

## The Christian Household!

Colossians 3:18-4:1

Joe had asked Bob to help him out with the deck he was building after work, so Bob just went straight over to Joe's place. When they got to the door, Joe went straight to his wife, hugged her, and told her how beautiful she was and how much he had missed her at work. When it was time for supper, he complimented his wife on her cooking, kissed her, and told her how much he loved her.

Once they were working on the deck, Bob told Joe that he was surprised that he fussed so much over his wife. Joe said that he'd started this about 6 months ago, it had revived their marriage, and things couldn't be better.

Bob thought he'd give it a go. When he got home, he gave his wife a massive hug, kissed her, and told her that he loved her. His wife burst into tears.

Bob was confused and asked why she was crying. She said, 'This is the worst day of my life. First, little Billy fell off his bike and twisted his ankle. Then, the

washing machine broke and flooded the basement. And now, you come home drunk!'

**One of the greatest problems for humanity is the inability to get along with one another.**

Our problems can be summed up into 3 words:

1. Amoral! Man, apart from God has no absolute moral or ethical standard to regulate behavior.
2. Anonymity! Man does not know who he is or why he is here. Thus, his life has no meaning as far as he can tell. Apart from God man is empty.
3. Alienated! The fall not only alienated man from God, but also from himself and from other people. Thus, man is lonely.

James 4:1-2, "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? 2 You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God."

As we explore Colossians 3:18-4:1 we will see that Christianity is not just personal, it is also relational.

Today we look at 3 relationships of believers.

I. Husbands & Wives! 3:18-19

A. Wives

Colossians 3:18, “Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.”

There is that word, submit. It’s horrible, controlling, used by old white guys to get their way. Well, at least that is what the world would have you believe.

But the world only condemns this word when applied to women. When Scripture says men, submit to your wife...crickets. Children submit to your parents...silence. Submit to Christ...obviously. Even submit to one another is acceptable...but if a woman is told to submit to their husband, well, that’s gone too far.

But here is the issue: Society rejects this duty of marriage and as a result it destroys the blessing husbands and wives are to be to each other.

Paul affirms this teaching in Titus 2:5, 1 Corinthians 11:3, Ephesians 5:22. Some reject Paul as some kind of misogynistic dictator. But if you look at all of Scripture you see Paul empowering women in the

church. We see Peter affirming Paul’s authority and Paul aligns with the general themes in Scriptural roles of marriage.

Now, we need to understand a few things here. First, submission here has the concept of willingly putting oneself under, not by compulsion. We choose to whom we submit.

Next, when a man and a woman live out submission in a loving relationship both the wife and husband are fulfilled.

Finally, this submission is to one’s own husband, not to all men everywhere. Also:

1. Submission does not imply inferiority. Jesus was submissive to the Father.
2. Submission is not absolute. If you are told to do something which violates God’s Word you are not under any obligation to submit.
3. A husband’s authority is not to be overbearing. It must be in context of a loving relationship.

B. Husbands

Colossians 3:19, “Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.”

Paul expands on this in:

Ephesians 5:25, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her”

The word ‘love’ here is in the present tense imperative which means it is a continuous action. It is not the passionate type of love, but rather it is the choice. You choose to love.

When it says ‘do not be harsh with them’ it holds the idea of becoming embittered towards them. This is what happens men, when you aren’t getting out of the relationship what you want. Again, this is your choice. If you aren’t getting what you need you need to work on the relationship, not slide into becoming bitter.

Here is the key for all you married couples; it’s a single word. Men, your word is love just like Paul instructs us here. If you strive every single day to make your wife, feel loved, you will succeed.

Ladies, your word is respect. If you strive every single day to make your husband, feel respected, you will succeed.

The love/respect cycle is vital to keeping your marriage on track. If you don’t think it is going well just focus on your word, it’s the only part you control.

There is one other aspect to look at here:

1 Corinthians 7:32-34, “I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord’s affairs—how he can please the Lord. 33 But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— 34 and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord’s affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband.”

What Paul is telling us here is that the husband and the wife are to be committed to pleasing their spouse. Do you understand this imperative? Do you strive to please your spouse? If not, what do you need to do to please them?

The second relationship is that of:

## II. Parents & Children 3:20-21

### A. Children

Colossians 3:20, “Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.”

This direction reflects what we see in the 10 commandments.

Exodus 20:12, “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.”

Children, you have a promise here to live long when you honor your father and mother. Disobedience was punishable by death in the Old Testament as we see in Deuteronomy 21:18-21 and in Proverbs 30:17.

Disobedience to a parent is a mark of the ungodly. Don't let this be you. The only exception to this is when they direct you to violate a commandment of Gods.

Now, parents, your relationship with your child can't be right if your relationship with your spouse isn't right.

### B. Parents

Colossians 3:21, “Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.”

This discouragement means that we will cause our children ‘to be without courage or spirit.’ This is how we take the heart out of them.

So, how can we embitter our children? Here are 10 ways we can do that:

1. Overprotection! This lack of liberty can cause a lack of trust in relationships. It can lead to despair, and the child gives up on being able to please their parents.
2. Showing favoritism! Casting one as a black sheep creates a self-fulfilling prophecy.
3. By depreciating their worth! In reality they are priceless, loved by God.
4. By setting unrealistic goals! It results in an inability to achieve unconditional approval.
5. By failing to show affection! When your child fails to get affection at home they will look to other places for it.
6. By not providing for their needs! This creates insecurity.

7. By a lack of standards! This is the opposite of overprotectiveness. Kids need clear boundaries.
8. By criticism! It creates doubts in themselves.
9. By neglect! Parents must be involved in their kids' lives.
10. By excessive discipline! This is abuse.

Our third relationship is:

### III. Masters & Servants 3:22-4:1

#### A. Servants

Colossians 3:22-25, "Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. 25 Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism."

Scripture doesn't condone slavery, but it does instruct how to live in such a relationship. In our

society this is reflected in the employer/employee relationship.

What Paul is teaching us here is that the Christian is to serve with their whole heart, not reluctantly. We are to strive to be a great employee who works hard and has a great reputation as a faithful employee.

Why? Why should we work hard for our employer?

1. The Lord will repay them for their faithfulness.

If you work hard and your boss takes advantage of you don't worry, God is watching and He will repay your faithfulness. But watch out:

2. By not serving well you will suffer the consequences.

You see, it goes to the core of your character. When you work hard no matter the conditions, no matter who is watching, that ethic carries over into all areas of your life and you benefit from it.

If you are lazy at work that quality carries over into other areas of your life as well and you suffer the lack of effort in all areas of your life.

#### B. Masters

Colossians 4:1, “Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.”

Ok bosses, business owners, supervisors and managers. Paul teaches us here that you will be judged by how you treat your employees.

If you use your authority poorly you will suffer the consequences of being a poor leader.

If we lead well, we become a light to the world because we demonstrate the characteristics of Jesus. Do you lead well in your work, or do you have some improvement to do?

1. What do you need to do differently for your spouse?
2. How are you honoring your parents?
3. Are you the best possible employee?  
Employer?

What do you need to do differently moving forward?