

When the Rubber Meets the Road: Part 2

Colossians 3:20-4:1

5/24/2025

Application

Announcements: Memorial Day Video and comments
No hands of grace, missions meeting, and Valley Food Kitchen

Scripture

Colossians 3:20-4:1 (NKJV) Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But 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.

Introduction

As we approach part 2 of our message from last week, we see that Paul has taken us from the greatest theological truths in the universe to the basic building blocks of how our faith is implemented within our churches, friendships, homes, families, and workplaces. Chapter 4 will end with getting into our personal lives.

He began with the bedrock relationship that every family and society is built from, the marriage:

He gave us simple instructions (notice I didn't say easy) on how to conduct ourselves mutually and reciprocally within our marriages. Husbands and wives have different roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities; however, Paul does emphasise personal obedience from each party as an act of worship to the Lord. From personal experience and observation within numerous married couples, it is evident that even in good marriages, the inherent flaws of our humanity can sometimes create challenges. As believers, we understand that sanctification is an ongoing process in our lives. This sanctification means that we are continually being transformed into the image of Christ, but we are not yet perfect. Therefore, it is crucial for grace and mercy to abound in our marital relationships. Just as God extends His grace and mercy towards us despite our shortcomings and mistakes, we are called to mirror this in our marriages. When conflicts arise, when misunderstandings happen, or when one spouse falls short, it is essential to approach these situations with a heart full of grace and a spirit of mercy. Scripture reminds us in Ephesians 4:32 to "be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." This verse encapsulates the essence of how we should interact within our marriages - with kindness, compassion, and a willingness to forgive just as we have been forgiven by God. Therefore, let us remember that in the journey of marriage, both partners are a work in progress. By extending grace and mercy towards each other, we not only reflect God's love but also create an environment where both individuals can grow and flourish in their

Next, Paul moves to the physical fruit that comes from a marriage: Children.

Main Point

Point 1

To the Children

Scripture

Colossians 3:20 (NKJV) - Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

All the kids should hear this, especially today. We live in a culture that praises and promotes rebellion and independence.

Scripture

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

Children - Teknon - A dependent child.

Obedience is fortified by honor - honor your father and mother - The 5th commandment is the first commandment with a promise. Complete obedience under the Lord is seasonal (during childhood), but honor is for a lifetime. To honor - don't bring public shame. Acknowledge the good done. Not ignoring sin, but recognizing the God-given place of a parent.

Jesus honored Mary at the cross by ensuring her care for John.

Application

Obey - To Listen Under

Do you listen to your parents with the intent of obeying? - listen with the intent of receiving and following. Why listen:

Your parents sacrificed for you; it pleases the Lord: this is well pleasing to the Lord. It will create an attitude that will benefit you in life: humility, the ability to listen and learn.

Quote

— John Calvin

"It is not for nothing that God has commanded children to obey their parents, for in doing so they learn submission to all just authority. This is not a minor matter, but the very training ground for civil order and spiritual discipline."

Scripture

Proverbs 30:17 (NIV) - [17] "The eye that mocks at his father, and scorns obedience to his mother: the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, the young eagles shall eat it."

Main Point

Point 2

To the Fathers

Fathers - do not provoke your children to wrath

This is not a pass for mothers to provoke and embarrass their children, just the acknowledgement that the leadership example starts from the top.

Children need discipline, and often that comes from the hand of a father.

Quote

— Voddie Baucham

"The purpose of discipline and obedience in the home is not just to keep order. It is to make disciples. We are shaping the next generation to understand authority rightly—beginning with their parents and culminating in Christ."

Scripture

Proverbs 22:15 (ESV) [15] Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline drives it far from him.

Scripture

Ephesians 6:4 (NKJV) "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

Scripture

Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV) Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

Children look to their parents, but especially their fathers, for acceptance, validation, and direction as they grow in this world. Just as we are the bride of Christ, we are also the children of God. So, as men, Jesus gives us the example of how to love our wives, but the Father also gives us the example of how we are to treat our kids.

Col 3:21 NIV - Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

It's easy for fathers to be extremely hard on their kids. They can set unrealistic expectations that their kids can't meet and then get visibly frustrated when they don't meet them. This creates a mentality within a child of feeling like they can never be good enough for their parents.

Dad is never proud of me, but he's always angry at me. He never praises me or acknowledges my successes, but he always chides me for my failures. There are no perfect fathers on earth, but we should strive to be the example of Christ to our kids. There are times when discipline has to come, but think about how God Fathers us. He accepts us, though we don't deserve it. He allows us to help him even though we usually mess things up. He disciplines us, then forgives us for even the most heinous sins. He came down from His world so that he could enter into ours.

He strengthens us when we feel weak, he arms us when we feel when this world has brought us down, he loves us through our weaknesses. Dads, you don't want kids who go through life discouraged because you were not willing to show them a little grace and invest a little time.

The extremes of parenting

Authoritarian

Excessive abuse of power and authority. Everything must be done on their terms in their time. No questions are allowed. They want the law; they get the law, but it costs their child, either through bitterness (too harsh), distance (no conversation) or rejection (hypocrite).

Permissive Parent

Excessive attention to the child's every desire. They hope for a good relationship but end up frustrated, lacking confidence, rude, and spoiled children.

Christlike Parent

They not only instruct the truth but model it. They make the truth desirable through humility, repentance, and healthy boundaries and gain a beautiful relationship with their child.

Here are some good words to describe these types:

Authoritarian - Harsh, unbearable rules, Insensitive, Shouts, rule-focused

Permissiveness - Soft, lacks discipline or healthy boundaries, overly sensitive, bargains, feelings (emotional) focus

Blend - Disciplines in love, shows consistency, patiently instructs, focused on training

Main Point

Point 3

To Slaves and Masters

Scripture

Colossians 3:22-4:1 (NKJV) Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

The Bible does not condone or approve of slavery, but does set a Christ-like standard for the reality of the day. In fact, the seeds Paul planted for the Christians would ultimately be the roots that destroyed slavery in society.

Scripture

Colossians 3:11 (NKJV) "where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all."

As a Christian slave, one would represent Jesus, who took on the form of a slave to lift up those around him, showing that the slave has the potential to become the greatest in the kingdom. For the slave owner, you now had to view the slave as your brother or sister in Christ, part of your family, and knowing you would give an account to the ultimate Master for how fairly you treated the slave in Christ.

We could really see Paul's instructions as to indentured servants who would be working to pay off a debt and masters who had an obligation to give them their fair dues. In many ways, these principles could apply to employers and employees today, and how one works for the Lord or leads in the Lord.

I could sum up these principles in three words: Activity, Attitude, and Awareness.

Activity

Words like "obey" and "whatever you do" indicate that laziness, rebellion, lying, cheating, finding loopholes and excuses, and disobedience to those who employ you are forbidden in Christ. We are to work hard and show diligence and excellence in the things entrusted to us. Joseph was a steward in Potiphar's house who rose up to being the most trusted member of the household because of his integrity, ingenuity, and diligence. The culture of work today, especially in the next generation, has completely degraded to entitlement, laziness, and demanding. If you are someone who learns how to use your mind, be trustworthy, and go above and beyond as unto the Lord, the sky is the limit.

Attitude

I don't just work when people are watching. I don't just work to impress the boss or give an appearance of work as though everything I do, seen and unseen, will be rewarded or rebuked by my ultimate boss, Jesus Christ.

Awareness

For the one in authority, recognize that your authority is an opportunity to serve those under it. Do so in a way that is aware of the fact that you also have a boss in heaven who commanded you to become a servant.

There is no partiality - When we all get to heaven, the CEO won't get a pass for treating people unfairly, withholding just payment, or being stingy, using people for their own aim. Everyone will be repaid equally for how they served Christ.

Scripture

James 5:3-4 (NKJV) Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

Jesus is not just for the public eye, and faith is not just a set of doctrinal statements. It is to be put into practice when the rubber of faith meets the road of life. Putting on Christ will be tested the most where it matters the most.

Communion Sunday