

Robe for Relationships

Chapter 6

Audio Lesson: New Testament #60



Objective: To understand how to apply Paul's practical advice on Christian living to our marriage, home, and other relationships.



Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

– Ephesians 5:21-28

In Ephesians 5, Paul wrote that the work of the ministry through the saints begins in the most difficult place — the home. We show our best selves to the world, but often we show a less attractive side to our family. Paul gave beautiful marriage counsel. Wives are to submit to their husbands, and husbands are to love their wives *even as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*. The greatest problem in Christian marriages is not women who cannot or will not be submissive to their husbands; it is men who will not accept the responsibility to love, give, and be as Christ to their wives and children. All men need to understand this responsibility and put it into practice.

When God designed marriage, He designed a relationship in which two people are to be one in spirit, one in mind, and one in physical unity. We can picture this special relationship if we imagine them joined together by a chain that has six links. These links are the spiritual dimension of each, the foundation of oneness; communication, the tool that helps us maintain oneness; compatibility, the evidence of oneness; agape love, the dynamic of oneness; understanding, the growth of oneness; and physical unity, the joyful expression of oneness.

Paul addressed other relationships, such as between slaves and masters, employees and employers, and children and parents. Applying the truths in this letter begins with the person or people closest to you. We might call the application section of this letter “Robe for Relationships.” We are to put on the new robe of our new life in Christ.

Paul also wrote that both good and evil spirits exist in the spirit world. The only way we can live in spiritual triumph is to be victorious over these spiritual powers. He tells us that we must put on the armor of God. (6:13-17) He outlined how we can stand for the Lord in this sinful world. We must fight, not in our own strength, but in the power of the Holy Spirit.



1. True or False? The home is an easy place to apply our faith because we are with our loved ones.
2. True or False? Paul says it is impossible to live eternally until we die.
3. True or False? Paul's counsel to submit ourselves to one another is easy to do.
4. True or False? The greatest problem in Christian marriages is men who will not accept the responsibility to love, give, and be as Christ to their wives and children.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Oneness in marriage means that two people are one in which of the following ways? (Choose all that apply)

In spirit	In physical unity
In mind	In roles
In personality	In responsibilities

6. How would you describe the importance of the spiritual relationship in marriage? (Choose all that apply)

- a. It can be healthy even if one partner is not a Christian.
- b. It is the foundation of oneness in marriage.
- c. It is only as strong as each partner's relationship with Christ.
- d. It is strengthened as each partner grows in Christ.

7. Which link is the tool that helps maintain oneness?
- Communication
 - Compassion
 - Compatibility
 - Physical
8. The evidence of oneness, compatibility, can be seen on many levels. Paul describes *agape* love in 1 Corinthians 13. Why is *agape* love a link to oneness? (Choose all that apply)
- Christians are not selfish.
 - Agape* is unconditional love.
 - Agape* focuses on Christ and others instead of on the self.
 - Agape* is indestructible and irresistible.
9. Understanding is important to oneness in marriage? Why? (Choose all that apply)
- Each partner needs to know how the other feels, thinks, and acts.
 - Knowing your spouse well is not important.
 - It shows that both partners are growing in oneness.
 - It is impossible to understand each other, so don't try.
10. We can apply these truths to the people closest to us. In what other relationships could we use the same principles? (Choose all that apply)
- Employees and employers
 - Children and parents
 - Extended family members
 - Close friends and neighbors
 - All of the above
11. What is the joyful expression of oneness in a healthy marriage?
- Submission of the wife
 - Sexual relationship
 - Not needing to communicate
 - Total understanding



Read Ephesians 6:10-17. In our spiritual battles, we can only be victorious if we put on our spiritual armor. List the different pieces of the armor of God below:

Do you put on His armor every day or do you try to fight spiritual battles in your own strength? What are some ways you can remind yourself to put on His armor every morning?



Praise God for your family. Thank Him for His wonderful design for marriage. If you are married, ask God to help you obey His design for your role of either husband or wife. Ask Him to help you live out your faith first with the people who are closest to you. Ask Him to remind you to wear the full armor of God every day.



Going Deeper

1. In what way is the instruction of Paul in 4:12, “the equipping of the saints (believers) for the work of the ministry,” which is the job description of every pastor? _____

2. How do you apply Paul’s teachings of this profound letter to the people closest to us—our spouse, our parents, our children, those we work for, and those who work for us? _____

3. What are the vital links of every marriage, what dimension of our oneness do they represent, and how are we to apply them to our marriage? _____

4. How are husbands to apply the teaching of Paul that, in the metaphor of the church and Christ, the wife is to be as the church and the husband is to be as Christ? _____

5. How are husbands to apply the teaching that we are to be submitting ourselves to one another in the Lord, as Paul instructs before he instructs the wives to be submitted to their husbands in everything? _____

6. How should we apply the teaching in chapter 6 of Ephesians that we are in a spiritual warfare and we must put on every piece of armor Paul describes in this great chapter? Describe and apply each piece of armor that Paul profiles. _____

7. How do you apply the instruction that each piece of armor must be put on with prayer? _____
