

Children and Parents, Servants and Masters

1. Paul sets high standards for believers as far as getting along with each other (5:19-21), and living as husbands and wives (5:22-33), as Christian children (6:1-3), as Christian parents (6:4), as Christian slaves, servants and employees (6:5-8), and as Christian masters/employers (6:9). Where does Paul say the power comes from that enables us to live up to such high standards? (5:18) How would you explain this principle to a new believer?
2. What does God say elsewhere about what He thinks of children? (See Psalm 127:3-5; Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:16-17). Why does Paul say it is “right” for children to obey their parents? (1)
3. What does it mean to “honor” a parent? (2) What if a parent is not considered worthy of honor? What does the Bible say about how to treat elderly parents? (See 1 Timothy 5:4)
4. The Greek word for “father” is *patér*, which can also be used to refer to both parents (as in Hebrews 11:23). What does it mean for parents to “not provoke your children to anger”? (4)
5. Look up Deuteronomy 6:5-7 and Proverbs 22:6. What are God’s instructions to parents about how to raise godly children in these passages? What do the following verses in Proverbs say about children listening to godly parents? (See Proverbs 1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 4:1, 4; 5:1; 7:1). What are the consequences of not listening to godly wisdom from parents? (Proverbs 30:11, 17).
6. Why doesn’t Paul suggest that slaves do everything they can to escape their situation? (5; see 1 Corinthians 7:20-24) The words “fear and trembling” refer to respect and reverence. What attitudes does Paul tell slaves to have toward their masters? (5-7; see Colossians 3:22)
7. Read verse 8 along with Colossians 3:23-24. Do we as free people today have any less duty than this standard as we serve our employers and customers? What does Proverbs 22:29 say about what the quality of our work should be?
8. Contrast worldly attitudes toward work today with God’s commands to respect the boss (5), put in an honest day’s work (6), maintain a positive attitude (7), and work for the Lord in our employment (8). How did Jesus view His service to His Father? (See Mark 10:42-45; Hebrews 10:7).
9. Compare what servants are commanded to do in verses 5-8 with what “masters” or employers are commanded to do in v. 9. What are “masters” commanded to stop doing, and what reason is given for stopping that practice? (9) How do we sometimes show partiality to those who serve us in some capacity? (For example: in restaurants, airports, hotels, retail venues, etc.)
10. Read Mark 10:42-45. What was Jesus’ attitude toward serving others? Discuss some ways we can grow in being a servant of Jesus, both within church and in our daily lives outside church.