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COLOSSIANS 3:18–4:6

RELATIONSHIPS



THIS WEEK'S **focus**

Healthy relationships require giving thought to how we carry ourselves in them. We can't control how the people around us act or behave, but we do have a say in our own attitudes and actions. While many of the traits that make for a good child, sibling, or friend are different, there is also much these have in common. All healthy relationships require giving careful thought to the other person—their needs, desires, and personality. The more mindful we are of others, the less selfish we will be and the more we will communicate to people around us that we value and care about them. Today we are going to see how the gospel reshapes our relationships, giving them purpose and meaning.



CENTRAL **truth**

The gospel reshapes our relationships, giving them purpose and meaning.



EXPLORE

scripture

COLOSSIANS 3:18–4:6

COLOSSIANS 3:18-21

18 Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. **19** Husbands, love your wives and don't be bitter toward them. **20** Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. **21** Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they won't become discouraged.

COLOSSIANS 3:21–4:1

22 Slaves, obey your human masters in everything. Don't work only while being watched, as people-pleasers, but work wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord. **23** Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people, **24** knowing that you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord. You serve the Lord Christ. **25** For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong he has done, and there is no favoritism. **4:1** Masters, deal with your slaves justly and fairly, since you know that you too have a Master in heaven.

COLOSSIANS 4:2-6

2 Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert in it with thanksgiving. **3** At the same time, pray also for us that God may open a door to us for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains, **4** so that I may make it known as I should. **5** Act wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. **6** Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person.

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE COLOSSIANS 4:5

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about man?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

COLOSSIANS 3:18-21

DWELL

The gospel should impact every area of our lives, including our relationships with the members of our family. The earthly attitudes that we put aside and the heavenly attitudes that we shift our attention to should guide the way husbands and wives interact with another, and the way that parents and children interact with one another. Words like “submit” and “obey” may not be comfortable to think about, but when we look at the ways that Christ submitted to and obeyed His Father, we see a holy picture of love, trust, and servanthood that we can imitate in our own lives.



How does the Bible’s concept of submission and obedience differ than the world’s attitude toward these ideas?



How can you obey your parents, guardians, teachers, or other authority figures in a way that reflects Christ?

MEMORIZE

Write Colossians 4:5 on a sticky note and place it somewhere you’ll see it every day, like your bathroom mirror, a notebook, or inside your locker. Read it to yourself each time you see it.

PRAY

Ask God to give you wisdom as you trust and submit to the authority figures in your life.

day 2

COLOSSIANS

3:22–4:1

DWELL

Paul turned his attention from family members to the relationship between slaves and their masters. Paul was clearly concerned about the way that slaves were treated and saw that this was another possible area for disunity in the church. He reminded his readers that no matter what their circumstances on this earth, whether they were slaves or masters, both served the same Master in heaven—that is, God. Because of this, slaves were to work as something they did for God, and masters should treat their slaves fairly because ultimately, they also worked for God.



What is the inheritance from the Lord that Paul said slaves would receive as a reward?



How can we work at school, at home, or at our jobs as though we are working for God?

MEMORIZE

Take a slip of paper or index card and draw or write Colossians 4:5 using markers or colored pencils. Use it as a bookmark in one of your text books or notebooks this week.

PRAY

Thank God that He cares about all the circumstances of our lives.

day 3

COLOSSIANS

4:2–6

DWELL

Paul started his letter to the Colossians with prayer, and now he returns to the subject. Prayer is one of the most practical ways that we can partner with one another in worship and in serving God. But one aspect of prayer we may not think about often is “watchfulness.” When we pray, we are to do so with an attitude of alertness and awareness of the circumstances around us. When we pray, we should pray expectantly about the things that God will do in the future, and with an awareness of what He is already doing in the world.



What did Paul ask the church at Colossae to pray about? How could they be watchful in this?



How can you pray with a more watchful and alert attitude?

MEMORIZE

Write each word from Colossians 4:5 on a different index card. Mix them up and then place them in order.

PRAY

Pray for the other students in your group, taking an attitude of watchfulness and expectancy as you do so.

day 4

COLOSSIANS

4:7-11

DWELL



Why does Paul spend so much time in his letter mentioning other Christians by name? Why were they important?



What are some ways we can make sure that important people in our life feel connected to us?

Social media and the internet have made near-instant communication possible with anyone around the world, and given us access to friends in places that previous generations may not have thought possible. But while getting a text or private message from a far-away friend is wonderful, there's nothing quite like seeing someone face to face. Since Paul could not greet the Colossians personally, he sent Tychicus to be there in his stead. Tychicus may have even delivered this letter himself, even though the Romans had a sophisticated postal service. It was important to Paul that the Christians in Colossae felt connected to him and the other believers who were sending their greetings

MEMORIZE

Find a recording of Colossians 4:5 on the web, in a podcast, or on a Bible app. Listen to it every day this week.

PRAY

Thank God for the church and the fellowship of other believers.

day 5

MATTHEW

5:43-48

DWELL

It's easy to show love in our relationships with people who also care about us. But here Jesus says that as Christians, we should love more than just the people who are easy to love. We should pray for those who persecute and slander us. If we are to imitate Christ, we cannot just be loving toward the people who can and will return that love. Greeting our brothers and sisters in Christ may come naturally, but Jesus calls us to step outside of our comfort zones, greeting and loving those who may hate us or avoid us—and He calls us to do this with the same generous attitude we show our friends and loved ones.



What reason does Jesus give for His command to love our enemies?



What are some steps you can take this week to pray for people who you find difficult to love, and to show them love?

MEMORIZE

Practice reciting Colossians 4:5 from memory with a friend or family member. Ask them to follow along as you recite, and prompt you with words from the verse if you need help remembering.

PRAY

Pray that Jesus would work in your heart to increase your compassion for others.