

REDEEMED FAMILIES

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Sunday, 23 March 2025

Text: Colossians 3:18-21

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.*

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

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

Redeemed Families: A Powerful Witness of the Gospel of Christ

Family as a witness of the Gospel:

Testimony: My story - From broken family to restored, a witness of the Gospel

The Christian household is one of the most powerful witnesses of the Gospel on earth, because it clearly displays an allegiance to the one true God and compels those outside of Christ to have a deeper look.

We must join hands with Jesus and partner with his Spirit as He works in us, and in our families to transform our lives to reflect Christ to the world.

The verses in Colossians where Paul addresses the family are a practical picture of what the Christian life looks like, in light of what he's been explaining in the preceding verses about putting off the old life and putting on the new humanity.

Note (NKJV): Paul's purpose in this letter to the Colossians is to show that Christ is preeminent – first and foremost in everything – and the Christian's life should reflect that priority. Because believers are rooted in Him, alive in Him, hidden in Him, and complete in Him, it is utterly inconsistent for them to live life without Him.

Illustration: PPTX – torch light

As you need a torch light to shine on a path when walking in the dark... so the preceding verses in Colossians "put off" and "put on" are the light in which we walk out these instructions.

The last two weeks Grant shared on Putting off the old man and putting on the new man. Paul uses terminology like this in most of his letters:

Illustration: Put off / on / PPTX

Take the old jacket off. Put on the new jacket. Powerpoint

Put off:

In Colossians 3 he says: ⁵ "...**put to death** your members which are on the earth..."

In Ephesians 4 he says: "²²...**put off**, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to deceitful lusts,..."

In Romans 13 he says: "¹²The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us **cast off** the works of darkness,..."

Put on:

He continues in Romans 13: "¹²..., and let us **put on** the armor of light. ¹³Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴But **put on** the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."

He says in Ephesians 4: "²⁴and that you **put on** the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."

And he says in Colossians 3: "¹⁰and have **put on** the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,"

There's an idea that Paul is labouring to express: We are called and empowered by the Spirit to expend energy in a **wrestling match** between the old human we used to be and the new human who is created in the image of Christ, who is emerging within us.

Students of the Bible call this: **Progressive Sanctification** – this is the reality of every Christian as we progressively become like Jesus, through engaging with the Spirit at work within us.

Paul says explicitly in...

Philippians 2:12-13

*¹²Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who works in you both **to will and to do for His good pleasure**.*

BUT: Can we be engaged in Progressive Sanctification without the Spirit of Christ?

NB: The answer is NO, we cannot do what Paul is talking about without the Spirit of Christ empowering us from within!!

Colossians 3:1

If then you were raised with Christ... this is a question we should not overlook!

If you have been raised with Christ!

If you have been Born Again!

IF THIS THEN THAT – IFTTT (illustration: App)

IF

We spend a lot of time in our Christian lives focusing on what we believe, but I think we often forget that this is a walk.

IF we have been raised with Christ we... Philippians 2:12-13 ¹²... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for (because) it is God who works in you both **to will and to do for His good pleasure**.

Which means it has a lot to do with our behaviour.

Illustration: PPTX / Christ in us

So we are called to look at ourselves and Judge (or discern) our own behaviour (or the fruit of our lives) --- and engage with the Holy Spirit to put to death the fruit (or behaviour) that is produced by our old nature --- and cultivate the prompts (to behave like Christ) that are being directed by the Spirit of Christ in us.

It's not like: Lord please fill me with your Spirit and then go live your life... NO, there's a partnership here which means: we have a responsibility!

IF we have been raised with Christ we...

Philippians 2:12-13

*¹²Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;¹³ for it is God who works in you both **to will and to do for His good pleasure.***

How do our families, in Christ, become a powerful witness?

- **Seek those things which are above.**
- **Set your mind on things above not on things on the earth.**
- **For you died...**

Illustration: Younger man

How do you deal with your love for another woman who is not your wife? I must die! You can't descend into the seat of your emotions, your flesh, your hurts and disappointments. You must die, crucify the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:24 says: *"And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."*

- **Your life is hidden with Christ in God.**
- **When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.**

Do you think this verse is talking about the future?

Through the way we behave!

Colossians: So these are people who are Born Again in a community called family treating one another as if they each embody Christ. (communion)

This is what it looks like when a family lives the Christ life.

Wives

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

- In the Lord, the wife allows the husband to become responsible for her.

Ephesians 5:22-24, 33

²²Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. ³³...let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Husbands, if your wife respects you, forgives you, notices you, if she regards and honours you, if she prefers and esteems you and lets you know about it.

If she values your opinion and admires your wisdom and character, if she appreciates your commitment to her and the family and always considers your needs and values.

If she doesn't expect you to read her mind and tells you what she's thinking.

If she's just like Christ and ministers to you like he would, **would it be easy to love her selflessly?**

IF Christ is in you?

Husbands

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

- The husband is subject to Jesus by loving his wife and placing her well being above his own.

Ephesians 5:25-29

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

Wives, if your husband was just like Jesus, and treated you like Jesus would treat you, would it be easy to submit to him and allow him to take responsibility for you?

If your husband laid his life down and always put your wellbeing above his own, like Jesus, **would it be easy?**

IF Christ is in you?

Children

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

- Children are not objects but are called to maturity and to respect.

Ephesians 6:1-3

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: ³ "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

- But this is not just an instruction, it's a **call for communion within our families**. We must see Christ in one another.

Parents, if your children are well mannered and respond to you when you speak to them.

If they honor you and don't value their phones, consoles or friends' opinions above your years of experience and your love for them.

If they obey you, question and engage with you honorably, and accept the outcome even if they don't agree,... **what do you think that would that be like?**

IF Christ is in you?

Fathers/Parents

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

- Parents must raise their children with patience and understanding.

Ephesians 6:4

⁴ And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Children, if your parents listened to you, like they listened to other adults.

If they considered your opinions like Jesus would.

If they valued your input and cherished your dreams.

If they took time and effort to explain to you, their decision concerning you, like you imagine Jesus would do.

Would it be more difficult or less difficult to obey them?

IF Christ is in you?

Conclusion

When our households reflect Christ in this way, they become a powerful witness to the reality of the Gospel to the world.

Our marriages will become undeniably compelling, when we become one and reflect the love between Christ and His people to the world.

Our unsaved friends (hopefully we have those) might not be responsive to our witness on the surface, but when they experience circumstances that they don't know how to handle, they'll come to us for answers, because they've witnessed the life of Christ through our homes and relationships.

How do our families, in Christ, become a powerful witness?

By producing the fruit of the indwelling Christ for all to see.

Colossians 1:5

⁵ because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel,

Invitation

Paul says in verse 1 of chapter 3 **IF** we have been raised with Christ...

The crux of all that Paul is saying is dependent on that.

1. If you have been raised with Christ: you're a Christian

And you **want to start living out your part in this partnership with God**, becoming progressively more like Christ as He works in you.

Maybe you're a Mom or a Dad, or maybe you're a Son or a Daughter and you hear God speaking to you through the scripture, to be who he's calling you to be.

Please stand and allow me to pray with you.

Prayer (Colossians 1:9-14)

Father we ask // that we may be filled // with the knowledge of your will // in all wisdom and spiritual understanding // that we may live a life that's worthy of you // and fully pleasing to you // that we may be fruitful // in every good (spirit led) action // and that we would have an ever growing knowledge of who you are // and that you would strengthen us // with your mighty power // for patience and longsuffering with joy // and we thank you Father // because you've qualified us // to be partakers of your kingdom of light // you have delivered us from the power of darkness // and brought us into the Kingdom of your beloved Son // in whom we have redemption // through his blood // our sins are forgiven // thank you

2. If you have NOT been raised with Christ: you're not a Christian

You can't partner with God in this walk without repentance.

Repentance is simply put:

- Acknowledging that you're a sinner and turning away from your sin.
- And trusting in Jesus to forgive you and save you.
- The Bible also says that repentance is a gift that the Holy Spirit gives.

If you want to turn away from your sin, and trusting in yourself, and turn to Jesus this morning, I would really like to pray with you.