

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Chapter Three

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Raised with Christ to Live for Him (3:1-4)

¹ If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

- Since the Colossians were “*raised with Christ*” when they were baptized into His death (**Col. 2:12**), they needed to “*seek those things which are above*,” where Christ is seated.
- This text highlights how sanctification in Christ has two aspects:
 - There is what God has done – He provided the means by which we can put to death our sins (**Col. 2:11-13**).
 - There is what man must do – we must take advantage of God’s plan of redemption by dying to sin and seeking to live faithfully (**Eph. 1:4**).
 - “*Since they had put off the old man in baptism, and had been raised with Christ, and in Christ, carry forward this begun work of conformity to the life of Christ*” (David Lipscomb and J.W. Shepherd, *Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians*, p.288).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Raised with Christ to Live for Him (3:1-4)

¹ If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

- God forces no man to “*seek those things which are above.*” Man must determine in his heart to “*seek*” these things.
 - Saints have been made to sit together with Jesus in the heavenly places (**Eph. 2:4-7**), but to stay seated with Christ we must continually keep our minds and hearts with Him (**Matt. 6:19-21; Rom. 8:6-8**).
 - Heaven is the ultimate goal of every Christian. Therefore, we must ensure that our minds and hearts are not “*set,*” or stuck in this world, but focused on heavenly things (**Rom. 12:1-2; 1 John 2:15-17**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Raised with Christ to Live for Him (3:1-4)

³ *For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*

- After once being dead in sin (**Col. 2:13**), the Colossians bore the responsibility of making themselves dead to sin.
 - Christians are raised to a new manner of living upon submitting to the Lord in baptism (**Rom. 6:1-4**). This new life demands complete and total abstinence from sin (**Rom. 6:5-14, 8:1-4, 13:14**).
 - Our new lives must be “*hidden with Christ*.” That is, our lives belong to Him.
 - “*Hidden*” – Locked together with (A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures of the New Testament*, 500).
 - We must conduct our new lives in full service to Him (**Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:20-21**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Raised with Christ to Live for Him (3:1-4)

⁴ When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

- There were those in the first century who questioned the certainty of the second coming of Christ (**2 Pet. 3:4**). However, Paul spoke with certainty of the Lord's return.
 - There is no question that the Lord will return (**Acts 1:10-11; Heb. 9:28; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; 2 Pet. 3:10; etc.**), but we do not know when that will occur (**Matt. 24:36, 44; etc.**).
- Those who make Christ their "*life*" by hiding their lives with the Him and setting their minds and hearts on heavenly things will eventually "*appear with Him in glory.*"
 - Faithful saints will not only appear "*with*" Christ on that great day but will also appear like Him (**1 John 3:1-2**).
 - Nothing can compare to this "*glory*" that is yet to be revealed (**Rom. 8:18**).
- It is necessary to conclude that those who do not follow Paul's instructions in the previous three verses will not appear with the Lord in glory.

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Put to Death the Old Man (3:5-9)

⁵ Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

- Though this verse is not an all-encompassing list of sins that must be “*put to death*,” five specific sins are listed here that Christians must refrain from committing:
 - “*Fornication*” – This term is inclusive of all illicit sexual intercourse, which would include adulterous (extramarital) affairs, premarital sex, homosexual relationships, bestiality, and all other forms of sexual activity outside the bounds of a scriptural marriage (**Heb. 13:4; Matt. 19:4-9**).
 - “*These faithful Christians (Col. 1:2) had at one time lived and walked in the sins specified in these verses. That is, their participation in these wrongs was not a one time or occasional violation. Rather, this was their walk or life . . . Notice that one of the sins they had ‘lived in’ [v.7] was fornication (which includes adultery) . . . This text shows that it is possible to live in adultery*” (Donnie Rader, *The Book of Colossians*, p.43).

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 - “*Uncleanness*” – This term broadly refers to moral impurity, but it also refers to sexual impurity (**Rom. 6:19**).
 - “*Uncleanness*” – The impurity of lustful, luxurious, profligate living (Thayer).
- The same Greek word is used in **Rom. 1:24** to refer to homosexual relationships; it also appears in **Gal. 5:19** within the same context as adultery, fornication, and lewdness.

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- Though this verse is not an all-encompassing list of sins that must be “*put to death*,” five specific sins are listed here that Christians must refrain from committing:
 - “*Passion*” – The term refers to “*inordinate affection*” (KJV), or “*shameful passion*” (NET).
 - “*Passion*” – Inordinate affection, lust (Strong).
 - Contextually, the term seems indicative of lust, such as what Jesus described in **Matt. 5:28**, which often leads to overt physical acts of “*fornication*” and “*uncleanness*.”

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- Though this verse is not an all-encompassing list of sins that must be “*put to death*,” five specific sins are listed here that Christians must refrain from committing:
 - “*Evil desire*” – This term is closely associated with “*passion*.” As such, it is difficult to distinguish the two. Ultimately, both “*passion*” and “*evil desire*” are the source of “*fornication*” and “*uncleanness*.”
 - “*Evil Desire*” – A longing (especially for what is forbidden) - concupiscence, desire, lust (Strong’).
 - “*Probably ‘passion’ is somewhat narrower than ‘desire,’ and the former represents the evil emotion as an affection which the mind suffers, while the latter represents it as a longing which it actually puts forth*” (David Lipscomb and J.W. Shepherd, *Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians*, p.291).

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- Though this verse is not an all-encompassing list of sins that must be “*put to death*,” five specific sins are listed here that Christians must refrain from committing:
 - “*Covetousness*” – The term is contextually defined as “*idolatry*.”
 - “*Covetousness*” – Greedy desire to have more, covetousness, avarice (Thayer).
 - Elsewhere, the root Greek word is used in reference to greediness (**Eph. 4:19**).
 - Paul likely used the term here specifically in reference to sexual covetousness.
 - “*Probably here, Paul had in mind the man who was covetous of a woman he has no right to have. Moses tied covetousness specifically to one’s desire for another man’s wife as well as for his possessions*” (Exod. 20:17) (Colly Caldwell, *The Book of Ephesians*, p.231).
- However, all forms of “*covetousness*” must be put off (**Eph. 5:3**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Put to Death the Old Man (3:5-9)

⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

- We must abstain from these sins because “*the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.*”
 - All unrepentant people – Christian and non-Christian alike – who engage in these sins will receive the punishment of God (**Rom. 1:18**).
 - While fear of punishment must not be the sole reason why we conform to God's will, it certainly should be a motivator for obedience (**Heb. 10:26-31; 2 Cor. 5:10-11**).
- People are “*sons*” (children) of the one they imitate.
 - One can be a son of “*disobedience*” and, therefore, a son of the devil by walking in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh / mind (**John 8:44; 1 John 3:10**).
 - Once be a son of light and, therefore, a child of God by imitating Him and walking in the light (**1 Thess. 5:5-10; John 1:12; Eph. 5:8-14; 1 John 1:7**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Put to Death the Old Man (3:5-9)

7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

- The Colossians once practiced the vile deeds mentioned in the previous verses, but a change was demanded when they surrendered themselves to the Lord (**Col. 3:1**).
- The same is required of all people who desire to partake in the blessings of Christ (**1 Cor. 6:9-11**).
- Though we live in a sinful world, we must not walk like the rest of the world (**Eph. 4:17-24; Prov. 1:15**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Put to Death the Old Man (3:5-9)

⁸ But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

- Though this verse is not an all-encompassing list of sins that must be “*put off*,” five specific sins are listed here that Christians must refrain from committing:
 - “*Anger*” – This term refers to a fixed disposition of indignation.
 - “*Anger*” – Properly, desire (as a reaching forth or excitement of the mind), i.e. (by analogy), violent passion (ire, or (justifiable) abhorrence); by implication punishment - anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath (Strong).
 - “*Anger*” itself is not a sin. However, if our “*anger*” prohibits us from adequately reasoning, controlling ourselves, forgiving others, etc., then we have sinned.
 - Unchecked anger gives Satan an opportunity to enter our hearts (**Gen. 4:1-8; Eph. 4:26-27**). As such, anger should not be lived with continually but dealt with immediately.

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- Though this verse is not an all-encompassing list of sins that must be “*put off*,” five specific sins are listed here that Christians must refrain from committing:
 - “*Wrath*” – This term differs from “*anger*” in that it suggests ill-feelings have grown in scale. Uncontrolled “*anger*” can become “*wrath*.”
 - “*Wrath*” – Fierceness, indignation, wrath (Strong).
 - “*Malice*” – This term suggests another increase in scale from the previous two terms. When one performs a malicious act, he employs his “*anger*” and “*wrath*.”
 - “*Malice*” – Ill-will, desire to injure (Thayer).
 - “*Blasphemy*” – This is an example of how a person can act maliciously. “*Malice*” can cause someone to blaspheme the person who invoked his “*anger*” and “*wrath*.”
 - “*Blasphemy*” – Slander, detraction, speech injurious to another (Thayer).

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Put to Death the Old Man (3:5-9)

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- Though this verse is not an all-encompassing list of sins that must be “*put off*,” five specific sins are listed here that Christians must refrain from committing:
 - “*Filthy Language*” – This term refers to “*obscene speech*” (NASB).
 - “*Filthy Language*” – Any kind of ‘base utterance,’ the utterance of an uncontrolled tongue (Vine).
 - “*Filthy language*” broadly refers to all corrupt communications (**Eph. 4:29**), which includes profanity, crude jokes, sexual innuendos and euphemisms, etc.
 - When a person uses this type of language in his speech, he reveals the corrupt spiritual condition of his heart (**Matt. 12:34-35**).
 - All filthiness, in whatever form it takes, must be put away (**James 1:21**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Put to Death the Old Man (3:5-9)

⁸ But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

- Instead of being consumed with these sinful emotions and types of speech, the new man in Christ seeks to be kind and tenderhearted (**Eph. 4:31**), with grace-filled speech (**Col. 4:6**).
- This is required by golden rule (**Luke 6:31**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Put to Death the Old Man (3:5-9)

⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,

- One way a Christian begins to “*put off*” the “*old man*” is ceasing the sin of lying.
 - Whether by speaking falsely, concealing the truth, or misleading others with purposefully vague speech, lying is a form of deceit, and deceit is a sin (**1 Pet. 2:1; Matt. 5:37**).
 - Lying is the work of Satan because he is a liar and the father of lies (**John 8:44**). We take Satan as our father when we sacrifice our integrity to lie.
 - Although Christians should be honest in their interactions with all men, contextually, Paul laid special emphasis upon the fact that Christians are not to lie to brethren, just like in **Eph. 4:25**.
 - Christians are members of the same spiritual body; we should have the same goals, interests, and aims. Why, therefore, would Christians lie to each other?

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

¹⁰ and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

- The “*old man*” must be “*put off*” and the “*new man*” must be “*put on*.”
 - Just as it takes a concerted effort to remove all the negative qualities of the “*old man*,” so too is a concerted effort required in putting on the positive characteristics associated with the “*new man*.”
- All positive qualities of the new creature are derived from one’s “*knowledge according to the image of Him who created him*.”
 - In other words, the “*new man*” reflects the image of his Creator by following His word (**Rom. 12:2**) and imitating Him (**Eph. 5:1; Matt. 5:48; 1 Pet. 1:16**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

- Christ's death destroyed all dividing barriers by bringing everyone together into one body upon obedience to Him (**Eph. 2:11-22; Acts 10:34-35**).
- One's position in society is not indicative of his position with the Lord. In Christ, all people are on equal spiritual footing because He *"is all and in all."*
- If Christ is in a person (**Col. 1:27; Rom. 8:10**), it matters not the color of his skin, nor the language he speaks, his education, gender, financial circumstances, etc. (**Gal. 3:28**); what matters is that he is a *"new man,"* equal with all others in the Lord's body.
 - *"In the slave Christ is his liberty; in the Scythian, as his civilization and culture. And since Christ includes in himself the whole world of man's need, and dwells in all his servants, all human distinctions have in the new life passed utterly away. National and social barriers there cannot be where Christ is" (David Lipscomb and J.W. Shepherd, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, p.294).*

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

12^a Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved,

- Paul addressed the Colossians as “*the elect of God, holy and beloved*.”
 - God has not chosen certain individuals to be saved and certain individuals to be lost. Instead, He chose a path whereby all men must “*elect*” for themselves to follow and, consequently, receive salvation (**Eph. 1:3-13; John 3:16; Rev. 22:17, 3:20**).
 - Since Christ is God’s elected way, all who obey Him are “*the elect*” (**1 Pet. 1:1-2, 22; Rom. 8:29-30**).
 - The phrase “*holy and beloved*” indicates a person is faithfully carrying out his election in Christ (**Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:2-4**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

12b put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering.

- Instead of being consumed with all the negative qualities / emotions mentioned earlier, we must “*put on*” various positive characteristics.
 - “*Tender mercies*” – A person with this quality possesses a “*compassionate heart*” (ESV).
 - “*Tender mercies*” – To have pity, a feeling of distress through the ills of others (Vine).
 - All deserve compassion, especially those in need (**Luke 10:25-37; Gal. 6:1-2**).
 - “*Kindness*” – This term is closely associated with love (**1 Cor. 13:4**).
 - “*Kindness*” – To have pity, a feeling of distress through the ills of others (Vine).
 - People who are unkind do not possess the fruit of the Spirit (**Gal. 5:22-23**).
 - Since God is so kind to us (**Rom. 2:4**), we must be kind to others.

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

12b put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering.

- Instead of being consumed with all the negative qualities / emotions mentioned earlier, we must “*put on*” various positive characteristics.
 - “*Humility*” – Whereas a prideful heart causes a *person* to elevate himself above others, “*humility*” leads a person to elevate others over himself (**Phil. 2:3-4**).
 - “*Humility*” – Humiliation of mind, i.e. modesty - humbleness of mind (Strong).
 - Paul condemned insincere “*humility*” earlier (**Col. 2:18, 23**). Genuine “*humility*,” however, is an admirable quality.
- “*Meekness*” – This quality involves mildness and “*gentleness*” (KJV).
 - “*Meekness*” – Inwrought grace of the soul (Vine).
 - “*Meekness*” is often described as gentle strength (**2 Cor. 10:1; 1 Pet. 3:15**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

12b put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering.

- Instead of being consumed with all the negative qualities / emotions mentioned earlier, we must “*put on*” various positive characteristics.
 - “*Longsuffering*” – This term is closely associated with patience.
 - “*Longsuffering*” – Patience, forbearance, long-suffering (Strong).
 - To be “*longsuffering*” is to be slow in avenging wrongs (**2 Pet. 3:9**).
 - All people deserve to be treated with this type of patience (**1 Thess. 5:14**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

- Forbearance and forgiveness serve as outward evidence of the inward changes derived from the knowledge of Christ and His will.
- The Colossians were commanded to be forbearant.
 - “*Bearing with*” – To sustain, to bear (with equanimity [mental calmness, composure, and evenness of temper, especially in a difficult situation]), to bear with, endure (Strong).
 - Forbearance requires us to endure the faults of brethren with the attitude of holding up the person, supporting him, and seeking to help rather than tearing down and criticizing (**1 Thess. 5:14**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

- The Colossians were also commanded to forgive others “*even as Christ forgave*” them.
 - Jesus clearly stated that God's forgiveness is dependent on our forgiveness of others (**Matt. 6:14-15**).
 - We “*must*” have a forgiving heart; there is no other option permitted by God.
- If a person is willing to repent of their wrongdoings we are required to forgive them (**Luke 17:3**).
- “I’ll forgive but I won’t forget” won’t cut it!
 - God remembers our sins no more when we repent (**Heb. 8:12**), and we are required to imitate Him (**Eph. 4:32-5:1**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

- “*Love*” is “*above*” each of the previous qualities because it “*is the bond of perfection.*”
 - If a person loves as he ought, he will possess all the previous qualities.
 - “*Love*” binds all of these qualities together, bringing a person to “*perfection,*” or spiritual and moral maturity (**Matt. 5:43-48**).
 - Godly “*love*” is genuine (**Rom. 12:9-10**); it is more than mere emotion. Godly “*love*” seeks the greatest good for others (**1 Cor. 13**).
 - Our faith must be rooted and grounded in love (**Eph. 3:17**).
 - The “*new man*” cannot satisfy God unless his faith is motivated by and works in love (**Gal. 5:6; 1 Cor. 16:13-14**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

- Paul exhorted the Colossian Christians to “*let the peace of God rule*” within their “*hearts*.”
 - “*The peace of God is the peace he bestows on those who love and obey him. It arises from the consciousness of union and harmony with him.*” (David Lipscomb and J.W. Shepherd, *Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians*, p.297).
 - Those who allow this “*peace*” to govern and control their “*hearts*” are the most likely people to exhibit the positive qualities mentioned earlier which make peace with all men more attainable (**Rom. 12:16-18**).
- Not only did the Colossians need to allow “*the peace of God*” to reign over their “*hearts*,” but they also needed to “*be thankful*” since they were “*called in one body*.”
 - This calling was accomplished via preaching the gospel and the Colossians’ obedience (**2 Thess. 2:13-14; 2 Tim. 1:8-9**).
 - All today who follow this pattern can be described as the called out people of God (**Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38-39; 1 Pet. 2:9-10**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

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 new man allows “*the word of Christ*” to “*dwell*” in him by “*teaching and admonishing*” via “*psalms*,” “*hymns*,” and “*spiritual songs*.”
 - “*Psalms*” – A set piece of music, i.e. a sacred ode (accompanied with the voice, harp or other instrument; a “psalm”); collectively, the book of the Psalms – psalm (Strong).
 - “*Hymns*” – Sacred song, song of praise to God . . . typically more formal and structured than other forms of musical worship, such as psalms or spiritual songs (Strong).
 - “*Spiritual songs*” – In the New Testament, it is associated with spiritual songs that are sung to glorify God. The word emphasizes the act of singing as a form of worship and expression of faith (Strong).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

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 “*heart*” and mouth are the only authorized instruments to be used in worship to God (**Eph. 5:19; Acts 16:25**).
- It is impossible to teach and admonish another person via a mechanical instrument.
 - *“No performance of an instrument can possibly grow out of the word of God in the heart; a mechanical instrument cannot speak that word either to praise God or to teach and admonish one another” (David Lipscomb and J.W. Shepherd, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, p.108).*
- The limitation of strictly “*singing*” praise to God without accompanying mechanical instruments not only applies within the church assembly but also applies outside the confines of the worship services (**James 5:13; Acts 16:25**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

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.

- Contextually, Paul's instruction is not referring to congregational singing in a church assembly but does grant authority for such due to the expression "*teaching and admonishing one another.*"
 - Christians have no greater opportunity to teach and admonish other people in song than during a church service.

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

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.

- “*Whatever*” the new man does, he does so “*in the name of the Lord Jesus*.”
 - To do something “*in the name of*” someone is to act by that person’s authority (**Acts 4:7; Matt. 28:18-19**).
 - Since Christ is our source of authority, we must do what He says and refrain from doing what He has condemned or not authorized (**Luke 6:46; Matt. 7:21-23**).
 - The Colossians were told earlier that Christ dwelled in them (**Col. 1:27**). If, however, they elected to go beyond what the Lord authorized, Christ would cease to dwell in them until they repented (**2 John 9**).
- All that we do must be authorized by the Lord and done with gratitude in our hearts (“*giving thanks to God the Father*”) knowing the grace and mercy of God (**1 Thess. 5:18; 1 Cor. 15:57**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

18 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.

- Men and women are undeniably on equal spiritual footing (**Gal. 3:28**). However, God requires women to “*submit*” to men (**1 Cor. 11:3, 8-9; 1 Tim. 2:12-14**); He specifically requires wives lovingly “*submit*” to their husbands (**Tit. 2:4-5**).
- Wives must “*submit*” to their husbands “*as is fitting in the Lord*,” i.e. in the same manner and totality as she submits to Christ (**Eph. 5:23-24**).
 - The exception to this rule is when a husband demands something of his wife that is contrary to the will of God (**Acts 5:29**).
 - If a Christian woman is married to an unbeliever or unfaithful Christian, she still must “*submit*” to her husband (**1 Pet. 3:1-6**), but she must not do so in a way that causes her to sin or partake in his sins (**1 Tim. 5:22**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.

- Husbands are commanded to “*love*” their wives and “*not be bitter toward them*.”
 - Christ’s selfless, sanctifying, and sacrificial affection for the church is the divine example that husbands must follow in loving their wives (**Eph. 5:25-29, 33**).
 - Wives are owed such love (**Eph. 5:28**).
 - A husband is guilty of sin if he does not love his wife as Paul commands or if he harbors bitterness towards her.
 - Bitterness will cause a husband to lose his soul (**Heb. 12:15**).
 - A husband must make it his aim to continually love and cherish his wife by upholding and supporting her, respecting and valuing her contributions, providing for her needs, and recognizing her great worth.

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

- “*Children*” are commanded to “*obey*” their parents.
 - This is one of the rare commands in the Bible strictly limited in application to “*children*.” Yet, this command is still broadly applicable because every person is a child of their respective parents.
 - The word translated “*children*” is inclusive of offspring who are under the care and responsibility of parents. Therefore, until the time they leave the care of their parents, “*children*” must “*obey*” them “*in all things*.”
 - Such obedience “*is well-pleasing to the Lord*;” it is the right thing to do (**Eph. 6:1**).
When a child obeys his parents, he obeys the Lord.

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

- A father must not “*provoke*,” “*antagonize*,” (NASB), or “*embitter*” (NIV) his children.
- If a father provokes his children, they can “*become discouraged*.”
- A father must not be dictatorial in how he parents but, rather, nurturing as he rears his son or daughter (**Eph. 6:4, ASV**).
- *“If children are required to ‘obey,’ it is but reasonable that the commands of the parent should be such that they can be obeyed, or such that the child shall not be discouraged in his attempt to obey . . . It is the duty of children to obey a parent; but it is the duty of a parent to exhibit such a character, and to maintain such a government, that it would be proper for a child to obey; to command nothing that is unreasonable or improper, but to train up his children in the ways of virtue and pure religion” (Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament – Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, p.118).*

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

- Elsewhere, special emphasis is placed upon “*fathers*” for training their child in the ways of the Lord (**Eph. 6:4**).
- It is only logical that this responsibility is placed upon “*fathers*” since husbands are the spiritual heads of their families (**Eph. 5:22-23; 1 Cor. 14:34-35**).
- Below are several practical admonitions that parents should consider as they seek to avoid antagonizing their child:
 - Never forget that a child will make childish mistakes (**1 Cor. 13:11**).
 - Avoid comparing your child with another child (**2 Cor. 10:12**).
 - Ensure punishment does not outweigh the crime (**Prov. 20:10, 16:11**).
 - Never engage in corporal punishment while angry (**Eph. 4:26**).
 - Do not simply tell a child he is loved; show him he is loved (**1 John 3:18**).
 - Lead by example (**Matt. 7:1-4**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

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.*

NOTE: This text does not support the cruel and forced slavery evident in the United States for centuries and still existing in some countries today. This type of slavery violates countless New Testament passages demanding servants of Christ to show love, kindness, and compassion to all people, especially those less fortunate than ourselves. Additionally, this type of slavery violates the attitude required by slave “masters” in **Eph. 6:9**. That being said, slavery itself was not abolished by the gospel of Christ. The commencement of the New Covenant did, however, introduce necessary changes in the attitudes of both “servants” and “masters” (**1 Tim. 6:1-3**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

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.

- “*Bondservants*” are commanded to “*obey*” their earthly “*masters*.”
 - For Paul to say this, there obviously must have been were “*bondservants*” in the church at Colossae.
 - Mere obedience was not all that Paul instructed, however. This obedience was to be accomplished “*not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.*”
 - One who serves with eye-service only works hard whenever his master’s “*eye is on*” him (NIV).
 - In contrast, we are expected to serve our fleshly masters with sincerity as if we are serving the Lord Himself (**Eph. 6:6-8**).
 - By obeying our earthly masters, we do the Lord’s will (**Col. 3:24**).

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men,

- In addition to commanding their servitude be performed sincerely, Paul then added that “*bondservants*” were required to “*heartily*” work for their earthly “*masters*” in the very same manner in which they worked for the heavenly Master.
- “*Whatever*” service we provide must be performed “*heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.*”
 - “*Heartily*” – “Literally, ‘from the soul.’ With a personal interest” (Vincent’s Word Studies in the New Testament).
 - We are to serve our fleshly masters earnestly because, in so doing, we are serving the Lord Himself (**Col. 3:24; 1 Pet. 2:18-20**).
 - Christians should realize our servitude is a reflection of our overall work in God’s kingdom.

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Live as a New Man (3:10-25)

²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. ²⁵ But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.

- A bondservant was expected to serve his earthly master “as to the Lord” because, ultimately, his “reward of the inheritance” will come “from the Lord” (**2 Cor. 5:10**).
- Both servant and master “who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done” because “there is no partiality” with the heavenly Master (**Eph. 6:9; Acts 10:34-35**).
- “A master may fail to render suitable recompense to a slave. But, if the servant is faithful to God, he will recompense him in the future world. It is in this way that religion would make the evils of life tolerable, by teaching those who are oppressed to hear their trials in a patient spirit, and to look forward to the future world of reward . . . If their masters do not reward them for their services here, God will; and if they may not enjoy liberty here, they will soon be received into the world of perfect freedom - heaven” (Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament – Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, p.122).