

Jesus, Our All in All – New You, Better Life - Colossians 3:17-4:1

A few weeks back, we looked at the majority of Colossians chapter 3. There, Paul issued strong warnings against chasing after the pleasures of this world. By doing so, his words to the Colossians remind us of the dangerous nature behind two types of sins that most people struggle at some point and time in life with. He gives us two lists concerning these sins. One on the “sensual” sins and another on the “social” sins. Along with his strong admonishment against these powerful sins, Paul provides even stronger advice for how every believer, under the power and authority of the Holy Spirit, can fight against them. First, we should seek heavenly things. Next, we should put to death everything that is earthly in us. Then, we should embrace Christ. Why? Paul says, because “*Christ is all, and in all.*” These are the words from verse 11 which led me to label this entire series of messages: **Jesus, Our All in All**. Remember, when we embrace Jesus as our everything, we submit to His authority in and over every aspect of our life. Paul teaches us that a life filled with Christ allows us the opportunity to be clothed in His completeness. Do you remember this list as found in verses 12-14? I hope so because it’s a rather good list. A life filled with Christ clothes the believer in *compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, bearing of another’s burdens, forgiveness, and above all these, love.*

Today, we are going to look at the closing verses of chapter 3 along with the first verse of chapter 4. In these few verses Paul helps us understand how embracing Jesus as our “all in all” allows us to experience His supremacy as well. Let’s read it. **Read Colossians 3:17-4:1.**

whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (v.17 ESV) As we work our way through these verses, I want to encourage you to keep these valuable words in mind. “**Everything**” includes your relationships; personal and professional. Here Paul continues this idea of maturing in Christ by addressing how He works in our families. Oh boy...Here we go... This is a passage in Scripture that is frequently misinterpreted and misapplied. *Wives, submit to your husbands.* Wait! That’s only half the verse. What’s the rest say? *as is fitting in the Lord.* Submission does not mean inferiority; it simply means the husband, not the wife, is head, the leader, the responsible person of the home. Two other places in Scripture help us understand Paul’s meaning here. First, from **1 Timothy 2:13** we read also from Paul, “*For Adam was formed first, then Eve.*” God established the order at creation. Adam first, then Eve. Again, God’s intended natural order for leadership in the family lies on the shoulders of the husband. Second, from **1 Corinthians 11:3** we read again from Paul, “*But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.*”

Here’s the intended order of God – Christ submits to the Father – man, submits to Christ, becomes at some point, a husband, who remains under submission to Christ – then, woman, who becomes at some point, a wife, submits to the husband. This passage is not establishing a system of inferiority or control but establishes a system of leadership within the Godhead that was established by God at creation. Of course, it comes with a moral expectation *as is fitting in the Lord.* Now listen to this husbands, the wife’s submission is only “in the Lord.” She is not obligated to follow her husband’s leadership if it conflicts with specific scriptural commands.

God is a God of order. The fact that the woman is to submit to her husband does not suggest that the man is better than the woman. It only means that the man has the responsibility of headship and leadership in the home. Men, this is not giving you permission to function as dictator or establish a Lordship over your home. Instead, it is God's opportunity for you to loving lead your wife by example. What's the example? Honey, you can trust me because I put all my faith in Christ. It requires that the husband and the wife both be submitted to Christ and then to each other. It's this mutual love and submission that creates an atmosphere of growth in the home and enables both husband and wife to become all that God wants them to be.

Behind this, Paul gives a complimentary command to the husbands. *Husbands, love your wives*. Paul made it clear in his letter to the Ephesians that a husband must love his wife *"as Christ loved the Church."* The last time I checked, I'm positive that Jesus gave His all for the Church. A marriage may begin with normal, human, romantic love, but it must grow deeper into the spiritual *agape* love that comes only from God. Love that is sacrificing and serving, just as Christ expresses to the Church. Wives, I think you will agree with me here. It's a lot easier to submit to your husband when you know that his love is genuine and born out of his relationship with Jesus. Paul also added a moral warning here as well; *"do not be harsh with them."* A husband who genuinely loves his wife and is submitted to Jesus, will not harbor any ill will, nor develop any bitterness, nor behave harshly towards her regardless of anything she does or does not say or do. Remember, from **1 Corinthians 13:4-8** - *Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.*

To follow this up, Paul addresses some of the other relationships which he knew existed among the Christians at Colossae. Similar relationships exist today. I'm not going to spend as much time on these. Not because they are less important, but because for whatever reason, the instructions concerning these other relationships are not misconstrued as often as the instructions for husbands and wives.

Conclusion

So...with Jesus as Lord over EVERYTHING, we are truly living as COMPLETE people. Go back to **Colossians 2:9-10**. Paul says, *"For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority."* Imagine how complete our families, our friendships, our workplaces would be if we followed the advice Paul gives us here in today's verses. Families living in harmony. Churches unified. Schools honoring God. Workplaces with gracious and productive people. We may not be able to totally change the world around us, but we can start with ourselves, then with our homes, then with everything else. Wouldn't you agree? **Read Romans 12:2**. Will you decide today to submit to Christ and embrace the new you, knowing that it will lead to a better life, a complete life, that only comes through Him?