

## Small Group Guide: "The Unified Life"

**\*\*Ephesians 6:5-9 | The Prison Epistles Week 14\*\***

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### ## Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

**\*\*Prayer:\*\*** Ask God to open hearts and minds to understand how the gospel transforms every area of life, especially our relationships and work.

**\*\*Icebreaker:\*\*** Share one moment this week when you felt the tension between your "sacred" life (church, prayer, etc.) and your "secular" life (work, home, errands). How did you navigate it?

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### ## Key Sermon Points

1. **\*\*No Sacred-Secular Divide\*\*** - Jesus doesn't live on just one side of our lives; He is Lord of all
2. **\*\*Work as Worship\*\*** - Our workplace ethic is a witness for Christ
3. **\*\*God Shows No Partiality\*\*** - Every person has equal value before God, regardless of status
4. **\*\*Coram Deo\*\*** - All of life is lived "before the face of God"
5. **\*\*We Serve Our True Master\*\*** - Christ is our ultimate supervisor in all relationships

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## ## Discussion Questions

### ### Understanding the Text

1. **Read Ephesians 6:5-9 together.** What initially strikes you as challenging or uncomfortable about this passage? Why do you think Paul addresses the master-slave relationship?
2. What does Paul mean by doing our work "with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ" (v. 5-6)? How is this different from people-pleasing?
3. How does verse 8 ("the Lord will reward each one...whether they are slave or free") challenge the Roman world's social hierarchy? How does it challenge ours?

### ### Personal Reflection

4. **The Sacred-Secular Divide:** Where in your life have you drawn a "dotted line" between sacred and secular? (Examples: work behavior vs. church behavior, how you treat family vs. how you treat strangers, integrity when alone vs. in public)
5. **"Eye-Service" vs. Heart-Service:** Be honest—when are you most tempted to work only when the boss is watching? What would change if you truly believed Christ was your supervisor in that moment?
6. Paul says masters should "stop threatening" and remember they have a Master in heaven (v. 9). If you're in a position of authority (parent, manager, teacher, team leader), how does knowing God shows no partiality change how you should lead?

### ### Going Deeper

7. The sermon stated: **"Every time you honor someone who cannot honor you back, you are preaching a sermon with your life."** When have you witnessed someone do this? How did it impact you?

8. **\*\*The Ground is Level at the Cross:\*\*** How should the truth that "there is no partiality with God" shape how we treat:

- People who serve us (waiters, janitors, customer service)?
- People we disagree with politically or theologically?
- People of different socioeconomic backgrounds?

9. The Latin phrase **\*coram Deo\*** means "before the face of God"—all of life lived in God's presence. How would your daily routine change if you were constantly aware God was watching with love, not judgment?

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### ## Key Takeaways

✓ **\*\*There is no sacred-secular divide\*\*** - Jesus is Lord over Sunday morning AND Monday morning

✓ **\*\*Our work ethic is our witness\*\*** - Excellence, integrity, and attitude at work reflect Christ

✓ **\*\*God is impartial\*\*** - Every person has equal worth before God, regardless of social status

✓ **\*\*We all answer to the Master in heaven\*\*** - Whether we have authority or are under authority, Christ is our ultimate supervisor

✓ **\*\*Redemption changes relationships\*\*** - The gospel transforms how we treat those above and below us

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**## Practical Application**

**### This Week's Life Change Challenge**

**\*\*Choose ONE (or both) of these practices:\*\***

**#### 1. \*\*Unseen Service\*\***

Do one thing this week at home, work, or school that:

- Nobody asked you to do
- No one will likely notice
- You consciously offer "to the Lord, not to people" (v. 7)

Let it be your private act of worship.

**\*\*Examples:\*\***

- Clean something no one expects you to clean
- Complete a task that's "not your job"
- Help a coworker without mentioning it

- Do the chore your spouse/roommate usually does

#### #### 2. **\*\*Relational Repair\*\***

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you one relationship where you've used your power wrongly (through harshness, neglect, intimidation, dismissal, or favoritism). Then take one concrete step:

- Confess to God
- Ask forgiveness from the person
- Change a specific pattern

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#### ## Group Accountability

**\*\*Share with the group:\*\***

- Which challenge will you take on this week?
- What specific action will you take?
- How can we pray for you?

**\*\*Next Week:\*\*** Come prepared to share one story of how you practiced "work as worship" or relational restoration.

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#### ## Closing Reflection

Read together slowly:

\*"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."\*

— Ephesians 3:20–21

\*\*Final Question:\*\* What is one way you want the people closest to you to "catch a glimpse of the Redeemer" through how you live this week?

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### ## Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer

- Share prayer requests related to work relationships, family dynamics, or areas where you struggle to live unified lives
- Pray for each person's Life Change Challenge
- Ask God to help the group live *\*coram Deo\**—before His face—in every relationship and responsibility

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\*"The ground at the foot of the cross is level. There is no first-class section at Calvary."\*