

# Too Comfortable? Week 6

Sermon date 3/5/2017

## QUICK REVIEW

- 1) Upon reviewing your notes from Sunday's teaching, was there anything that caught your attention?

## The Goal

Last week we discussed the place where we are most comfortable—our homes. We unpacked the passages from Ephesians 5 and Luke 22. The goal was to uncover the areas where our comfort meet God's challenge. This week we will continue to unpack passages regarding the family. The passage we will be focusing on the most is Ephesians 6. This is the passage about parents and children. We are going to unpack this from an open perspective, meaning we all have had parents and have been a child at one point or another, or we have children or grandchildren of our own. We can learn from these passages from this perspective. The goal is to help it apply to the group members even if they are not currently parents.

## MY STORY

- 2) What theme or idea has God been speaking to you personally about throughout this study?
- 3) What was your takeaway from last week's study?
- 4) Did you do something different in your family because of last week's study, and if so, will you share it with your group?

## DIGGING DEEPER

Read Ephesians 6:1-3

<sup>1</sup>Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do.

<sup>2</sup>"Honor your father and mother." This is the first commandment with a promise: <sup>3</sup>If you honor your father and mother, "things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth."

We will be breaking the above passage into two sections, the first regarding children's responsibility. Below is a commentary from "The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures."

<sup>ii</sup>The Spirit-controlled life (5:18) is necessary for having a good parent-child relationship. 6:1–3. **Children** are to **obey** their **parents**. The phrase **in the Lord** does not mean that children are to obey parents only if their parents are believers. As Colossians 3:20 clearly denotes, a child's obedience to his parents is pleasing in the Lord's sight. The reason **for this** is that it is **right** (*dikaion*); it is a proper course to follow in society. Paul then quoted the fifth commandment (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16) to support the need for children to obey parents (Eph. 6:2a, 3). The parenthetical clause states that this **is the first commandment with a promise**. But this is actually the second command with a promise (cf. Ex. 20:6). Some say Paul meant that this is the first command that children need to learn. But the first, not the fifth, of the Ten Commandments should really be learned first. More likely, Paul meant that this is "first" in the sense of being "a primary commandment," that is, of primary importance for children and it also has a promise. The promise for those who obey their parents is **that they enjoy a prosperous and long life on the earth**. This states a general principle that obedience fosters self-discipline, which in turn brings stability and longevity in one's life. (Stated conversely, it is improbable that an undisciplined person will live a long life. An Israelite who persistently disobeyed his parents was not privileged to enjoy a long, stable life in the land of Israel. A clear example of this was Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas [1 Sam. 4:11].) Though that promise was given to Israel in the Old Testament, the principle still holds true today.

We recognize that many of us are in different stages regarding this passage. Some people are parents while some are not. When answering these questions, please answer them from your current circumstances. If your parents are not around or are no longer in your life, answer them from the perspective of God as the Father in your life.

- 5) What does it mean for children to obey their parents?
- 6) Is Paul (the author of this passage) referring only to believing parents or to all?
- 7) What does the word "honor" mean?
- 8) What are some ways we can honor and obey even when it's hard?

Here are some synonyms of Honor

<sup>iii</sup> **synonym** honor, homage, reverence, deference mean respect and esteem shown to another. honor may apply to the recognition of one's right to great respect or to any expression of such recognition (the nomination is an *honor*) . homage adds the implication of accompanying praise (paying *homage* to Shakespeare) . reverence implies profound respect mingled with love, devotion, or awe (great *reverence* for my father) . deference implies a yielding or submitting to another's judgment or preference out of respect or reverence (showed no *deference* to their elders) .

- 9) Two weeks ago, Pastor Craig discussed submission being an action and not a feeling. How does that apply to this passage?

**Leadership Tip:**

If this is a hot button issue with some of your group members, this may be a great place to break out 3 x 5 cards and have each member write their prayer need on the card and trade it with a different person in the group.

<sup>iv</sup>Billy Graham has some great thoughts for those among us who have had painful experiences with parents. He says, "Allow me to say a word to those who have not had the joy of being reared by godly parents. This kind of pain is severe because the relationship between parents and their offspring is meant to be positive, nurturing and wholesome. Nonetheless, there are many who hurt deeply because of various kinds of parental abuse. How does a believer carry out God's commandment here, and what would God have to say about this? May I suggest six things to consider?

- Pray for your parents.
- Keep on trying to help them, even though that may be difficult at times.
- Model Jesus for them.
- Exercise restraint in front of them.
- Weep for them before the Lord, pouring your heart out to Him on their behalf.
- Forgive them. The Lord can help you do this!

- 10) Of these six points which is the hardest for you to do personally?

## **TAKING IT HOME**

Ephesians 6:4

<sup>i4</sup>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.

From The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures."

<sup>ii</sup> **Fathers** are addressed because they represent the governmental head of the family on whom rests the responsibility of child discipline. Fathers are **not** to **exasperate** (*parorgizete*, "provoke to anger"; used only here and in Rom. 10:19; cf. Col. 3:21) their **children** by unreasonable demands, petty rules, or favoritism. Such actions cause children to become discouraged (Col. 3:21). **Instead**, fathers are to **bring them up**, that is, rear or nourish (*ektrephete*, "provide for physical and spiritual needs"; also used in Eph. 5:29) them **in the training** (*paideia*, "child

discipline,” including directing and correcting; cf. “training” in righteousness [2 Tim. 3:16] and God’s “discipline” of believers [Heb. 12:8]) **and instruction** (*nouthesia*; cf. 1 Cor. 10:11; Titus 3:10) **of the Lord**. Children are to obey “in the Lord” (Eph. 6:1) and parents are to train and instruct “in the Lord.” He is to be the center of their relationships and of their teaching and learning.

- 11) Is Paul only addressing fathers in this passage or does it include mothers and other members of the family who are in authority?
- 12) What are some ways we provoke children to anger, and what can we do differently?
- 13) What are some common areas of conflict between parents and children?

Depending on the person's perspective these answers can vary. This is where we need to guide the group members back to the heart of the discussion. Am I *too comfortable* with this area of conflict, and have I allowed it to become an area in my life stopping me from God’s best?

- 14) What is the area of family relationships that you have become *too comfortable* with and are hearing God's challenge to do something different?

## CHAIR TIME TOOL

Over the last several weeks we have been putting together a Vision Statement. In the past three we have been writing values based on the framework found in the first two weeks of the study. This week we are going to seek God and ask Him and ourselves a couple of questions.

- 1) What am I most passionate about? If your answer is about a leisure activity or yourself, dig deeper and seek God to find what moves you in His kingdom. This can take some time, but is important to prayerfully figure out. I encourage you to seek Him here because God knows the answer.

Read and think about Psalm 139.

- 2) Who knows what you were made for according to the Psalm?

The next question to ponder is what experiences in my life has God allowed me to walk through that can be of benefit to others?

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<sup>i</sup> Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2013), Eph 6:1–4.

<sup>ii</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, “Ephesians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 641–642.

<sup>iii</sup> Inc Merriam-Webster, *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

<sup>iv</sup> Billy Graham <https://billygraham.org/decision-magazine/june-2013/honor-your-mother-and-your-father/>, accessed, October 24, 2016 at 7:00am