

51-03-06.wpd —Our Relationships Under His Lordship
relationships, Lord, discipleship, obedience, love, hate
Colossians 3:18-25

Christ's authority presides over all relationships in a Christian's life.

INTRODUCTION:

–**Col 3:18-25**, Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.

--When we say the phrase, "Jesus is **Lord**," or even the full name, "the **Lord** Jesus Christ," we are stating more than an affirmation of our faith. We are calling Jesus our Master, our Ruler, our King. In Colossians, Paul has emphasizes the supremacy of Christ: that God's Son by becoming human, by dying sacrificially, and by being resurrected, was given the *position of supreme leadership over all things*. His authority is over heaven and earth, the spiritual realm and the physical realm, the biggest galaxies and the smallest microbes.

–We confess His lordship over all things in the universe, but we don't always allow Him to be Lord over all things in our lives. This is often the case in relationships (**title**). This is what these verses are about: *our relationships*. What I hope to show from them is how **HOM.idea**.

I. "Why Must Jesus Govern the Relationships in My Life?"

- A. God is a Society of Three Divine Beings, living in complete *love* and *peace* and *unity*. When, in Gen 1:26, God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...", He created us to be a society, too, one that would represent Him by those same Trinitarian characteristics.
- B. But SIN brings chaos and disharmony into every relationship in human society, and, left to ourselves, *love* can be selfish, *peace* can be imaginary, and *unity* must be externally enforced.
- C. Jesus came not only as a Savior, to deal with our sins and bring forgiveness. He came as a King, to reestablish in human society the love, peace and unity that was a Self-portrait of the Trinity.

TRANS: *Marriage* relationships, *parent-child* relationships, *employer-employee* relationships, all suffer from the effects of sin. Jesus can forgive relational transgressions, but He came also to bring *Kingdom values* and *Kingdom rule* into this world. Christians who proclaim that "Jesus is Lord," must find what His will is, because His **authority presides over all relationships in a Christian's life**.

II. "But this List of Relationships Doesn't Apply to Me Anymore!"

- A. This is literally true for some people [*seniors* whose parents are gone, the *unmarried* or the *widowed*, the *childless* couple, the *orphan*, those who are *unemployed* or *retired*]. BUT God's specific commands are almost always rooted in larger principles.
- B. In this passage, the relationships listed represent 3categories of relationships that include and go beyond the list:
 1. Chosen relationships [as in *marriage, friendships*]
 2. Natural relationships [as with *parents, children, relatives*]
 3. Incidental relationships [*employment, neighbors, landlords, and others*]
- C. How does God's directives for various relationships listed in this passage apply to these broader three groups? (I will illustrate this is by substituting other relational roles for the specific ones listed, even though a variety of roles could fit in the same place.)
 1. "submit to your ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR, as is fitting in the Lord"
 2. "love your NEIGHBORS and do not be harsh with them"
 3. "obey your SECURITY GUARDS in everything, for this pleases the Lord"
 4. "do not embitter your HOUSEKEEPER, or they will become discouraged"
 5. "obey the EXECUTIVE STAFF in everything...not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord."

TRANS: **Christ's authority presides over all relationships in a Christian's life**, those listed in this passage, and those in the categories represented by the list. *AND* the attitudes and ways of behavior given in this passage are not exhaustive. The NT is full of principles & precepts about how submitting to Jesus as Lord applies to our relationships with others. What this passage does give us is the attitude we are to have in all relationships: **v.22-23**, Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Our attitude in all relationships is to be that of serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. "How Can I Maintain that Attitude in All Relationships?"

- A. In some relationships, things are great, but in others, it's really hard to get along together [*ie.*, obnoxious relatives, discourteous neighbors, a committee member who disagrees with everything you suggest....].
- B. Jesus gave us a solution—something that relates everything, even our relationship with ourselves, directly to His lordship— **Lk 14:26**, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple." (This often misunderstood verse is the key to having the lordship of Christ over every relationship), and here's how:
1. Relationships are ties or bonds or heartstrings connecting us directly to other people [like a cord attaching our hearts to others, some of which are good cords we like and others are bad ones we don't like].
 2. By telling us to hate all our relationships, Jesus is asking us to cut all the cords of our heart, and hand those loose heartstrings in a bundle directly to Him for His sovereign control. Then Jesus reattaches them to the people they were connected to in the first place. What we end up having is a relationship with each person, not based on our likes or dislikes, but based on His rulership.
 - a. **"But I don't have a good relationship with my parents"**
(*"Now you have no relationships at all! You gave them all to Me, and as your Lord, I tell you to 'honor your parents!'"*).
 - b. **"I do love my wife, but her nagging makes me blow up!"**
(*"You hated your relationship with your wife for My sake, and now it belongs to Me, not you, so I tell you, husband, love your wife and do not treat her harshly."*)

CONCLUSION:

—Do you see the point? *Relationships* used to be all on our own, but no more. **Christ's authority presides over all relationships in a Christian's life.** Without His overruling lordship to direct us, we can't achieve the *love* and *peace* and *unity* that God intended for human relationships. In fact, if we haven't done this already, we need to come to Him for forgiveness where we've sinned in our relationships. Then we need to bring all our present relationships under His authority and rule. *Jesus is Lord... He wants to be Lord of all our relationships.*

Colossians 3:18-25 (NIV)

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 19Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.
 20Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
 21Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.
 22Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.
 23Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,
 24since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.
 25Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.