

A STUDY ON THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

Understanding Jesus



WEEK 8 STUDY GUIDE

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FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 3, 2023



Monday, February 27, 2023

Read: Colossians 3:18–4:1

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

Today’s Thought:

In previous studies we have seen the faith and love of the Christians of Colossae for Christ and his word, and Paul’s prayers for their spiritual progress. We have also seen that Jesus is the author of our redemption, that he is the image of the invisible God, creator of all things and supreme head of his Church. We have seen Paul’s various works in ministry, and his struggle for the church of Jesus Christ through the power of Christ working mightily in him. We have seen the various recommendations of the apostle to Christians against false doctrines, his exhortations to Christians to holiness, love and piety. Now the apostle Paul addresses the duties of Christians in the various relationships in which they find themselves. He speaks of the submission of women to their husbands, the obedience of children to their parents, the behavior of parents towards their children, and the obedience of servants to their master.

In this study, let’s talk a bit about the submission of women to their husbands. Here, remember that Paul is talking about Christian families. Before talking about the family, we can define the word Christian as follows: The Christian is one who has received the gospel of Jesus Christ, perseveres in it and preserves it, according to 1 Corinthians 15:1–2. The Christian is one who identifies himself with Christ, who bears the name of Christ and who validly represents him in everything and everywhere. He confesses that Christ is the Lord and the only Savior of mankind. In this verse, the apostle Paul instructs Christian wives to submit to their husbands as to the Lord. First, the Christian wife must submit to God, which will lead to submission to her husband.

The Christian husband must also submit to Christ as Christ himself submitted to the Father. Here we see that submission is not a bad thing. Jesus submitted to his Father for the salvation of mankind. Similarly, the submission of the wife is not a form of inferiority or lesser value in relation to her husband. Christ submitted to the Father without losing his value, his identity, his essence, his authority as an equal to the Father. The submission of the wife does not mean that she loses her value, her essence in the house and in society as a woman. However, for the smooth running of the home, the Christian woman must voluntarily submit to her

husband who is a proof of obedience and love for the Lord.

Submission is an act of love and respect that brings happiness and well-being to the home. It is a sign that shows that love and harmony reign in the home. Submission must be in harmony with the thought of God who wants happiness, joy, peace, love in the home. Submission should be a natural response of direction from a loving heart that wants the progress and growth of the house. The direction should not be for the benefit of one and the destruction of the other. For submission to be without reservation, the husband must consider his wife as bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh because she has been taken from him. The direction that leads to submission must be done in discipline, not to satisfy one's little desire or to remind the other that one is a leader.

All must be done as part of one flesh (Genesis 2:24). When the Christian husband loves his wife as Christ loved his church, submission becomes automatic. Instead of doing the requested 1km, she will do two. The wife must submit to her husband for all that is lawful and pleasing to God. The creator demands of the woman submission and respect for her husband. She must recognize the value and authority of her husband. Someone said: "One of a man's deepest psychological needs is to be esteemed by his wife." Finally, for there to be submission and respect, the husband must not be egocentric, dominating and manipulative. The husband has the obligation to love his wife; he must exercise his authority with love, tenderness, wisdom, respect, grace and fear of God.

Heavenly Father, give those who are married a heart to love each other with sincere love. Help them know to support each other. Help them to never lose faith in each other and never doubt you. Our time is marked by violence, selfishness, hatred, but Lord, help Christian couples to live in harmony. Despite trials, may their sincere love bring confidence and build peace and happiness.

- What does the apostle Paul require of married women?
- Why such a request?
- How should submission be done?
- Who is our submission model?

Further Reading: Ephesians 5:22-30

Tuesday, February 28, 2023

Read: Colossians 3:18–4:1

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

Today's Thought:

Previously, we had seen that the Christian wife must submit to her husband in all that pleases God. That she must show respect for her husband; everything for the progress of the home and the good development of the children. And the man? The man on his side must love his wife. A man's love for his wife must be sincere. It should not be made-up love, but real and sincere love from a pure heart because love is divine. It was out of love that God gave his Son as a ransom to save us from the curse of sin. God proved his true love for us by giving his only begotten Son. It is not without reason that Paul himself made this comparison in his letter to the Ephesians: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" Ephesians 5:25.

Christ wanted the happiness of his Church, he gave himself for her, and the Church in return must submit to Christ her husband. Sincere and true love provokes submission. It is an obligation for the man to love his wife because she is taken from the rib of the man. We read in the book of Genesis: "Then the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he slept, he took one of the man's ribs and closed the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman of the rib which he had taken from the man, and he brought her to the man. She will be called 'woman', because she was taken from man. Genesis 2:21-23. God had the power to take part of the man's head, part of his arms, part of his feet to create the woman. He took none of these parts to create her. He took a rib from the man. Commentator Matthew Henry wrote, "God created woman from a man's rib, not from his head to rule her, nor from his feet to be crushed by him, but from his side to be his equal, under his arms to be protected, and close to his heart to be loved."

Woman must be submitted to man not because she is inferior to man, but because she is part of him. When she is next to man, she makes him complete. God created man and woman out of love, they must live in love and harmony to fulfill God's plan. Woman is the companion and the help that meets the needs of the man. Thus, the husband must love his wife as Christ loved his church despite her imperfections. Although God places the man at the head of the woman, he must do everything with

love and harmony. The husband has no arbitrary or dictatorial authority to rule his wife with an iron fist. He should not selfishly impose his will to satisfy his own interests. The Christian husband should be motivated by selfless love and a deep desire for the highest good of his wife. The Christian husband must love his wife despite her weaknesses, because he too has his weaknesses. If God considered our imperfections and our weaknesses, he would not grant us salvation in his Son Jesus Christ. The husband-and-wife relationship is one of the most complex of all human relationships. Therefore, Christian couples constantly need the presence of God in the home so that submission, mutual respect, love and forgiveness reign in the home.

Finally, Christian couples must maintain and cultivate mutual respect. Mutual respect is as important as romantic love, and that's what will make romantic love meaningful. The Christian home should be a home of peace, a place where life is good, where the word of God has its authority. The Christian couple always learns to live in harmony, to have emotional maturity, to know how to face life with realism, to be able to make good decisions, to know how to collaborate and communicate. There are always disagreements in every couple; it is a union between two different people with different thoughts. A certain fact, these disagreements will not be serious if God is at the center and if we communicate in a positive way.

You who have a home, I pray to the Lord that your union will bear much fruit and that your relationship will be an inspiration to others. May your home be an ideal place where children can be brought up well in all respects: physical, social and spiritual. In Jesus' name!

- What does the apostle Paul require of married men?
- Why should men love their wives?
- Speaking of love, what comparison did Jesus make in Ephesians 5:25?
- How should a man's love for his wife be?
- Who is our model of love?

Further Reading: Ephesians 5:1-2

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Read: Colossians 3:18-4:1

Scripture Verse: *"Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord." Colossians 3:20*

Today's Thought:

We saw in the last two studies that Paul gave recommendations to wives and husbands. We have seen that Christian wives must submit to their husbands according to the Lord. Women must recognize the value and authority of their husbands. We have also seen that husbands should sincerely love their wives. The husband must love his wife because she is bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. He must be motivated by selfless love and a deep desire for the highest good of his wife. If the apostle emphasized the good conduct of wives towards their husbands and vice versa, he did not forget the children.

As members of the Christian family, children should live in obedience. The home is the ideal place where children can be brought up well in discipline and in the teaching of the word of God. It is the space in which the child must flourish in a healthy way from all points of view: physical, mental, social, moral, emotional and spiritual. In Christian families, parents are responsible for bringing up children according to God's plan. If children are educated according to God's plan, when they grow up, they will not become a major handicap for the society in which they live. Therefore, the child of the Christian family must learn to live in obedience from an early age. He must learn to love God, to respect his neighbor, his classmates, to live in submission to Christ and his word.

Christian parents must teach children to walk as Christ walked, to grow as Christ grew as a child. We read: "Then he went down with them to Nazareth and obeyed them. But his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favor before God and before men." Luke 2:51-52. It is the responsibility of all Christian families to raise their children in the word of God, in obedience and discipline. The Bible says in Proverbs 22:6 "Set children in the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn aside from it." The children of Christian parents must walk according to the way of God, they must not let themselves be abandoned to themselves. Children who live in obedience bring joy to their parents and they will know happy days. They must obey their parents in all things because their parents always want their happiness; they are not going to ask children to practice unwholesome things. They always love the progress, well-being and rights

of their children.

In Ephesians 6:1, the apostle Paul said it very strongly: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." As Christian parents, we must teach our children to live in obedience and discipline, and we must submit them to our teachings. We are the guardians of our children, and we will give an account to God of the way in which we manage. However, we should not punish them with anger like someone with whom we have a dispute. We must discipline them with love as God treated us with love when we were estranged from him. Children trained in obedience will have great satisfaction. They will be happy and will live long on the earth. Children, "Honor your father and your mother - which is the first commandment with a promise that it will go well with you and that you may enjoy a long life on earth." Ephesians 6:2-3.

Lord, thank you for your word to our children. Help the children of our church to live in obedience to you and their parents. Allow them to follow in the footsteps of your Son Jesus. May they honor you and their parents so that this promise of longevity and happiness on earth is realized in their lives. And that we, parents, learn to treat our children with love as you have treated us with love despite our sins and iniquities. Heavenly Father, make us a good example to them. By means of your Holy Spirit, give us the appropriate words to communicate with them. In Jesus' name!

- According to the apostle Paul, what is the duty of children to their parents?
- How do you define the home in relation to the children?
- What are the responsibilities of Christian parents to their children?
- What can make a Christian child happy and live long?

Further Reading: Ephesians 6:1-4

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Read: Colossians 3:18–4:1

Scripture Verse: *“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.” Colossians 3:22*

Today’s Thought:

Earlier we saw that Paul emphasized the obedience of children to their parents and how parents should act in a way that is pleasing to their children. We can see from verse 18 to verse 22, Paul speaks only of obedience, submission and love. Obedience, submission and love are three important things in the life of a Christian.

In verse 22, which we are now studying, the apostle instructs servants to obey their earthly masters. During the first century, much of the Roman population was enslaved. Those who had a lot of property had slaves in their service. Their masters had the right of life and death over them. Since there were good masters and wicked masters, to protect Christian slaves from the wickedness of wicked masters, Paul wrote to the Christians in Colossae to submit to their masters with a simple heart in the fear of the Lord. This does not mean that Paul endorses or encourages the slavery of man by man. As he lived in a slave system, he asked Christian slaves to obey their masters in all things and Christian masters to deal with justice and fairness towards his slaves. In other words, he asked Christian slaves and Christian masters to make a difference in the slave system they found themselves in.

The apostle Paul asked both groups to behave and act as servants of God, so they may live worthily in the kingdom of Christ. Since they became Christians, they are under the same banner, the banner of the Gospel. They will have to render an account to Christ, their supreme master. Paul wanted to show that both groups (masters and slaves) are equal before God. Slaves should submit to their masters in the fear of the Lord, and masters should treat their slaves with kindness and fairness because they have the same master in heaven (Hebrews 4:13).

So, considering this verse, we are all slaves of Jesus Christ. We haven’t belonged to ourselves since the day we accepted Jesus as our Savior. We are freed from the bondage of sin and wickedness to become a slave of God to produce fruits worthy of holiness. We read in Romans

6:22 "But now that you have been set free from sin and become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life." Whether we are slaves or masters, Jews or Gentiles, by accepting Jesus Christ, we have been baptized into one Spirit into one body in Jesus Christ. We are no longer slaves to sin, hatred and wickedness; we are sons of God. If we are sons of God, we are joint heirs with Christ. We are sons of the kingdom of God. Therefore, we must live in his love. We must make a good management of our life and live in symbiosis with the others because we are with the Lord, we must give an account to him of our actions. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one of us may receive our due for the things done while we were in the body, whether good or bad." 2 Corinthians 5:10. We are to work for God in love and singleness of heart and in the fear of God even when our earthly boss is not always there to watch over us. We must consider all work done as work done for the Lord and not for men. "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing shake you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, for you know that your work in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Corinthians 15:58.

Lord, thank you for your word. I am no longer a slave to sin and shame. Thank you for redeeming me from the empire of Satan and translating me into the kingdom of your Son Jesus. Now I'm yours, do with me what you want. I am the clay, you the potter transform me, mold me, shape me, make me a vessel of honor for your service. Help me to manage this vessel well and help me to live in harmony with others.

- Why did Paul ask slaves to submit to their masters and masters to treat their slaves well?
- What were we before our new birth in Jesus Christ?
- What have we become after our new birth?
- How should we manage our life?
- Why do we have to do this management?

Further Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:22-22

Friday, March 3, 2023

Read: Colossians 3:18-4:1

Scripture Verse: *“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.” Colossians 3:23-24*

Today’s Thought:

We saw earlier that the Christian slave must submit to his Christian master, and that both slave and master must act in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ because they have the same master in heaven. They will have to give an account to their master who is in heaven. The Christian, whether he is master or servant, whatever the system in which he evolves, must always make the difference, because he does not live for himself nor for the society in which he finds himself. He must live for God; he must act according to the desire of his master.

In this study, what interests us the most in the two verses is: “Whatever you do, do it with a good heart,” and the other part of the text, “You will receive from the Lord the inheritance as a reward.” Whatever you do, do it with all your heart. In other words, whatever you do, do it for love. We must ensure that the love of God rules in our hearts and in all our activities. We must show love for God in our actions and in the way we act. Everything we do for God or for our neighbors must be done with love from a sincere heart. Our love for God becomes palpable when we show it with all our heart to one of his children. We read in Matthew 25 from verse 31 at the end of the chapter, speaking of the judgment of the nations, Jesus will say to those who loved him and proved this love to his children: “...Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.” v.34.

Jesus will reward us because we loved him, and we proved it to those who needed proof of love. In verses 35 and 36 of Matthew 25 we read: “For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes, and you dressed me, I was sick, and you nursed me, I was in jail, and you came to visit me.” Every time we show love for others, especially those who are not of great importance in the eyes of society, it is to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that we have shown it. We are called to follow wholeheartedly what Jesus himself has commanded us. He gave us a command-

ment of love. Whatever task he has called us to for his service, we must do it willingly. We must put all our potential into the work of the Lord. God's work must not be neglected, we must do it with love. We must put aside hatred, pride, jealousy, selfishness to do the work of God.

Why do we have to do everything with all our heart? Because we are workers with God. We need to take God's work more seriously than any other work we must do. To give importance to the work of God is to show how important God is in our life. Whether it is the service that we render to others, whether it is the work that we do directly for God, it must be done with love without any petty interest, nor to show others what we can do for God. Even if the work is hard, if we engage in the work of God, we must do it without murmuring, without constraint, because God will reward us. To work wholeheartedly and in obedience has a price. This prize does not come from a human being like us, but from God. The people to whom Paul wrote the letter had nothing to receive from their earthly masters. Despite everything, he encouraged them to do their job wholeheartedly. How much more should we take God's work to heart when we know that a reward awaits us in heaven. "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing shake you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, for you know that your work in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Corinthians 15:58. We are the slave of a master who works for us and who will reward us. What paradoxes! The master prepares a place in heaven for his servants. What a reward! Doesn't he deem it worthy to do everything with all heart for the Lord? We serve a sincere, just and faithful master, he will not forget to reward our faith, our obedience, our patience, our faithfulness and our dedication in his work. Isn't it a privilege to serve the Lord and be a faithful worker in his field?

Lord, help me to dedicate myself completely to you. Help me to do your work wholeheartedly, for my reward will be great in heaven.

- How should we show our love for God?
- How do you understand Matthew 25:35-26?
- Why do we have to do everything with all our heart?

Further Reading: Matthew 5:8-12

I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord." Psalms 122:1

Oh look! It's Friday! Saturday and Sunday are on the way; do not forget your appointment with your Lord! He loves that!

NOTES



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