

Lesson 35  
For Ye Serve The Lord Christ  
**Col 3:18-4:1**

Col 3:18-4:1 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.  
19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.20 Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.22 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;  
24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.4:1 Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven. KJV

In this passage, Paul now exhorts his readers to their responsibilities in various relationships, focusing on the central theme that we, as Believers, are the servants of Christ.

### **I. Servants of Christ**

- a. The over riding consideration for the Believer is that he **serves** the Lord Christ in every relationship, in every employment, and in every activity. V23
- b. We need to conduct ourselves in such a way in every relationship that it becomes **apparent** that we are the bond-slaves of Christ. V22
- c. This conduct springs from the **spiritual reality** of our relationship to Christ. When we are submitted to Christ the resultant emotional climate of the relationship should be one of harmony and peace. Col 3:17; Ps 119:165
- d. If we experience disharmony and turmoil in any given relationship, the first place to examine for **cause** is in a breakdown of our living in submission to Christ. Luke 12:45-47
- e. Our relational problems do not start **externally** (outside of ourselves). They always begin in our relationship with Christ our Master. Luke 16:13

To understand this let's review the bond-slave relationship.

### **II. The Bond-slave**

- a. The Greek word Douleuo, literally, "**to be a slave**," in bondage or service. Gal 4:8; Eph 6:7; 1 Tim 6:2.
- b. A servant becomes a bond-slave when he wishes to remain in his master's house rather than accept freedom due to his **love** for a master, or wife and children, Ex 21:6
- c. He was brought before the elders and had his ear bored against a door or post with an awl in token of **lifelong** servitude.
- d. It was allowed because love and the allegiance of love were prized more highly by the slave than **personal freedom**.
- e. **Paul** understood his relationship with Christ as His "servant," Rom 1:1; Titus 1:1.

### **III. The Implications To Us**

- a. Christians, are not hired servants but slaves committed to service to Jesus. As slaves we do not manage our own lives, but voluntarily **yield** them in service to our master. 1 Cor 6:20
- b. Believers are bond-slaves on the basis of love for their master. This service is an eternal free will offering of **self**. Rom 12:1

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- c. Accordingly, our chief desire is the fulfillment of **every desire** of our master; how we may please Him and not ourselves. John 8:29; 2 Tim 2:4
- d. His desire for us is that we **learn** godly character. Godly character is learned primarily through experience...the experience of difficulty, turmoil, self denial, pain and suffering.
- e. These experiences are primarily handed to us within the **context** of relationships with others. John 13:34; 1John 4:12
- f. Another word for this is "**sanctification**". Therefore, sanctification is a goal to be achieved in relationship. That is one of the chief outcomes of our experience with others. 1 Thes 4:3
- g. When we experience disharmony in our relationships with others it is an **indication** of our having stepped out of our role as bond-servant of Christ. 1Peter 5:5-6
- h. Instead of **humbling** ourselves and clothing ourselves in Christ-like character in that relationship, we have lapsed into the old man with its deceitful lusts. Col 3:12-13
- i. In such cases, some deep seated issue imbedded in our soul has been hooked or re-activated and we are responding as if we are our **own master**.

#### **IV. The Problem of the Runaway**

- a. To identify and deal with these issues, it is fruitful to examine a few of the major sources of difficulty with which **we all struggle**.
- b. When resolving these kinds of relational issues we must bear in mind that the problem we are experiencing is rooted **inside the self**; not in the other. Here are five:
  - 1. **Past** issues= family background, unresolved abuse, etc.
  - 2. **Personal** differences= male and female, likes and dislikes, etc.
  - 3. **Present** struggles= with sin, self-centeredness, submission, etc.
  - 4. **Persistent** pressures with culture, (success, wealth creation, retirement goals) work, family, etc.
  - 5. **Problematic** patterns = abuse, addiction, adultery, abandonment, etc.

#### **V. Application**

Examine your disharmonious relationship and ask these questions:

- a. What areas have been hooked by this person or by the situation in which I encounter disharmony within myself?
- b. If I were looking at this person/situation from God's point of view, what would He point out as the root of my problem?
- c. If the solution was entirely up to me to resolve this disharmony, what would I need to change within myself?
- d. What keeps me from doing it?
- e. Confess that as sin and get this relationship restored.

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