

Colossians – The Supremacy of Christ

[6] Home and Work as Christians (3:18-4:1)

Michael L. Riddle

1. Reading: **Col. 3:18-4:1**
2. Chapter 3 began a new section in the book – the practical application and instruction which follows the doctrinal considerations (like the rest of Paul’s epistles written to gentiles).
3. **Col. 3:18** – begins speaking of various relationships between people and how they should look if we are Christians – each is spoken of as being done “in the Lord” (Col. 3:18, 20, 22)
4. The home (marriage, children)
5. The workplace (bondservants, masters)

Discussion:

I. IN THE HOME (**COL. 3:18-21**)

- A. Starts with the home – All of the things we discussed last week apply to the home.
 - In our homes, we must be seeking the things above, not the things on the earth. (**3:1-2**)
 - In our homes, we must put to death our members on the earth. (**3:5**)
 - In our homes, we must put on the new man. (**3:10**)
 - In our homes, we must do everything in Christ’s name. (**3:17**)
- B. FIRST – HUSBANDS AND WIVES
- C. There is a sense in which husbands and wives are perfectly equal
 1. No male/female in Christ (**Gal. 3:28**)
 2. As Christians they’re heirs together of the grace of life (**1 Pt. 3:7**)
 3. In the sexual relationship, they are to be equal participants who decide equally together what that will look like (**1 Cor. 7**)
- D. The difference arises in their roles/responsibilities in the family.
- E. THE WIFE IS TO BE IN SUBMISSION TO HER HUSBAND. (**Col. 3:17**)
 1. The Husband is the head of the home (**c.f. Eph. 5:22-24**)
 2. Woman was created to be a helper to man (**c.f. Gen. 2:18,21-24**)
 3. In no way is a woman to be like a slave to her husband. He has no right to order her about. But she should recognize her role and respect that of her husband and to choose to help him.
 4. As a Christian herself, she is to obey God first – even if that means going against what her Husband asks (**Ac. 4:19; 5:29**)
 5. Husbands should never compel their wife to do something that is sinful (either explicitly sinful, or sinful by means of violating her own conscience). But if they do, the wife should rather submit to the Lord.
 6. This arrangement is fitting or proper in the Lord.
 7. When the husband is a kind head over his house as Christ is to the church, it should be easy for the wife to submit to her husband’s leadership – However, by the wife submitting as she should, she may even win over an unbelieving/disobedient husband (**c.f. 1 Pt. 3:1-4**)
- F. HUSBANDS TO LOVE THEIR WIVES AND NOT BE BITTER TO THEM (**Col. 3:19**)
 1. While the sexual relationship is certainly part of the relationship – the love commanded in marriage is much broader. This is a love that is always seeking her best interest, even above his own. This love is not passion, but genuine concern for their soul.
 2. IT should be a self-sacrificial love like Christ had for the church (**c.f. Eph. 5:25-27**)
 3. It should be a love that nourishes and cherishes his wife as Christ does the church (**c.f. Eph. 5:28-33**)
 4. The husband is not permitted to be bitter toward their wife (**Col. 3:19b**) – either in thought, in word, or in action
 - “The husband may soon forget what he said to his wife, but such words may burn more deeply into the feelings of the wife than the husband ever knows.” – EVEN IF SHE IS NOT FULFILLING HER ROLE, do NOT be bitter or resent your wife
 5. He should dwell with his wife with understanding and treat her with honor and dignity – as a weaker vessel and fellow heir (**1 Pt. 3:7**) Else it hinders their relationship with God.

G. SECOND – CHILDREN AND PARENTS

H. CHILDREN ARE TO OBEY THEIR PARENTS (Col. 3:20)

1. Not just submission, but obedience
2. This obedience pleases the Lord
3. Obedience and honor (respect) is commanded (c.f. Eph. 6:1-3; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16)

I. FATHERS ARE TO NOT PROVOKE THEIR CHILDREN (Col. 3:21)

4. **Unlike** the husband-and-wife relationship, there is punishment permitted and required in this relationship.
5. But this must be tempered and used in the best interest of the Child – too permissive and the children don't learn right and wrong and are rebellious; too overbearing or inconsistent and they provoke to wrath/discourage their children (c.f. Eph. 6:4a)
6. Rather than provoking – bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord (discipline and instruction) (Eph. 6:4b)

II. IN THE WORKPLACE (COL. 3:22-4:1)

A. Paul emphasizes our transformed life not just in the home, but also in the workplace – specifically the slave-master relationship. – This teaching still applies to the modern workplace.

B. BONDSERVANTS (NKJV); Servants (KJV, ASV); slaves (NASB, RSV, NIV, ESV) (Col. 3:22-25)

1. Obey your masters (Col. 3:22)
 - a. “not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers” – don't just serve as you should when they are looking or begrudgingly serve them
 - b. “but in sincerity of heart, fearing God” – or in singleness of heart, focus on serving and pleasing your master – as that pleases the Lord
 - c. Even if your master is not what they should be – you are required to obey to be pleasing to the Lord
2. Do it as if doing for the Lord (Col. 3:23-34)
 - a. “do it heartily as to the Lord and not to men” (Col. 3:23) – serve with the diligent mindset with which you serve the Lord
 - b. “Knowing you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord” (Col. 3:24) – God will reward you with your heavenly inheritance – put your focus on that reward
 - c. Compare to Eph. 6:5-8
3. If you don't obey – you not only will suffer consequences from your master – but from the Lord (Col. 3:25) – And if your master is unjust – God will take care of punishment

C. MASTERS (Col. 4:1)

1. “Give your bondservants what is just and fair” – do not abuse your authority over your servants but take care of them
2. “Knowing you also have a master” – whether slave or free all bound to God who shows no partiality (Gal. 3:28)
3. To the Ephesians he adds giving up threatening to this (Eph. 6:9)

Conclusion:

1. Do our homes look like what was described here?
2. Are we giving our all to our masters (employers)?
3. If we are in a role of authority, are we being just/fair, respectful?
4. Our submission to Christ is to be present in EVERY aspect of our life!