids make their choices"; we are in a world that tells us the Bible is outdated; we are in a world that tells us that these things do not add value. We know that's not true. Live like you know that's not true.

And don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless living,
but **BE FILLED** by the Spirit:
 speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs,
 singing and **making music** with your heart to the Lord,
 giving thanks always for everything to God the Father
 in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 submitting to one another in the **fear** of Christ.

Ephesians 5:18-21 CSB

Be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:18-19). If you remember, I talked about this last week. Speak the word of God to one another, which means be in the word of God. Be ready to encourage one another from the word of God. Be ready to point one another to the truths of the word of God. **Sing and make music** (Ephesians 5:19), not just when we're at church worshiping together, but in your homes. My kids, when we do meals together, we hold hands. Not all the time, but sometimes we sing the doxology together. And it's wonderful because my son can't pronounce all the words, but he's got them all in his heart. **Sing and make music**. Worship together. Make your home a hub of worship, whether you're alone or with others.

Give thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:20). In your lowest moment, you can always say, "God, before the foundation of the world, you have chosen me as your child; you have shown me your immeasurable power and grace and love." **And we submit to one another** within the body and within our homes because that is how God designed things. He gave some gifts to be teachers and shepherds and others gifts to do other things, and so we **submit to one another** (Ephesians 5:21) for the glory of God because of the work of Christ.

How to Walk Worthy in Wicked Days (part 2)

Make the most of your time in these evil days (5:15-21)
Make your household a model of the Gospel for all to see (6:1-4)
Make sure your faith is founded on the Word of God (6:5-9)

We're called to **walk worthy in these wicked days**. We're called to make the most of our time. And we're not gonna do it if we're not founded on the word, and if we are not seeking to do it each and every day in our homes. We cannot control what the world does, but we can pay careful attention to how we walk.

Let's pray.

Father in heaven, we thank you for how amazing your word is. We thank you for how amazing the gospel is, that we can stand before you not as those of lesser status because Christ humbled himself and took on the form of a servant, that as he is lifted up, you would raise us up with him. We thank you that as your children, we can stand before you because of the work of your son. And we praise you.

Father, we pray as we go out into the world. I pray for all the parents here that you would be emboldening them to stand firm in a world that mocks the idea of parents raising their children well. I pray, Father, for our parents that you would empower them with their children to raise them and to teach them and instruct them in the way that they should go because of your word. And I pray for our children, Lord. I praise you for those who lead them, and I praise you that we have so many that put their hearts and minds into lifting these kids up. And I pray, Lord, that we would be raising this next generation well.

And Father, I pray for all of us as we seek to follow you, that we would do so with sincere hearts, trusting in your word, trusting in your promises, and that we would follow in the example of your Son, who followed you perfectly. We pray all of this in Jesus' holy and precious name. Amen.



Digging Deeper – **Walking Worthy in Wicked Days (part 2)** - Ephesians 6:1-9

1. What stood out to you from the sermon?

Read Ephesians 5:15-6:1-9 (focus on 6:1-9)

2. What stands out to you as you read through the passage?
3. What are some ways that you see the days being evil related to parents and children?
4. For parents, what are some of the ways you need to focus on instructing and raising up your children?
5. Do you have questions for other parents about how they handle aspects of instructing and leading their children? This would be a great place to ask them.

For the next questions, as a group consider how you would respond to someone saying the following things. Take time to consider your responses and how you would evidence them from Scripture:

6. How would you respond to someone telling you the following statements? What examples would you use from Scripture, your life, and recent sermons?
 - a. “Christianity is oppressive to women because of Ephesians 5:22.”
 - b. “Parents need to let their children figure things out for themselves and shouldn’t tell them how to live.”
 - c. “Children have to obey their parents no matter what, no matter the age, no matter the circumstance.”
 - d. “The Bible is an outdated book because it doesn’t condemn slavery.”

7. Take some time to end in prayer by sharing prayer requests and praying for one another.