

Lesson 8

**Rooted in Christ;
He is our Lord...**
so live in him, working heartily,
as serving him

GETTING STARTED

1. Our Study: Colossians 3:18-4:6

Overview

Everything which Paul has written thus far in the letter applies to the Colossian Christians as a group, as members of the church. In this section Paul speaks to specific relationships.

Close your eyes and meditate on the passages you have studied so far in this letter. Which one do you remember the best? Can you think why?

Review your memory verses. Think what a blessing it would be if you memorized the entire letter... what a treasure to guard your heart!

Pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance concerning your personal relationships.

Concerns About the Life in Christ

Have you considered... what it means to have Jesus as Lord? Meditate on the following quotation:

“You can find plenty of people whose heart is like a tavern, where Christ finds no welcome, where evil plies its trade busily and brazenly. You can find others whose heart is like a hotel with rooms all parceled out, and a rather nice one assigned to the Lord Jesus. You can find yet others whose heart is like a HOME, where Christ as Lord has been given not only the right of entry but the right of mastery. There's not a room he cannot occupy, not a corner he cannot inspect, not a piece of furniture he cannot either enjoy or remove!” (Paul S. Rees, *Prayer and Life's Highest*, p. 23)

If your heart like a HOME to Christ, how will this affect your home relationships? Consider what Paul has to say.

DIGGING IN... for the facts

2. Christian Living in the Home (Colossians 3:18–4:1)

Paul is counseling Christians regarding some of the basic relationships in life. Some have called these the “household duties of the Christian.” This portion gives us a “heavenly perspective” as we go about ordinary tasks. Paul gives advice to six types of relationships. Use the questions who, what why, and how for your guide as you study this section. When answering the questions, instead of always using the general names which Paul uses, use personal names whenever possible. Think of him speaking to your family and work relationships.

- A. (3:18) Who? _____
 What to do? _____
 Why? _____
- B. (3:19) Who? _____
 What to do? _____
- C. (3:20) Who? _____
 What to do? _____
 Why? _____
- D. (3:21) Who? _____
 What to do? _____
- E. (3:22) Who? _____
 What to do? _____
 (3:22, 23) How? _____
 (3:24) Why? _____
- F. (4:1) Who? _____
 What to do? _____
 Why? _____
- G. What is the basis for these relationships? Note Ephesians 5:21. _____

3. Christian Living Outside the Home (Colossians 4:2-6)

- A. What is essential for Christians to be effective witnesses in and out of the home? List three imperatives.
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____
 - 3. _____
- B. What specific prayer requests does Paul ask for himself? _____

DIGGING DEEPER... for understanding

4. What Does Paul Mean?

Maybe this is a section in which we would rather not think too seriously about meanings. We might be compelled to do more self-examining than we want to do... in an area that is too close to home! Yet our Christian witness is the most revealing in our home and work relationships. If we do not reveal Christ as our Lord in these relationships, where would we? Consider the following questions. Choose one or more of them for special study. Be sure to use the dictionary for meanings of words.

- A. Note that in this section Paul uses the title LORD to designate Jesus Christ. Note the number of times he uses this title. Why do you think he uses it especially in this passage?

- B. Compare Colossians 3:17 and 3:23. How are they alike and how do they differ in meaning? From these verses can you formulate a few general principles which you can apply to all work? Try to state at least three.

- C. In this section Paul describes Christian attitudes toward many areas. What is the meaning and significance of the words and phrases which he uses to describe attitudes toward the following things? Give an illustration.

1. Toward the Lord: *fitting, pleasing, reverence, serving, working?* _____

2. Toward work: *eye is on you, curry their favor, sincerity of heart?* _____

3. Toward prayer: *devote, watchful, thankful?* _____

4. Toward outsiders: *making the most of every opportunity?* _____

5. Toward speech: *full of grace, seasoned with salt?* _____

- D. Think about motives. Paul has given much advice to parents, children, slaves (employees?), and masters (employers?). We might ask the question, "Why should Christians behave in this manner?" Note Ephesians 5:21-25; 1 Peter 2:18-3:7 for deeper insights. _____

GROWING... in Christ

5. What is Paul Saying to Us?

- A. Think about the task you dislike the most. If you really were going follow Paul's admonition to "*work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord*" how would you approach this task? Can you apply this admonition to all tasks? _____
- _____
- _____
- B. Think about your witness at work or in your neighborhood. In what various ways can you "tell" others about what Jesus Christ means to you? How might your speech "*be always full of grace, seasoned with salt*"?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- C. Think about the importance of the Christian witness of parents in the home. How would your family relationships be strengthened *in the Lord* were you to do the following:
- If/because your family had devotions together? _____
 - _____
 - If/because all the family attended BOTH church school and service. If you don't, why don't you? _____
 - _____
 - If/because your family did more praying and playing together? When did you last play with your children? and pray with them? _____
 - _____
- D. In what ways might parents be so busy helping others and assuming responsibilities in the church and community that they neglect their own children? What does 1 Peter 3:1-6 have to say to the wife who seeks to win an unbelieving husband? _____
- _____
- _____

6. How to Respond

Memorize... one of the key passages such as Colossians 3:23,24.

Pray... about your relationships in home or at work. Write a *Prayer for the Home* or a *Prayer for the Workplace*. Your children have heard you encourage them, scold them, praise them, and reprimand them, but have they ever heard you pray? A mother's or father's prayer can be one of the most memories of a child. Write a *Morning Prayer* and/or an *Evening Prayer*.

Remember... that we may not find JOY in the task, but we can find JOY in the Lord. The heart of the Gospel is that Christ has redeemed us. Only in him can we do all things because he strengthens us.

Consider... if there is unconfessed resentment between you and a member of your family. If so, pray for the grace to admit it. If you believe in Christ's forgiveness, then trust you can also forgive each other!