

We are going to continue looking at the end of Colossians 3. I want to remind us that this entire section is focused on the new life that we have in Christ. The goal of these verses is not to have a better marriage or be a better parent. This might sound odd. **But if this passage was focused just on marriages or parenting the focus would be on us.** We are told at the start of the chapter where our focus should be:

Colossians 3:1 ESV

(1) If then you have been raised with Christ, **seek the things that are above, where Christ is,** seated at the right hand of God.

The truth found here is showing us how the new life we have in Christ should change every aspect of our lives. Seeking the things above is not a one-time action. We are called to seek the things above in absolutely every aspect of our life.

Colossians 3:17ESV

(17) **And whatever you do,** in word or deed, **do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,** giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This is a large all-encompassing concept. It also can sound churchy and not real. Yet the truth found in doing this in actually living out the concept of glorifying God in everything we do sums up so many concepts of what it means to grow as a believer.

It is a daily walk, abiding in Christ, having an eternal perspective, seeking God's will, all of these come together in living our new life in Christ and having every single aspect of our life, be for His glory and not ours. Last week we saw the first example given, of how our new life in Christ should change our marriage.

Colossians 3:18-19 ESV

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

(19) Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

Marriage is a picture of Christ and the church. A marriage can only function how God intended if husband and wife are seeking to glorify God. The next examples are found in verse 20-25:

Colossians 3:20-25 ESV

(20) Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

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

(22) Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.

(23) Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,

(24) knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

(25) For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

Colossians 3:20 ESV

(20) Children, **obey** your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

Notice how the word changed. Children are not called to submit to parents. That would be an overvaluing of their role. Children are told to obey. They are not equals to parents. Ephesians's 6 expands this thought.

Ephesians 6:1-3 ESV

- (1) Children, **obey** your parents **in the Lord**, for this is right.
- (2) "**Honor** your father and mother" (**this is the first commandment with a promise**),
- (3) "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."

Children are called to obey in the Lord. Again, all of these commands are in the context of the new life in Christ. Things get much more complicated when you have unbelieving or foolish parents and obeying them is sinful. Sin always complicates. Sin is only getting worse. Kids are only going to become more rebellious.

2 Timothy 3:1-2 ESV

- (1) But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.
- (2) For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, **disobedient to their parents**, ungrateful, unholy,

But notice the promise given to Children. In the new life there is a rich blessing in obeying and honoring our parents. This is not only a horizontal issue. God is glorified when the family functions correctly.

Notice though that the language changes between verses, 1 and 2.

Children obey is changed to children Honor.

There is an age limit to Children obeying their parents. Every family is different on when this happens but it must happen. There is a point when the child becomes responsible for their own choices and are not told to obey their parents. And yet there is absolutely a point when you are under your parents leadership and you must obey.

There is no age limit to honoring our parents. No matter how old you are we honor our parents, care for them, and have grace for them. This does not mean obey.

Christ has very harsh things to say to people that do not honor their parents.

Matthew 15:4-9 ESV

(4) For God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.'

(5) But you say, 'If anyone tells his father or his mother, **"What you would have gained from me is given to God,"**

(6) he need not honor his father.' So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God.

(7) **You hypocrites!** Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said:

(8) **"This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me;**

(9) in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

The pharisees were using spiritual things as an excuse not to take care of their parents. Jesus has no use for that. He calls them hypocrites. Honoring our parents and taking care of our family is a high calling in a believer's life.

1 Timothy 5:8 ESV

(8) But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, **he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.**

Every family is different and as I said sin complicates so many things. You can honor you parents even when you have to confront an ungodly lifestyle. This new life has to be applied at home and with those closest to us.

Colossians 3:21 ESV

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

After commanding children to obey, Paul then addresses how we as fathers are to raise our children and give out discipline. Because obeying will not come naturally to Children.

Proverbs 22:15 ESV

(15) **Folly is bound up in the heart of a child,** but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.

Children need discipline. But it must be done correctly.

Colossians 3:21 ESV

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

Provoke means:

to cause someone to react in a way that suggests acceptance of a challenge, ***arouse, provoke mostly in bad sense irritate, embitter,***

Discouraged:

to become disheartened to the extent of losing motivation, ***be discouraged, lose heart, become dispirited,***

There are so many ways that we can provoke our children. It comes naturally to us, and yet it does such damage. Some of the ways we can provoke our children:

-Being a proud parent

-We will not admit when we were wrong, and not apologize to our children. What a lesson to a child to see humility in your parent if they are willing to admit they were wrong and even ask forgiveness of the child.

-Being an inconsistent parent

-If the rules and consequences are constantly changing, this disheartens the child from even trying to obey.

-Being a submissive/ manipulated parent

-As parents it is so easy to take the easy way out instead of dealing with the disobedience or will battle. A friend once told me that they had to learn not to negotiate with terrorist. This is actually great parenting advice.

-Being a parent who is too hands-on or hand-off

-This might seem contradictory but it will provoke children if parents are too attentive and smother, and on the flip side, being too hands off and unengaged will also provoke.

-Being a parent who is too busy

-Don't let good things crowd out great things. Managing your families schedule is hugely important for the health of the whole family. Do we stop and pray about what to be involved in. Do we let business crowd out seeing our children.

In a positive light listen to how we are called to parent in Ephesians 6.

Ephesians 6:4 ESV

(4) Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but **bring them up** in the **discipline** and **instruction** of the Lord.

bring them up = to provide food, *nourish*

discipline = the act of providing guidance for responsible living, *upbringing, training, instruction,*

instruction= counsel about avoidance or cessation of an improper course of conduct, *admonition, instruction.*

Proverbs 13:24 ESV

(24) Whoever spares the rod hates his son, **but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.**

Biblical Discipline

- Focuses on the heart
- Never out of anger
- Focused on Teaching

-Rules should be clear and explained

Teaching God's truth must start in the home. The Church is just a supplement.
Do your kids see your new life in Christ by observing you? Can they tell your priorities by what they see you doing and how you interact in various situations?

Deuteronomy 6:5-7 ESV

(5) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

(6) And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

(7) **You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them** when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

This passage is clear, do we teach our children spiritual truths. **Is talking about God and the things of God part of our regular conversations?**

The next example given is that of a slave and master.

Colossians 3:22 ESV

(22) Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, **but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.**

For application it is easy to read this verse and start talking about our jobs and work. This absolutely applies to that. But let's not gloss over the fact that this is addressed to literal slaves. The new life in Christ even would touch how a slave was supposed to live in such a tough situation.

It is also worth pointing out that depending on the estimate there are between 25 to 40 million slaves in the world today. This world is full of sin. Scripture does respond to slavery and the book of Philemon is a great example. Paul expects Philemon to view slavery through a new lens because He has a new life in Christ.

Listen to how Ephesians expands on how we are to view our work in light of our new life.

Ephesians 6:5-8 ESV

(5) Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, **as you would Christ,**

(6) not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, **but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,**

(7) rendering service with a good will **as to the Lord and not to man,**

(8) knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.

This applies the concept of glorifying God in everything we do all the way to the slave. For us it is even in the most mundane, repetitive job. God can still be glorified and our new life can still shine through.

You can only glorify God if you are a believer.

-you cannot do the will of God from the heart if you have a dead heart.

You cannot glorify God with Sin

-God has called us to live holy lives. Sin is never in God's will for us.

1 Thessalonians 4:3; 7-8 ESV

(3) For this is the will of God, **your sanctification**: that you abstain from sexual immorality;

(7) For God has not called us for impurity, **but in holiness.**

(8) Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

To Glorify God we must understand that in absolutely everything we do, it should be for God

Ephesians 6:5-8 ESV

(7) rendering service with a good will **as to the Lord and not to man,**

This means it doesn't matter who our boss, is our what the earthly situation is.

In every situation we must ask the question **how would I do this task, job, chore, etc. if I knew that I was actually doing it directly for God?**

Now I want to be very careful here, notice again that we are called to work from the soul.

Colossians 3:23 ESV

(23) Whatever you do, **work heartily**, as for the Lord and not for men,

work heartily

$\psi \cup \chi \eta \square \varsigma$ or psyche, meaning from the soul

Ephesians 6:6 ESV

(6) not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from **the heart**,

It is the same word. Doing God's will from the soul. Often we replace this idea with doing things to the best of our ability or replace it with working really hard. There can be a problem with this thinking. **If we are using a human standard to judge effort, or success then we have a major problem.**

Sometimes it would be a sin to do something to you best effort or ability.

Other times it is a sin not to do something to your best ability.

These are not contradictory thoughts. God has called us to many things, and working for His glory, from the soul means we are supposed to view everything through His eyes. Success is no by human standard but His.

I want to give two examples of this principal:

The first is from my own life. I had a teacher tell our class for some of you it would be a sin to get an A in this class. He was absolutely right.

The second example is from the apostle Paul.

Acts 18:1-4 ESV

- (1) After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.
- (2) And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them,
- (3) and **because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.**
- (4) And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.

Paul goes to Corinth, and works as a tent maker. Was Paul the best tent maker in all of Corinth? Did He seek to expand the business as much as he could because He was working for God? No God had called Paul to tent making for a very different reason.

1 Corinthians 9:5-6 ESV

- (5) Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?
- (6) **Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living?**

Paul is asking if he is the only apostle not allowed to be paid.

1 Corinthians 9:11-12 ESV

- (11) If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?
- (12) If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? **Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.**

Paul's reason for working as a tent maker was not to put an obstacle in the way of the Corinthians believing the gospel. Does this mean Peter was putting up obstacles by being supported? Absolutely not, Paul defends Him exercising his right to be paid.

This was specifically what God had called Paul to do in Corinth. In other cities Paul was paid. Paul knew one of the key factors in glorifying God in all we do is being sensitive to the Spirit's leading.

We don't just work hard or rely on a formula. We seek God through prayer, and truth to see how to glorify Him in each situation.

Did you know it could even be wrong to share the gospel with someone? Again, we have this example in Paul's life.

Acts 16:6-7 ESV

(6) And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, **having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.**

(7) And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, **but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.**

Twice in the span of two verses Paul is stopped by the Holy Spirit from fulfilling the Great commission and sharing the gospel. We must always be sensitive to God's will. We must base seeking His will on the truth found in God's Word.

There is a performance review, and reward for glorifying God in all we do.

Colossians 3:23-25 ESV

(23) Whatever you do, **work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,**

(24) **knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward.** You are serving the Lord Christ.

(25) For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

This is describing the Bema Seat

2 Corinthians 5:9-10 ESV

(9) So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

(10) **For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body,** whether good or evil.

There will be a separating of Earthly from Eternal, this is why we cannot evaluate things on a human level.

Ephesians 5:15-18 ESV

(15) **Look carefully then how you walk,** not as unwise but as wise,

(16) **making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.**

(17) Therefore do not be foolish, **but understand what the will of the Lord is.**

(18) And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, **but be filled with the Spirit,**