

"UNIFIED TOGETHER IN PURPOSE"
Ephesians 4:1-6:24

NIV MEMORY VERSE: Ephesians 4:32-5:1

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

→ Transformation How now shall we live? As creatures saved by Grace and no longer living under the law? ... Again, how now shall we live?

My Other Life

Most of you are aware that I am a dental hygienist by profession. In my "other" life, I spend time in leadership for my professional organization. In fact, I currently serve on the Board of Directors for the national dental hygiene association as the representative for Arizona and California.

There are changes happening in dental healthcare these days. There is a growing shortage of dentists and an increasing percentage of the public that either do not seek dental care or have no access to dental care. Studies show that about 48% of the American public does not see a dentist. The US Department of Labor lists dental hygiene as one of the top 5 professions in demand, which means we now have more educational programs opening, and a growing workforce.

The problem is that hygienists cannot work unless they are employed by a dentist, and dentists are retiring without an equal number of new dentists taking their place. This leaves a public asking for basic or preventive dental services and a vastly under or unemployed dental hygiene work force.

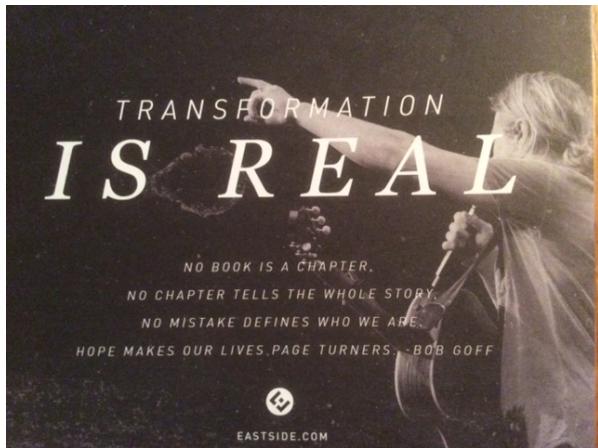
→ Dental hygienists across the country know that we need to re-invent or transform how we fit into the overall healthcare system to survive. We need to transform how and where we deliver our services to the public. This is the "world" and volunteer work I have been focused on for the past few years. The challenges include navigating

Lead the transformation of the dental hygiene profession to improve the public's oral and overall health.



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educational requirements, state level regulations and legislation, re-training of the current workforce to a new level, and acceptance by the public.



→ So imagine my surprise to see the Fall kick off materials at Eastside where our church is saying that "Transformation is real!" It's a different transformation of course, but it's still the process of transformation. And when I read the personal letters of Paul this summer in preparation for this year's Bible study, it was so relevant to me to consider how Paul dealt with the change stress of the churches in Galatia and Ephesus and their struggles with transformation. Yes,

transformation is real! And it can be very hard.

In Paul's day the people were transforming from living by the Law of Moses to salvation by the Grace of Jesus. These are two very different concepts. The Jewish people were faced with accepting the Gentiles, whom they basically considered pagans, to be adopted into and accepted as equal members of God's family, and to now live alongside them in love and peace. Talk about an adjustment to diversity!

That is what perked my interest. How then shall we live in this transforming environment? If you are a Believer, then you are a Transformed person. You think differently, you act differently, you respond differently. You are transformed! But not everyone in your life is transformed as well. How then shall you live? And how shall you behave in such an environment?

This is a lesson where Paul addresses all believers and how they shall live together under Grace.

Let's pray ...

→ All of Paul's letters contain a beautiful balance between doctrine and duty, and Ephesians is the perfect example. The first 3 chapters deal with doctrine, our riches in Christ, as presented by Dellen last week, while the last 3 chapters explain our duty or responsibilities in Christ. In these last 3 chapters Paul admonished us to walk in:

- Unity,
- Purity,
- Harmony, and
- Victory

The Christian life is not based on ignorance, but knowledge, and the better we understand Bible doctrine, the easier it is to obey Bible duties. When people say, "Don't talk to me about doctrine - just let me live my Christian life!" they reveal their ignorance of the way the Holy Spirit works in the life of the believer. "It makes no difference what you believe, just as long as you live right" is a similar confession of ignorance. But it does make a difference what you believe, because what you believe determines how you behave! And this lesson is about how we behave in Christ!

➔ Walk in Unity

Paul admonishes us to walk in unity. This is simply the practical application of the doctrine taught in the first half of Ephesians. God is building a body, a temple. He has reconciled Jews and Gentiles to Himself in Christ. The oneness of believers in Christ is already a spiritual reality. Our responsibility is to guard, protect, and preserve that unity. To do this, we must understand 4 important facts about Unity.

- The Grace of Unity
- The Grounds of Unity
- The Gifts for Unity, and
- The Growth of Unity

➔ The Grace of Unity:

Unity is not uniformity ... Let me repeat that, Unity is NOT Uniformity. Unity comes from within and is a spiritual grace, while uniformity is the result of external pressure.

If we are going to preserve the "unity of the Spirit," we must possess the necessary Christian graces. Those are: Lowliness or humility, Meekness, Longsuffering, Forbearance, Endeavor, and Peace.

Humility means putting Christ first, others second, and self last. That's the opposite of "self pride".

Meekness is not weakness. It is power under control. Allied with meekness is long-suffering, which literally means "long-tempered," a grace that cannot be experienced apart from love. (1 Cor. 13:4) The "unity of the Spirit" (Eph. 4:3) is the result of the believer "walking in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16).

The next grace that contributes to the unity of the Spirit is endeavor. Literally it reads "being eager to maintain, or guard, the unity of the Spirit." We must constantly be endeavoring to maintain this unity. The spiritual unity of a home, a Bible study group, or a church is the responsibility of each person involved, and the job never ends.

The final grace is peace - as in "the bond of peace." The reason for war in our lives on the outside is that war is happening on the inside. When "the peace of God" rules in our hearts, then we build unity (Col. 3:15).

➔ The Grounds of Unity:

Unity built on anything other than Bible truth is standing on a very shaky foundation. Paul names here seven basic spiritual realities that unite all true Christians.

- One body
- One Spirit
- One hope of your calling
- One Lord
- One faith
- One baptism
- One God and Father

➔ The Gifts for Unity:

God has given each believer at least one spiritual gift (1 Cor. 12:1-12). This gift is to be used for the unifying and edifying (or building up) of the body of Christ. A spiritual gift is a God-given ability to serve God and other Christians in such a way that Christ is glorified and believers are edified.

How does a believer discover and develop his gifts? By fellowshipping with other Christians in the local assembly. Paul taught that Christ is the giver of these gifts, through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:8-10).

Paul named, not so much "gifts" as the gifted men God placed in the church, and there are four of them.

- Apostles (v. 11a) - The word means "one who is sent with a commission."
- Prophets (v. 11b) - A New Testament prophet is one who proclaims the Word of God (Eph. 3:5). The purpose of prophecy is "edification, encouragement, and consolation" (1 Cor. 14:3).
- Evangelists (v. 11c) - "Bearers of the good news." These men traveled from place to place to preach the gospel and win the lost (Acts 8:26-40, 21:28).
- Pastors and teachers (v. 11d) - Pastor means "shepherd," indicating that the local church is a flock of sheep (Acts 20:28), and it is his responsibility to feed and lead the flock. The Word of God is the staff that guides and disciplines the sheep.

➔ The Growth of Unity:

Paul was looking at the church on two levels. He saw the body of Christ, made up of all true believers, growing gradually until it reaches spiritual maturity. He also saw the local

body of believers ministering to each other, growing together, and thereby experiencing spiritual unity.

The members of the church grow by feeding on the Word and ministering to each other. The first evidence of spiritual growth is Christ-likeness. The second evidence is stability. The third evidence of spiritual maturity is truth joined with love: as in, "Speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). It has been said that truth without love is brutality, but love without truth is hypocrisy.

One more evidence of spiritual maturity is cooperation (Eph. 4:16). Each believer no matter how insignificant he may appear has a ministry to other believers. The body grows as the individual members grow, and they grow as they feed on the Word and minister to one another. ... Amen!

➔ Walk in Purity

The Bible was written to be obeyed, and not simply studied. We are to be doers of the Word, and not just hearers only (James 1:22). The fact that we have been called in Christ (Eph. 1:18) ought to motivate us to walk in unity. And the fact that we have been raised from the dead should motivate us to walk in purity, or as Paul told the Romans, "to walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). Within that walk in purity Paul gives an Admonition, an Argument, and an Application.

➔ The Admonition:

"Walk not as other Gentiles walk." The Christian is not to imitate the life of the unsaved people around him. They are "dead in trespasses and sins," while he has been raised from the dead and given eternal life in Christ. Paul explains the differences between the saved and the unsaved.

To begin with, Christians think differently from unsaved people. (Amen!) Salvation begins with repentance, which is a change of mind. The whole outlook of a person changes when he trusts Christ, including his values, goals, and interpretation of life.

The Christian cannot pattern himself after the unsaved person, because the Christian has experienced a miracle of being raised from the dead. His life is not futile, but purposeful. His mind is filled with the light of God's Word, and his heart with the fullness of God's life. He gives his body to God as an instrument of righteousness, and not to sin for the satisfaction of his own selfish lusts. In every way the believer is different from the unbeliever, and therefore the admonition to "Walk not."

➔ The Argument:

To "learn Christ" means to have a personal relationship to Christ so that you get to know Him better each day through a personal fellowship with Him. This fellowship is based on the Word of God. I can be taught "the truth" as it is in Jesus Christ. The better I understand the Word of God, the better I know the Son of God, for the whole Bible is a revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This experience of salvation goes much deeper, for it has resulted in a whole new position before God. The former life has been put away, and now we can walk in newness of life through Christ. As Christians, we have not simply changed our minds or our thinking. We have totally changed our citizenship. We belong to God's "new creation" in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), and therefore, the ideas and desires of the old creation no longer should control our lives.

This was Paul's argument - you no longer belong to the old corruption of sin; you belong to the new creation in Christ. Take off your old life and put on your new life! But how do we do this? By being, "renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph. 4:23). Through Christ, once and for all, we have been given a new position in His new creation. But day by day, we must by faith appropriate what He has given us. The Word of God renews the mind as we surrender our all to Him (Rom. 12:1-2).

As the mind understands the truth of God's Word, it is gradually transformed by the Spirit, and this renewal leads to a changed life. Physically, you are what you eat, but spiritually, you are what you think. This is why it is important for us as Christians to spend time daily meditating on the Word, praying, and fellowshipping with Christ.

→ The Application:

Paul was not content to explain a principle and then leave it. Paul dared to name sins, five of them in fact. Paul told us to avoid them, and he even explained why. Those five sins are: lying, anger, stealing, corrupt speech, and bitterness.

→ One of our study questions this week was: When does righteous indignation become sinful anger in your opinion? This was a great question ... First you need to define sinful anger. So I searched online and here's what I found:

From questions.org by the Daily Bread.

"We can know, however, if the anger we feel is sinful or godly by considering the provocation, goal, motivation, and timing of our anger.

Selfish anger is provoked when we believe we've been treated unjustly or unfairly. We want something, we don't get it, we feel deprived, and now someone is going to pay for having treated us this way (James 4:1-4). The goal is revenge. When driven by vengeance,

we demand that someone pay now for the injustice we've suffered. We impatiently demand immediate execution of justice according to our specifications, and refuse to allow time for God to work in the hearts of those who have offended us (James 1:19-20). Our anger becomes a caustic acid intended to burn those we feel have burned us unfairly. When offended, we can be ruthless, hard, unreasonable, and devoid of mercy in our response.

Conversely, godly anger is provoked in us when we witness persistent violations of God's standards of justice (Psalm 119:53). There is an appropriate time to be outraged over those who hold God in contempt and mar the beauty of His creation. The goal of godly anger is to warn the person who has breached God's divine law so that once exposed they can have the opportunity to change (Ezekiel 3:18-21). This kind of anger is like iodine, an ointment intended to purge infection and promote healing in the recipient (Proverbs 27:6). It is painful at first, but in the end, it soothes and heals.

Godly anger is motivated both by the love of Christ that works in us to extend His love to others (2 Corinthians 5:14), and by the fear of His coming execution of perfect justice (2 Corinthians 5:11). Godly anger is marked by a confidence in God's long-suffering character (Psalm 86:15; 2 Peter 3:9), knowing that only He is qualified to carry out vengeance equitably. Godly anger refuses to resort to personal acts of revenge now, but is willing to wait for God's wrath to be poured out against evil in His good time (Psalm 73:16-19; Romans 12:19).

Paul warns us against several sins about attitude, which amplifies what he wrote about anger. Bitterness refers to a settled hostility that poisons the whole inner man. Bitterness leads to wrath, which is the explosion on the outside of the feelings on the inside. Wrath and anger often lead to brawling or blasphemy (or evil speaking). The first is fighting with fists, the second is fighting with words. It is difficult to believe that Christians would act this way, but they/we do. And this is why Paul warned us.

Paul gave three reasons why we must avoid bitterness.

1. It grieves the Holy Spirit. He lives within the Christian, and when the heart is filled with bitterness and anger, the Spirit grieves.
2. Our sin grieves God the Son, who died for us.
3. It grieves God the Father, who forgave us when we trusted Christ. Here Paul put his finger on the basic cause of a bitter attitude: We cannot forgive people. An unforgiving spirit becomes the devil's playground, and before long it becomes the Christian's battleground.

→ From GotQuestions.org

"What does it mean to grieve / quench the Holy Spirit?"

Answer: When the word "quench" is used in Scripture, it is speaking of suppressing fire. When believers put on the shield of faith, as part of their armor of God (Ephesians

6:16), they are extinguishing the power of the fiery darts from Satan. Christ described hell as a place where the fire would not be "quenched" (Mark 9:44, 46, 48). Likewise, the Holy Spirit is a fire dwelling in each believer. He wants to express Himself in our actions and attitudes. When believers do not allow the Spirit to be seen in our actions, when we do what we know is wrong, we suppress or quench the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19). We do not allow the Spirit to reveal Himself the way that He wants to.

To understand what it means to grieve the Spirit, we must first understand that this indicates the Spirit possesses personality. Only a person can be grieved; therefore, the Spirit must be a divine person in order to have this emotion. Once we understand this, we can better understand how He is grieved, mainly because we too are grieved. We grieve the Spirit by living like the pagans (4:17-19), by lying (4:25), by being angry (4:26-27), by stealing (4:28), by cursing (4:29), by being bitter (4:31), by being unforgiving (4:32), and by being sexually immoral (5:3-5). To grieve the Spirit is to act out in a sinful manner, whether it is in thought only or in both thought and deed.

→ The word "followers" in Ephesians 5:1 is the word "mimics," so the verse can be translated "Be ye imitators of God as beloved children." If we are truly children of God, then we ought to imitate our Father. This is the basis for the three more admonitions Paul wrote.

- God is love, therefore "walk in love;"
- God is light, therefore walk as children of light; and
- God is truth, therefore walk in wisdom.

Of course, each of these walks is a part of Paul's exhortation for us to walk in purity.

→ Walking in Love:

Paul gave several reasons why the Christian ought to walk in love.

- He is God's child - As believers we have received a new nature that want to express itself in love. The old nature is basically selfish, builds walls, and declares war. But the new nature is loving, and therefore builds bridges and proclaims peace.
- He is God's beloved child - We are born into a loving relationship with the Father that ought to result in our showing love to Him by the way we live.
- He was purchased with a great price - Our love for Christ is our response to His love for us.

Paul began with "walk in love" because love is the fundamental factor in the Christian life. If we walk in love, we will not disobey God or injure men because "he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:8).

→ Walking as Children of Light:

Since "God is light" and we are imitating our Father, then we should also walk in the light and have nothing to do with the darkness of sin.

In Paul's day, there were false Christians who argued that believers could live in sin and get away with it. These deceivers had many arguments to convince ignorant Christians that they could sin repeatedly and still enter God's kingdom. "You were saved by grace!" they argued. "Therefore go ahead and sin that God's grace might abound!" Paul answered that foolish argument in Romans 6. "Sin in the life of a believer is different from sin in the life of an unsaved person!" Of course it is, - it's worse! God judges sin no matter where He finds it. And he does not want to find it in the life of one of His own children.

Paul admonished his readers to "walk as children of light." The light produces goodness, one manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). Goodness is "love in action." Righteousness means rightness of character before God and rightness of actions before men. Both of these qualities are based on truth, which is conformity to the Word and will of God. To "walk as children of light" means to live before the eyes of God, not hiding anything.

→ Walking in Wisdom: (Eph. 5:15-17)

Paul used the word "circumspect" to admonish us to walk in wisdom. *Circumspect* comes from two Latin words that mean "looking around." The Greek form carries the idea of precision and accuracy. "See that you walk carefully, and with exactness" is the meaning. Paul presented several reasons why we should be accurate and careful in our walk.

- It is a mark of wisdom - Only a fool drifts with the wind and tide. A wise man marks out his course, sets his sails, and guides the rudder until he reaches his destination.
- Life is short - Our English word opportunity comes from the Latin and means "toward the port." It suggests a ship taking advantage of the wind and tide to arrive safely in the harbor. The brevity of life is a strong argument for making the best use of the opportunities God gives us.
- The days are evil - In Paul's time, this meant that Roman persecution was coming. How foolish to waste opportunities to win the lost, when soon those opportunities might be taken away by the advances of sin in society.
- God has given us a mind - "Understanding" suggests using our minds to discover and do the will of God. We discover the will of God as He transforms the mind; and this transformation is the result of the Word of God, prayer, meditation, and worship. God does not want us to simply know his will, He wants us to understand his will.
- God has a plan for our lives - Paul alluded to this plan. If God saved me, He has a purpose for my life, and I should discover that purpose and then guide my life accordingly. He reveals His plan through His Word, His Spirit in our hearts, and the working of circumstances. The Christian can walk carefully and accurately because he knows what God wants him to do.

→ **Walk in Harmony**

"When home is ruled according to God's Word," said Charles Spurgeon, "angels might be asked to stay with us, and they would not find themselves out of their element."

The trouble is that many homes are not governed by God's Word - even homes where the members are professing Christians - and the consequences are tragic. Instead of angels being guests in some homes, it seems that demons are the masters. Too many marriages end in the divorce court, and nobody knows how many husbands and wives are emotionally divorced even though they share the same address.

The answer is the Holy Spirit of God! It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that we can walk in harmony as husbands and wives, parents and children, and employers and employees. The unity of the people of God that Paul described must be translated into daily living if we are to enjoy the harmony that is a foretaste of heaven on earth.

Paul wrote that there are three evidences of the fullness of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer;

- He is joyful,
- He is thankful, and
- He is submissive.

Paul stated that the home can be a heaven on earth if each family member is controlled by the Spirit, and is joyful, thankful, and submissive.

→ Let's look at the relationship of husbands and wives. Ladies, wives are to be submissive to their husbands, and that can be challenging to follow. But fellows, you hold the greater responsibility in the marriage relationship.

I confess that in preparing this lecture I found TONS of resource articles on the issue of being godly husbands and wives online. Of most help was a website called:

GotQuestions.org. In the interest of time, I have included 3 articles you might find

helpful at the end of the lecture document posted to Dan Leppo's website

"DictationsFromtheSpirit.com." I decided if I read these articles to you, tonight's lecture would be way too long. So when you access this lecture online, be sure to read articles on:

- What is the role a godly husband?
- What does it mean to be a godly wife?
- What should a Christian mother be like according to the Bible?

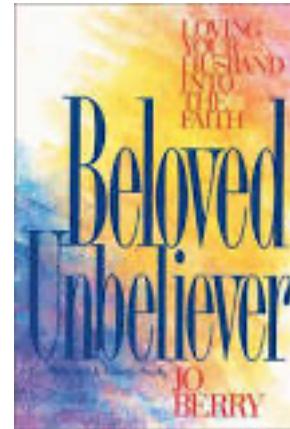
In all transparency, I cannot address the beauty of a Christian marriage without touching on unequally yoked marriages. Some of you may have guessed by now that this is where I live. I have been married to a wonderful man for 35 years, and "Honey"

loves and cherishes me very much. However, his journey of faith is not the same as mine. He holds himself just short of a full commitment to the Lord, but I understand well his reasons. It was not until I worked a personal study on living unequally yoked that I was able to find a measure of peace and harmony in our marriage. I surrendered the burden of his salvation to the Holy Spirit, and our life and marriage has been much better because of it.

→ Beloved Unbeliever by Jo Berry is the study that was recommended to me by a Christian friend. My copy of this book was given away long ago. However, you can find this book on Amazon, and I highly recommend it.

Because I suspect many of you share this journey as well, allow me to share the following discussion from GotQuestions.org

Question: "What should a Christian do if he or she is married to an unbeliever?"



Answer: Being married to an unbeliever can be one of the most difficult challenges in a Christian's life. Marriage is a sacred covenant that joins two people together in one flesh (Matthew 19:5). It can be very difficult for a believer and an unbeliever to live in peaceful harmony (2 Corinthians 6:14-15). If one partner becomes a Christian after the marriage, the inherent struggles of living under two different authorities quickly become apparent.

Often Christians in this situation will look for a way out of the marriage, convinced that this is the only way to truly bring honor to God. His Word, however, says the contrary. It is very important not only to be content in our situation, but also to look for ways to bring glory to Him out of our challenging circumstances (1 Corinthians 7:17). The Bible specifically addresses those who are married to unbelievers in 1 Corinthians 7:12-14:

“...If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband...”

Christians married to unbelievers need to pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to enable them to profess Christ and live in the light of God's presence (1 John 1:7). They should seek God's transforming power to change their hearts and produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). A Christian wife is obligated to have a submissive heart, even toward her unbelieving husband (1 Peter 3:1), and she will need to remain close to God and rely on His grace to enable her to do so.

Christians are not meant to live solitary lives; they need to find support from outside sources such as the church and Bible study groups. Being married to an unbeliever does not alter the sacredness of the relationship, so it should be the priority of every Christian to pray for his or her spouse and set a good example, allowing Christ's light to shine brightly (Philippians 2:14). May the truth found in 1 Peter 3:1—that an unbelieving spouse is "won over"—be the hope and goal of every Christian who is married to an unbeliever.

... And allow me to add that being "won over" is without a word! That is being a "1 Peter 3" wife or husband!

Recommended Resource: "Surviving a Spiritual Mismatch in Marriage" by Lee Strobel and Logos Bible Software.

→ Walking in Victory!

Sooner or later every believer discovers that the Christian life is a battleground, not a playground, and that he faces an enemy who is much stronger than he is - apart from the Lord. That Paul should use the military to illustrate the believer's conflict with Satan is reasonable. He himself was chained to a Roman soldier, and his readers were certainly familiar with soldiers and the equipment they used.

As Christians we face three enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil. "The world" refers to the system around us that is opposed to God, that caters to "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:15-17). "The flesh" is the old nature that we inherited from Adam, a nature that is opposed to God and can do nothing spiritual to please God. By His death and resurrection, Christ overcame the world, and the flesh, and the devil. In other words, as believers, we do not fight for victory - we fight from a position of victory!

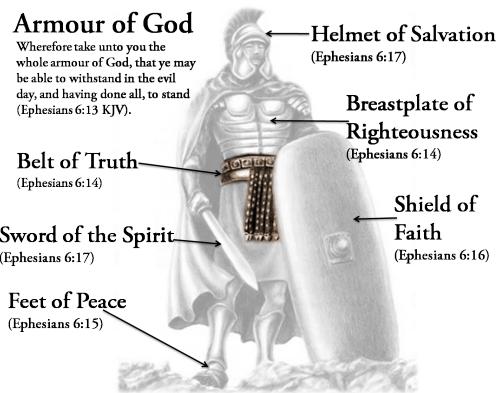
In the closing verses of his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul discussed four topics so that his readers might walk in victory.

- The Enemy
- The Equipment
- The Energy
- The Encouragement

The Enemy:

Unless we know who the enemy is, where he is, and what he can do, we have a difficult time defeating him. Not only in Ephesians 6, but throughout the entire Bible, God instructs us about the enemy, so there is no reason for us to be caught off guard.

The Equipment:



→ Since we are fighting against enemies in the spirit world, we need special equipment both for offense and defense. God has provided the "whole armor" for us, and we dare not omit any part. Satan looks for that unguarded area where he can take an opening. Paul commanded his readers to put on the armor, take the weapons, and withstand Satan. All this we do by faith. Knowing that Christ has already conquered Satan, and that the spiritual armor and weapons are available, by faith we accept what God gives us and go out to meet the enemy.

The day is evil, and the enemy is evil, but "if God is for us, who can be against us?"

- The girdle of truth - Satan is a liar, but the believer whose life is controlled by truth will defeat him. The girdle held the other parts of the armor together, and truth is the integrating force in the life of the victorious Christian.
- The breastplace of righteousness - This piece of armor, made of metal plates or chains, covered the body from the neck to the waist, both front and back. It symbolizes the believer's righteousness in Christ.
- The shoes of the gospel - The Roman soldier wore sandals with hobnails in the soles to give him better footing for the battle. If we are going to stand and withstand, then we need the shoes of the gospel.
- The shield of faith - The shield was large, usually about four feet by two feet, made of wood, and covered with tough leather. As the soldier held it before him, it protected him from spears, arrows, and fiery darts. The edges of these shields were so constructed that an entire line of soldiers could interlock shields and march into the enemy like a solid wall. This suggested that we Christians are not in the battle alone. The faith mentioned here is not saving faith, but rather living faith, a trust in the promises and power of God.
- The helmet of salvation - Satan wants to attack the mind, the same way he defeated Eve in the Garden. The helmet refers to the mind controlled by God. When God controls the mind, Satan cannot lead the believer astray. The Christian who studies his Bible and learns the meaning of Bible doctrines is not going to be led astray too easily.
- The sword of the Spirit - This sword is the offensive weapon God provides us. The Roman soldier wore on his girdle a short sword which was used for close-in fighting. Hebrews 4:12 compares the Word of God to a sword, because it is sharp and is able to pierce the inner man just as a material sword pierces the heart.

The Energy:

Prayer is the energy that enables the Christian soldier to wear the armor and wield the sword. We cannot fight the battle in our own power, no matter how strong or talented we may think we are.

- Pray always - This obviously does not mean "always saying prayers." "Praying without ceasing" says to us, "Always be in communion with the Lord."
- Pray with all prayer - There is more than one kind of praying: prayer, supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving. The believer who prays only to ask for things is missing out on blessings that come with intercessions and giving of thanks. In fact, thanksgiving is a great prayer weapon for defeating Satan. "**Praise** changes things" as much as "**prayer** changes things."
- Pray in the Spirit - The Bible formula is that we pray to the Father, through the Son, and in the Spirit.
- Pray with your eyes open - Watching means "keeping on the alert."
- Keep on praying - The word perseverance simply means "stick to it and not quit." The early believers prayed this way, and we also should pray this way. Perseverance in prayer does not mean we are trying to twist God's arm, rather that we are deeply concerned and burdened and cannot rest until we get God's answer.
- Pray for all the saints - The Lord's Prayer begins with "Our Father" - not "My Father." We pray as part of a great family that is also talking to God, and we are called to pray for other members of the family.

The Encouragement:

We are not fighting the battle alone. There are other believers who stand with us in the fight. We need to be sure to encourage one another. Paul was not the kind of missionary who kept his affairs to himself. He wanted the people of God to know what God was doing, how their prayers were being answered, and what Satan was doing to oppose the work. His motive was not selfish. He was not trying to get something out of them.

What an encouragement it is to be a part of the family of God! Nowhere in the New Testament do we find an isolated believer. Christians are like sheep; they flock together. The church is an army, and the soldiers need to stand together and fight together.

→ Note the words Paul used as he closed this letter: ***Peace - Love - Faith - Grace!*** He was a prisoner of Rome, yet he was richer than the emperor.

So this is how we shall live as Transformed Children of God – with Peace, Love, Faith, and Grace!

"Peace be with you, dear brothers and sisters, and may God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you love with faithfulness. May God's grace be eternally upon all who love our Lord Jesus Christ."

Lecture Resources:

From Gotquestions.org

Mission Statement of Got Questions Ministries:

"Got Questions Ministries seeks to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ by providing biblical, applicable, and timely answers to spiritually related questions through an internet presence."

GotQuestions.org is a volunteer ministry of dedicated and trained servants who have a desire to assist others in their understanding of God, Scripture, salvation, and other spiritual topics. We are Christian, Protestant, conservative, evangelical, fundamental, and non-denominational. We view ourselves as a para-church ministry, coming alongside the church to help answers to their spiritually related questions.

We will do our best to prayerfully and thoroughly research your question and answer it in a biblically based manner. It is not our purpose to make you agree with us, but rather to point you to what the Bible says concerning your question. You can be assured that your question will be answered by a trained and dedicated Christian who loves the Lord and desires to assist you in your walk with Him. Our writing staff includes pastors, youth pastors, missionaries, biblical Bible/Christian college students, seminary students, and lay students of God's Word.

Question: "What does it mean to be a godly wife?"

Answer: To be a godly wife, we must first consider what the word *godly* means. In [1 Timothy 2:2](#), Paul uses the word in conjunction with being "peaceful," "quiet," and "dignified." The Bible says the Spirit, who is in every believer, produces visible and invisible acts of godliness, "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness" ([Galatians 5:22](#)). The decisive definition of *godliness* would be "[Christlikeness](#)." Godliness involves a genuine striving to imitate Christ, to be like Him in thought and action as the apostle Paul strived to be ([1 Corinthians 11:1](#)). These characteristics of a godly disposition apply to every believer, whether male or female. Fortunately, the Bible gives more specific qualifications as to what a godly woman—particularly, a godly wife—looks like.

In the [book of Proverbs](#), there is a beautiful word picture painted of a godly wife. The virtues of a godly wife have not changed, even over thousands of years. A godly wife is one who has the complete trust of her husband. He doesn't have to worry she will be tempted by the wiles of another man, overcharge the credit cards, or spend all day watching soap operas. He knows she is dignified, wise, and devoted ([Proverbs 31:11,12, 25, 26](#)). He is confident of her support and sincere love because she is not vindictive or critical. Her husband has a good reputation in the community, and his wife never speaks ill of him, never gossips about him. Rather, she is always lifting him up and giving him praise. She maintains the household thoroughly and is well respected herself ([Proverbs 30:12, 21, 23](#)).

A godly wife spends less time in front of the mirror than in sharing her goods with the poor and needy because she is selfless and benevolent ([Proverbs 31:20, 30](#)). But she doesn't neglect herself; she keeps her body and spirit strong and in good health. Although she works hard and keeps long hours, she is not haggard; she cares about beautiful things to enhance herself and her family ([Proverbs 31:17, 21, 22](#)).

Contrary to what many believe a biblical portrait of a godly wife to be, [Proverbs 31](#) reveals she is enterprising and

ambitious. The [Proverbs 31](#) wife is a small business owner—she makes and sells garments. She makes her own business decisions independently, and she alone decides what to do with her earnings ([Proverbs 31:16, 24](#)). Notice, however, her earnings do not go toward shoes or bags, but to buy a field where she can plant a vineyard—something that will benefit the whole family.

Through all of her endeavors, service, and hard work, the godly wife maintains joy. She can discern all she is doing is profitable, which spurs her on to a sense of gratification ([Proverbs 31:18](#)). A godly wife doesn't worry about what the future may bring. She smiles at the future because she knows her Lord is in control of everything ([Proverbs 31:30](#)). Verse 30 is the key to the entire passage because a woman cannot be a godly wife without first fearing the Lord. It is her pursuit of Jesus and her abiding in Him which bring the fruit of godliness to manifest in the life of a godly woman (see [John 15:4](#)).

Finally, a godly wife should be submissive to her husband ([Ephesians 5:22](#)). What does a submissive wife look like? Not what you might think. The Bible teaches that Jesus submits to His Father ([John 5:19](#)). Yet Jesus is equal to the Father ([John 10:30](#)). Therefore, a submissive wife is not less valuable as a human being; her role is not less important—but it is *different*. Christians know that Christ is every bit as divine as the Father (and the Holy Spirit), but each plays a different role in redemption. In the same way, men and women each play a different part in marriage. So, for a wife to be submissive to her husband as Christ is submissive to the Father means she willingly *allows* her husband to lead. Jesus went willingly, although not without distress ([Matthew 26:39](#)). Christ knew the Father's way was best. A godly wife may find the path of submissiveness painful at times, but following God will always result in spiritual rewards that last for all eternity ([1 Timothy 4:7-8](#)).

The Bible equates submissiveness to one's husband to submissiveness to God ([Ephesians 5:22](#)). In other words, if a wife cannot submit to her husband, it may be a reflection of her struggle to be submissive to Christ. Submission does not imply weakness; a submissive wife is not “unintelligent” or “unimportant.” Submission requires strength, dignity, and devotion, as we learn from the [Proverbs 31](#) woman.

[Proverbs 31](#) presents the ideal. A woman can be a godly wife without being perfect (we know there is no such thing as human perfection). But as a wife grows more intimate in her relationship with Christ, she will grow increasingly godly in her marriage. Godliness goes in complete opposition of what secular society says a woman should aspire to. However, as women of God our first concern must always be what pleases God.

Recommended Resources: [Feminine Appeal: Seven Virtues of a Godly Wife and Mother](#) by Mahaney & DeMoss and [Logos Bible Software](#).

By Steve Webb on [blogos.org](#) (Blogging God's Word)

What is the role of a godly husband?

The position of the husband in the home and his related responsibilities are defined in principle in [Ephesians 5:22, 28-31](#), as follows:

Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the church . . . Therefore as the church is subject to Christ, so let wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wife as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it . . . So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church . . . For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

The husband is thus to love his wife above all others.

This doesn't mean that the only responsibility of the husband is to be head of the house. Also note that "head" does not mean master as in a master-slave relationship, nor does

it mean a relationship like a general to a private in the army. It is more like a partnership where one is the leader, guide or director. Probably without exception the husband should consult his wife when making important decisions, and be willing to accept her guidance in areas where she has greater expertise and knowledge.

Ephesians 5:25-28; and Colossians 3:19 teach that the husband is to be considerate and tender, cherishing his wife. Since love must be nourished, there is to be a warm demonstrative affectionate relationship. The husband has the responsibility of demonstrating his love and concern, and being verbal about it. Men are often not communicative enough and need to make sure they are sufficiently demonstrating their love mentally, verbally and physically. Your wife is a part of your body - you are a part of each other. For this reason Paul said, "Love your wife." He didn't say, "...if you want to." It is a commandment. If you fail to do this you are disobeying God. As you love her, you love yourself, and are fulfilling the role that God wanted you to have.

I Peter 3:7, teaches that the husband is to honor his wife. Honor means showing her respect, which involves courtesy, consideration, and emotional support. A husband must not hold his wife up to public ridicule by such things as cutting remarks. She is not perfect and neither are you, so do not expect perfection. As Ephesians 4:32 teaches, "forbear one another." This means being gentle. Controlling your temper, avoiding physical violence, and restraining a sharp tongue are ways by which you can exhibit forbearance.

Paul presents another responsibility of husbands in I Timothy 5:8: "If any provide not for his own, especially those of his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." Thus, the father should set an example for his family by working honestly and diligently. Marriage is partly a financial undertaking, and the husband has a responsibility to support his family. As husband, your earnings are not solely your own but belong to your wife as both of you raise your children.

As a final point, the husband must be involved in the discipline and rearing of their children. In I Timothy 3:3-5 we learn that men should wisely rule their own household. Ephesians 6:4 says, "Fathers provoke not your children to wrath," and similarly in Colossians 3:21, "Fathers provoke not your children to anger lest they be discouraged." The husband therefore does not leave discipline solely to his wife, but shares in the training of their children. He is to direct the household with concern for each member, and should see to their spiritual development by the life he lives and the direction in which he leads them.

From CompellingTruth.org

What should a Christian mother be like according to the Bible?

The first mother mentioned in the Bible is, of course, Eve. Genesis 3:20 says, "The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." "Eve" means life or living; "mother" is the Hebrew 'em. In the Old Testament, 'em is translated "mother"

218 times. But it also carries with it the hint of "point of departure or division" (see parting in Ezekiel 21:21). It represents a nurturing source from whence those of similar character disseminate. In English, this is seen in such terms as "motherland," "mother-ship," and even "mother board."

In the biblical worldview, the mission of parents is to raise children to follow God. To that end, God designed the family as the primary unit by which children are cared for, loved, trained, and empowered. This requires both kindness and discipline. Being a Christian mother encompasses a great degree of tension. She must be kind but still uphold biblical expectations, and she must know when to let go of the children she nurtured.

As most Christian mothers can attest, it is difficult to balance the natural instinct to protect one's child from harm with the necessity to equip the child for life as an adult. Mothers are reminded to love their children (Titus 2:4)—to feel affection for them, to approve of, like, and to have a kind attitude toward them. At the same time, a mother is to train her children to live godly lives (Psalm 78:5-6) and discover how they, personally, can contribute to God's kingdom (Proverbs 22:6).

Children don't always make this task easy. Deuteronomy 21:18-21 gives the law that if an Israelite child was completely rebellious toward his parents, to the point where he endangered them and those around them, the parents were responsible to turn the son in to the authorities. If the crimes were serious enough, the governing body could then have the son executed. This law must have been incredibly difficult for mothers whose first instinct was to protect their child, and, indeed, there is no record that the law was ever used. Part of a Christian mother's responsibility in equipping and training her children is to explain and embody the character and holiness of God (Deuteronomy 6:4-7), even if the child rejects everything to do with God. It's comforting to know that Jesus also struggled with rebellious children.

Another serious tension in Christian motherhood is that of being a life-giver as well as a place of departure. Genesis 3:20 describes Eve, the first mother, as the source of life. In Genesis 17:16, God promised Abraham that his wife Sarah would become the mother, or source, of many nations and kings. But God also told Eve's children to "fill the earth" (Genesis 1:28), which would require them to leave her. And Sarah's children include everyone who follows Christ—certainly a diverse and widespread group. Similarly, mothers need to remember that the purpose of mothering is to develop a strong, independent adult (Genesis 2:24). Even if that adult child resides geographically close, she must allow him the freedom to live as an adult, taking his mother's wisdom into account (Proverbs 31:2) but still making his own decisions—even decisions she doesn't understand or agree with (Mark 3:20-21, 31).

In order to hold the tension of motherhood, God expects Christian mothers to have two specific characteristics. The first is inferred in Proverbs 1:8-9: "Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck." In order for a child to trust his mother's wisdom, the mother must actually be wise. Mothers need to follow God and

rely on the promises in 2 Peter 1:3, which says, "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence." But Christian mothers should also keep in mind Ephesians 6:4: "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." Discipline and training are greatly undermined when they are given without respect or affection. Add the two together, and you get Ephesians 4:15—speak the truth in love.

The Bible does not reserve motherhood only for women with biological children. Judges 5:7 identifies the prophet and judge Deborah as "a mother in Israel," but she was also a mother to Israel. She provided wisdom (Judges 4:5) and, under God's leading, showed Israel the way they were to go (verse 6). She even tried to encourage her "grown child" to follow God on his own, without her constant presence (verses 8-9). Because of Deborah's wisdom and guidance, Israel enjoyed a rare period of peace (Judges 5:31). All women can follow Deborah's example to encourage, nurture, and train those around them to live mature, effective, and God-honoring lives.

Motherhood is not the sum total of a Christian woman's responsibilities. She is also a child of God (Romans 8:14), possibly a respectful wife (Ephesians 5:33), and an essential part of her local church (1 Corinthians 12:4-31). In all of these relationships, a woman can exhibit Christian motherhood by supporting, training, and empowering others so they can make their own contribution to God's kingdom.