

The New World of the New Man

(Colossians 3:18-4:1)

(preached 5/29/16; Sunday AM)

Introduction

Take your Bible and turn with me to Colossians
3:18-4:1...

Let me read this passage for us...

If you are a visitor here, we are going through the book
of Colossians verse by verse...

We are committed at Pine Grove to the Word of God and
we are committed to the explanation of every verse...

And today brings us to Colossians 3:18-4:1...

***18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in
the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be
embittered against them. 20 Children, be obedient to
your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing [a]to
the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children,
so that they will not lose heart.***

***22 Slaves, in all things obey those who are your
masters [b]on earth, not with [c]external service, as
those who merely please men, but with sincerity of
heart, fearing the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, do your
work [d]heartily, as for the Lord [e]rather than for***

men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward [f]of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. 25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and [g]that without partiality.

4 Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.

Let us pray.

Ted Kaczynski, also known as the Unabomber, is back in the news this week...

If you have forgotten about him, he was the man responsible for 3 deaths and dozens of injuries from his bombs which were often mailed to his victims..

This week, Kaczynski has offered to be interviewed for the first time by a reporter from the New York Times with the catch that the reporter acknowledges that Kaczynski is not insane....

That may be hard to acknowledge if you remember anything about the Unabomber...

Though he grew up and went to Harvard and had a doctorate in mathematics, he eventually withdrew from life...

Built a 10 foot by 12 foot cabin in the woods of Montana and lived for 26 years building and sending bombs..

Though people in the area around his cabin occasionally saw Kaczynski, he rarely talked to anyone and lived off the land...

He was the perfect example of a hermit and recluse who kept to himself...

Unfortunately, he was an evil recluse and dangerous hermit...

And his isolation from society is one of the major signs that Kaczynski was mentally ill...

Though some people like to be alone, most normal functioning people need human interaction...

In fact, God said in the second chapter of the Bible...

It is not good for man to be alone...

In God's design for man, he made him a social creature...

So God created a woman for that man to end his loneliness and the institution of marriage between one man and one woman was established by God in the very beginning of time.

Yet, God also gives us social opportunities apart from marriage as well...

Friends, co-workers, church, school are all creations of God to give us opportunity to not be alone in this world...

Men and women are social creatures that were designed that way by God....

And when we isolate ourselves, we usually find trouble...

Now, this applies to everyone whether you are a believer or not...

We are made to interact with others...

Now, this creates an interesting situation when someone comes to know the Lord...

Because everything about him changes...

His thinking.

His emotions.

His speech.

His decisions.

His actions.

We have been looking at this over the past few weeks in the book of Colossians....

And so, one truth about the true believer is that his social activity and how he relates to people changes as well after salvation.

In some cases, that means he or she has to cut ties with some social settings...

In some cases, that means he or she may have to cut ties with friends...

But in all cases, everyone that the new Christian interacts with should see a difference in them...

Whether that is the lady who cuts their deli meat at Wal-Mart or the teacher who meets with them about their child at school or the bank teller or the friend at work...

All of these people who are the social circle of that person should begin to see a change in that person's life...

Because being a Christian is not a new face on Sunday morning and Wednesday, being a Christian is a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week transformation...

And it should affect the Christian's interactions with everyone they interact...

However, the first people to recognize the new man or the new woman should always be those closest to that person...

And those people are always the person's immediate family...

And it is no accident that those are the people we just read about in Col 3:18-4:1...

Wives, husbands, children, bosses and co-workers form the closest social circle of most people in the world...

These are the people with whom we interact most often...

And so as Paul leaves the section on how to think, speak, and look like a new man, he now tells us where we need to look like the new man or woman the most...

And that is within our own family and within our own jobs...

Since God has called you to think different, your family should be the first people to see your new way of thinking...

Since God called you to speak different, your spouse should be the first to notice that..

Since God has called you to compassion and kindness and patience, your children should spot that difference first...

Since God has called you to forbear and forgive others, your co-workers and boss should see those qualities first...

And why is that?

Because you are around these people the most...

In Paul's day, the house would be made up of all these people...

Wives, husbands, kids, masters, and slaves would all be under the same roof...

In our times, that has changed...

We rarely see a home with servants, but the practice of bosses and employees is still around for sure...

And so, we are going to address everyone of these roles in life today as we look at Col 3:18-4:1...

In what I have called...

The New World of a New Man

The breakdown of this set of verses is very simple...

Paul really does it for us as he addresses every role, but I put a split between verses 21 and 22 to give us a neat outline....

So, let's begin in verses 18-21 with....

I. Taking Christ Home with You (3:18-21)

As verse 17 ends the section on how to live like the new man on the outside, Paul simply says whatever you do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus...

And then he jumps right into verse 18 by talking to wives, husbands and children...

And if you think about it, most of the things that you will do in this life fall into those categories...

Though God gifts people to be single and live single, most people spend large portions of their time being husbands, wives, parents and children.

So when Paul says, “whatever you do,” for most people whatever is often a reference to family life...

And Paul first gives his attention to wives in verse 18..

18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

This verse has created much controversy over the years and many questions...

But let me tell you...

This is not a hard verse to understand at all...

This sentence in the original Greek is not complicated or hard to translate...

It is simply hard to read and obey....

The same is true for the next verse to husbands...

But we will get there in a minute..

Verse 18 is simply a command to Christian wives to submit to their husbands...

Now, let me tell you what it is not before I tell you what it is...

#1 - It is not a verse that teaches that women are inferior or hold less value to men....

Women are made in the image of God...

Male and female, God made them...

#2 - It is not a verse that teaches that women must do everything their husband tells them to do...

If a husband asks you to sin, a wife is free from the command to submit to him...

If a husband asks you to disobey a command of Scripture, a wife is free from the command to submit to him...

#3 - It is not a verse that teaches that a wife can be a door mat for her husband...

And husbands who use this verse to justify doing that have no idea of how to interpret the Bible..

This verse is simply a command to wives to recognize the husband as the head of the family and to honor him in that position by allowing him to lead..

In the Greek language, the word for submit was often found in the military....

Soldiers were called to submit to their commanders...

They were of no less value, they simply needed to respect their commanders and allow them to lead...

Everyone in this world submits to someone...

God has designed the family to be led by the husband...

He deigned it that way and when wives try to reverse that order and take the lead themselves, they are taking on their husbands, they are taking on God Himself...

Now the question always comes....

Well, my husband isn't a spiritual leader or he may not be saved at all...

Do I have to submit?

And the answer is yes.

This verse makes no exceptions other than the ones I mentioned before...

In fact, your submission to him may awaken him from his spiritual sleep or even awaken him to the truth of the gospel and he get saved...

In fact, if you want to change your husband, honor his position as the head of the family...

And follow his leadership as long as it doesn't lead to sin or disobedience to the commands of God...

Now this command to the wives is followed by a command to husbands for this reason...

Husbands who obey verse 19 make submission a joy for the wives of verse 18...

So, let's read what God commands husbands to do in verse 19...

19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them

The men are given to commands in verse 19...

One positive and one negative...

The positive command is to love your wife...

It is incredible to note that husbands have to be commanded to love their wives...

Yet, that is the case..

And before every man in here says “I do love her” and stops thinking about this verse...

Let me define love for you....

Ephesians 5:25-29...

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church [q]in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; 29 for no one ever hated his

own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church,

Let me sum up those verses on what love for wife looks like...

Verse 25...

Love her by dying for her.

In other words, give up what your desire to meet what she needs...

Verses 26-27..

Love her by aiding in her spiritual growth.

Make sure she is being cleansed by the word...

That means making sure she is reading the Bible...

Going to church to be fed in Sunday School and preaching...

And feeding her the word yourself...

Verses 28-29...

Love her by taking care of her as good as you do yourself.

I don't have to teach any of you husbands how to love yourself...

You do that everyday...

You shower, you shave, you eat, you rest...

Verses 28-29 tell us that love for our wives includes caring for her as well as we care for ourselves...

If you need a break, make sure she gets one as well..

If you need encouragement, encourage her just as much...

Love her as much as you love yourself...

Now notice husbands, none of these descriptions of love include anything about passion or desire...

The word used for love her is the word agape, which means all encompassing love..

It is an attitude of love that is filled with the action of self-sacrifice...

Husbands, love your wives, and in case you were wondering, loving them biblically means that you are not embittered against them...

This is the idea of a harshness or resentfulness...

Husbands, do not be harsh with your wives...

Instead treat them with gentleness and care...

One pastor said this...

“Don’t call your wife honey, and then treat her like vinegar.”

We all know what harshness looks like, but for the Christian husband we may see it, but we can never practice it...

And look, let me tell you the secret of verses 18-19...

Men who lead lovingly and gently have wives who submit lovingly and gently...

Men who lead harsh and unlovingly have wives that struggle against their leadership...

And though Paul doesn’t write about it here, the truth of this husband wife relationship is that both submit to one another in it...

The man submits to the woman's needs and the woman submits to his leadership and they both submit to the commands of Scripture...

In other words, the more the new husband and the new submit to one another, the lovelier the marriage becomes and the more blessed it is by God...

Although the wives would be willing to stay until 1 PM to uncover every truth in verse 19, we must move on to verses 20-21...

20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing [a]to the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.

Recognizing that the home is often more than just husbands and wives, Paul move to another relationship in the home....

Which is the one between parent and children...

In verse 20, we get the simple command to children...

Children, obey your parents...

This applies to children who are still under the supervision of their parents...

And it is a simple command, just like the previous two...

Obey your dad and mom...

Once again, it need to be said that this would not include parents who are leading you to sin or disobey the commands of God...

In those cases, children may disobey and still be pleasing to God...

However, in all other cases, the command for kids is to obey their parents...

I love to open a toy and see one page of instructions and not 20 pages.....

I like simple and easy to follow directions...

Many of us often say how good it would be go back and be a kid again...

Where we had less responsibility and more free time...

But there is one added benefit to childhood as well and it is this....

God has given you a simplified command as well...

Live in obedience to your parents....

That is it....

Do what they say and live a blessed life...

And kids in here today, the reason for that is simple...

God has put your parents over you to see how you respond to their authority...

And kids who respect the authority of their parents often become Christians who respect the authority of God...

If you rebel against your parents, you will find yourself rebelling against God...

That is why parents must teach their kids to obey...

If they can't obey you, they will never obey the Lord...

And on the note of parents, let's move to verse 21...

21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.

Though it is addressed to fathers, it could easily be translated as Parents, do not exasperate your children...

I do not have time to talk about this at length, but let me offer a little insight into what this means...

Exasperate or provoke or embitter are all words that different translations use here...

But the original word here is used of a bellows....

A bellows is often a wooden instrument with two handles and a bag in between them...

Where you take and open the handles to draw air into bag and then you push the handles together and air rushes out of the bag...

It is used to push oxygen onto a fire to cause it to flame up...

And that is a great picture of what you are not to do as parents to your kids....

Do not blow air on their fire and cause them to flame up...

In other words, don't pour gas on their flames....

Children are bent to sin and disobedience comes natural...

As a parent, you must control your emotions to your kids to keep from sending them out of control even worse...

Now, this doesn't mean you can't discipline them, but discipline in love rather than anger....

Don't provoke your kids to greater anger...

Be a firm but calming influence in their lives as you shepherd their hearts to know God and love God...

You need to lead their hearts to Christ and not cause their hearts to lose hope by your constant nagging of them..

Let me give you a few ways that John Macarthur suggests you can exasperate your kids..

I think all of these are real good....

You can exasperate your children when you...

#1 - Overprotect them.

Show your kids trust and give them more freedom as they age.

Make sure the rules are there to guide not enslave your children...

#2 - By not valuing their worth.

As much as you talk to your kids, also take the time to listen to them.

Parents complain that their teens don't talk to them, but they were often guilty of not listening long before.

#3 - By setting unrealistic goals..

Don't expect a 4 year old to act 15...

Don't expect a 10 year old to act like an adult...

Be realistic with what expect from your children and reward them when they meet the expectations...

Stop raising the bar a little higher each time...

And though you always discipline sin, let your kids be kids and enjoy their youth.

#4 - By never showing affection to them.

Everyone needs encouragement and a hug and assurance that your love them...

#5 - By not giving them clear and consistent rules..

Too many rules can be exasperating, but so can no boundaries at all...

Set family rules and call them that, but enforce them consistently and lovingly.

Kids need and even want boundaries..

#6 - Too much criticism and discipline.

Hear me clear.

Discipline your children and correct your children...

But make sure that every word to your kids is not “stop that” or a negative and critical comment...

Kids who live in a home that consists of mostly discipline and criticism never return to it, and I don't blame them....

Fathers, parents, do not exasperate your kids..

Do not provoke them to anger...

Raise them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord...

See them as a gift from God and not your enemy to be criticized and disciplined...

Enjoy them and always point them to salvation in Christ...

Let's move from taking Jesus to the house to....

II. Taking Christ to Work with You (3:22-4:1)

Let me read verses 3:22-4:1 to refresh our minds of these commands...

22 Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters [b]on earth, not with [c]external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, do your work [d]heartily, as for the Lord [e]rather than for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward [f]of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. 25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and [g]that without partiality.

4 Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.

As I mentioned before, Colossians homes had servants that were often unpaid slaves...

Now, that doesn't mean the Bible teaches slavery; it never does...

God simply recognizes that men are evil and slavery is a result of the fallen human heart, and he addresses Christian slaves in verses 22-25...

However this would also apply to the employee and employer relationship of today...

And just like our homes should be new if we have been made new, our workplace should also be affected by the new heart that we now have as well...

For slaves or servants or employees, we find a few words of instruction for the new man or woman...

First, obey your bosses in all things...

Obviously, the exceptions would be to do sinful things or things that violate the commands of God...

But other than that, obey your masters in what they ask you to do...

And on top of that, obey from your heart...

That means.....Don't walk away mumbling about how stupid your boss is while you do what he says...

You see, we think our grumbles aren't heard by anyone, but the Lord hears them...

And what you need to understand about authority in your life is this...

The authority of you is God-ordained, so when you grumble against authority, you ultimately grumble against God...

That is why Paul says at the end of verse 22 to obey from the heart out of the fear of God...

Because He is the One who you are truly working for...

And since you are working for Him, do whatever you do with excellence...

That is what verse 23 is teaching....

When you cut corners at work, you are cheating your company but you are really cheating the Lord...

When you take 10 extra minutes at lunch, you are stealing from your company, but you are also stealing from God...

When the boss leaves for the afternoon and you surf the internet, you may not have your boss over your shoulder to check on you, but God's eyes have never left you...

And I can't say any better than the end of verse 24...

It is the Lord Christ whom you serve...

And according to verse 25, don't assume that since you are a Christian, you get a pass on not working hard for your boss...

He may never dish out consequences for your poor performance, but the Lord surely can and will to those who do not respect and obey their bosses....

Again, the comment is always said....

"You don't know my boss" and the answer to that is always this....

I don't need to...

I know that the Bible says and it says obey your master in all things even if he is unfair and unjust...

Maybe your simple obedience will be used to convince of his need for Christ...

Maybe not, but your resistance and complaining certainly won't draw him to Christ...

The final instruction of this section is reserved for employers....

And the command is real simple....

***4 Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness,
knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.***

The simple command for Christian bosses is to treat employees with the same fairness and justice that they would want to be treated with themselves.

In other words, bosses on their earth will reap from God what they have sowed to their employees...

If you want mercy with God, show mercy to your employees...

If you have grace from God and understanding from Him, be a gracious and understanding boss...

You may be a master on earth, but God is master over the earth.

And you will answer to Him by how you treat the people who work for you...

Conclusion

Well, that is the new world of the new man...

For the Colossians church, this letter probably turned their world upside down...

Because family values were not the talk of that culture..

Wives were seen as property of overbearing, unloving husbands..

Children were seen as nuisances, who could be left in the streets if they became too annoying.

Masters were cruel to their servants and slaves, and workers tried to do as little as possible yet still live...

And this was true for both Christians and non-Christians...

And here comes Paul sent by God to tell these Christians in Colossae to stop thinking, acting, and speaking like the world...

And on top of that, he tells them that this new man must first be seen in your homes and in your work...

So, many of the Colossian Christians probably read the letter and did exactly what many of you are doing this morning...

Asking themselves, how in the world is this possible?

I can't be that kind of wife or that kind of husband or that kind of parent or employee or boss...

I have tried before and I have failed miserably...

So, let me end with a reminder of what these verses are...

The Bible is NOT a self-help book...

These are not commands that can be done in your own power...

The only way to become a new wife, husband, parent and worker is by being born again..

Only believers have the ability to do any of these things that we have talked about tonight....

Only those who have repented and trusted alone in Jesus Christ can ever have the hope of being or doing any of the thing we have seen tonight..

And if have found yourself wanting to be any of these things but can never stick to it....

You are probably trying to act like a Christian without ever being one...

And that can be the most frustrating thing you could ever imagine...

Do you want to know why the Colossians could be the new wives, new husbands, new parents, new children, new servants and new bosses?

Do you want to know how Christians today can be any of these people?

It is real simple, and I will end 4 reasons why you can change your home and your work...

#1 - You have a new presence in your life.

Which simply means that a believer takes the presence of the Jesus Christ with Him wherever he goes.

In other words, the first place you bring Jesus Christ is into your home and work.

Therefore, both of those worlds change.

#2 - Because you have Christ in you, you have a new purpose.

You stop living to please yourself, you start living to please others...

Your life becomes 2nd to everyone else's life.

#3 - Because you have Christ in you, you have a new pattern for your life...

You stop following the deadbeat husbands you know and the comparing wives you know, and you start following and doing the things that Jesus did...

#4 - Because you have Christ in you, you have a new power in your life...

The power of God that comes through His Spirit dwelling inside of you enables you to do things that were impossible even moments before you were saved...

And that power helps us keep our mouth shut in our homes and work...

That power causes us to put ourselves last in our families and jobs...

That power causes us to stop seeking our own good but the good of our spouses, our children, our bosses and everyone else around us...

Why can the true Christian be the person described in verse 3:18-4:1...

Because he or she has a new presence, a new purpose, a new pattern, and a new power....

But none of those things come without the new birth...

You want to be a new husband or a new wife or a new employee?

Stop trying to reform yourself and stop making empty promises to others..

Instead, repent of your sins.

Trust in Christ alone.

Then take Jesus into your house and into your workplace, and they both will begin to change...

Let us pray.