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God's Good News Story: The Church Alive & Growing
Colossians: Christ - Our Lord, Our Life, Our Love
Part 5: Christ: Lord of Our Relationships

Today we continue our series in the Book of Colossians. Paul writes Colossians, probably around 60-62 AD. While he was under house arrest in Rome. Colossians is labeled as one of Paul's 'Prison Epistles, along with Philemon, Ephesians and Philippians. Colossians is described as a spiritual "chart and compass," reminding believers that Christ alone is our true North—our Supreme Lord and sufficient Savior. Below is an overview chart by Dr. Charles Swindoll.

COLOSSIANS

	Christ Is Our Lord		... Our Life	... Our Love
	<u>Lord of creation</u>	<u>Lord of our walk</u>	<u>Our mind</u>	<u>Love for "outsiders"</u>
	<u>Lord of the church</u>	<u>Lord of our salvation</u>	<u>Our body</u>	<u>Love for believers</u>
	<u>Lord of ministry</u>	<u>Lord of our growth</u>	<u>Our attitude</u>	
			<u>Our actions</u>	
	CHAPTER 1	CHAPTER 2	CHAPTER 3	CHAPTER 4
Subject	Instruction	Warnings	Exhortations	Reminders
Christ	His person and work		His peace and presence	
Emphasis	Doctrinal and corrective		Practical and reassuring	
Theme	Christ is our supreme Lord and sufficient Savior.			
Key Verses	2:9-10			
Christ in Colossians	Jesus is the supreme Lord of the church and the world, the all-sufficient Savior in whom the fullness of Deity dwells (1:13-20; 2:9).			

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Material adapted from Warren Wiersbe's Bible Exposition Commentary on Colossians. Victor Books.

As we continue our journey through Colossians, we come to a section where Paul moves from doctrine to daily living. Wiersbe reminds us, *"If Christ is truly preeminent in our lives, then we will glorify Him by keeping pure, by enjoying fellowship with other saints, by loving each other at home and being faithful at work, and by seeking to witness for Christ and serve Him effectively."* In these verses, Paul shows us that Christ's lordship must shape our closest relationships—at home and at work. Let's see what it means to crown Him Lord of our relationships.

Colossians 3:18–4:1...¹⁸ Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly. ²⁰ Children, always obey your parents, for this pleases the Lord. ²¹ Fathers, do not aggravate your children, or they will become discouraged. ²² Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything you do. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. Serve them sincerely because of your reverent fear of the Lord. ²³ Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. ²⁴ Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ. ²⁵ But if you do what is wrong, you will be paid back for the wrong you have done. For God has no favorites.

Chapter 4:1...Masters, be just and fair to your slaves. Remember that you also have a Master—in heaven.

1. Husbands & Wives:

Love & Submission

Colossians 3:18,19...¹⁸ *Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord.* ¹⁹ *Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly.*

5293 ὑποτάσσω hupotasso {hoop-ot-as'-so}

Meaning: 1) to arrange under, to subordinate 2) to subject, put in subjection 3) to subject one's self, obey 4) to submit to one's control 5) to yield to one's admonition or advice 6) to obey, be subject

Commentator Warren Wiersbe explains, “We must not think of submission as ‘slavery’ or ‘subjugation.’ The word comes from the military vocabulary and simply means ‘to arrange under rank.’ The fact that one soldier is a private and another is a colonel does not mean that one man is necessarily better than the other. It only means that they have different ranks. God does all things ‘decently and in order’ (1 Cor. 14:40).”

This concept is not about dictatorship or lordship. It is loving leadership. In fact, both the husband and the wife must be submitted to the Lord and to each other (Eph. 5:21). It is a mutual respect under the lordship of Jesus Christ. True spiritual submission is the secret of growth and fulfillment.” When Christ is

Lord of the home, love and submission are not competing forces but complementary expressions of devotion to Christ and to one another.

How can we come to the point where we love this way in respectful submission? Let’s reread a passage earlier in this same chapter...

Col. 3:12–14...¹² *Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.* ¹³ *Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.* ¹⁴ *Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.*

When Christ is Lord of the home, submission and love are not competing forces but complementary expressions of devotion to Him and to one another. The health of our marriages is a direct reflection of Christ’s preeminence in our hearts.

In Colossians 3:18–19, Paul calls wives to “submit” to their husbands as is fitting in the Lord, and husbands to love their wives and not be harsh with them. This teaching echoes other New Testament passages—such as Ephesians 5:21–25, where all believers are first called to “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ,” and 1 Peter 3:1–7,

which highlights both respect and understanding in marriage. The biblical idea of submission is not about inferiority or blind obedience, but about willingly embracing God's order for the home—a structure that brings peace, respect, and flourishing. For husbands, leadership is never about domination, but about sacrificial, Christlike love and gentle oversight. For wives, submission is a voluntary, intelligent response that honors both Christ and their husband's role. In today's context, this means both husband and wife seek to outdo one another in showing honor (Romans 12:10), each submitting their own desires for the good of the other and the glory of Christ. True biblical order in marriage is not a power struggle, but a partnership marked by mutual love, respect, and a shared commitment to model the self-giving love and humility that Christ shows His church.

2. Parents & Children:

Encouragement and Obedience

Colossians 3:20–21...²⁰ *Children, always obey your parents, for this pleases the Lord.* ²¹ *Fathers, do not aggravate your children, or they will become discouraged.*

In Colossians 3:20–21, Paul sets a vision for the Christian home that is both orderly and nurturing. Children are called to obey their parents “in all things,” not simply out of duty, but because such

obedience pleases the Lord and reflects a heart yielded to God's authority. Wiersbe writes, “*Obedience to parents is part of one's Christian life. To obey parents in the Lord means to obey them in everything that is in line with God's will.*”

Children are called to obey, not because parents are perfect, but because it pleases the Lord and reflects Christ's own obedience.

Wiersbe notes that “the breakdown in authority in our society reflects the breakdown of authority in the home,” emphasizing that learning to obey at home prepares children to respect all forms of rightful authority throughout life. Yet, Paul balances this command with a word to parents—“*The Christian father must not be a tyrant. He must govern his family in the love of God and not in the tyranny of men. Discipline is necessary, but it must be administered in love and not in anger.*” This means parents must lead with patience, encouragement, and consistency, avoiding harshness, constant criticism, or shifting standards. A truly Christian home should be a place of encouragement, where parents listen, nurture, and help their children grow in both character and confidence. When both obedience and encouragement are present, the home becomes a place where God's order and love are beautifully displayed, and children are equipped to flourish in faith and life, and where encouragement and obedience flow from hearts shaped by Christ.

3. Masters & Servants:

Honesty & Devotion

Colossians 3:22–4:1...²² *Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything you do. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. Serve them sincerely because of your reverent fear of the Lord.* ²³ *Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.* ²⁴ *Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ.* ²⁵ *But if you do what is wrong, you will be paid back for the wrong you have done. For God has no favorites. Chapter 4:1...Masters, be just and fair to your slaves. Remember that you also have a Master—in heaven.*

Paul writes, “Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God.”

Wiersbe explains, “Paul did not advocate the overthrow of the existing social order, but he did lay down principles that, ultimately, would lead to the abolition of slavery.” The principle is clear: “Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men” (3:23).

Wiersbe observes, “*It is by His power and authority that we should live in our daily relationships. If He is the preeminent One in our lives, then we will love*

each other, submit to each other, obey, and treat one another fairly in the Lord.”

It is important to understand that Paul’s instructions regarding masters and slaves in Colossians 3:22–4:1 are not an endorsement of slavery, but rather a pastoral response to the realities of the ancient world, where slavery was a deeply entrenched social institution with over sixty million slaves in the Roman Empire. As Wiersbe notes, “*The gospel did not immediately destroy slavery, but it did gradually change the relationship between slave and master.*” Paul’s aim was to bring the transforming power of Christ into every relationship, urging Christian masters to treat their slaves with justice and fairness—radical ideas in a society that viewed slaves as property, not people. The New Testament consistently affirms the equal worth of all people in Christ (Gal. 3:28), and Paul’s letter to Philemon is a powerful example of calling for the recognition of a slave as a beloved brother.

Today, Christians must be clear: slavery in any form is a violation of God’s design for human dignity and freedom, and followers of Christ are called to oppose and work against all forms of oppression and exploitation. Paul’s words are not a blueprint for perpetuating injustice, but a call to let the lordship of Christ transform every human relationship with love, respect, and equality.

In today's world, while we no longer live under the system of slavery Paul addressed, the principles he taught apply directly to the relationships between employers and employees. Wiersbe notes, "*A Christian worker ought to be the best worker on the job. He ought to obey orders and not argue. He ought to serve Christ and not the boss only, and he ought to work whether anybody is watching or not.*" For Christian employees, this means working with integrity, diligence, and sincerity—"not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God" (Col. 3:22). For Christian employers, Paul's words challenge us to treat employees with fairness, respect, and honesty, remembering that "masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven" (Col. 4:1). In a world often marked by exploitation or indifference, Christians are called to reflect Christ's character in the workplace—valuing people over profit, leading with humility, and seeing every task as an opportunity to serve the Lord. When Christ is Lord of our work, our jobs become platforms for witness, and our relationships at work become a testimony to His justice and grace.

He concludes, "*The heart of every problem is the problem of the heart, and only Jesus Christ can change the heart.*" When Christ is Lord of our work and our authority, honesty and devotion become the

marks of our relationships, and our daily labor becomes an act of worship to Him.

Conclusion

Paul's words in Colossians remind us that Christ's lordship isn't just a doctrine to be believed—it's a reality to be lived out in the most ordinary and intimate places of our lives. Wiersbe says, "*If Christ is truly preeminent in our lives, then we will glorify Him by keeping pure, by enjoying fellowship with other saints, by loving each other at home and being faithful at work, and by seeking to witness for Christ and serve Him effectively.*"

If Jesus Christ is not Lord of all, He cannot be Lord at all. Let's crown Him Lord of our marriages, our families, and our workplaces.

Invitation & Response Time:

Those of you who are here today and are already believers, will you let Christ truly be Lord (PREEMINENT) of every relationship in your life—at home, at work, and beyond?

And if you've never trusted Jesus as Savior, today He invites you to come, receive His forgiveness, and begin a relationship and a new life under His loving Lordship.