

Ephesians 5:21-33 & 6:1-4

International Bible Lesson Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further

Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all the **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The ***Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further*** below are not actually intended to be *the answers* to the discussion questions. These indeed are “hints” a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class. The *Class Preparation Guide* includes the questions below, and it can be given to students at the end of the previous class; then, they can pray, read, and think ahead to prepare for the next week’s Bible lesson. And/Or, consider giving each student the *International Bible Lesson Study Guide*, which includes the Bible verses to be studied before class and other questions.

1. What does it mean to be subject to someone? What does it mean to be “subject to one another”? What reason does Paul give why Christians ought to be “subject to one another”?

To be subject to someone is to be under their authority, direction, or influence. Employees are subject to work for their employers under their directions. Many successful businesses consider themselves subject to the needs or desires of their customers and employees. As Christians, to be “subject to one another” is to try to meet the real (and not the imaginary or wrong) needs of another person just as they, as a Christian, should try to meet the real needs of the other person. The Bible teaches that instead of always considering what we might gain when we are “subject to one another” (with each person helping the other) that we need to serve others out of reverence for Christ—focusing in His will for us and our desire to honor Him through our obedience to Him and service to others according to the Scriptures.

2. Why do you think some people reject the Biblical role of wives that Paul described in Ephesians?

Some may think that as a wife they must have the freedom to live totally independent of the will of their husband. Some may think that the Bible

means a wife should do whatever her husband commands, similar to a general in the army commanding a private to do something. Some wives may have been abused by demanding husbands, who do not treat them as Paul described in Ephesians 5:21 by being “subject to one another.”

3. What does “be subject . . . as you are to the Lord” mean to you?

The Bible tells us to be subject to the Lord, because Jesus is our Lord as well as our Savior. We should do whatever we do “out of reverence for Christ.” Everything else we do in serving the needs of others or following the directions of others, including wives being subject to their husbands (and in another sense husbands being subject to their wives) is secondary to reverence for and obedience to Jesus Christ. A person does not need to serve or meet the needs of someone when that would mean disobeying Jesus Christ or being irreverent to Christ according to the Scriptures.

4. How do you think Jesus Christ being the Savior of the church effects how He relates to the church as “head of the church”?

Because Jesus Christ loved and gave himself to save the Church, His body, and each member of His body, He will never direct the Church or anyone in the Church to do anything that would harm the Church or any member of the Church in the context of eternity. Jesus Christ is the example for us to follow when we have responsibilities for others. Jesus relates to the Church today in ways that will promote the best interests of the Church and each member of the Church He died for and lives to save. If a Church member dies a martyr’s death or suffers for preaching the gospel as Paul did, Jesus has good and loving reasons for everyone when anyone suffers. Jesus will never ask a Church to do anything or make any changes that are contrary to His commands or example in the Bible.

5. How should husbands love their wives?

“As Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25).

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