

THIS WEEK, I WILL LOVE
SACRIFICIALLY BY...



WEEK 24 - HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIPS
PART 1 (HUSBANDS & WIVES)
COLOSSIANS 3:18-19

TODAY'S VERSES:

Colossians 3:18-19

Genesis 1:27-28

Genesis 2:18

Psalms 33:20

Genesis 3:6

Genesis 3:16

Colossians 3:17

Ephesians 5:22

Today in Colossians we start looking at something that is very controversial in our world today but was very hopeful and freeing in Paul's day: a new understanding of what were called "household codes." Household codes governed how people within a household would/should act and interact with one another—it was foundational for the broader community. The code laid out who had authority and what responsibilities each person in the household was (by law) committed to.

What type of household rules or codes do you have in your home?

When we decide to love others in a Biblical way, we lay down what we think of as "our rights" in order to serve one another. In Colossians, Paul moves us toward how to love others in household relationships and honor Jesus. Paul doesn't just tell wives, children, and slaves how to behave (as many pagan moralists of his day would have done); he balances everything with corresponding duties of husbands, parents, and masters; what Paul is doing is revolutionary for its time.

What rights are you currently laying down in order to serve others?

Paul's fellow workers in ministry included women and married couples. He didn't hide women away, tell them be silent, or say their husbands were of more value; they were vital partners in ministry. In specifically speaking about marriage, Paul is telling us that the mutuality of respect and love makes a marriage what it should be; the roles are reciprocal, not identical.

How can roles in marriage be reciprocal and not identical?

- **In the beginning, there were no Bible verses that sounded anti-women or anti-men.**

In Genesis, God creates men and women as distinct and equal; there is no indication that one gender is superior (or has greater value) than the other.

- **We are the ones who brought inequality because of our sin.**

In Genesis, God gives prescriptions for mankind (what they were to do, not do, etc.), yet they decide to disobey God and break relationship with Him. God enters their situation and begins His plan to rescue His creation. God didn't need to rescue us, but He did.

- **The domestic rules given in Colossians were vastly different from those of the day.**

Paul addresses wives in Colossians *equally* with their husbands; both husbands and wives had duties (not just the wives, as would be expected). They were both under the lordship of Jesus as equals. Anyone who read Paul's words in that day would instantly recognize a different version of the household codes, a radical Christian remix regarding household structure.

How have you seen "Biblical" depictions (of marriage, gender roles, etc.) in healthy and harmful ways?

- 19 *'Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.'*

This command to men is world changing. Eduard Lohse has documented that this type of command is found nowhere in any extra-Biblical household rules of the day. Husbands were commanded to love their wives! The word for love is *agape* love, which involves unceasing care and loving service for the wife's entire wellbeing.

How could our world today be transformed by a Gospel-centered love ethic in our homes?

Sacrificial love mutually elevates any relationship. This is what will bring fullness in any household relationship: full love, full commitment, full exchange, full blessing. It starts with Jesus, given to us, loving one another as we understand how Christ first loved us.