



## **Honoring Others & Obeying HIM** (Col 3:18-4:1)

If the Scriptures are true, then God sees all we do, and what we do demonstrates our love for Him. So, what would our actions from last week demonstrate...a love for God? Today we discover practical ways to please our King by honoring others & obeying Him.

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### teachingnotes

\* All Scripture is from CSB (Christian Standard Bible) unless otherwise noted.

#### **2 important observations before we read this text:**

1. Paul is addressing what is expected in a Christian household - where both spouses are followers of Jesus.
  - If you are married to an unbeliever, you need to read 1 Cor. 7:12-16.
  - For those NOT married, you should only marry a believer (1 Cor. 7:39).
2. Ancient, non-Christian household codes gave directions only to wives, children, & servants, not husbands/fathers.<sup>1</sup> The ancient person hearing the text we are studying would be surprised by the limitations & directions given male leader of the house.

#### **Family Relationships: Distinctions without Division**

**Colossians 3:18-21** <sup>18</sup> Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. <sup>19</sup> Husbands, love your wives and don't be bitter toward them. <sup>20</sup> Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they won't become discouraged.

#### **HOW WIVES TREAT HUSBANDS**

**Wives** are to **submit** to their **husbands**. **Submit** is a voluntary term meaning **to place yourself under the leadership of another**.<sup>2</sup> So wives are to submit their husbands as the leaders in the Christian marriage. The Greek term translated submit (*hypotassō*) is the same verb used of

- **Jesus submitting** to Joseph & Mary (Lk. 2:51) & God the Father (1 Cor. 15:28)
- **Believers submitting** to one another (Eph. 5:21) - including both husband & wife. Believers are to *submit to authorities* (Titus 3:1). And of course, believers *submitting to God* (James 4:7).
- This passage is focused on Christian marriages. **So what if you are married to a man who doesn't follow Jesus?** Peter addresses that in his letter.

**1 Peter 3:1-2** <sup>1</sup> In the same way, wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, **even if some disobey the word, they may be won over without a word by the way their wives live** <sup>2</sup> when they observe your pure, reverent lives.

The wife doesn't influence the ungodly husband by nagging him, but by serving the Lord & serving him. In this way, the wife who serves reveals the God who saves.

#### **YOUR NOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Ben Witherington III, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 187.

<sup>2</sup> Douglas J. Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon, The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2008), 299-300.

## HOW HUSBANDS TREAT WIVES

<sup>19</sup> **Husbands, love your wives and don't be bitter toward them.**

Remember that non-Christian household codes gave directions only to wives, children, & servants. But this is not the case for husbands who claim to follow Jesus. **Husbands**, you are to **love your wives and don't be bitter toward them**.

What's **bitter** mean? Some translations use "*harsh*" [ESV, NIV] instead of "*bitter*". The Greek root word (πικρός) originally meant "pointed" or "sharp," (e.g., of arrows). It was later used of "*a pervasive smell*" or something "sharp to the taste",<sup>3</sup> hence the rendering - "**bitter**". Men are NOT to be harsh, sharp, or **bitter** towards their wives. Instead, men are commanded to **love your wives**. Paul writes the Ephesian church and say this

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

*Husbands, your talk & your touch should be tender & kind.* You are to protect your bride, not mistreat her. Peter echoes these words with a warning attached:

**1 Peter 3:7** Husbands, in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker partner, **showing them honor as coheirs of the grace of life**, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

Not showing honor to you wife? **Your prayers** will be **hindered**. Has God been answering you lately? Men should treat God's daughters with honor. *Treat your wife like you want your daughter to be treated!*

**BIG TRUTH: Christians Please Jesus by Honoring Others & Obeying Him.**

## HOW CHILDREN TREAT PARENTS

<sup>20</sup> Children, **obey your parents in everything**, for this pleases the Lord.

How **children** respond to parents is a mirror image of their response to the GOD, who put parents in children's' lives. If you disobey your parents, you disobey God. BUT...**when you obey them, you obey Him...and this pleases our King!** Sadly, **cultures collapse** when parents stop leading their children to do what is right AND when children stop obeying what their parents say. That's why God commands children to "honor your father and mother" (Ex 20:12; Eph 6:2-3). Of interest, look at a specific characteristic us the ungodly.

**2 Timothy 3:1-2** <sup>1</sup> But know this: Hard times will come in the last days. <sup>2</sup> For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, proud, demeaning, **disobedient to parents**, ungrateful, unholy...

**Romans 1:29-31** <sup>29</sup> They [unrighteous] are filled with all unrighteousness, evil, greed, and wickedness. They are full of envy, murder, quarrels, deceit, and malice. They are gossips, <sup>30</sup> slanderers, God-haters, arrogant, proud, boastful, inventors of evil, **disobedient to parents**, <sup>31</sup> senseless, untrustworthy, unloving, and unmerciful.

Children are to obey whatever their parents say, as long as they aren't telling the to disobey the Ultimate Authority.

## HOW PARENTS TREAT CHILDREN

The Greek word for **fathers** might be referring to BOTH PARENTS (as it does in Heb 11:23).

<sup>21</sup> Fathers [*Parents*], do not exasperate [*provoke* = NET, ESV] your children, so that they won't become discouraged.

**Exasperate** could also be translated as "stir up" or "irritate".<sup>4</sup> Paul also writes:

**Ephesians 6:4** Fathers, **don't stir up anger in your children**, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

It is the parents' responsibility to raise their children, **training** them to walk with Jesus, while making sure not to **stir up anger** in their children. How might a "father" or parents do that?

- TALK about Jesus. Pray. Open Scriptures.
- Discipline & encourage, not too harsh/lenient.
- Treat each child with equal value and never play favorites (as did Isaac & Rebecca).
- Teach and model love, justice, mercy, truth, forgiveness, kindness, & generosity.

<sup>3</sup> Wilhelm Michaelis, "Πικρός, Πικρία, Πικραίνω, Παραπικραίνω, Παραπικρασμός," ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 122.

<sup>4</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *Colossians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992), 171.

## HOW SLAVES TREAT MASTERS

### 3 major differences to consider between ancient Greco-Roman slavery & slavery in America:

- 1) Slavery in the Roman Empire consisted of many different ethnicities, captured in war.
- 2) Some chose to sell themselves into slavery for food, housing, or to pay off a debt (indentured servant).<sup>5</sup> Slaves in the Greco-Roman world received a small amount of money as an inheritance, and could eventually be used to buy their freedom.<sup>6</sup>
- 3) While many slaves were considered property and brutally mistreated, others were considered to be persons with rights & privileges. Some slaves were even allowed to marry.

**Colossians 3:22** <sup>22</sup> **Slaves, obey your human masters in everything.** Don't work only while being watched, as people-pleasers, but work wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord.

Why did Paul tell slaves to **obey your human masters in everything** instead of encouraging them to run for freedom? *Ancient historians estimate that about 1/2 of the population of the Roman Empire were slaves (around 60 million people).*<sup>7</sup> Paul didn't have the ability nor authority to issue a Christian emancipation proclamation, so he told them to make the most of their situation.

Thankfully, we don't have slavery, but **we can apply these principles to employers and employees**. What if followers of Jesus, served their bosses, not just when they are LOOKING, but giving their best **to work wholeheartedly** every minute of the day, to honor their heavenly master?

**Colossians 3:23-24** <sup>23</sup> **Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people,** <sup>24</sup> knowing that **you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord.** You serve the Lord Christ. <sup>25</sup> For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong he has done, and there is no favoritism.

What if instead of *complaining* about our jobs, we starting *THANKING* God for them! What if instead of going to work or serving others with a smirk we served others with a smile....actually believing that Jesus sees what we are doing...and looking forward to our **the reward of an inheritance from the Lord!** And if we refuse to work hard, then don't be surprised when **the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong he has done.**

## HOW MASTERS/BOSSSES TREAT SLAVES/EMPLOYEES

**Colossians 4:1** <sup>1</sup> **Masters, deal with your slaves justly and fairly, since you know that you too have a Master in heaven.**

How might the Christian master/employer treat his slave/employee differently if he really lived for Jesus? What spiritual impact might he make in the life of the unbeliever? How might the master and the servant together show what followers of Jesus look like? How would our JOBS and those we work with be impacted? How would our FAMILIES be impacted...if we began to believe and live this out:?

**BIG TRUTH: Christians Please Jesus by Honoring Others & Obeying Him.**

4) **Prioritize time with your Faith Family.** Join us tonight Covered Dish, Communion, & Conference. Join a Growth Group!

**heretoserveyou**

Have questions and need some help?...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- \* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), **Christy** (673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- \* Or call our **deacons & wives**: Steve & Debbie Bass (673-7952), Freddy & Joyce Howard (973-0047), Jere & Darlene Burnette (673-1888), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (464-6717), Jim & Derita Pinkard (229-834-4307), & Fain & Linda Poppell (464-1282).

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## YOUR NOTES

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ben Witherington III, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 194.

<sup>7</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Colossians and Philemon: The Supremacy of Christ, Preaching the Word* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1989), 128–129.

# discussion questions

These open-ended questions are designed to help you LIVE what you LEARN with your Family, Friends, or Small Group.

1. Share what most challenged or surprised you from today's teaching.
2. **Read Col. 3:18-21.** Share about a family you have watched live this out. How has their example impacted you? What most encourages or challenges you from this passage?
3. Growing up, did your family model vv.18-21? Explain how this was so. If not, what was missing? What would your children say if they were asked this question about your home?
4. **Read Col. 3:22-4:1.** Without using names, share about a time when a Christian employer or employee lived this passage out OR a time when they didn't. What was the result?
5. How might giving our best daily, not just for our boss or clients - but for Jesus - change our actions, attitudes, & sense of purpose?
6. What is God challenging you TO DO from the passage we studied today?
7. Share prayer needs & lift them up together! Make sure to prayer for our political and spiritual leaders during the Coronavirus.