

Colossians 3:18-4:1

Questions

1. Do the families of your Christian and non-Christian friends practice what Paul teaches here?
2. Read Colossians 3:18—4:1. How do Paul's commands to wives/husbands, children/fathers and slaves/masters address our tendency to do the opposite?
3. The wife is to submit to the husband "as is fitting in the Lord" (v. 18). Why do you think that this verse is so hard for women to follow, especially in our day and time?
4. The husband is to love his wife and not be harsh with her (v. 19). How would Colossians 3:12-17 help him understand what that love should be like in actions and attitudes? Would you say that most men that you know are doing a good or bad job in this area?
5. People often read verse 18 first and become offended that the Bible would teach this before they even take the time to read and understand verse 19. (This question is for the ladies.) Ladies, would it be very hard for you to submit to your husband if he followed Ephesians 5:22, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her?"
6. Why are these commands to submit and love unconditional; that is, not dependent on the behavior of the spouse?
7. Why is the basic command to children: "Obey your parents" (v. 20)?
8. Why are fathers told what they are *not* to do (v. 21)?
9. How do you think that the Bible would teach kids to act who have parents who treat them badly, who do embitter them, and who are not Christians? Are your parents like this?
10. What attitudes and actions of parents embitter or discourage their children?
11. How could the motivations of pleasing the Lord (v. 20) and not discouraging others (v. 21) improve relationships in your family?
12. When and how are slaves to obey their masters (vv. 22-25)?
With what motives?
13. Do you work hard and do your best at everything you do, whether or not somebody is watching you or not?
14. Why does Paul use the example of Masters and Slaves? I mean what can we learn from that since we no longer have slavery? Was Paul promoting slavery?
15. What would it demand of a master to "provide your slaves with what is right and fair" (4:1)?
16. How should knowing "that you also have a Master in heaven" affect a master's attitude toward himself and his slaves (3:25—4:1)?

17. How would obeying these instructions change how you do your job as employee or employer (3:22—4:1)?

18. How would following the instructions in 3:18—4:1 demonstrate that "you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority" (2:10)?