
COLOSSIANS 3:18 - 4:1

Instruction For The Christian Household

¹⁸ Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.

²⁰ Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

²¹ Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

– Colossians 3:18-21 New King James Translation

WIVES SUBMIT TO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS

- Speaking to a group of households made up of husbands and wives, each of you wives submit to your own husband.
 - Paul does not say all women should be subject to all men, only that a married woman should be subject to her own husband.
 - Comments?
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HUSBANDS LOVE YOUR WIVES

- Again, speaking to a group of households composed of husbands and wives, each husband is to love his own wife.
 - And husbands are not to be embittered by their wives.
 - “"Embittered" means irritated or cross. This attitude is a specific and all too common manifestation of lack of love.” - Dr. Constable’s Notes
 - “Both under Jewish and under Greek laws and custom, all the privileges belonged to the husband, and all the duties to the wife; but here in Christianity we have for the first time an ethic of mutual and reciprocal obligation.” - Barclay
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CHILDREN (HONOR AND) OBEY

- Children are to honor their parents by obedience.
 - “As long as you’re under my roof you’ll do as I say!” Right?
 - Personally, I had to give up on trying to get my stepdaughter to make her bed and clean her room. She was only untidy in her own space, so I let her be messy. Otherwise, she was president of her sophomore class, on the varsity soccer team, joined Young Life, and was early accepted to UVA.
 - Comments?
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²² Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. ²³And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. ²⁵But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.

4:1 Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

– *Colossians 3:22-4:1 New King James Translation*

SLAVES BE OBEDIENT AND CONSCIENTIOUS

- Self explanatory, right?
 - How do you think of slavery? How would you describe it?
 - **SLA'VERY**, *noun* [[See Slave](#).]**1.** Bondage; the state of entire subjection of one person to the will of another. *slavery* is the obligation to labor for the benefit of the master, without the contract of consent of the servant. *slavery* may proceed from crimes, from captivity or from debt. *slavery* is also voluntary or involuntary; voluntary, when a person sells or yields his own person to the absolute command of another; involuntary, when he is placed under the absolute power of another without his own consent. *slavery* no longer exists in Great Britain, nor in the northern states of America. [Webster 1828]
 - Comments?
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[Psalms 123:2](#)

Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

—The Kings Bible Online

Malachi 1:6

A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father,
where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the
LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name.
And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?

—The Kings Bible Online

Philemon 1:16

Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?

—The Kings Bible Online

6 ¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: ³ “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

⁴ And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. ⁵ Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶ not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free. ⁹ And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

— *Ephesians 6:1-9 New King James Translation*

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- Dr. Constable had a lot to say about the rewards that are to accrue to the believing slave, as well as the believer in general.
 - However, he had little to say about the “But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality,” other than to emphasize the impartiality of He who judges.
 - “Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven,” should counter balance the doctrine of rewards.
 - My hope is in Jesus as my Intercessor before God.
 - Comments?
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MORAL'ITY, *noun*

The doctrine or system of moral duties, or the duties of men in their social character; ethics.

The system of *morality* to be gathered from the writings of ancient sages, falls very short of that delivered in the gospel.

1. The practice of the moral duties; virtue. We often admire the politeness of men whose *morality* we question.
2. The quality of an action which renders it good; the conformity of an act to the divine law, or to the principles of rectitude. This conformity implies that the act must be performed by a free agent, and from a motive of obedience to the divine will. This is the strict theological and scriptural sense of *morality*. But we often apply the word to actions which accord with justice and human laws, without reference to the motives from which they proceed.

– Webster's 1828 Dictionary

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- What is the Christian ethic?
 - “but here in Christianity we have for the first time an ethic of mutual and reciprocal obligation.”
 - So, what is the Christian ethic towards marriage? Children? Fatherhood? Master?
 - Are the instructions given here in Colossians more than a foundation for an ethic?
 - Have you ever had a discussion among your friends or small groups on ethics and morality?
 - This is a very opportune time to have such a discussion, don't you think?
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