

“CHRIST ABOVE ALL”
STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS
Colossians 3:12-4:18
“Living in the Household of God”

Introduction: As we seek to make practical application of the theological principles presented by Paul in light of the New Covenant through the Gospel, we must take the time to bridge the gap between the culture of the first century Roman Empire and the year 2023 United State of America. We must carefully discern what is descriptive and what is prescriptive. In other words, what are the timeless principles that apply across all cultures and history.

SECTION I: BEHAVE LIKE YOU BELIEVE (Colossians 3:12-17; 4:2-6).

- A. Paul gives instructions for the elect of God. Saints chosen for a specific purpose. How do you know you are elect? Long-term perseverance in the faith. (Matthew 24:13; 1 John 2:19; 1 Peter 5:8-11).
- B. The word mercies (*splanchna*) is the same word used for intestines or inward parts. *Splanchna* is the spiritual internal organ that produces compassion (1 John 3:17). The forgiveness we receive from Christ is the basis for our forgiving each other.
- C. Love is described as the bond (tendon or connective tissue – spiritual anatomy) of maturity or completeness. The heart is another part of our spiritual anatomy relating to the mind/emotions. We were called to be ruled by the peace of God in unity with all the saints.
- D. Let the word dwell in you abundantly in wisdom (utilizing it properly) making proper application. Scripture tells us to use songs as a method of instructing and warning concerning the word of Christ. Revelation 15:3 All our words and actions are to be done in accordance with the character of Christ giving thanks to the Father through Him.
- E. Paul tells us how to pray for ministers of the Gospel. God opens doors for the word and God gives people the ability to properly share. We need training and we need prayer for God’s empowerment.
- F. Live in a wise way when dealing with unbelievers. Redeeming the time is making the most of the time you have to advance the kingdom. Salt is a reference to adding value or a preservative (Matthew 9:50).

SECTION II: HOME LIFE IN CHRIST (Colossians 3:18-4:1)

- A. First century households typically are organized under an agricultural economy. The husband and wife managed the estate and children were additional workers. Servants would be hired or purchased to perform various duties. Slaves were not limited to field hands or domestic workers. Many slaves were educated professionals.
- B. Wives are to submit to their own husbands not just any man. Husbands must love their wives and not be nasty, mean, or harsh. Parents have authority over their children (Acts 4:19). Christ modeled being subject to parents (Luke 2:51). Fathers who model Christ like love encourage and motivate children.
- C. Servants are told to have a work ethic that models Christ. Servants will receive a reward from Christ. Slave status is not an excuse to sin or lack integrity. Masters are told to act justly and fair because they are slaves of God.

SECTION III: TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHEIVES MORE (Colossians 4:7-29).

- A. Tychicus and Onesimus were sent to update them on Paul's status and to provide pastoral care. Onesimus is the slave of Philemon that Paul advocated for. This is evidence that Philemon probably lived in Colossae.
- B. Aristarchus is a Macedonian from Thessalonica (Acts 27:2). Mark is mentioned – proof that Paul and Mark reconciled. Paul is endorsing Mark for ministry.
- C. Mark and Justus are Jewish believers (circumcision) and Paul's fellow workers for the kingdom of God. Mark proved to be a comfort to Paul.
- D. Epaphras most likely planted the church in Colossae. He continuously labored in prayer for the Colossians, Laodiceans, and Hierapolis. He prayed for their maturity.
- E. The only reference to Luke being a physician. Demas is the same person who later forsakes Paul for the world (2 Timothy 4:10).
- F. The church in Laodicea is mentioned in Revelation. Nymphas hosted this church in his house. This is proof that the letters were circulated around different cities.
- G. Archippus received a specific word of exhortation – pay careful attention to your ministry so you can complete it.

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