

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

FUTURE *in* FOCUS

Future in Focus | Week 6 | October 12, 2025

Text: Ephesians 6:1–4

READ

Read the Scripture of the week: Ephesians 5:21–33

DISCUSS

- Share a time when your family—or a family you know—experienced God’s grace in the middle of struggle or conflict.
- Share one or two “nuggets” that stood out from Sunday’s sermon.

COME AND SEE

Paul continues his vision of the “new walk” by applying it to family life. In a world where parenting philosophies shift constantly, Scripture presents a design that cultivates stability, respect, and joy.

1. The Family “In Christ” vs. “In Crisis” (vv. 1–3)

Paul begins with children: “Obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.” Obedience teaches children the goodness of authority and the blessing of structure. “Honor your father and mother” (Deuteronomy 5:16) adds depth—honor means to “give weight to,” showing respect and gratitude even into adulthood.

- What’s the difference between obedience and honor? How can adults continue to honor their parents while maintaining boundaries? (See Proverbs 1:8–9 and Colossians 3:20.)
- How might the promise attached to this commandment—“that it may go well with you”—be a spiritual principle, not just a social one?

2. Parents Who Guide and Guard (v. 4)

Paul’s instruction to fathers (“do not exasperate your children”) is radical for his day, calling parents to nurturing, not domination. The words for “training and instruction” (paideia and nouthesia) describe shaping character through guidance, correction, and loving authority.

- What’s the difference between authoritarian control and authoritative guidance? How have you seen “warm authority” produce better outcomes than either harshness or permissiveness? (See Proverbs 22:6.)

3. The Power of Example

Children learn most from modeled faith. The home is the primary discipleship center, where parents “train and instruct” not just through words, but daily rhythms of grace.

- How can you intentionally weave faith, prayer, and repentance into ordinary family moments (meals, drives, bedtime, conflict)?
- What might your children, grandchildren, or younger believers be learning about God’s character by watching you?

4. Grace for Imperfect Parents

Paul David Tripp writes, “Every parent is a contradiction: you’re a flawed person raising flawed people who need a flawless Savior.” None of us parent perfectly—but Jesus supplies the grace, wisdom, and forgiveness we lack.

- How can the gospel free you from guilt in parenting and move you toward dependence on Christ’s help? (See Malachi 4:6 and Psalm 103:13–14.)

FOLLOW ME

- For Parents: What's one practical way you can bring your children up "in the training and instruction of the Lord"? (Think time, tone, boundaries, or faith conversations.)
- For Children/Teens: What is one tangible way you can show honor to your parents this week—even if you don't fully agree?
- For Grandparents and Mentors: How can you help the next generation see faith as beautiful and life-giving rather than restrictive?
- For Everyone: In what ways can your household (or church family) reflect the grace, order, and joy of God's household?

Write down one step you'll take this week to make your family—or your circle of influence—a clearer reflection of Christ's love.

GO AND BE

- Pray that Christ would turn the hearts of parents toward their children and the hearts of children toward their parents (Malachi 4:6).
- Ask God to make your home (or church) a place of grace and truth where people learn to honor, forgive, and flourish.
- Thank Jesus that He is both the perfect Son and the perfect Parent—and ask Him to shape your family into His likeness.