

## **Ephesians Chapter VI Part 1**

*Translation: The Orthodox New Testament, Vol. 2, Holy Apostles Convent, Buena Vista CO., 1999)*

**1 Children be obeying your parents in the Lord; for this is right. 2 “Be honoring your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with a promise, 3 “in order that it might be well with you, and you shall be long-lived on the earth.”**

### **1. Few words for children because the parents set the foundation**

“... if the husband and the wife are thus disposed according to the law which he has laid down, there will be but little trouble in securing the submission of the children. For whenever any matter has a good and sound and orderly principle and foundation, everything will thenceforward go on with method and regularity, with much facility: the more difficult thing is to settle the foundation, to lay down a firm basis. (Chrysostom, Homily XXI, On Ephesians)”

### **2. Obedience based upon the premise that the father *is* in the Lord**

“... if the father be a gentile or a heretic, we ought no longer to obey, because the command is not then, ‘in the Lord.’ (Chrysostom, Homily XXI, On Ephesians)”

### **3. To honor those from whom we are born**

“inasmuch as they before all others are, after God, are the authors of our being, so that it is reasonable they should be the first to reap the fruits of our right actions; and then all the rest of mankind. For if one has not this honor for parents they will never be gentle toward those unconnected with them. (Chrysostom, Homily XXI, On Ephesians)”

**4 And fathers, cease provoking your children, but be nurturing them in the instruction and admonition of the Lord.**

### **1. Against emotional manipulations**

“... as many do by disinheriting them, and disowning them, and treating them overbearingly, not as free, but as slaves. This is why he says, "Provoke not your children to wrath. (Chrysostom, Homily XXI, On Ephesians)”

### **2. Nurturing them in the scriptures**

“Never deem it an unnecessary thing that he should be a diligent hearer of the divine Scriptures. . . Never say, this is the business of monks. Am I making a monk of him? No. There is no need he should become a monk. . . Make him a Christian. For it is of all things necessary for laymen to be acquainted with the lessons derived from this source; but especially for children. For theirs is an age full of folly; and to this folly are super added the bad examples derived from the heathen tales, where they are made acquainted with those heroes so admired amongst them, slaves of their passions, and

cowards with regard to death . . . How is it not absurd to send children out to trades, and to school, and to do all you can for these objects, and yet, not to 'bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord?' And for this reason truly we are the first to reap the fruits, because we bring up our children to be insolent and profligate, disobedient, and mere vulgar fellows. Let us not then do this; no, let us listen to this blessed Apostle's admonition. . . Let us give them a pattern. Let us make them from the earliest age apply themselves to the reading of the Scriptures. (Chrysostom, Homily XXI, On Ephesians)"

**5 Slaves, be obeying your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in simplicity of your heart, as to the Christ, 6 not according to eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of the Christ, doing the will of God, from the soul, 7 with good will rendering service to the Lord and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good thing each one might do, this shall he receive from the Lord, whether he be a slave or free.**

### **1. On Slavery**

"Slavery is nothing but a name. The mastership is "according to the flesh," brief and temporary; for whatever is of the flesh, is transitory. . . He is a brother, or rather he has become a brother, he enjoys the same privileges, he belongs to the same body. Yea, more, he is the brother, not of his own master only, but also of the Son of God, he is partaker of all the same privileges... (Chrysostom, Homily XXI, On Ephesians)"

### **2. Servanthood**

"It is no sign of low birth, rather it is the truest nobility, to understand how to lower ourselves, to be modest and unassuming, and to give way to our neighbor. And the free have served the free with much fear and trembling. . . The man-pleaser then is no servant of Christ. The servant of Christ is not a man-pleaser. (Gal. i. 10) For who that is the servant of God, makes it his object to please men? And who that pleases men, can be a servant of God? (Chrysostom, Homily XXII, On Ephesians)."

**9 And you masters, be doing the same things towards them, forbearing to threat, knowing that their Lord and yours is in the heavens; and there is no respect of persons with Him.**

### **1. Against Slavery – equal rights of all**

"Ah! How mighty a Master does he hint at here! How startling the suggestion! It is this. 'For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. (Matt. vii. 2)' . . . Think not, he would say, that what is done towards a servant, He will therefore forgive, because he was a servant. Heathen laws indeed as being the laws of men, recognize a difference between these kinds of offenses. But the law of the common Lord and Master of all, as doing good to all alike, and dispensing the same rights to all, knows no such difference. (Chrysostom, Homily XXII, On Ephesians)."

## **2. The source of slavery**

“ Slavery is the fruit of covetousness, of degradation, of savagery; since Noah, we know, had no servant, nor had Abel, nor Seth, no, nor they who came after them. The thing was the fruit of sin, of rebellion against parents. (Chrysostom, Homily XXII, On Ephesians).”

## **Ephesians Chapter VI Part 2**

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**10 For the rest, my brethren, keep on being empowered in the Lord and in the strength of His might.**

### **On Spiritual Warfare**

a.) Everyone in the church has a “office” a position – unity precedes going into battle. “For look, having disposed of the several offices, he proceeds to arm them, and to lead them out to war. If no one usurps the other's office, but every one remains at his post, all will be well ordered (Chrysostom Homily XXII on Ephesians Chapt. 6).”

b.) In battle the Lord provides the hope (goal) and the strength

“ ‘Being empowered’ - That is, in the hope which we have in Him, by means of His aid. For as he had enjoined many duties, which were necessary to be done, fear not, he seems to say, cast your hope upon the Lord, and He will make all easy. (Chrysostom Homily XXII on Ephesians Chapt. 6).”

**11 Put on the full armor of God, for you to be able to stand against the wiles of the devil;**

### **1. The devil is skilled in war tactics**

“For this enemy is at war with us, not simply, nor openly, but by ‘wiles.’ What is meant by wiles? To use “wiles,” is to deceive and to take by deception or contrivance (set-up, plot) ; a thing which takes place both in the case of the arts, and by words, and actions, and tricks, in the case of those who seduce us. . . our conflict is with one skilled in the arts of war, and with one who wars not simply, nor directly, but with much shrewdness. (Chrysostom Homily XXII on Ephesians Chapt. 6).”

### **2. The Master of Disguising Sin**

“The Devil never proposes to us sins in their proper colors; he does not speak of idolatry, but he sets it off in another dress, using ‘wiles,’ that is, making his discourse reasonable, employing disguises. (Chrysostom Homily XXII on Ephesians Chapt. 6).”

3. Vigilance and Watchfulness required to “see” the true enemy.

**12 because for us the wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the principalities, against the authorities, against the cosmic rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of evil on account of the heavenly things.**

**The goal of the devil is the “enslavement” of our person-** casting us out of heaven “The conflict lies ‘on account of the heavenly things’; the struggle is not about riches, not about glory, but about our being enslaved. And thus is the enmity diametrically opposed. The strife and the conflict are fiercer when vast interests are at stake; for the expression “in the heavenlies” is equivalent to, ‘on account of the heavenly things.’ It is not that they may gain anything by the conquest, but that they may desecrate us ... know that the hazard is on behalf of vast interests, and the victory for the sake of great rewards. For he is doing his best to cast us out of Heaven (Chrysostom Homily XXII on Ephesians Chapt. 6).”

**13 For this cause take up the full armor of God, in order that you might be able to withstand in the evil day, and having counteracted all things, to stand.**

**Daily Vigalence is required in order not to fall again into the same things- remain standing!**

“By ‘evil day’ he means the present life . . . from the evils which are done in it. It is as much as to say, always be armed. And again, ‘having done all,’ that is, both passions, and vile lusts, and all things else that trouble us. He speaks not merely of doing the deed, but of completing it, so as not only to slay, but to stand also after we have slain. For many who have gained this victory, have fallen again. He said, ‘Having counteracted all things,’ – ‘all;’ not having done one, but not the other. For even after the victory, we must stand. An enemy may be struck, but things that are struck revive again if we do not stand. But if after having fallen they rise up again, so long as we stand, they are fallen. So long as we waver not, the adversary rises not again. (Chrysostom Homily XXII on Ephesians Chapt. 6).”

**Exhortation:**

**1. The unarmed fall to the enemy**

“If then it is a warfare, if such are the forces arrayed against us, if ‘the principalities’ are incorporeal, if they are ‘rulers of the world,’ if they are ‘the spiritual hosts of wickedness,’ how, tell me, canst thou live in self-indulgence? How can you be depraved? How if we are unarmed, shall we be able to overcome?”

**2. Know who is the Enemy**

“These words let every one repeat to himself every day, whenever he is under the influence of anger, or of lust, whenever he is seeking, and all to no profit, after this leisurely life. Let him hearken to the blessed Paul, saying to him, ‘**Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers.**’ A harder warfare this than that which is matter of sense, a fiercer conflict. Think how long time this enemy is wrestling, for what it is that he is fighting, and be more guarded than ever.

### **3. How do we overcome?**

How then are we to wrestle with the darkness? By becoming light. How with the 'spiritual hosts of wickedness?' By becoming good. For wickedness is contrary to good, and light drives away darkness. But if we ourselves are darkness, we shall inevitably be taken captive.

## **Ephesians Chapter VI Part 3**

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### **14 Stand therefore,**

"Let us stand well. Let us stand in awe. Let us be attentive that we may make the holy offering in peace." (Div. Lit. John Chrysostom).

"The man who, in a true sense, stands, is upright; he stands not in a lazy attitude, not leaning upon anything. Exact uprightness discovers itself by the way of standing, so that they who are perfectly upright, they stand. But they who do not stand, cannot be upright, but are unstrung and disjointed. The luxurious man does not stand upright, but is bent; so is the lewd man, and the lover of money. He who knows how to stand will from his very standing, as from a sort of foundation, find every part of the conflict easy to him." (Chrysostom, Homily XXIII, on Ephesians).

**14 ... having girt your loins with truth, and having put on for yourselves the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet in readiness of the Gospel of peace; 16 on the whole, take up the shield of faith, with which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one.**

#### **1. The "girdle" binds clothing (life in the flesh) and keeps one from stumbling.**

"The man that is loose in his life, and is dissolved in his lusts, and that has his thoughts trailing on the ground, him he braces up by means of this girdle, not suffering him to be impeded by the garments entangling his legs, but leaving him to run with his feet well at liberty. (Chrysostom, Homily XXIII, on Ephesians).

#### **2. Keeping watch over one's souls strengthens us in battle.**

"So then in 'girding up the loins' he compacts the foundation of our soul; for he is not of course speaking of these loins of our body, but is discoursing spiritually. . . Oftentimes, we know, when persons are fatigued, they put their hands there as if upon a sort of foundation, and in that manner support themselves; and for this reason it is that the girdle is used in war, that it may bind and hold together this foundation . . . It is this which guards our strength. Let this then, be done also with respect to the soul, and then

in doing anything whatsoever we shall be strong; and it is a thing most especially becoming to soldiers (Chrysostom, Homily XXIII, on Ephesians).”

### **3. On Truth – integrity of purpose – divine will**

“Let us love nothing like falsehood, in all our duties let us pursue ‘with truth,’ let us not lie one to another. Whether it be an opinion, let us seek the truth, or whether it be a line of life, let us seek the true one. . . He who seeks the doctrine of truth, shall never fall down . . . they that are without (truth) are enslaved to the passions, following their own reasoning ... (Chrysostom, Homily XXIII, on Ephesians).”

### **4. An illusion to the Eucharist**

“This is what the Israelites also, when they were departing out of Egypt (Ex. xii. 11), were charged to do. For why did they eat the passover with their loins girded? . . . They had, we read, their loins girded, and their staff in their hands, and their shoes on their feet, and thus they ate the Passover. . . They come forth out of Egypt, they eat the Passover . . . Their appearance is that of people traveling by foot; for their having shoes, and staffs in their hands, and their eating standing, declares nothing else than this. . . For this is why they were to eat girded and sandaled, that when they were asked the reason, they might say, ‘we were ready for our journey, we were just about to go forth out of Egypt to the land of promise and we were ready for our exodus.’ This then is the historical type. But the reality is this; we too eat a Passover, even Christ; ‘for, our Passover has been sacrificed, even Christ. (1 Cor. v. 7.)’ What then? We too ought to eat it, both sandaled and girded. And why? That we too may be ready for our Exodus, for our departure hence. (Chrysostom, Homily XXIII, on Ephesians).”

### **5. Temptations to fall back into slavery abound**

“For we also are going to depart, and many are the difficulties that intervene. When we have crossed this plain, straightway the devil is upon us, doing everything, contriving every device, to the end that those who have been saved out of Egypt, those who have passed the Red Sea, those who are delivered at once from the evil demons, and from unnumbered plagues, may be taken and destroyed by him. (Chrysostom, Homily XXIII, on Ephesians).”

### **6. The Grace of the Spirit is strengthened through vigilance.**

“... if we be vigilant, we too have a pillar of fire, the grace of the Spirit. The same both enlightens and overshadows us. We have manna; yes rather but far more than manna. Spiritual drink we have... (Chrysostom, Homily XXIII, on Ephesians).”

### **7. Let us not be as Israelites**

“Let us not commit the same acts, and then shall we not suffer the same punishment. They murmured, they were ungrateful; let us therefore not cherish these passions. How was it that they fell all of them? ... By becoming indolent and cowardly, and not choosing to undergo any labors to obtain it. Let not us then ‘despise’ Heaven! This is what is meant by "despising." Again, among us also has fruit been brought, fruit from Heaven, ...

the Son of the Very God, has brought every virtue, has brought down from Heaven all the fruits that are from there, the songs of heaven has He brought. For the words which the Cherubim above say, these hath He charged us to say also, "Holy, Holy, Holy." He hath brought to us the virtue of the Angels. (Chrysostom, Homily XXIII, on Ephesians)."

## **Ephesians Chapter VI Part 4**

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### **15 and having shod your feet in readiness of the Gospel of peace;**

#### **1. Good works are the fruit of discipleship and are signs of virtue.**

"... we should be made ready for the gospel, and should make use of our feet for this, and should prepare and make ready its way before it; or if not this, at least that we ourselves should be prepared for our departure. 'In readiness,' then, 'of the gospel of peace,' is nothing else than a most virtuous life... (Chrysostom, Homily XXIV On Ephesians Chapt. 6)"

#### **2. Salvation is making peace with God**

"... he shows us that we must have this conflict with the evil spirits: for the gospel is 'the gospel of peace;' this war which we have against them, puts an end to another war, that, namely, which is between us and God; if we are at war with the devil, we are at peace with God. Fear not therefore, beloved; it is a "gospel," that is, a word of good news; already is the victory won. (Chrysostom, Homily XXIV On Ephesians Chapt. 6)"

### **16 on the whole, take up the shield of faith, with which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one.**

#### **1. Faith is a divine gift**

"By 'faith' in this place, he means, not knowledge but that gift by which miracles are wrought. And with reason does he term this 'faith' a 'shield;' for as the shield is put before the whole body, as if it were a sort of rampart, just so is this faith; for all things yield to it. (Chrysostom, Homily XXIV On Ephesians Chapt. 6)"

#### **2. Faith destroys temptations and passions of the soul.**

" 'By the darts of the evil one,' he means, both temptations, and vile desires; and 'fiery,' he says, for such is the character of these desires. Yet if faith can command the evil spirits, much more can it also the passions of the soul. (Chrysostom, Homily XXIV On Ephesians Chapt. 6)"

**17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God –**

“He either means the Spirit, or else, ‘the spiritual sword:’ for by this all things are severed, by this all things are cleft asunder, by this we cut off even the serpent's head. (Chrysostom, Homily XXIV On Ephesians Chapt. 6)”

**18 by means of every prayer and entreaty, praying in every season in the Spirit, and being vigilant towards this same thing with all perseverance and entreaty for all the saints, 19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, in the opening of my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the Gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I might speak boldly as there is need for me to speak.**

**1. Christ *is* the Word of God (John 1:1)**

“As the word of God has power to do all things, so also has he who has the spiritual gift. ‘For the word of God,’ he said, ‘is living, and active and sharper than any two-edged sword.’ (Heb. iv. 12.) (Chrysostom, Homily XXIV On Ephesians Chapt. 6)”

**2. Praying in the Spirit**

“... it is possible ‘to pray’ not ‘in the Spirit,’ when one ‘uses vain repetitions’ (Matt. vi. 7); ‘and to be seen by others,’ (Chrysostom, Homily XXIV On Ephesians Chapt. 6)”

**3. The Kyrygma (message) of the Spirit – a gift of God’s Spirit**

“He did not then study what he used to say, but according to what Christ said, ‘When they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak (Matt. x. 19)’: so truly did he do everything by faith, everything by grace. (Chrysostom, Homily XXIV On Ephesians Chapt. 6)”

“Yet, the genuine gift for speaking, for proclaiming the good news, is not an ‘immanent’ gift of the preacher, but a charism of the Holy Spirit, given in the Church and to the Church. Genuine proclamation of the good news does not exist without faith that the ‘assembly as the Church’ is really an assembly in the Holy Spirit, where the same one Spirit opens the preacher’s lips to proclamation and the hearer’s mind to acceptance of what is proclaimed. (Fr. Schmemmann, The Eucharist, p. 77)”

**21 But in order that you also may know the things concerning me, what I am practicing, Tychikos, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things, 22 whom I am sending to you for this very thing, that you might know the things concerning us, and that he might comfort your heart. 23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption. Amen.**

**Incorruption is salvation**

“Let us take the alarm then, I entreat you, let us dread the words, that we meet not with the realities. Covetousness is corruption, corruption more dangerous than any other, and leading on to idolatry. ... A fearful evil is it for us not to strip ourselves of everything in this present world; a great calamity to depart into the next with loads of sins about us. . .Let us reflect then how many burdens of sins each of us has about him, and let us make our acts of mercy counterbalance them; nay rather, far exceed them, that not only the sins may be quenched, but that the acts of righteousness may be also accounted unto us for righteousness. (Chrysostom, Homily XXIV On Ephesians Chapt. 6)”