

## Colossians 3:18-4:6

### *Living the Christian Life in Everyday Life*

Colossians 3:18-19 jumps right into instruction for husbands and wives. Let's take a larger look at the biblical purpose, intention, and design for marriage to better understand Paul's instructions.

At the essence of our faith, we believe that our God lives and exists as a Trinity, three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each are fully God and co-equal with one another. What do we learn about their relationship during Christ's earthly ministry in John 6:38?

1 Corinthians 11:3 - What is the nature of the Son's relationship to the Father throughout eternity? Does this in any way diminish His value or worth?

Genesis 1:26-28 - God creates man and woman in his image. God is relational and dwells in community, so it makes sense that He would create us in the same manner. According to Genesis 2:18-25, what roles do Adam and Eve share, and where do their roles differ?

"One flesh," by definition, means the couple is fully equal in value and quality. Our "one flesh" experience in marriage is as close as we come to experiencing the relational nature of the Trinity. Equal in value does not mean that each person plays the same role and purpose in the relationship (as with the Father and the Son).

Passages on marriage help us understand God's intention for men and women in marriage. His greatest intention is that marriage would reflect Christ's love for His church (Eph 5:25). This intention calls the husband to sacrificial love and service in a way that reflects the love that Christ displayed for the church in His death for us. Wives should respect their husbands and trust his leadership as the husband puts his wife's needs first in all decisions (as Christ did for us).

How does this perspective differ from the world's perspective? Why does this perspective make so many angry?

Is it God's original desire and design for a wife to respect and follow an unloving self-centered husband?

What happens when our focus is on "respect" and not "love"?

It may also be important to clarify that we all live in submission to others. Children to their parents, employees to their bosses, to the government, and of course to the Lord Himself.

Ephesians 5:21 – It should also be noted that a woman is not called to be subject to any man besides her husband (while both submit to spiritual leadership). The call is that each and every Christian submits to one another.

Luke 22:27 - How can we better live like Christ in the church?

How could this discussion affect a single person's decision in who they relationally pursue?

3:20-21 – What has been your hardest struggle as a parent? What has been your hardest struggle to live out these verses as a son or daughter (for those who are not parents)?

How can we parent both a child's actions as well as their heart?

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 – Describe the picture of parenting that we are given in this passage:

Has this been your experience as a parent or child? How can this become the flavor, atmosphere, and practice of your home?

3:22-4:1 – “Slaves” in this context and culture would be comparable to “employees.” How would it change your effort and attitude if you truly viewed your career and daily work as done for the Lord?

Of course, the moment you see your boss, you are reminded that Jesus does not sit in the corner office. But ultimately, He has you in this job and station of life to glorify Him and make his Name known to those around you. What are your next steps in the way you treat your employees, your employer, your fellow workers, and others in demonstrating the grace and love of Christ?

4:2-4 – What does it look like to be devoted to something or someone?

Describe someone you know who lives a life devoted to prayer:

Obviously, we can't quit work and our daily activities to simply pray all the time. How can prayer play a role in the mundane parts of our life?

Prayer has been defined by some as "simply talking to God." How would your prayer life change if you related to the Lord as your best friend?

What is Paul's prayer request?

How awesome to see Paul praying for an "open door" for the message of the Gospel as he sits behind a locked prison door! His prayer was not that the prison door would open, but for others to hear about Christ. How much of our prayer life is devoted to evangelism and outreach? Are we excited about the Gospel going forth? Is it going forth in your neighborhood? In your office? City?

Paul, who wrote the book of Romans, feels the need to pray for clarity of speech in sharing the Gospel. It makes sense that we pray for opportunities and for the words to speak. ***Let's pray this week that God would give you a clear opportunity to share the Gospel with someone.*** How does that thought and prayer make you feel?

What is a simple and clear way to present the truths of the Gospel? How can we do it in a way that is loving, respectful, and still clear?

4:5-6 – How do we make the most of every opportunity? Does it mean we need to shove the Gospel down someone's throat the moment we have the opportunity?

Without an intentional working knowledge of the people around us, it is near impossible to live out these verses. Give examples of sharing Christ with grace versus sharing Christ with coldness, indifference, or pity: