

## #9 Colossians 3

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**Verse 16:** 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.'

The Word of Christ is the Word of God Who is the Lord Jesus Christ. All of His Word, Genesis through Revelation should be what fills our minds and hearts, what motivates and stimulates, innervates, invigorates, what liberates and separates and what eliminates doubt in our minds. The Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ should always feel at home in our hearts. He is our only source of true Wisdom. With that Wisdom we are to be teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, the Psalms set to music, with hymns which are more like doctrine set to music and finally spiritual songs which are more like good, Biblically sound choruses. We are to be singing, always exhibiting grace, singing to the Lord.

**Verse 17:** 'And whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.'

Doing anything and everything in the Name of the Lord Jesus does not mean that we say 'In Jesus name' with everything we do. It means that everything we do is done in such a way that it glorifies God and exhibits His character, doing what we do in the way that He would do it. And, if it isn't something He would do, we shouldn't do it either.

But... you'll notice that Paul specifically commands that all of our 'giving thanks to God the Father,' is to be done 'through Him,' through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is in contrast to the fact that God the Father has seated us in Heavenly places with the Lord Jesus Christ and we know that the Lord Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father. So... in the spiritual realm, we are seated with Christ next to the Father but in the physical realm, everything to the Father must go through Jesus Christ. What's the difference?

In the spiritual realm, our spirits have been created in the holiness and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our spirits and our souls are invited, commanded really, to come boldly to the Throne of Grace to find help in time of need: 'Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.' Heb. 4:16 And, when we don't even know what to pray, it is God's Holy Spirit Who helps our souls to pray rightly: 'Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.' Rom 8:26

Our souls within our spiritual selves have been made new; both are now righteous and eternal: 'Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.' 2 Cor 5:17. However, the Word makes clear that our flesh is not yet included in the 'all things have become new.' Our flesh is still sinful and will only be made new, perfect and eternal at the moment of the Rapture.

When we give thanks to God the Father, we are speaking it out from unredeemed mouths with unredeemed tongues. Therefore, our thanks must be filtered through the complete perfection that is the Lord Jesus Christ. After the Rapture, when we have been completely redeemed, spirit, soul and flesh altogether, then we can come boldly before the Throne of Grace to offer up praise and thanksgiving out of souls, spirits and flesh that are eternally perfect, redeemed and glorified. No longer will we need a 'go between,' an intercessor. We will behold Him, face to face. We will praise and glorify Him, face to face; 'we will see Him as He is and we will be like Him.' 1 John 3:2

This is why we pray 'in Jesus' Name;' our prayers are also coming from redeemed souls and spirits but out of unredeemed physical bodies.

**Verse 18:** 'Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.'

The family unit: one man married to one woman, for life, creating the stable and nurturing environment in which to produce and raise children. The family unit is the very foundation of all civilization and it was meant to act as a tangible representation of our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ but also of the relationship of God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son has willingly placed Himself under the authority of the Father while in no way inferior and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Ephesians 5 is a parallel passage to this; Paul says much the same thing to the Ephesians as to the Colossians: '...speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.' Eph 5:17

Notice here that Paul commands us all to submit ourselves to one another: to other believers and he uses the exact same word in commanding wives to submit themselves unto their own husbands.

Also in Ephesians, Paul adds even more: 'Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in everything.' Eph 5:22

Never does Paul or any other writer of Scripture give husbands authority to command their wives to submit; it is always to be done as a loving, voluntary action by the wife as if she is submitting unto Jesus Christ Himself. Which, by the way, then offers the wife, the opportunity to gain unimaginable eternal rewards by submitting to her husband because God sees that as if she is willingly, lovingly submitting to the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself. A husband has no more right to command his wife to submit to him than he does any other member of the congregation or than he does Jesus Christ, Himself. And, taken in this context, the husband is just as much commanded to submit himself unto his wife; 'submit yourselves unto one another.'

God has established His planned 'chain of command.' After all discussion, convincing or arguing, finally, it falls to the husband to make the right decision and he is responsible, before God, to do so prayerfully and wisely.

God tells wives to submit to their **own** husbands; women are not commanded to submit to any other man and notice that he writes, 'to your own husbands.' She owns her husband in exactly the same way he owns his wife; they are one with each other; they own each other. Again, it is designed as a mirror to the relationship within the Godhead.

Paul does not qualify this command to wives; it is not contingent upon his being a good husband or a good Christian. In fact, this is what God has planned in bringing many husbands to salvation. Peter writes: 'Wives, likewise, *be* submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, <sup>2</sup> when they observe your chaste conduct *accompanied* by fear.' 1 Pet 3:1 Even if the wife is smarter, *which usually goes without saying*, even if she is a more mature Christian. In fact, the verb Paul uses for **own**, your own husband, in the Greek, the word is 'idios!' Idios... what does that sound like? Wives, submit yourself to your idios husband... even so, submit!

This is the only man to whom she is commanded to submit '*as unto the Lord*,' but also, he is her own possession as much as she is his.

The main picture in the marriage relationship is the Lord Jesus and His bride, the true Church.

**Verse 19:** 'Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.'

That sounds simple enough... but wait... there's more... 'Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup> So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord *does* the church.' Eph 5:25

Peter adds: 'Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, **giving honor to the wife**, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, **that your prayers may not be hindered.**' 1 Pet 3:7

The quickest way to make our prayers ineffectual, to be unheard, is to not honor our wives. The word for hindered, in the Greek is ekkopto. It means, to cut down, to be hewn down at the roots, sawn off at ground level. That is what happens to a husband's prayers when he does not honor his wife.

This is sure adding up! I liked the sound of that 'Wives submit,' but this husband stuff... nobody warned me it was so serious. And here, too, he doesn't qualify it with, '*if she is worthy of your love and honor.*'

Both the husband and the wife have the responsibility to faithfully and lovingly obey these commands and to take up their own God-designed position in the family. Submission to this is submission to the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself. Rebelliousness to this is rebelliousness to the Lord Jesus Christ. Resisting this or harboring bitterness in this is doing so to Jesus Christ.

The most drastic example in the Bible of this relationship which is, in fact, the picture of Jesus Christ with His Bride, the Church, is found in Hosea. God commanded Hosea to marry Gomer who was *faithfully unfaithful* throughout the entire marriage. She prostituted herself. She was the picture of unfaithful Israel while Hosea's continued faithfulness was the picture of God and His never-ending faithfulness. It is also the mystery of the future picture of the Lord Jesus Christ's never-ending love and faithfulness to us, His unfaithful Church.

**Verse 20:** 'Children, obey your parents *in everything*, for this is pleasing to the Lord.'

Children should be taught that obedience to parents is obedience to Jesus Christ. This is self explanatory but it goes beyond when a child grows up and leaves to begin his or her own family. To the Ephesians, Paul adds: 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup> "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: <sup>3</sup> "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

Our command is to honor our parents, which has no expiration date; it is an ongoing command throughout our lives for as long as our parents live. This, too, is not qualified; it does not say, 'only if they are worthy of honor.' Many have had parents that are far from honorable. Our command, before God, is to honor them within the confines of honoring God. In other words, our honoring of them is never to be through dishonoring God. For example, a father tells his son to go to the liquor store and steal a bottle. Of course he is to respectfully refuse to steal and so, dishonor God, but he is still commanded to honor his father, to respectfully obey when possible. That respectful obedience is what God may use to bring that father to Himself... along with the wife's respectful submission.

Many Christians have had dishonorable parents or wives or husbands but our command is still to love, honor and to submit. If we do, God sees it as loving, honoring and submitting to Himself and He will reward eternally. Never will He fail to see and 'add to our account' any, and every, instance of loving, honoring and submitting. In so doing, we are honoring and acknowledging God.

'Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.' Prov 3:5

Wives are to submit unreservedly, unqualifiedly and sacrificially.

Husbands are to love unreservedly, unqualifiedly and sacrificially.

Children are to obey and honor unreservedly, unqualifiedly and sacrificially.

In so doing, each one is honoring and glorifying God unreservedly, unqualifiedly and sacrificially.

The wisest wife, husband and child will always see their commanded responsibility in just that light.

**Verse 21:** 'Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.'

Fathers are responsible, before God, to raise and train up their children in the same way that God raises and trains him up with love, with patience and with grace and mercy; never with anger and never punishing; only with correcting and disciplining as God does with him.

A very difficult thing for parents and especially fathers, in light of this command, is to understand the difference between punishment and discipline with correction. It is far easier to punish than it is to discipline with correction. A father must discipline himself in this regard as well as regarding loving and honoring his wife.

The most effective tool parents have in training up their children is in loving, honoring and submitting to each other.

The best way to bring an unbelieving husband to salvation... lovingly submit to him.

The best way to bring an unbelieving wife to salvation... love and honor her.

The best way to bring an unbelieving parent to salvation... honor and obey them.

**Verse 22:** 'Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.'

This means slaves, servants, bondservants and employees. The Greek word is *doulos* from which we get, *doula*.

For us, this means employees obey your employers, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God, even unjust and unholy employers. If one cannot do that, he should resign and work elsewhere but probably, he will find the same problem in his new job because God was the one Who was orchestrating the previous trial in order to produce patience, Godly patience in that employee.

Having an unjust boss is exactly the same as any other trial devised by God for our *enjoyment*. James is the one who told us the secret of all trials and how to respond but it is not how any of us want to respond to any trial whatsoever.

'Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance (patience.) <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.' James 1

To respond to trials with joy and submission is to respond to God with joy and submission. To respond to difficult employers with joy and submission is to respond to God with joy and submission.

Next, Paul gives us, along with what James just told us, what should be our understanding of the Christian's response in every interpersonal relationship: wives, husbands, children, fathers, employees and with every other person with whom we ever come in contact, within the Church and without:

**Verse 23:** 'And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.'

We are submitting to the Lord; we are loving and honoring the Lord; we are obeying the Lord; we are doing our work as unto the Lord. All that we do is either in submission to the Lord Jesus Christ or it is in rebellion against the Lord Jesus Christ... everything! And none of this is merely a suggestion; none of it is a request.

**Verse 25:** 'But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.'

God will never 'let it slide' when we have disobeyed; He never 'brushes it away' and forgets it. No Christian is going to lose their Eternal Salvation through disobedience or neglect but every person will pay a price for disobedience. The unbeliever, in his eternal punishment and the believer in the loss of some unimaginable eternal reward.

**Chapter 4:** 'Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.'

Employers are commanded be fair with their employees. This is also meant for all of us: Christian, be just and fair in all your interpersonal dealings... God is watching.

Wives, husbands, children, fathers, bosses and employees, fellow Christians: do what is right always.

**Verse 2:** 'Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; <sup>3</sup> meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.'

Praying always, vigilantly, with thanksgiving for ourselves, our families and our spiritual leaders and teachers. Pray earnestly for me that God would keep this door open and enable me to speak the mystery of Christ, to know what and how I ought to speak at all times.

We have recently seen the beginnings of persecution against Christians and Churches; more is coming, especially if the Left wins power in November. Pray for me; pray for each other; pray for Pastor Jason.