

Families Go Better with Christ
Colossians 3:18-21



IS JESUS ENOUGH

Theme: Depending upon the sufficiency of Jesus is the only way to develop the ideal Christian family.

I. In order to develop the ideal Christian family the wife should accommodate herself to her husband. (3:18)

Read: vs. 18

Question: In light of all the context found in Colossians 1:1—3:17, why do you suppose we have developed the principle "the wife should accommodate herself to her husband" as the meaning of *submit to your husband*? Can you point to several things in particular?

For example: How does 1:19-22 nuance the meaning of *wives submit to your husbands*?

Read: Acts 5:17-29

Question: When confronted with any demand to submit to that which is outside the biblical will of God, what must a believer do?

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II. In order to develop the ideal Christian family the husband should give himself completely to the fulfillment of his wife. (3:19)

Read: John 3:16 and Romans 5:8

Question: What do John 3:16 and Romans 5:8 teach us about love?

Read: vs. 19

Question: How does this concept of love inform us regarding the meaning of Colossians 3:19?

Now let's consider the phrase *do not be harsh* by comparing a few different translations:

New American Standard: *do not be embittered toward them*

The Message: *don't take advantage of them*

Amplified: *do not be harsh or bitter or resentful toward them*

Question: So what does it mean...*do not be harsh*?

Question: What does being harsh look like? Be as specific as possible.

Question: What does it look like to not be harsh? Be as specific as possible.

Read: 1 Peter 3:7

Question: What happens to the Christian husband who fails to treat his wife properly?

While this may not bother some, for the man who longs to hear the Lord say, "Well, done, good and faithful one," it has overwhelming implications.

III. In order to develop the ideal Christian family the children should please God by obeying their parents.

Read: vs. 20

This needs little commentary except to say that the word **obey** is stronger than the word **submit** found in verse 18. While *submit* carries with it a voluntary component, *obey* does not.

IV. In order to develop the ideal Christian family the parents should lovingly equip their children rather than breaking their spirits.

Read: vs. 21

Again, let's compare different translations.

New American Standard: *do not exasperate your children*

The Message: *don't come down too hard on your children*

New King James: *do not provoke your children*

Young's Literal: *vex not your children*

New Living: *do not aggravate your children*

Amplified: *do not provoke or irritate or fret your children [do not be hard on them or harass them]*

Question: What does this look like in real time? Can anyone give an example?

Now let's consider the phrase *or they will become discouraged* by comparing different translations again.

New American Standard: *so that they will not lose heart*

The Message: *or you'll crush their spirits*

New King James: *lest they be discouraged*

Contemporary English Version: *if you are, they might give up*

Amplified: *lest they become discouraged and sullen and morose and feel inferior and frustrated*

Question: Again, what does this look like in real time? Can anyone give an example?

Read: Matthew 18:6

Question: How should this impact one's parenting?

Application:

Okay, now let's relate each of the four family roles back to the theme of Paul's Letter to the Colossian's. If the sufficiency of Christ touches on how we are to become better wives, husbands, parents and children, then we must learn to appropriate the strength of the Savior in our moment to moment lives.

What will this look like?

What will we need to start doing more of?

How will it change our attitudes and behaviors?

Finally, how will this increase our capacity to impact our communities?