

Ephesians 5:18-21

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[0:00] is going to be to the book of Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 5. Ephesians chapter 5, not very many verses we'll be looking at together this morning. We'll actually be in Ephesians chapter 5, verses 18 through 21.

Some of you rejoice when you hear me say it's just a few verses because you know at times I can get quite a few verses. Some of you that have been with me for some time say, oh, that doesn't necessarily mean a short sermon. So either way, we're Ephesians 5, verses 18 through 21. I'm so encouraged, and I do encourage you to support a number of things we have going on here at the church. You know, each week, we really struggle to get everything in the bulletin. It needs to be in the bulletin. There are a number of things going on. There are a number of activities that are there, and many of them are behind the scenes, and many of them are being done by individuals just week in and week out. I'm so thankful for that. Women on Mission do a great, great work, and I'm so appreciative of the ministries that they do throughout the year, so I want to encourage you to support them. The correlating of scriptures is not just a Women on Mission thing. It's a ministry of the church wanting an invitation for all the church to come. From the members we've seen go to the mission field this year, I don't know if you realize it, but in a 12-month period, we'll have five members so far that have been on the mission field, either foreign or domestic, and it's encouraging to see the church come around them and support them and be there for them, you know, and just to be able to give to that.

We didn't budget on that, but God's provided for that, so it's been awesome to see how that has come together, and just to continue to see the gospel going forth in your life and in the life of the church, and the things that we have going on here, the community-wide Easter egg hunt, not just an opportunity to throw eggs in the middle of a field and say we hit them, quote unquote, but to be there and to have interaction with our community, to be able to provide a lunch for them, to be able to start conversations, the blessing of being in a community that's excited about the church being there.

Some of you have never had the opportunity to be in a church where the community didn't like the church, but it is a blessing to be a part of a community that, or part of a church that the community loves, and they show up to, and they're there, so what an opportunity we have, and it is so good to see that. So appreciative for the work that's even been going on for the lunch, and it's going to take place after service this morning. A lot of work's been going on back there, and I know there's still ongoing work, but just so much that we have going, so much to be thankful for. We're in Ephesians 5. We're going to start in verse 18 and go down to verse 21. So if you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you would join with me as we stand together, and we read the word of God with one another, and then we will pray. The word of God says, and do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing, and making melody with your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father, and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for this day. God's so thankful to have the opportunity together with the saints which are at War Trace.

Lord, thankful for the chance we have to proclaim your praise and song with one another. Lord, to take moments of stillness and just to dwell upon the things of heaven. Lord, we thank you even more for the opportunity of opening up your word. And Lord, pray as we have opened your word up, and we have read it, and we have seen it, and we have heard it. Lord, that now by the power and presence of your Spirit that you would speak to our hearts and minds. Lord, we pray that as you speak to us, we would have a willingness and a desire to hear you, but Lord, also to live it out in application for your glory and honor. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated.

[3:49] We're making our way through the book of Ephesians. And in the book of Ephesians, we have been seeing a number of things, things that are astounding and abounding to us. We have seen things that deal with doctrinal truths. We have seen the application that comes as a result of not only the acceptance, but the living out of those doctrinal truths. If you have not been with us, you know the first half of the book of Ephesians, chapters 1 through 3, deal with doctrine and theology, the things that we know. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 deal with practice, how we apply what we know. Because truth without application, you know it, is just useless information. If you don't do anything with what you learned, and it hasn't done you any good, and it's not doing anyone else any good. So Paul here declares the truth of God and of Christ and who we are in Christ, and then he gives us application to live that out.

Now he began his application part in the fourth chapter with reference to the church. He kind of works backwards from what he did with his doctrinal section. In doctrine, chapters 1, 2, and 3, he deals with who we are as individuals. We have been redeemed, we have been purchased, we have been enriched according to, and never get that wrong, right? I mean, I know I say it over and over again, but if nothing else, by the time we get with Ephesians, you know you are enriched according to the riches of Christ, not from the riches of Christ. That is, according to the measure of his riches, so it has been given to us. So we have been enriched as individuals, and then being enriched as individuals, he unites us together as a spiritual body. We are being built up into the holy temple of the Lord, right? We are the temple. It's a good thing. I love the Old Testament. Oh, I remember when I first started preaching, I love the writings of Paul, and in case you haven't caught on to it, I could preach the writings of Paul over and over and over again, but you know the more I matured in Christ, and the more

I began to grow in my understanding of Scripture, and the more I began to get into the Word, I knew that I really didn't understand Paul until I knew what was said in the Old Testament, because the Old Testament is not null and void, the Old Testament is fulfilled in the New Testament, right? And when God makes a promise that the seed of David would build the temple that would endure forever, and that the one building the temple would be called the Son of God, and God would be called his Father, and that the one that was building the temple would set upon a throne eternal, and that the one that was building the temple would reign forever and ever without end, then it's not Solomon, right? Solomon builds a temple, but that's not the temple. We see the temple when we realize that we are the stones being built and united with one another into a spiritual household, and it's a glorious truth, and it's a glorious position, but then Paul, when he begins to deal with application, and I know I'm going fast, gets into the fourth chapter, and he begins to define how we look as a church, how every stone has a part, how every portion and piece matters. Brother Glenn shared earlier that the women on mission predate this building, and you say, oh, that's good. Well, when you realize the building's been here since started construction in 1887, was officially kind of christened in 1888. February of 1888 was the first service here, and they had to bring extra trains in from Shelbyville because so many people wanted to come see this building. It's all there in the newspaper articles, and you can read it.

I wasn't there. I'm assuming none of you were there either, but in 1888, people were riding all the trains and coming in, and everybody wanted to come see this new building that was built in war trace, but the very first stone that was laid in 1887 was the cornerstone on the back of the building back here, and in that cornerstone, they tell me, you remember when we had our 150th anniversary in 2018, somebody told me, said, pastor, there's a time capsule in that cornerstone. We need to open it up. I said, not we. I'm not doing it. You can do it, but I'm not doing it. I'm not taking a sledgehammer to the cornerstone of the building because that stone matters. They should have, we buried one that year, 2018. We buried it in the yard because we didn't want anybody knocking the stones out of the building. Why? Because the stones are important, right? I was not going to be the pastor that knocked the cornerstone out of the building that had been here 150 years. I'm sorry. I'm just not going to do it because those stones matter, and we understand that. Each one of them was there in place, and they were there for a purpose, and that's who we are, and Paul tells us that in Ephesians 4, and he goes from dealing with who we are as a corporate body, and then he begins to get personal, who we are as individuals. We get that in the first part of the fifth chapter, how we

as individuals, we behave differently. We look differently. There's something different and new about us, and now we transition after verse 17. If you remember, verse 16 tells us we need to make the most of our time, some translations say redeeming the time, knowing that the days are evil, and then in verse 18, he transitions, starting in Ephesians 5, 18, until we go all the way into the sixth chapter, in the sixth chapter verse 9, there is this kind of subgroup inside the group. There's a mini series inside the series, if you will. There are a number of things that Paul talks about there as he's speaking of the individuals. He really tells us in that section from chapter 5, verse 18, all the way down to chapter 6, verse 9, how we can transform a society, and the transformation of the society takes very clear steps. Now stay with me now, I'm really about to get into the meat of the message. He deals with the individual, he deals with the home, and then he deals with the workplace, because that's how you transform a society. You don't go outside of that and tell it to change those things.

[9:36] Paul deals with the individual, then he deals with the home, and then he deals with the workplace, because when we get the individual right, then once the individual is right, then all of a sudden the home becomes right, and when the home becomes right, the workplace becomes right, and when the workplace becomes right, the community is changed. He's going to deal with us, who we are as individuals first, and then he will deal with husbands, and wives, and children, and somebody will say, oh, I can't wait, I wish you'd have kept on reading, and we get to this whole, wives be submissive or subject to their own husbands, husbands are ahead of the house. Oh, pastor, I can't wait to hear that. Well, I can't wait to preach it, but we'll get there next week, right? Anyway, so we see that he deals with the individual, and then he deals with the home, and he deals with husbands, and wives, and children, and then he deals with what he calls masters and taskmasters, or masters and slaves, or bosses and laborers, is what we would call it today, how we look different in the workplace. But we don't need to worry about the workplace until we deal with the individual, and it's really not any good dealing with the home until we deal with the individual, because if we make the home look good on the outside, but we hadn't fixed the individual who's on the inside, then it really doesn't matter how good the home looks. So we can't get ahead of ourselves, and we got to start where Paul started, and that's why we have verses 18 through 21, and we see what it looks like to be a restored individual. Friend, listen to me. You want your workplace to be better, and you want your home life to be nicer, then you need to live as a restored individual. That's really all it is. You have to deal with the individual before you can ever deal with the corporate. We always say church would be great if it wasn't full of people, but we're here. Right, guess what? Your work would be an awesome place if it wasn't full of people, or the home would be great if it wasn't full of people, but the problem is is we have people in desperate need of restoration, but when people are restored to what they should be, then everything else begins to fall in order and in line. So Paul tells us in these verses how to live as a restored individual. The first thing that we notice in the scripture before us this morning is that the restored individual has surrendered control. He has or she has surrendered control. The Bible tells us, and do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation. Some of you go, well, pastor, I know you're here now. We're going to speak on the debaucheries of this and debaucheries of that, and we're going to speak on all these other things. Well, let's let the scripture say what the scripture says. The scripture says, do not be drunk with wine, for that is dissipation. Now, I don't think he put it there lightly. I don't think he put it there haphazardly, because he's just told us two verses prior to this to redeem the time, or to utilize the time, or not to waste time. The word dissipation means to let something fly apart.

When it dissipates, it is, you have things flying off of it, right? There are things going here and there, and it is beginning to break apart, and you are losing valuable assets and valuable pieces and parts of something. And what Paul is saying, and not just wine, even though that makes a mockery, and alcohol makes a mockery, not any of those things, he says, but to be so controlled by anything that you're losing time, then you're not redeeming it. You're letting it fall apart and fly apart, and you don't have control over the situation. By allowing, friend, listen to me, we could, I love how in scripture we can use scripture as a springboard to make it say anything we want to, when Paul is writing to a particular group of people in a particular location, right? Take it in context, because the moment you begin to take scripture out of context, then you're beginning to take it and apply it to your life, and you have separated it from its thing. Now, I know, let's slow down a little bit here, pastor, but once we get warmed up, we got to keep going. In scripture, there is, in every portion of scripture we open up, there is but one truth. One truth. There's only one truth. In every part and portion of scripture, there is but one truth. And in that one truth, we find that that truth is kind of confined to the context. That is, the author who wrote it, who he was writing to his intended audience, and the original language in which it was written in. That's hermeneutics, right? We need to take our hermeneutical practice, that is, interpretation of scripture, and we want to know exactly what that truth is. Now, that single truth has thousands and thousands of applications. The application is that which transcends time. We don't have to confine it to when Paul wrote this in the early 60s A.D. to a city of

Ephesus. We don't need to confine it to that. The application transcends time. Paul, writing to the Ephesians who had a habit of going out in their religious worship. You remember Ephesus, right? You remember it was the great city of the temple to Diana. It had this great temple that was there, and great is Diana among the Ephesians. And part of the common practice was to go out and just get drunk on wine in their worship and celebratory fashion and to make a mockery of themselves in the community and to make a mockery of themselves. And Paul says, you're going to look different. You are now restored and redeemed. He would write later on that people count it strange that you no longer do the things you used to do, right? He says, don't let this control you. Now, when he's writing to the Ephesians, he's telling them, society doesn't control you. The common practice among you doesn't control you. These things no longer are what dictate how you should live because in doing them, you are losing valuable time. Now, we can make that application for ourselves and say, friend, listen to me.

[15:19] Anything that has control over you that causes you to lose time to dissipate is sinful. Anything.

But he says, but rather be filled with the Spirit. So now we have a controlling influence introduced into the life of the individual. We have a controlling influence. Now here he says, but be filled. Now, the scripture in its original language means to continuously be filled. Being filled. It is the present active tense. Each and every moment you are being filled. And I know some of you in the back of your mind say, well, pastor, I wish you would tell me, can I or cannot do this? Well, if we will follow the command or the implication at the end of the verse, then we will know the answer to the first part of the verse, right? Am I being filled by the Holy Spirit at this moment? Am I being filled by the Spirit? Because if I give you rules of do's and don'ts and, you know, you should and shouldn'ts and all this other stuff and we're putting check marks beside anything, that's not being filled by the Spirit. That's being filled by the dictate of man. It says to be filled with the Spirit. Being filled by the Spirit. Now, the Spirit is both the substance of our being filled and he is also that which is filling us. I know that's confusing, but it is that we are being filled by the Spirit with the things of God. And the more we are being filled by the Spirit with the things of God, then we have more of God himself living within us, right? So he is the one that is filling us. He is the one doing it. And he is also the one who is filled within us. Now, I know that makes you scratch your heads, but it's okay because he's God and we're man and we don't have to always understand all things.

We are filled by him and we are filled with him. Why? Because you cannot fill your own self with spiritual things. Natural man and natural woman does not fill themselves with the things of God. Naturally, we have no desire for the things of God. But spiritually, we have eyes to see and ears to hear and our hearts and minds to apply it, right? It's a supernatural work. Jesus told Nicodemus who came to him by night, lest the man be born again. Nicodemus had all the intelligence in the world.

He said, I don't know how a man can be born again. And Jesus says the wind blows where it wishes and you know not. This is a spiritual matter, right? It is the Spirit that has to do these things. It is a spiritual matter that does it in us and through us and for us. And he fills us up and it is an active tense. We are to be filled with the Spirit. Someone asked D.L. Moody one time, he was he was preaching on being filled with the Spirit. And he kept saying, I need to be filled with the Spirit. And there was a lady sitting on the front row, had one of the big Sunday go to meeting hats, right? And she was there and she kept saying, Mr. Moody, why do you keep talking to being filled with the Spirit? You're already filled with the Spirit. He looked at her and said, because lady, I have holes. I leak. You know, there are things in my life that cause me to leak out some of the spiritual matters. I'm not perfect. I need to continuously be filled up with these things.

[18:30] We need to continuously be filled with the Spirit. Here we see surrender control because here it is, my friend, the first part of a restored individual is either he is going to control what controls him or he's going to give up control to another to fill him. He says we ought to be filled with the Spirit. Secondly, we see not only a surrender of control, we see a change of conduct. You know, the moment an individual surrenders their control, the conduct is changed. As long as I am in control, I can only do what I can do. That is, on my own abilities, on my own efforts, in my own works, in my own righteousness, then I can only do the things that I can do. When I have control, I am limited in scope and expense of what I can and cannot do. But the moment I give up control, then all of a sudden, new things begin to happen. We see there is a change of conduct. It says it there in verse 19, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Can we take just a moment to pause right here for just a moment? Because in the early church, there was such a hard time of what should we sing in the early church?

I mean, it's raised, it wasn't until the 1600s that hymns were allowed in Baptist churches, because Baptist churches in England in the early 1600s, 1640s when the Baptist, if you take the roots all the way back, 1640s, 1650s, you know, I don't want to give you a good history lesson here. A lot of people's like, we can't sing anything but the psalms. All we can sing is the psalter, right? That's the only thing that matters, the only scriptural mandate that we have. And there's this one pastor who, one Sunday a year, would have his congregation sing a hymn. One Sunday a year. And it caused a stir.

And then, okay, after about a couple years of doing that, he decided they were going to do it one Sunday a month. One song, one Sunday a month. Non-psalm, non-salter song. And people got all bent out of shape about that. And then, you know, that radical, they started singing hymns every Sunday.

And they started setting them to tunes. What I can't figure out is the word of God is really clear here. Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Paul gives a clear admonition, right? He gives a clear admonition as to what should be the practice. He's still speaking to the church here.

But in man's legalism, in our efforts to be pure, we overlook things. But anyway, Paul is saying, here's speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. That doesn't mean that you have to walk up to me and start reciting, I surrender all to me, right? It doesn't mean you have to walk up to me and the only thing you say is like Psalm 90. We don't need to have those things, right? Or if you're going to do it, let's do Psalm 119. I want you to quote all Psalm 119 to me next time you come talk to me and then we'll be okay. Longest chapter in all scripture, by the way, guys, okay? So we get done with those 176 verses. We'll probably be done talking and we can move on. We don't have to do that, right? What are you saying? Because it's taken in context, just a few verses prior to this, he says to put off filthy talking and useless language. He said, you used to talk that way with jesting and coarse language. He said, but now your conduct has changed because you surrendered control and now it's full of the things of God. You're speaking in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. By the way, it's a very clear division. Psalms are the Psalter and scripture. We find it in the book of songs. Hymns, easy way to remember this, hymns, H-Y-M-N-S are all about hymn, H-I-M, right? So a hymn is all about hymn. What you have in front of you in the pews are hymns and spiritual songs. Not every one of those are hymns. Some of them are hymns. Some of them are not. Spiritual songs are things that take the truths of scripture and kind of apply them to

us, right? We'll sing it, we'll sing songs like that. There's nothing wrong with that. There are songs that, holy, holy, holy. That's a hymn, right? That's a good hymn because it's all about hymn. Others, when the role is called up yonder, that's a spiritual song. It's a truth. It's not a hymn. You say, oh, that's a good one. It's a classic. Yes, it's a spiritual song. There's nothing wrong with it, but those are matters. But what are you saying? Is there what we say, how we talk, it's all changed. Our conduct looks different. Why? Look at the rest of that verse.

[22:57] And making melody with your heart to the Lord. Making melody with your heart to the Lord because your conduct has changed because the heart has changed. Warren Wiersbe said it this way. I don't know if he even said it in direct quotation of this verse, but of another verse, and it has stuck with me in this, and I shared this with my wife the other day. Warren Wiersbe once wrote, the heart of every problem is the problem of the heart.

The heart of every problem is the problem of the heart. Because until the heart is transformed, until the heart is renewed, until the heart is restored, you're always going to have a problem.

Think about it in your life. Every problem you have is either a problem of your heart or a problem of somebody else's heart. But when the heart is renewed and all of a sudden the conduct is changed. And you're speaking not only in a different way, but you're speaking with a new force and a new focus, right? And now it's the things of heaven that consume us. It's the things of our Lord and Savior that consume us. It's the things of God that are upon our mind and upon our heart. And our conduct is just so different. Why? Because we're transformed. We're restored. We've surrendered control. Now there's a change of conduct. Number three. Just to sell you, there's four verses and four points, okay?

Number three. Number three. We see a steadfast confession. We have surrendered control. We have a change of conduct. And now there's a steadfast confession. Look at what it says. I mean, verse 20 is a great verse. Sometimes we wish it wasn't in there, but it says, always giving thanks for all things. Let me just read that again. Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father. Always means always and all means all, right? Always giving thanks for all things. You read that and you're like, there's some things in my life I'm not very thankful for. I know naturally we're not. But Paul very clearly said, I mean, this is Paul, right? This isn't a guy who had it easy. This isn't a guy writing to believers who would have it easy. This is a gentleman that knows suffering and hardship. And some of them rightly said, you couldn't do anything with Paul.

You killed him. He said, that's great to be absent from the bodies, to be present with the Lord. You say, well, we're going to let you live. He said, well, for me to live is Christ. He said, well, I'm going to beat you. So that's good. I'll bear in my body the brand marks of Christ. And what do you do with him?

[25:35] You can't kill him. You can't beat him and you can't leave him alone because it's all about Christ, right? It's all about something else. And what Paul says to always give thanks in all things. You know, thankfulness, true thankfulness is really a clear understanding and application of the gospel message. It is really understanding the gospel. It is understanding who we are.

Undeserved recipients. It's really who we are that while we were yet sinners, it is understanding what he has done that God so loved us. He gave us his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him shall be saved, right? He's given us salvation. He, he died for us. He restores us. He redeems us.

He renews us. He gave us an excellent gift. And it understands that everything that comes to us, no matter who we are and no matter what he does, comes from a loving father, that God unconditionally loves us, that he loved us while we were unlovable, right? So anytime we get those distorted, if we think, well, I wasn't that bad of a guy, then we begin to diminish God's love, right? Or if we begin to say, well, I was a little bit better than that, that's narcissism, right? Friend, listen, we need to get over ourselves because we are that bad of people.

And you say, well, that doesn't make me feel good. Every time I open up the book of Leviticus, I don't feel good about myself, right? Be holy for I am holy, says the Lord. And any, I say it laughingly, but seriously, I don't get past the fifth chapter in the book of Leviticus, which is really in

the first five books of scripture, right? So you're not very far into the Bible and I'm already stoned because I'm not good enough. So I don't feel too good about myself when I open up scripture, but I see who I am. I see the condition and I see the understanding of my heart and I see who I am. But then praise God, it doesn't stop there because he begins to talk about how much he loves me. Even when I am that guy, he loves me. God loves me. The father wants me to cry out to him.

Abba father. He sent his son. He came flesh to dwell among men that he may redeem us and that he restores. And he loved us enough to sweat drops of blood because of the grief laid upon him. And he bore in his body, our bread marshes. You know, the book of Ephesians says in Ephesians 54, and I'm about to start preaching. Ephesians 54, it says that God was pleased to despise and to put the beatings I deserved upon his son. That is always, that is always kind of got to me. God was pleased to beat his son in my place because God loves us that much. And what he has given us is abundant, eternal life and glory forever and ever and ever and ever and ever, right? He didn't just give us a better life now. He didn't just give us a better position in this world. He gave us life in heaven with him. He gave us life eternal and he wants us to live eternal life today, right? So when you have those together, friend, listen to me, when that's what you understand, how can we not always give thanks in all things? Because look at what it says, through Jesus, our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father. So the thankfulness is directed through Jesus, not just Jesus, our Lord Jesus.

[28:45] So now all of a sudden, my thankfulness is not because of the circumstances. And while I can be thankful for you, that's okay. I'm not thankful to you, right? I can be thankful towards you for you doing something to me, but if you do something bad to me, then I'm going to be unthankful towards you.

But if it's through Christ, he is my Lord. He is my master. He is also my savior. And I'm giving it to God who is my father. And he's not just a father who's out of control. He's a father who has all control and he puts his feet upon the world as his footstool. So when I go through that manner, then listen to me. I know it's difficult to wrap our minds around and sometimes it's even hard to understand. Either God permitted it or God ordained it. And he's a loving father who cares for his children. So therefore I ought to be thankful for it. And that settles it. Always giving thanks in all things. It's a positional understanding of the gospel message. Because the moment we begin to think we deserve better, then we've messed up the gospel. We don't.

I remember when I was first started preaching and I had to learn this lesson the hard way. And I was I was pastoring and I say I was preaching. I wasn't really pastoring at that time. I was preaching and and and you got a great pastor's wife. I know she doesn't like it when I pump it up to her. But I would I would used to say things to her. I was like, oh, I deserve it. And it was hard. It was just difficult. And she'd look at me. She said, no, we deserve hell. I was like, yeah, you're right. All right, let's go back.

Let's go do it again. Right. I mean, had a really good way of putting things in perspective. And she would say it to me personally. I was like, this we deserve it. She would just say no. Because as a dad and as a husband, you know, we were making sacrifices for me to be full time in the ministry at that time. And really, and I would just start feeling bad because there were things I couldn't do. We're going to get to the marriage part later. And I was just and she would just look at me. She said, God called us to it. God's quitting us to do it. And she said, what we deserve is we deserve hell, but you get to preach. And I was like, okay, I'm gonna go back and prepare a sermon. I'll see you later. Right. I mean, it was just really, but in every aspect of our life, that's what we deserve. But yet God being rich in mercy has loved us to this extent, right? Always giving thanks in all things. That's a steadfast confession. If you can give thanks on the mountaintop, friend, give thanks in the valley and give thanks on your way down that mountain towards the valley as you're tumbling down.

[31:09] It's steadfast. You know what, what really transforms the world is when they see thankfulness flowing from the lips of uncomfortable individuals. You expect to find people thankful when things are easy and nice, but when you find someone who's thankful when it's not, it gets their attention. Always giving thanks in all things. What a steadfast confession. Let's look at this last one. Fourth and finally, it is a position of contentment. There's a surrender of control. There's a change of conduct. There's a steadfast confession and there's a position of

contentment. Bible scholars kind of go back and forth as verse 21 introduced the 22nd verse and, and really have a correlation to there. Or is it standalone?

Well, I believe when Paul wrote this, he didn't write it in verses and breaks and subject matters like that. He wrote it as a letter. So they would have read this before they read about how things should happen in the home, which means it has its place right here where it is in scripture.

But it tells us that we ought to have positional contentment, no matter who we are, because until we deal with the contentment of the individual, it really doesn't matter what we look at at the home, because it is really the individual that has the issue. And it says, and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ or submit to one another. Naturally, some of us, more than likely, some of us men or most of us men say, I'm not going to subject myself to anyone, but the word of God says, and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

He says, it's no longer about this wrestling and wrangling for position. It's no longer about trying to make sure you're getting the best. It's, it's being content with where you're at among your peers and among everybody else. Being subject to one another or submitting to one another.

That doesn't necessarily mean that we ought to submit to everybody in the world. He's speaking here to the believers in the church, right? And we know that submission never calls us to disobedience. That way, that is, I'm not going to submit to you if you allow me and call me to do something or want me to do something to contrast the gospel. We are to submit to authorities as long as they walk in obligation of scripture. The moment the authorities begin to tell us to go different than scripture or the clear teachings of God, then we resist that, right? That's, that's where the submission finds its line. Uh, but we ought to be subject to one another. You know, the only way we can do that, uh, I love this, the fact that scripture speaks to all of us before it begins to speak to us, uh, really uniquely. Uh, we're going to get into the wives and husbands and, and children and parents and all those things, but it's dealing with all of us first, right? It says, every one of us ought to be in submission to everyone else.

[33:42] And it just really implies that we are content with where because until we're content with where we're at, we're always looking at other people as a stepping stool to get somewhere else. And we're pushing past them and over them. And sometimes at the expense of them, either in the community or in the church, unfortunately this, this happens so often, even in pulpits, right? They're called stepping stones. I want to move my way here, move my way there, move my way. Uh, someone asked me recently, uh, they, they were new and coming and they wanted to sit down with me. I said, that's fine. And they asked me, uh, just in our conversation, they say, uh, are you looking at moving somewhere else? I said, I pray the Lord never moves me.

And I said, I've prayed that from the very beginning of my ministry. I'd never really had it in my desire to be anything else other than where he wants me to be. Now, am I, I'm content to be here the next 40 years. Some of you say, well, I hope not. Uh, but I'm content to be here the next 40 years, but I'm also content to be here the next 40 minutes. If God leaves, then God leads. Okay. But my desire has never been to try to find something no matter where I'm at, uh, even in workplaces or anything else that I could promote or step. So my desire has just been to serve where God put me and stay there. I understand not only the extent of that through church history, but also know the application of that in contentment. I'm content. I always want to be content. I haven't always been that way. I've had to learn those matters, right? Those wrestling, because it tells us that we ought to subject, be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. That is my contentment with where I am positionally really is a direct reflection of my reverence for Christ. If I'm living in discontentment, again, we go back to that gospel message. I have a Lord who is over me. He is our Lord Jesus Christ. I know we don't like the Lordship principle too much, but he is Lord, right? And if I am discontent with where I'm at, what I'm telling my master is he hasn't put me where I deserve to be. But if I'm not Lord of my own life, then I ought to be content to subject myself to one another and say, Lord, this is where you want me. This is where I'm going to be. And I find my place of positional contentment. Friend, listen to me. Then we have an individual who will have an impactful role in the home and an impactful role in the workplace. You want to, you want to shock your boss when you go to work? Be content. Blows their mind. Live with contentment. Why?

Because you work as unto the Lord, not unto man. I haven't always been vocational ministry, right? I knew that.

I know that application. That I had a boss who was over me, sure, but I had a Lord who was over him. And we can find contentment with where that's at. We see here that the first step to a transformed society is restored individual. And until that restored individual begins living in these manners, nothing else, nothing that follows this is going to amount to anything. We can't deal with the home until we deal with the individual. All right, we can't deal with the children. Some of them say, well, I wish you'd fix my kids. There's some good books out there. You know, I have a new kid by Friday.

[37:11] You know, when you read those books, they deal with the parents first because you can't deal with the kids until you deal with the husband and wives. And you can't deal with the workplace until you deal with the individual. Because it all starts here with a restored individual. And this is what Paul says as an application of the gospel message. Let's pray. Lord, I thank you so much for this day.

God, I thank you that you are a God of restoration. Lord, you are sufficient and able to do a work which no man can do on their own. Lord, you can take the broken vessels that we are. You can take up, take the messed up humanity that we live in and you can restore it and make it new. You can call us to walk in a newness of life. Well, we just ask that you do the supernatural. Lord, if we need to surrender our life to Christ, we pray that we would surrender it in a new way. Maybe there's some here need to come to you for the first time. Lord, I pray that you move and lead their hearts. Maybe there's some who need to come to you full time, not just saying, well, I've kind of followed Christ. I want to completely commit to Christ. Or maybe there's just some of us that need encouragement that what we're doing is right. Lord, we just trust that in your spirit you would speak to our hearts and minds and we give you this moment and we give it to you for your glory. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.