

Ephesians 6:1–9 (NKJV)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.² “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise:³ “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

⁴ And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

⁵ Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ;⁶ not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,⁷ with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men,⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he* is a slave or free.

⁹ And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Interpretation: *Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.*

1. In vv. 2 and 3, Paul quotes from Ex. 20:12 (see also Deut. 5:16). What does it mean when Paul says that “this is the first commandment with promise”?

2. What does it mean to “bring [children] up in the training and admonition of the Lord” (v. 4)? Other versions may also be helpful in understanding this phrase.

3. Consult a study Bible or commentary to find out more about the life of a “bondservant” (v. 5) in the first century.

4. Why does Paul expect bond-servants to obey “with fear and trembling” in verse 5? What does that mean?

5. In what circumstances would verse 8 bring comfort to both bondservants and free individuals? In what circumstances would it not be comforting?

6. What reason does Paul use to support his command to masters in verse 9? Why is that significant?

Application: *Take time to reflect on the implications of Ephesians 6:1–9 for your own life today.*

7. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?

8. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?
