

RENEWED RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FAMILY OF FAITH



Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ. The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by cherishing. So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership, wives should likewise submit to their husbands.

Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ’s love makes the church whole. His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring the best out of her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness. And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They’re really doing themselves a favour—since they’re already “one” in marriage.

Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

No one abuses his own body, does he? No, he feeds and pampers it. That’s how Christ treats us, the church, since we are part of his body. And this is why a man leaves father and mother and cherishes his wife. No longer two, they become “one flesh.” This is a huge mystery, and I don’t pretend to understand it all. What is clearest to me is the way Christ treats the church. And this provides a good picture of how each husband is to treat his wife, loving himself in loving her, and how each wife is to honour her husband.

Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

Children, do what your parents tell you. This is only right. “Honour your father and mother” is the first commandment that has a promise attached to it, namely, “so you will live well and have a long life.”

Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

Fathers and mothers, don’t exasperate your children by coming down hard on them. Take them by the hand and lead them in the way of the Master.

Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

Servants, respectfully obey your earthly masters but always with an eye to obeying the *real* master, Christ. Don’t just do what you have to do to get by, but

work heartily, as Christ's servants doing what God wants you to do. And work with a smile on your face, always keeping in mind that no matter who happens to be giving the orders, you're really serving God. Good work will get you good pay from the Master, regardless of whether you are slave or free.

Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

Masters, it's the same with you. No abuse, please, and no threats. You and your servants are both under the same Master in heaven. He makes no distinction between you and them.

Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-9, THE MESSAGE

