

Sermon Text from 2/28/2010

Christ at Home and on the Job

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.

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

Colossians 3:18-4:1 (NLT)

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- Who has been one of your best employers? What did you appreciate about him/her?

v.3:18-4:1 - Overall

- O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?
- O: What do you see in this passage that indicates that all these relationships are to be built around Christ?
- I: How does each of these Christ-centered relationships happen (don't forget the context of 3:1-17)?
- I: How do the commands to Husband/Wife, Parents/Children, Slaves/Masters sound like opposites to our natural tendencies?

v.18-19 - Husband/Wife

- O: Depending on how deep your group wants to dive into Husband/Wife relationships, Eph. 5:22-33 is more extensive on it.
- I: The wife is to submit to the husband "as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord" (v.18). What would that kind of submission include (see 3:5-17)? What would it not include?
- I: The husband is to love his wife and not be harsh (v.19). How should this love look (see 3:12-17) in terms of actions and attitudes?
- I: How do the commands to wives and husbands complement one another (v.18-19)?
- A: As a husband or wife (or potentially in the future), how do you wish to grow towards the teaching in this passage?

v.20-21 - Parents/Children

- O: See also Ephesians 6:1-4 for a parallel passage
- I: What difference would it make in family relationships if members wanted to please the Lord (v.20) and encourage each other (v.21)?
- I: How can parents teach their children without discouraging them?
- A: As a child or parent (or potentially in the future), how do you wish to grow towards the teaching in this passage?

v.22-4:1 - Master/Slave (Employer/Employee)

- O: These instructions to slaves & masters must have sounded totally countercultural. When & how are slaves to obey their masters (v.22-25)? With what motives?
- I: While (in our immediate Michiana culture) there are not literally slaves and masters today, in what contexts can we apply verses 23&24?
- I: What would it demand of a master to "be just and fair" (v.4:1)? How should remembering their Master in heaven affect their attitude towards their slaves (and themselves)?
- I: What principles can employers and employees draw out of these verses (v.3:22-4:1)
- A: How does the slave-master teaching relate specifically to your work situation? What difference would it make if you actually worked as if it was Jesus for whom you were working?

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray across these different relationships, and that your life will demonstrate your desire to please and honor Jesus through these different types of relationships.
- **Respond:** Pick one of these three relationship pairs to pray over and ask God to move in your attitudes and actions. How can you grow and change in how you treat others?
- **Read:** Next week's sermon (3/7/2010) will focus on Colossians 4:2-18. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.

* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid "go through this guide word-for-word." **There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time.** These guides rely heavily upon James Reapsome's &/or N.T. Wright's study guides on Colossians & Philemon (ISBN 9780830830145 & 9780830821921), as well as Ryan Roeder's 2005 discussion guides on Colossians & Philemon.