

Recap of 11/21/21 (Col 3:18-3:21):

1. Paul gives us the attitudes and actions required for thriving relationships. We are to put on Christ-like attitudes and take Christ-like actions; compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, love, peace, and gratitude (Col 3:12-15). Yielding to the Holy Spirit is critical to consistently displaying these Christ-like characteristics which are in-turn critical to thriving relationships. Paul then goes on to give supplemental instructions for a few specific relationships.

2. Paul gives functional roles in three of life's most important relationships; husband/wife, parent/child, master/slave (think employer/employee for modern application). It is important to remember that these instructions relate a role or functional distinction, not a worth distinction. We are all of equal worth before God (Col 3:11, Ro 10:12, Ga 3:28). However, God in His infinite wisdom designed our relationships to function a certain way. We would be foolish to go against our car designer's instructions and put gas in the crankcase and oil in the gas tank. Our car would break down in a hurry. We struggle with relationships because we go against the God's design for those relationships. Do it the way God tells us to do it and we will be absolutely amazed at the results

3. Husband/Wife: God made husbands the leader of the family and he made the wife the follower (helper, Ge 2:18). Wives are to submit to their husband's leadership and respect him (Eph 5:22, 33). The parallel passage in 1 Pt 3:1-6 makes it clear that this is the wife's role even when her husband isn't following God. Husbands are to love their wife as Christ loved the church (Eph 5:25-33). This is a sacrificial love. Just as Christ did not "lord it over" His disciples, the husband ought not to lord it over his wife. They are to lead their wife by serving, protecting, and caring for her. Just as the wife's role is not conditional on the husband's obedience to the Word, so the husband's is not conditional on the wife's obedience to the Word. Husbands and wives are to fulfill their God given roles regardless of what the other spouse is doing. The marriage relationship works well when both members are trying their best to do what God has called each to do.

4. Parent/Child: Children are to obey their parents in all things. This assumes the parents are not asking the child to do anything against God's character (immoral). Kids, even when you don't want to do it, God is still calling you to obey. Stop fighting your parents. The freedom you seek will not be gained by rebellion. Just as all of become free in Christ when we submit to Him, you will enjoy more freedom in your family when you submit to and obey your parents. Parents are not to exasperate (be unreasonable, inconsistent, perfectionist) with their children. Instead, they are to raise children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph 5:4). Exasperating causes our children to lose heart. Raising them in Christ gives them a foundation that will benefit them for their entire life (Pr 22:6).