

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** This passage is very much focused on practical application. The **DANGER** of this study is if people simply see it as **LAWS**. Please keep the context in mind – that this new lifestyle rolls out of our identity of belonging to and being “in Christ.” We change in His power out of our love for Him.

LEARN FROM THE BIBLE

This week's passage tackles how we can live “Rooted in Jesus” in three central roles: Marriage, Parenting, and Work.

Read Colossians 3:18-4:1

List how Jesus (“Christ” or “Lord”) is the focus or involved in each role?

**NOTES TO LEADERS:**

**Wives:** “is fitting in the Lord.” A wife can respond to her husband because she sees herself in relationship with the Lord. Her desire to submit is about and for Christ Jesus and His design.

**Husbands:** The model for husbands is the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ. This *agape* love was essential foreign to those who didn't know Jesus.

**Children:** The mindset of a child is to “please the Lord.” Again, their minds and hearts are on Him. (cf. 3:1-4)

**Fathers:** The command to not “embitter” children means to not treat them in such a way that you stir up their anger or become discouraged. Again, their example is the Lord Jesus and their mindset is to be on Him (3:1-4)

**Servants:** This is the most surprising commands and promises. Slaves (*doulos*) are given the clear instruction to see the Lord as their ultimate owner and boss. They are to see themselves in relationship with the Lord, revere Him, and remember that He will reward them.

**Colossians 3:18** Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. <sup>19</sup> Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. <sup>20</sup> Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. <sup>22</sup> Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. <sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, <sup>24</sup> since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. <sup>25</sup> Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.

How is this in keeping with 3:1-4?

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** As seen above, our relationship with Jesus is central to every earthly relationship. Only by living in, with, and for the Lord Jesus will we both fulfill our God-given roles and please Him.

List how each person (e.g. wives) benefits when people obey God's ways.

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** Todd focused on this idea (benefits) in his message. Each of the above people benefits both by the giving and receiving part of their role.

List how people would they suffer if people don't obey God's ways.

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** This is the reverse of the above question. What we see in our world reveals what happens when we abandon God-given roles and God-empowered people.

DISCUSS TOGETHER

Which of the roles is more significant to you at this time in your life? Why?

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** This is intentionally an open question. If you allow people long enough to share it may give you an indication of how to guide your time together.

What do we learn in this passage on relationships about the Lord Christ and His roles? How is he is connected in all of them?

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** The entire evening could focus on Christ and his roles. He is intimately involved in every area of our life – empowering, modeling, comforting, forgiving, encouraging, etc.

How might the command and promise addressed to slaves in 3:23-24 affect us? What might we feel toward God? Does it encourage or discourage you?

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** For me (Steve), these verses have been a motto I long to fulfill. It is powerful that these commands and promises are addressed to slaves/servants. We all belong to Him and are His servants. Notice the implications of *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”*

- *“All your heart”* - we are all given different abilities but we can give it our “all”
- *“working for the Lord”* – No parent or boss is perfect except the Lord. So keeping our heart and mind on Him never disappoints and always is rewarded.
- *“you will receive”* – This is amazing – He has already given us Himself and now He is going to further reward us!

May our Father give you His wisdom and strength as you love your flock,  
Steve