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# COLOSSIANS: CHRIST PREEMINENT

Session 12 | Colossians 3:18-4:1 | Dr. Randy White

## Instructions to Wives | v. 18

- **Wives, submit** - The word ὑποτάσσω [hupotasso] is "under appointment," and is a word that designates an organizational chart.
- This is an instruction without parameters. Clearly, a wife should not submit to ungodliness.
- The world is at odds with this instruction, considering it "Neanderthal."
- Evidence that this is a problem area among Christian women
  - Who says, "I have to check with the boss"
  - Fill in the blank, "If \_\_\_\_\_ ain't happy, ain't nobody happy."
- The basic issue here is one of respect, which is a husband's greatest need.

## Instructions to Husbands | v. 19

- The verb ἀγαπάω [agapao] is often described as "godly love." In reality, however, it is the love of the heart, while *phileo* is the love of action.
- The husband has two commands - to love and to "be not bitter."
- Sometimes men, who have a longing for freedom, can become bitter to their wives who may, by necessity of the role of a husband or by the demands of the wife, keep their husbands from expressing this freedom. Love conquers any degree of bitterness.
- A Christian husband needs to learn
  - Love, and the expression of love. It is what his wife needs.
  - Freedom from bitterness of the constraints of marriage.

## Instructions to Children | v. 20

- The command ὑπακούω [hupoakouo] is "to come under hearing," that is, to listen and obey.
- The child that is disobedient is not doing that which is **well pleasing** to the Lord.
- This simple instruction ought to be taught to children from a very early age.

## Instructions to Fathers | v. 21

- Note Paul's assumption that the Fathers are the head of the home, and disciplinary matters ultimately belong to him.
- If children are **provoked** then they may become ἀθυμέω [athumeo], which is "without fierceness" or "without passion."

## Instructions to Servants | vv. 22-25

- **Servants** are to **obey**. This is the same word used in v. 20 in reference to children.
- They are to obey **in singleness of heart**.
  - The word ἀπλότης [haplotes] comes from *haplos*, meaning *single* or *simple*. The English word *haplography* is the "inadvertent omission of a repeated letter or letters." For example, *speling* rather than *spelling*. Idolatry is actually a result of haplography, coming from *eidololoteria* (the second *lo* being left out). The work of a servant should be with **singleness of heart**, not a plurality of hearts.
  - With a singleness of heart, a servant is to do **whatsoever** with ψυχή [psuche], which is *soul*.
- **Ye shall receive the reward** – We learn here that 1) earthly work is rewarded and 2) gentile believers receive a reward of **the inheritance** that is in reference to the Kingdom.

- **He that doeth wrong** - This appears to be an earthly punishment, and teaches that God does not protect his children from the earthly punishment of wrong they commit.
- **No respect of persons** - This is given as a statement of fact, not just an "opinion" of God. In any world-system, the world doesn't really care *who you are*.

### *Instructions to Masters | 4:1*

- **That which is just and equal** - This does not imply that all servants be paid the same. *ἰσότης* [isotes] is that which is *fair or equal to the work*. We get words like *isosceles* and *isotope* from this word.
- The balance in these instructions is done in such a way that nobody has the "upper hand."
  - Wives submit to husbands who love their wives and are not bitter toward them.
  - Children obey their parents who do not provoke them to wrath.
  - Servants obey their masters who give to their servants.
- These instructions confirm that **there is no respect of persons**.