

The church in the world

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Preacher: Don Kiang Yap

[0 : 0 0] Thank you, Audrey, for reading the Word of God for us this morning. Good morning, Church. Let's pray.

Our Heavenly Father, open up your Word to us. Speak to us. Help us and teach us to glorify you in our homes and to glorify you in our workplace.

Amen. For those who are new in this church, we are going through a sermon series from the book of Ephesians.

Now, how many chapters are there in this book? How many chapters? Six chapters. So, the first half of the book... Okay, next slide, please.

The first half of the book tells us about what God has done for us in Christ. Our relationship with God in Christ. The second part of the second half of the book, chapter 4 to 6, tells us about our relationship with one another in Christ.

[1 : 1 3] How we respond to this gospel truth. This morning, we are almost at the end of a sermon series. Ephesians 5.21.

Next slide. Paul writes, Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. And he spells out how this submission looks like in these three types of relationship.

Relationship between wives and husbands. Relationship between parents and children. Relationship between masters and slaves. For our case, it would be employers and employees.

Our pastor, Brian, has preached on relationship, the delicate relationship between wives and husbands two Sundays ago. So, this morning, I would like to talk more about the other two types of relationships.

Between parents and children. Between masters and slaves. Let's begin with Ephesians 6.1-3. Ephesians 6.1 says, Paul addressed this letter not only to the adults, but also to the children.

[2 : 3 7] This means that the children are in the church when the letter has been read. If the children are not in the church, why say children? It means they are in the church together with their parents.

How good it is to have the whole family worshipping together. There are three reasons given here why children should obey their parents.

Firstly, children need to obey their parents because nature demands it. Children, obey your parents for it is right. For it is right.

This is God's creator order. This is the order in nature. Since the parents brought the child into the world. And since usually, they have more knowledge and wisdom than a child.

It is only right that the children obey their parents. Secondly, children need to obey their parents because the law demands it.

[3 : 3 9] The fifth commandment, commandment number five says, Honor your father and mother. This is the law. They had a great promise attached to it. What is this promise?

What is this promise? It says, Honor your father and mother so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. So there are two blessings.

If you honor your parents, you can expect two blessings. You know that children? Number one, what are the two blessings? What are the two blessings? What are the two blessings?

Things will go well with him and he will live long on earth. This does not mean that everyone who dies young, everyone who dies young, is not honoring their parents.

If you die young, it means you are not honoring your parents. It doesn't mean that. Paul was just stating a general principle. And a general principle is usually true.

[4 : 39] Not 100% true, but usually true. For example, if your parents say, Don't take drugs. Your parents tell you, Don't take drugs, you know. Don't do drugs. Don't do drugs. You do the drugs.

If you don't listen to them, you take drugs, you increase your chance of a short, unhappy life. If your parents say, When you cross the road, look both ways, right and left, both ways.

But if you don't pay attention to your, if you don't follow your parents' instructions, you cross the road anyhow, you will be what? You knock the car, or the car will knock you.

But, life is not measured, but a quantity of time. How long you live. Life is not measured by the quantity of time. Not only measured by that.

It is also measured by the quality of experience. How, the kind of life you live. God enriches, God enriches the life of the obedient child, no matter how long he lives on earth.

[5 : 48] Sin always robs us. Sin always takes from us. But, obedience always enriches us. Thirdly, children need to obey their parents because the gospel demands it.

Children are to obey their parents in the Lord. In the Lord. What does it mean? It means to obey your children because you belong to the Lord. Obey your children.

Sorry. You see? Obey your parents because you belong to the Lord.

To make it clearer, it means obey your parents because Jesus says so. Jesus tells you to do so, to obey your parents. Children, who put their trust in Jesus, will be motivated, will be motivated by the gospel to obey their parents.

Their faith, their trust in Christ will make them better children at home. I came from a non-Christian family. One night, when I was 15 years old, 1-5, not 5-0, 1-5, when I was 15 years old, my elder brother scolded me for going to church.

[7 : 07] Don't go to church. Don't go to church. Church is no good. Don't go to church. My father overheard him scolding me. So the next morning, my father told me, son, don't go to church.

The church teaches you the wrong thing. The church is no good. They teach you wrong things, you know. I was 15 years old. 1-5, 15 years old. I look at my father.

I told my father, the church teaches me to honour my parents. I say, is it good or not?

My father don't know what to say to me. He didn't know what to say to me. He shooed me away. Go, go, go, go, go away. A few months later, my neighbour visited our family.

I still remember the occasion vividly. I was about to go to church, step out of the house. They were sitting on the sofa on my right. And my neighbour asked my father, hey, how come you allow your child to go to church?

[8 : 13] How come you allow your son to go to church? I was just stepping out of the house. My father told her, going to church is good. Children are to obey their parents for three very good reasons.

Nature, law, and the gospel. The young people here may ask, next slide please, how long do we have to obey our parents?

As long as you are a child under their care. But what if your parents ask you to sin? What does the Bible have to say about this? Is that working?

Is the slide working? Never mind. If not, you refer to your notes at the handout. What does the Bible have to say about this? What is the teaching of the Bible regarding this? Acts 5.29 In the New Testament, the apostles command us to obey those in authority.

But when the authorities commanded the apostles not to preach the gospel, how did they respond? How did the apostles respond?

[9 : 27] The apostle says, we must obey God rather than human beings. Acts 5.29 The principle is very clear. Obey your parents unless they ask you to do something in violation of God's word.

Unless they tell you to do something against God. If not, just obey. Okay. I think our parents appreciate not just obey, immediate obedience.

Immediate obedience. I know some children they say, give me one more hour, two hours, wait, you know. I think the parents appreciate it. So the children here, when the parents ask you to do something, do it immediately.

If the parents ask you, throw the rubbish, do it straight away. Don't say, wait, let me, what's that my parents, what's that my friend first, settle that person. No need. Do it immediately. Learn immediate obedience.

The parents will really appreciate it. Right or not? Right or not parents? Right or not? Immediate obedience. So if I ask my children to wash dishes, if they don't wash, I will go and wash.

[10 : 36] I don't like the delay, you know. They see me going up, they wash, they go straight and do it. I don't like, I don't like, I for me, don't like the tea with the sink, you know. After dinner means wash. Don't have the delay.

Some people like to delay one hour, two hours, you know. So for me, they know, my children know. After dinner, I like the dishes sink to be clean, you know. So I go straight away. If they don't do it, I'll do it.

And they feel guilty, you know, and they feel guilty, oh, parents are doing it. My father is doing it, so he quickly helped me. No matter how old we are, we have to respect and honour our parents.

When we are under their care, honouring our parents is shown by strict, very strict obedience. But when a child becomes an adult, our respect for our children changes from strict obedience to courtesy.

courtesy. As an adult, we show our respect by considering what our parents have to say about our situation with courtesy and humility. When a child transitions into an adult, he may think that his parents are very narrow-minded.

[11 : 46] Why are they so narrow-minded? Why are my parents so narrow-minded? You know why? Young people, you know why your parents are so narrow-minded? They are narrow-minded because they don't want you to go through the pains, they don't want you to go through the hurts they have gone through.

They want you to learn from their experience. They are narrow-minded. Yes, parents are narrow-minded because they want to protect you. So come back early.

Don't stay out too late at night. Yes, the parents want to protect you. There was a story about a child. When he was only 4 years old, he says proudly, you know my dad knows everything about everything.

When he's 7, 7, how is 7? 7. He says, dad knows almost everything about everything. When he is 12, he says, well, it's only natural that dad doesn't know everything.

When he's 14, he says, dad is old-fashioned. When he's 21, he says, dad is hopelessly out of step with the time. When he's 25, he says, maybe dad does know something about a few things.

[13 : 00] When he's 35, he says, maybe we ought to call dad and check this out with him. When he's 50, 5-0, I wonder what dad would have thought of this.

And when he's 65, he says, I sure wish I could talk to dad again. So, it is always good at this stage of transition from childhood to adulthood to always consider what your parents have to say about a situation with courtesy and humility.

You may ask, when does a child become an adult? When? Some reach this stage when they start working, when they get a job.

Some reach this stage when they become 21. Some only reach this stage when they get married. If you are a child still living in the home, living at home with your parents, and you don't want your parents to treat you like a child, you want to be treated like an adult, what can you do?

What can you do? You want to know the secret? What can you do? How to make your children, how to make your parents treat you like an adult? What do you think your parents want to see in you?

[14 : 18] What do they want to see in you? They want to see you become a more responsible person. Your parents will treat you more like an adult when you take up more responsibility.

responsibility for your lives. Responsibilities like be able to manage your own finances. Don't always use your money to drink Starbucks coffee.

Learning to cook, clean, and take care of yourself. Let you clean yourself. Don't be a smelly, you know. You must learn to cook and take care of yourself.

Manage your own studies and timetables. The more you grow into these things, the more your parents should treat you like an adult. Right or not, parents?

Right. You see? You look at us, your parents. Right. Take up more responsibility. Don't have to be told what to do all the time. When it's time to study, study. Don't go and do something else.

[15 : 24] We have seen how children should honor their parents. And now, we're going to consider how parents should bring up their children. Next slide, please.

One of the best training programs for bringing up children in a Christian way is the Alpha training program. The Alpha parenting course.

Those who have attended the course the slide before this, there's a slide before this. Is there a picture? No? The picture cannot come out. Never mind. Then use this one. The picture doesn't come out.

Okay, never mind. It's okay. One of the best training programs is the Alpha training program. Parenting program. Those who have attended the course tells you that it has been very helpful.

I wish the course was available when my children were young. There were so many practical gems that you can use if you attend a course.

[16 : 20] So when this course is available, attend it when you have young children. You will never regret. You will know what are the tools. You see, when you want to drive a car, what must you get before you drive a car?

A driving license. No driving license. Cannot drive. But you know that when we bring our children into the world, we have no skills, you know. And we think that the children just any skills will do.

Not true. That's why I got a lot of problems. Social problem. I'm a teacher. School problem. Students problem. Most of them are family problem. Caused by the family. I can assure you that.

Most of the children's problem, problematic children, they are problematic because of their family background. Good start right with a family.

Attach good courses like Alpha Parenting course. What does the Bible have to say about bringing up children? Ephesians 6.4 is addressed to the father.

[17 : 27] Fathers, do not exasperate your children. Instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Why does Paul address this to the fathers? Where are the mothers?

Why? Why to the fathers? Firstly, because the fathers are ultimately responsible for what goes on in the family. He is responsible to set a standard for the family.

Secondly, a father in the Roman time or the Roman father has absolute power over his family. He could sell them as slaves. He could take the law into his own hand and punish as he liked.

He could even inflict the death penalty on his child. When a person has such authority, such power over his family, he could easily abuse it.

In other words, Paul is asking the fathers not to use their power to abuse, but use the power to build up the family. This is counter-cultural.

[18 : 36] This would be against the culture of that day. In that society, the fathers often treat their children harshly. So you know who is in charge, who is the boss in the family.

In fact, if it was the Greeks or Romans giving this instruction, how would the Greeks give this instruction, they would address it to the children, not to the fathers.

Next slide, please. They would say, children, don't provoke, don't exasperate your fathers because they will get extremely mad at you and may beat you.

Romans would do that. The Greeks would do that. They said that. But Paul addressed it to the fathers instead. So fathers, do not exasperate your children.

Next slide. Fathers, do not exasperate your children. They may do the mothers come in. It could be that the mothers are already doing the good job, doing the good job of bringing up the family.

[19 : 44] So the mothers are not the problem. It is the fathers that need to be exhorted. But since today is Mother's Day, I want to dedicate a story by Robert Munch entitled Love You Forever.

Next slide. So Robin, you follow, you follow. As I tell the story, just follow, okay? Just follow. Just change the style and follow as I go. Love You Forever, Robert Munch. A mother held her new baby and very slowly rock him back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

And while she held him, she sang, I love you forever. I'll like you for always. As long as I'm leaving, my baby you'll be.

The baby grew and he grew. Can you follow me, Robin? Next slide. The baby grew and grew and grew. Where's the next slide? No slide. No slide. Listen then.

The baby grew. He grew and he grew and he grew. He grew until he was a teenager. He had strange friends and he wore and he wore strange clothes and he listened to strange music.

[21 : 02] But at night time, when the teenager was asleep, the mother opened the door to his room, crawled across the floor and looked up over the side of the bed. If the child was really asleep, the baby was, the teenager was really asleep, she picked up that great big boy and rocked him back and forth, back and forth.

While she rocked him, she sang, I'll love you forever. I'll like you for always. As long as I'm leaving, my baby, you'll be.

The teenager grew. He grew and he grew and he grew. He grew until he was a grown-up man. He left home and got a house across town. But sometimes on dark nights, the mother got into her car and drove across the town.

If all the lights in her son's house were out, she opened his bedroom window, crawled across the door floor and looked up over his side of the bed.

If that great big man was really asleep, she'd pick him up and rocked him back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. While she rocked him, she sang, I'll love you forever.

[22 : 15] I'll like you for always. As long as I'm leaving, my baby, will you be well. That mother, she got older, she got older and older and older.

One day, she called up her son and said, you better come see me because I'm very old and sick. So her son came to see her. When he came in the door, she tried to sing the song.

She sang, I'll love you forever. I'll love you forever. I'll love you for always. But she couldn't finish because she was too old and sick.

The son went to his mother. He picked her up and rocked her back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, and he sang this song. I'll love you forever.

I'll like you for always. As long as I'm leaving, my mommy, you'll be. When the son came home that night, he stood for a long time at the top of the stairs.

[23 : 26] Then he went into the room where his very new baby daughter was sleeping. He picked her up in his arms and very slowly rocked her back and forth, back and forth, and while he rocked her, he sang, I'll love you forever.

I'll like you for always. As long as I'm leaving, my baby, you'll be. Thank you all the mothers here for bringing us up.

Thank you so much. Fathers and mothers are partners in bringing up the family and God holds the fathers ultimately responsible because they are the heads of the family.

How do we exasperate, provoke our children? How do we make them angry? We can do this in a number of ways. Firstly, by criticising them.

Next slide, please. Jim, and then next slide. Next slide. Jim Burton says, when I, when I was young, baseball was my life.

[24 : 37] You can imagine the excitement I felt when my older son began playing. This game would be one of our main bonding mechanisms. If my son would just listen, I could help him be a great baseball player, learning to recurve balls, shift his body weight with a swing, steel bases, turn double plays.

These things separate the amateurs from the pros. Next slide. A pattern developed in our relationship. Because of my familiarity with the game, I saw every mistake my son made.

In addition, I knew how to correct them. So after the game, on their way home, the father would tell him how to improve his game. Soon his son got tired of his father's critique.

One night, the son said, next slide, Dad, could you not start by telling me everything I did wrong? Tell me what I did right first. Are you a coach or a critic?

Next slide. Are you a coach or a critic? A good parent is a coach. Next slide. Secondly, unhealthy comparison. We compare our children with other people's children.

[25 : 44] Why can't you do as well as your classmates? Your classmates cannot A. Why can't you get an A? The comparison is not fair. Because people are different.

Thirdly, favouritism. A third way to exasperate your children is to show favouritism. In the Old Testament, there's a classic example. In the Old Testament, Isaac favours who?

Isaac favours who? Isaac favours Esau. Over who? Over Jacob. Rebecca prefer who? Rebecca prefer Jacob over Esau.

This family experienced terrible agony. And the two brothers became bitter rivals. If you want to destroy your child, very easy. You want to destroy your child?

Very easy. Just make him feel inferior to everyone else in the family. Just make him feel he has no value in the family. You can destroy him. Fourthly, deliberate hypocrisy.

[26 : 46] You apply one standard for yourself and you apply another standard for your child. Double standards. You tell your child not to gossip, but do you gossip yourself? You tell your child, hey, don't spend too much time on your smartphone, but do you waste time watching useless television show?

Now, that's the negative side of parenting. Avoid exasperating our children. What? What's the positive side of parenting?

Instead of provoking our children, we should bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Next slide. This means that we should provide Christian education at home.

Our children should be taught the gospel of our Lord Jesus. We should not surrender this task to our Sunday school teacher. In our Sunday school training, we stress that Sunday school teachers partner with the parents to bring their children up in the Lord.

Sunday school teachers don't replace the parents. The parents are still primarily responsible for their children's Christian education. Sunday schools should only supplement to the instruction, to our instruction at home.

[28 : 01] Our instruction should include modeling. Parents are the children's strongest model, strongest role model.

They are the greatest influence. they have the greatest influence on their parents. Remember the story Love You Forever just now? Because the mother sang the song to the son, the son now sang the song to the daughter.

Your children will eventually adopt many of your values and behaviors. Many values are caught rather than taught. Your children notice and respond to the way you deal with problems express feelings and celebrate special occasions.

The goal of every Christian is just going to heaven. Not just going to heaven. God's purpose for you is to live out Christ's likeness now like a disciple of Christ.

Christ's likeness now. To be like Christ. So we should model Christ's likeness for our children. The fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit should be evident in our life.

[29 : 13] love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. They should be evident in our life. And spiritual disciplines like Bible reading and prayer should be seen by our children to be important in our life.

I want to mention two more important things that we need to model for our children. Next slide. We should model control over words.

Ephesians 4.29 says, Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Words matter. You need to tame your tongue. You need to chain it. You need to train it. Make sure the words that come out of your mouth toward your spouse, toward your child, toward others, toward your friends, toward your enemies, are respectful, respectful and kind.

Then we should model appropriate action. Ephesians 5.8-9 says, For you were once darkness, but now you are in the light. You are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.

[30 : 24] For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth. Your child is always watching. Your child sees the kinds of movies and television shows you watch.

watch. He notices the music you listen to. He notices, he knows the people you associate with. He also notices the way you drive and the way you treat your spouse and other people.

Your child's actions will often be a reflection of your actions. Next slide. Next slide. Benjamin Franklin puts it this way, well done is better than well said.

But we, as parents, will make mistakes. But we can still model for our children the way we handle situations when we make mistakes. How do we handle the situation when we make mistakes?

Honestly, admitting when you are wrong and asking for forgiveness can be a powerful way to model the behavior you want your kids to adopt. There were times when I scolded my children wrongly.

[31 : 34] Let's say it's my daughter Rini, because some of you know her. And this really happened. I'm just a cook of story. It really happened. When I scolded her wrongly, the parents can identify this with me.

When I scolded her wrongly, she would go to her room and to get away from me. I could sense a tension in her relationship. So I would go to her room and apologize to her.

I would say I'm sorry. And I say I don't know what gets into me. You know sometimes you become angry. You say a lot of words and sometimes you say wrong words. And we will, I just say I don't know what gets into me.

To say all those things, all kinds of things, to make her angry. So I will ask for forgiveness and we will pray together to ask for forgiveness from God. And I also pray that I will be a better father to her.

Why is it so difficult to say sorry? when parents are wrong? Why is it so difficult? Not just the parents, you know, even young people.

[32 : 38] In my ISF group, we have a leader, we were sharing. He said, it's so difficult for me to say sorry even though I'm wrong. You know, he confessed.

but we have a God who can help us. Because of our pride, we don't want to say we are wrong and we don't want to say we are sorry.

We still give excuses. So ask God to help us. Ask God to help us to apologize, to say sorry. Our main task as parents is not to produce the cleverest children, to produce the smartest children.

This is not our main task. Our main task is to produce godly children. Children who love Jesus. When my daughter Rini says, Dad, I want to go to Bible college after her form 6, A level.

You know, I know some parents say, advise me, better let her study, finish the university first. For me, when my daughter says, she wants to go to Bible college, go man, go.

[33 : 50] She wants to take a year gap, one year gap, because in Malaysia, we always want to finish fast. In America, it's very different. They take two years gap. They don't go to university first. They want to find out. They go two years to think about life.

But Malaysians, we want to finish. So I encourage young parents, when children go to Bible college, go. When my Muslim friends, my Muslim colleagues, know that my daughter has gone to Bible college, she said, bagus, bagus, You see, the Muslim think, what about us, Christians?

So they're happy for me. Iman musti kuat, they say. Iman musti kuat. Iman musti kuat dulu. Good. I'm really happy. You know why?

Why I'm so happy? Because when I was in form 6, after my form 6, I asked my father, I want to go to Bible college. My father said, no. So my daughter is repeating. Of course, it's so different now.

When my daughter says, I'm going to repeat history, you know, history repeats itself. So you know how I feel when my daughter wants to go to Bible college for one year? Go, man, go, yes.

[35 : 07] How many children want to go to Bible college? Tell me. After form 6? Anyone of you? Yeah, think of it. When a child wants to go to Bible college, support them. Don't, you are, we should have more Bible college students like Pastor Brian.

I'm so happy for Pastor Brian. We should not have more people like that who wants to know the Bible well. When your children want to know the Bible well, support him, support him or her.

Don't let the world get him, don't let the world clip into their heart and then they don't have interest in the Bible anymore to know the Bible. Our main task is to produce godly children.

Children who know the Bible well, children who know who love Jesus, children who know the gospel and can pass it on to the next generation. There are just too many clever children around, too many smart children around, but not enough godly ones.

Here's a sad confession of one father. Next slide please. I took my children to school but not to church. I taught them to drink but not of the living water. I enrolled them in a little lake but not sunny school.

[36 : 21] I showed them how to fish but not to be fisher of men. I made the lost day a holy day rather than a holy day. I taught them the church was full of hypocrites and made the greater hypocrite of them and me.

I gave them a colour TV but provided no Bible. I handed them the keys to the car but did not give them the keys of the kingdom of God. I taught them how to make a living but failed to bring them to Christ who alone can make a life.

Like this man, we can provide everything for our children but failed to bring them to Christ. So to the children, Paul says, obey your parents.

To the parents, he says, train and instruct your children in Christ without breaking their spirit. Now we come to the submission of slaves to their masters.

Next slide please. Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear and sincerity of heart just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favour when their eyes are on you but like slaves of Christ doing the will of God from your heart.

[37 : 27] Serve wholeheartedly as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he's slave or free. slavery was a common, was very common in the ancient world.

A high percentage of the population were slaves, about 5 million, 20 to 30% of the Roman Empire. They constitute the workforce, they are the workforce.

They include domestic servants, manual labourers, they even include educated people like doctors, teachers, administrators.

they were slaves, you know. Paul did not condemn slavery, but what he wrote was counter-cultural in the way slaves and masters were to treat each other.

You know, at that time, masters treat their slaves very harshly, but Paul said, no, no, no, don't do that. Don't be harsh to your slave. Slaves, disobeying their masters, no, no, no, don't disobey your masters.

[38 : 34] Both, now you have Christ, you live according to the new life in Christ. Slaves were to obey their masters.

Masters were to treat their slaves fairly. Paul admonished the slaves to be obedient with several good reasons. Next slide. First, next slide.

First, they were really serving Christ. True, they had masters according to the flesh, but the true master is in heaven. The employee, should show proper respect for the employer.

The best way to be a good witness, to witness for Jesus in your workplace, is to do a good day's work. You know what a good day's work is? It's very simple.

How to be a good employee? Just imagine yourself as employer. Just imagine yourself as an employer. How do you want your employee to work? Do the same thing.

[39 : 34] Just do the same thing. You want your employer to be lazy? Employer? No. Do whatever you think you want the employer to do. It's a simple rule. The best way to bear witness on a job is to do a good day's work.

The second reason is that doing a good job is the will of God. A Christian can perform a good work, can perform good work, any good work, as a ministry to Christ, to the glory of God.

the worker must do his job from the heart, since he is serving Christ and doing the will of God. The third reason is that they will be rewarded by the Lord.

In those days, slaves were treated like properties. They may receive harsh treatment from the masters, but harsh treatment should not be a reason for not doing the best, not the reason for him for not doing his best.

We are to serve Christ, not man. We shall receive our rewards from Christ, not from man. Now come to Christian masters. What are the responsibilities of the Christian masters?

[40 : 44] Next slide. And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

Next slide. The Christian master must seek their welfare. If the employer expects the workers to do their best for him, he must do his best for them.

He must not exploit them two-way. This is counter-cultural, you know. Counter-cultural. He must not threaten.

He's a boss, he can threaten. He doesn't negotiate with the employee, he's a slave. Just do what I tell you to do. Roman masters had the power and lawful authority to kill a slave who was rebellious.

Paul is actually telling the Christian masters, the Christian masters are there, the masters in the congregation, in the church. You, Christian masters, you should not use threats.

[41 : 52] Don't threaten your slave. Use encouragement. Encourage them to work for you. Thirdly, he must be submitted to the Lord. You know why?

Because you have a master also. Your slave, you are the master of your slave, but you yourself have a master, you know. Your master is in heaven, and a master in heaven does not play favourites.

God is no respecter of persons. He will judge you. He will judge you, master. He will judge you, and also will judge the servant if he sins. He will reward you and your servant if he obeys.

Let me close with the story. At least it's a true story. It's a television show. One night on a television show, a man was interviewing some bodybuilders. This interviewer was standing there.

There were some bodybuilders. You know bodybuilders, their muscles upon muscles, muscles on their muscles, and he asked a question, what do you use all these muscles for?

[42 : 56] So one guy answered, next slide please. Wow, this guy answered by flexing his muscles in one of those bodybuilding poses like this. The interviewer says, no, no, no, you don't understand.

What do you use all these muscles for? The guy said, I'll show you another slide, next slide. And he flexed again, posing another way. No, no, no, no, no, you don't understand me.

You don't understand my question, the interviewer say. Read my lips, read my lips, what do you use them for? Next slide. And the guy posed again. Now, ask your church here, what do you use your muscles for?

What do you use your muscles for? To do work, to do work, not to show off. God has given us not just muscles, God has given us knowledge, talent, skills, education, to do what?

To do work, to do good works. Next slide, please. Ephesians chapter 2, verse 8 to 10 tells us, for it is by grace, you have been saved through faith, and this is not from yourself, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast, for we are God's handiwork, created in Christ, Jesus, to do good work.

[44 : 18] God prepared in advance for us to do, and your job is the good work that God prepared for you, in advance for you, God has prepared in advance for you to do.

your job is the good work that God prepared in advance for us to do. So this concludes Paul's teaching on submission, which he began in chapter 5, verse 21.

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Marriage, marriage has its moments of despair for both husbands and wives.

No one said that a parent or child is easy. Being a faithful employee or a fair employer has its fair share of frustrations and difficulty as well.

But no matter what, in your respective roles, whether you are a husband, a wife, an employee, employer, children or parents, no matter what roles you are in, God expects us to live as his servants, with our hearts and attitudes transformed by his spirit.

[45 : 38] I'd like to close this with this prayer. Next slide. I'll give you one minute just to go through it, so we pray together this prayer. Okay, let's pray.

Father, we find ourselves as both children and parents, and the various seasons of our lives as both employers and employees. Help us to live out our life for you with joy and integrity, no matter where you have placed us for now.

Lord, we are inclined to complain about our circumstances and why. Forgive us. Help us to live and serve as part of our service to you, and thank you for your immense grace towards each of us.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.