

Looking Back

Reflect on what you heard in the sermon on last week's Scripture text (Eph 6:1-4).

- What key truths did you learn?
- How will you apply these truths to your life?

Looking Forward

Scripture Text: Ephesians 6:5-9

Context

In the first three chapters of Ephesians, we encounter the glory of what the Triune God has accomplished through the Gospel. In 5:22-6:9, Paul exhorts different members of the household (wives and husbands, children and parents, slaves and masters) to live wisely, in a way that is consistent with the truths of the Gospel. This is what it means to "understand what the will of the Lord is" and to be "filled with the Spirit" (5:17-18).

Observation and Meaning

1. What are slaves exhorted to do? Why?
2. What are masters exhorted to do? Why?
3. What Gospel truths does Paul emphasize in order to motivate obedience to these exhortations?

Big Idea

As followers of Christ, we work for King Jesus. This changes how we work as well how we relate to others in our work. It also shapes the reason why we work.

Connecting to the whole Bible's storyline

Work is a good gift from God, for the benefit of His creation and for His glory. Sin has corrupted work. But Jesus Christ is the worker par excellence. He worked in perfect obedience to the Father; willingly going to the cross to accomplish the work the Father gave Him to do. In Christ, we have been brought from death to life. In him, we are God's workmanship created for good works.

Application

1. Who do we work for? Why?
2. What motivates us to work? How should the gospel shape our motivations?
3. How should the Gospel affect how we work and relate to others in the workplace?
4. Discuss how we would practically apply these verses, as an employee or an employer.

Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger storyline of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (eg. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

Who is writing and to whom?
What is the situation of the author and of the readers?
Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?
Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.