

# IS ENOUGH!!!

## A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

### *Living to Please God*

In our technological age, for just about any question we want answered, we can pick up our phone and ask Siri, or Google U-tube or look on Facebook! Most of us frequently search the Internet for tutorials on how to do this or that. Many voices in this world want us to listen to what they say, but only God's Word is what we must hear and obey.

Today, we will examine a brief tutorial by the Apostle Paul on how we, as Christians, are to live to please God.

#### **Living in the Peace of Christ**

***Read Colossians 3:15 (ESV)*** <sup>15</sup> *And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.*

All of God's children crave the peace of Christ but satan uses tools of worry, discouragement, dissatisfaction, etc., to destroy our peace. The word translated *rule* is an athletic term. In the Greek games, there were judges or umpires who rejected and disqualified contestants who broke the rules. Wiersbe explains, "The peace of God is the 'umpire' in our believing hearts and our churches. When we obey the will of God, we have His peace within; but when we step out of His will (even unintentionally), we lose His peace."

Beware of living with false peace. Jonah deliberately disobeyed God, yet he was able to sleep in the hold of a ship in a storm! It is sometimes easy to say 'I have peace about it!' just because that peace comes from being on the path WE want to take. To experience the peace of Christ, we must pray, surrender to His will, and seek His guidance in the Scriptures. When we experience the peace of Christ personally, we will bring that peace collectively to the body of Christ that is the church family. When we allow the cares of this world to overtake us, we lose the peace of Christ and that too will affect the body of Christ. In order to experience the peace of Christ, we begin by looking at our lives through the lens of thankfulness.

#### **Living in the Word of Christ**

***Read Colossians 3:16 (ESV)*** <sup>16</sup> *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*

The false teachers/Gnostics came to the Colossian fellowship with man-made traditions, religious rules, and human philosophies. They wanted to harmonize God's Word with their teachings which did not work since God's Word always magnifies Jesus. The Word will transform our lives if we permit God's Word to dwell in us richly. *Dwell* means to be at home. We should be permanent dwellers in God's Word – not living like homeless transients. Dwelling in His Word comes from not only teaching and learning from one another – but music. One of our greatest joys of being in choir over the years, has been learning a song together and then realizing the

words of that song have been taken straight from scripture. That would have not have happened to the extent that it has if John and I had not met regularly over the years with the choir “community.”

We cannot bring honor and glory to the Lord, if we are not thankful. Unthankful people are a turnoff. Some may say in moments of distress, “what do I have to be thankful for?” God’s Word answers in **Hebrews 12:28 (ESV)** <sup>28</sup> *Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,* That is what we have to be thankful for – a kingdom that cannot be shaken – even when the world around us is falling apart.

Paul mentions using a variety of songs in worshiping the Lord together: Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. What’s the difference? Simply put, the answer is Psalms are biblical texts put to music, hymns are biblical truths put to music and spiritual songs are biblical testimonies put to music. It is important for our worship music to be biblical and I am happy to say that through the years, our church body has stood firm in biblical worship through music. What is the purpose of our songs? The same as the purpose of our teaching, that is to cause the Word of Christ to dwell in us richly.

### Living in the Name of Christ

**Read Colossians 3:17 (ESV)** <sup>17</sup> *And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

The name of the Lord Jesus refers to His authority. **Philippians 2:10 (ESV)** <sup>10</sup> *so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,* When a document is signed, the authority of the person is associated with the document. Just try to probate an unsigned will and see how far you get. Our words and actions should be consistent with all that Jesus’ name represents. **Proverbs 22:1 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.* We should serve Christ thankfully. It should be a ‘spiritual goal’ to live for Christ 24/7.

### A Family Affair

**Read Colossians 3:18-21 (ESV)** <sup>18</sup> *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 provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.*

In modern times, many resist the biblical instruction for wives to submit to husbands. Some women say, ‘I’m a capable, independent woman and I don’t like the idea. Some people at my church even say it isn’t relevant anymore.’ Most likely the negativity arises from the fact that many men through the centuries have abused the role. However, just because we happen to not like something in the Bible or others tell us it is not relevant does not make it so. We should not think of submission in a negative way. The word comes from the military vocabulary and simply means ‘to arrange under rank.’ The role of the husband is designated in the family unit as the leader of the household. Real spiritual leadership involves service. Just as Christ served the disciples, even to the point of washing their feet, so the husband is to serve his wife.

John Piper lists six things that wives submitting to husbands is NOT:

1. Submission is not agreeing on everything.
2. Submission does not mean leaving your brain at the altar.
3. Submission does not mean that you do not try to influence your husband.
4. Submission is not putting the will of the husband before the will of Christ.
5. Submission does not mean getting all her spiritual strength from her husband.
6. Submission does not mean living or acting in fear.

Piper goes on to give this definition: Submission is the defined calling of a wife to honor and affirm her husband's leadership, and so help to carry it through according to her gifts. Headship or leadership is not dictatorship. The woman was made to be a helper not a servant. **Genesis 2:18 (ESV)** <sup>18</sup> *Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."*

Men are commanded to love their wives. The word for love in this case is agape which indicates God's kind of love. God's kind of love was the love that was willing to die for His Bride, the church. It has been said, "Love is not a mere feeling but a fact, not merely emotion but devotion, nor mere attitude but action, not mere sentiment but sacrifice." Husbands are not to be harsh or bitter against their wives.

Why would Paul tell husbands to love their wives? Possibly it is because many men find it easier to give their wives and children things than to spend time with them and share their hearts with them in deep, loving relationships. Ligonier Ministries list some of the many different ways husbands are to love their wives.

1. Love her heart – emotional love. The Bible uses the word love over 350 times. A wife desire to hear her husband speak words of love.
2. Love her mind – intellectual love. Work at keeping up the engaging conversation as the years go by.
3. Love her body – physical love. Physical love includes being complimentary to the 'love of your life'.
4. Love her soul – spiritual love. Spiritual love includes family worship and praying together.
5. Love her relationships – relational love. Be interested in her friends. Stand up for her when she needs a protector.
6. Love her Maker – theological love. A shared love of Christ is the best foundation for every marriage.

Children are commanded to obey their parents. All of us have the desire to rule ourselves and children are certainly no different. Disobedience in children will affect their future relationships with teachers, employers, police, friends, spouses, aging parents, and even their Heavenly Father. Honoring of one's parents is a lifelong obligation. It is part of the Ten Commandments. **Exodus 20:12 (ESV)** <sup>12</sup> *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you."*

As it pertains to parents and their young children, obedience is meant to be a temporary measure that lasts as long as children are under the authority of their parents. Childhood is a time of training and preparation for life. As adults to honor our parents we are to respect them, to speak well of them and to treat them with kindness. We are to ensure they are cared for and even to make provision for them when necessary.

In teaching children to obey, fathers are instructed not to embitter or provoke their children. One writer points out that fathers, perhaps more than mothers, tend to provoke their offspring. This aspect of not intentionally provoking others is a good way to live to please God.

**Read Colossians 3:22-25 (ESV)** <sup>22</sup> *Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.* <sup>23</sup> *Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,* <sup>24</sup> *knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.* <sup>25</sup> *For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.*

In Paul's day, slaves were a part of the household relationship. Today, we apply the principles found in these verses to the workplace. As I have said often, verse 23 was a 'life verse' during my working years. Of course, my employment had no comparison to slavery but one way I avoided getting caught up in 'pity parties' was to remember my work was for the Lord and I should do it heartily. This attitude should be no different in the school years or the retirement years.

Some may wonder why Jesus and Paul did not oppose slavery outright. The purpose of the early church was to spread the good news of Jesus and win souls, not to get involved in social action. Isn't the purpose of the church still today to spread the gospel and win souls? Slavery was entrenched in ancient life and outright opposition would have increased the slaves' burden. Instead Jesus and Paul sought to apply Christian principles that would relieve the agony of being a slave.

Living to please God in a particular work environment may be for the purpose of others seeing us living in Jesus' name. Christians should work with enthusiasm and do the best job possible because ultimately we are working to please the Lord. It is scriptural to keep on working even when the boss is away. When things are unfair, know that the King of kings is in control.

**Colossians 4:1 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.*

If you are an employer or an employee, there are responsibilities on both sides. The employee is entitled to a just salary for his service; but, the employer has the right to expect service equal to that pay. It would be an ideal situation if we could all have Christians employers; but, God places His children in the midst of non-Christians to live in His name.

We are called to live in peace, live in the Word and in the name of Christ. We are called to live to please God in our homes and in our workplaces. And, we don't do it by looking on the Internet or asking Siri. We look to Jesus. He is enough.