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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Colossians 3.

(2013).

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But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

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Colossians 3

Topics.

- If you are raised with Christ, seek the things above.
- Your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- When Christ who is your life appears you will appear with him in glory.
- Put on the-new-self, which is being renewed after the image of its creator.
- Christ is all, and in all.
- Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.
- In God there is no partiality.

The Previous Chapter: in the previous chapter Paul was concerned that false teachers were deluding the Colossian brothers and sisters by telling them that faith in Christ was not enough for salvation. With plausible arguments false teachers were drawing them back to religious customs, regulations, traditions and the legal demands of the law. Paul spent the entire chapter brilliantly explaining to the Colossians that everything they needed for salvation is in Jesus Christ and in him alone.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

Paul told the Colossians to have this letter read to the church in Laodicea and instructed them to read the letter he had written to the Laodiceans (Col. 4:16).

If you are Raised with Christ, Seek the things Above.

Colossians 3:1-4 ----- ¹If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds (affections in KJV) on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God ⁴When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

When addressing a group there is no way of knowing who belongs to Christ and who doesn't, so Paul begins by saying, 'if' you have been raised with Christ, showing that what he is about to say applies to all who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.

You have Been Raised with Christ.

Paul's words, "If then you have been raised with Christ (v1) immediately takes our minds to the previous chapter in which Paul told those who had been water baptised: -

- You have been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also *raised with him through faith* in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead." (Col. 2:12)

And to his words to the Ephesian brothers and sisters: -

- Even when we were dead in our trespasses, God made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved and *raised us up with him* and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, (Ephes. 2:5-6)

In our own strength we can no more ascend than a bar of iron can lift itself up' from the earth, but God's power and Christ's love working through our faith is a powerful

magnet drawing us upward. God's majestic design of the Gospel is not merely to give rules, but mainly to produce passions and supply motives to live a life worthy of Christ's name.

The words, "You have been Raised with Christ" (v1) carry two ideas: -

1. It is every brother and sister's privilege that they have risen with Christ, meaning they have benefited by the resurrection of Christ, and by virtue of their faith and their union with him they are justified and redeemed and will be raised to eternal life and everlasting glory with the Lord. This is guaranteed to those who are in Christ because it is founded on God's promise and He cannot lie, thus the reason Paul can say that those who are in Christ have been raised with Christ with such confidence and in the present tense.

Added to this the Scriptures picture Christ as being the Head of the body and as with any body where the head is the body must be. Paul with the words, "If then you have been raised with Christ (v1) is not only contrasting the believer's former state of being alive to the world but dead to God and their present state, dead to the world but alive to God but is also contrasting the mental and spiritual earthly state and abode of the unbeliever to the mental and spiritual heavenly state and abode of the believer (1 Co 15:47, 48).

Paul in his letter to the Ephesians wrote, "God raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places (Ephes. 1:20) and is now telling the Colossians and by extension every faithful brother and sister in Christ that by God's promise we are already seated in Christ as our Head and in our union with him are by faith already seated alongside the Lord in heavenly places.

2. Paul's statement; "If then you have been raised with Christ" (v1) or more correctly "If then you have been raised together with Christ," implies that a definite act has taken place. This definite act is named in the previous chapter in which Paul told those who had been water baptised that they, "Had been buried with Christ in baptism, in which they were also *raised with him* through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. (Col. 2:12). Thus Paul is saying, "If from the heart and in faith you rose with Christ to a new spiritual life then seek those things which are above and let your aspirations, hopes and desires ascend there. The definite act or the thing that faithful brothers and sisters through water baptism have been raised to is; a new spiritual eternal and heavenly life to be lived in union with Christ.

It is through an intimate union of love between Christ and those who faithfully follow him and by faith in his death and resurrection that they 'Have died (v3).' Death in this context does not refer to a natural or human death or to being unaffected mentally or emotionally by earthly things because even though they are in Christ they are still living in the world and in a fallen corrupted body.

The phrase, "You have died" (v3) means they are dead to the law's demands and to ceremonial rites and religious works and to the condemnation of sin which gives the law its damning power it is in this manner that believers "Have died with Christ."

They are not only truly dead to all expectation of justification by the law or by keeping, religious rites, customs, works and traditions, but also live in freedom and the joyful expectation of an eternal future in everlasting glory knowing that it is in Christ alone that they are saved.

All hopes of happiness that this present world can give is secondary to the heart's passion to know the love of Christ and all their dreams and aspirations for life in this world take a secondary role to the things that are above.

This is because through faith in the Lord's resurrection those in Christ have risen to a new spiritual life united with God and with Christ and therefore from this union of love their affections are in heaven with Christ, he is the supreme passion and the attachment of their affections, their cares and their love. It is in this sense their minds are in heavenly places, meaning they are set on the things above seeking to dwell with the Lord in glory.

Seeking the things that are above: just as heaven and earth are contrary one to the other and both cannot be followed together since the affection to the one will weaken and abate affection to the other and since those in Christ are freed from self-effort in keeping religious rites, ceremonial laws and traditions they are through the Gospel invited to walk together with Christ in a union of love and from this love they are not only called to do-good and what is right, but when able help others in need so that by their behaviour and life they bring a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Set your mind and affections on things that are above: means to think on things that are good, pure, decent and right and fix the emotions, passions and affections on things that honour God.

Setting you mind on things of the earth: means only ever focusing on things that are devoid of God, craving after worldly success, fame, importance and power and being so fully consumed with money and how to make more that not only is no time given to God, but He is totally devoid of a person's life and their thoughts.

Dead to Sin: those that are in Christ are Dead to Sin, this is because sins dominion is broken and its power is gradually subdued in the following four ways: -

- 1 By God's grace working in the inner most being of every faithful brother and sister in Christ.
- 2 By the love of Christ that dwells in the heart of those who are in Christ.
3. By understanding and perceiving the wisdom of Christ teachings in regards to godly behaviour and applying them to our life.
4. By the indwelling Holy Spirit of God.

It is in this way that brothers and sisters are not only dead to sin in their affections and cravings but the lust of the flesh (self, pride, ego, greed etc.,) is gradually being extinguished and mortified as they grow in the grace and love of Christ.

To be dead then means this the passions and affections of those who have the grace of God, the love of Christ and the Holy Spirit, dwelling within them are transformed from craving after the things of this earthly and temporal world to having their passions and affections set upon the things that are above and eternal.

Though Christ is at this present time is one whom we have not seen; our comfort is that our life is safe with him. The streams of living water and the joy and contentment that flow from this faith into the heart by the influences of the Holy Spirit, the words of the Lord and by Christ himself changes the motivation and desires of the heart from craving after things to gratify self, ego, pride and greed etc., to seeking (howbeit not perfectly) after the things that please God and are worthy of Christ.

It is in this manner that the power of sin is being mortified and will continue to be mortified until Christ returns and those whose life is now hid with Christ are gathered together to be with the Lord in everlasting glory. It is with this glorious and majestic vision and promised eternal hope that those in Christ are motivated to seek their happiness in the things of God and set their affections on the things above and not on the things of this decaying earth and temporary world.

A man once wisely said, "I have never seen a car transporting the coffin of a dead person with a trailer attached and full of the dead person's material possessions." This clearly shows the vanity of setting our entire focus on building our lives solely on the temporary things of this world.

The true life of the redeemed lies in the other world, the eternal world, "We are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God", (v3), the new man has its livelihood in Christ. It is born and nourished from above; and the perfection of its life in this present world is imputed as a free and pure gift from God because of our faith in his most beloved Son the Lord Jesus Christ and our perfection is being kept for that glorious moment when Christ descends and all the redeemed are gathered together with him.

In that glorious and world changing moment the perfection that is now hidden will be revealed and the sons and daughters of God will be clearly manifested for all to see.

Dead to the World; Dead to Sin and Dead to Earthly Pleasures.

When Paul uses the word dead in this context it carries two ideas: -

1. That as Christ became literally dead in the tomb so we in virtue of our connection with him have become dead to sin, to worldly influences, sinful pleasures and to selfish ambition etc., meaning we no longer crave after these things or are driven by them.
2. we are to be to them as if we were dead and they have no more influence over us than the things of earth had over Christ in the grave. Christ by his death became insensible to all surrounding objects (as the dead always are) in death nothing had any power over him, it is in this sense that Paul says he is dead, but this does not mean that he was literally and totally numb to the appeals made to him by self, ego, pride, etc., or emotion-less to the influence of other people or anesthetized to the temptations of this world.

Rather Paul is saying, "He is dead, not only to pride to the pomp of life, the temptations of the world and the love of money, but also the law, religious rites and traditions as a means of justification." All of these have not only lost their power over him but ceased to influence him. It is in this sense that he was "Dead and his life was hidden in Christ in God" (v3) because the things of this busy world no longer had power over him.

Likewise since there is the same intimate union of love between Christ and his people that Paul had with the Lord what offends Christ also offends all who are in this spiritual relationship with him because the faithful in Christ like Paul out of their love for him greatly desire to be made just like the Lord in all things and are therefore willing to share in suffering with him even in the manner of his death.

NOTE: Being dead to the world does not mean being lazy to the world, the Gospel was not designed to make people inactive, stifle their own-efforts or cause people to do nothing. The effect of the Gospel is not to make one dead in regard to laying aside their natural energies since true religion will never produce a lazy person or one that is self-indulgent, but rather produce people engaged in doing-good and living a life that brings a good testimony to Christ as they go about doing whatever is set before them, whether it is raising a family, seeking a career, pursuing a talent or gift or being a minister in the Lord's service whatever it is in life we are doing.

Obviously not every brother and sister in Christ is called to minister, teach, or serve the Lord in full time capacity, but we are all called to do, all as unto the Lord and aim live a life that honours God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Your Life is Hidden with Christ in God.

Paul's statement, "Your life is hidden with Christ in God" (v3) not only carries the idea of secrecy, but also denotes security because Jesus himself said, "Because I live you also will live" (John. 14:19). Christ is at present a hidden Christ, or one whom we have not seen; but this is our comfort, that our life is hid with him, and laid up safely with him (another reason those in Christ love him whom they have not seen) (1 Peter 1:8).

In this sense our comfort of happiness is out of sight since the one who fills the redeemed with such inexpressible joy is sitting at the right hand side of God in heaven unseen and hidden from unbelieving human eyes and seen only by the redeemed through spiritual eyes of faith in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The language, "Your life is hidden with Christ in God" (v3) is most likely taken from treasure which is hidden or concealed in a place of security with the idea being that eternal life is an invaluable jewel or treasure which is laid up with Christ in heaven where God is. There it is safely deposited. It has this security, that it is with the Redeemer, and that he is in the presence of God and therefore nothing can reach this invaluable jewel or take it away.

It is now laid up far out of our sight, and far from the reach of all our enemies, and with one who can, "Keep that which we have committed to him against that day" (2 Tim 1:12).

Our eternal life therefore, is as secure as it could possibly be made. The true condition of the redeemed is that though they are dead to this world they have immortal life and that life is secure in the holy keeping of their Redeemer who is now in the presence of God.

It is from understanding this majestic and awe-inspiring glory that God's eternal inheritance is being kept in heaven for every faithful brother and sister in Christ that they are called to set their affections on the things above and regard themselves as living for heaven.

Christ is the Treasure of those who are Redeemed.

Jesus himself said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt 6:21). Christ by his Spirit and by love lives in the heart of those who faithfully follow him and in this sense they are seated in heavenly places with the Lord. He is not only the passion of their hearts, but also their best thought and in this sense their life is hidden in him. The union of love between the Lord Jesus and the redeemed is so close that it might be said that the one lived in the other.

When Christ who is your Life Appears.

Paul's words, "When Christ who is your life" (v4) carry two ideas: -

1. Though every brother and sister in Christ now lives on earth surrounded and affected by the trials, cares and anxieties of this life and their own inward life is full of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations their true and authentic life is the Spirit of Christ dwelling within. It is from this hidden life that they are motivated to behave according to the principles Jesus has taught meaning they aim to do-good, what is right and live to reflect the hidden life of Christ dwelling within and to honour God.
 2. The words, "Your life in Christ" means those in Christ do not trust in their natural life i.e., their own self-effort in keeping religious rites, customs and traditions to be justified, but rather they trust in their spiritual life of faith and on the righteousness of Christ. They know that in Christ they are dead to the Law in the sense that it has no power over them to condemn them to eternal death so they walk in the 'newness of life' that they have in the Lord fully trusting in him for salvation to eternal life in contrast to trusting in their own self-efforts to attain to it.
- Jesus said, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16).

Faith fastens upon this love; "Christ gave himself for me" And those who have true faith live by this love and by this faith.

You will appear with Christ in Glory.

The magnificent, wonderful and awe-inspiring words, "When Christ appears, then you also will appear with him in glory" (v4) refer to the following words Paul wrote to the brothers and sisters at Corinth.

- We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed, because this perishable (corruptible in KJV) body must put on the imperishable (incorruption in KJV), and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable (corruptible in KJV) puts on the imperishable (incorruption in KJV), and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:51-54)

And also to the following celebrated, awesome and humbling words he wrote to the brothers and sisters in Thessalonica: -

- The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God and the dead in Christ will rise first then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18).

It is when this breathtaking and world changing event takes place that those whose life is hidden in Christ will appear with him in glory (Col. 3:3-4).

Put to Death what is Earthly in You.

Colossians 3:5-9 ----- ⁵Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming. ⁷In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices.

Idolatry: means image-worship it refers to an image made for worship i.e. and idol and by implication a heathen god or the worship of such gods.

Image: means a likeness or resemblance, i.e., to be like a statue or profile and carries the idea of the faintness of a copy.

Sexual Immorality: refers to orgies, unlawful sex, adultery and the practice of adult sex with a young child and such like things.

Covet: (covetousness) means; to set the heart upon, to desire, long for or lust after (rightfully or otherwise) it carries the idea of holding onto or desiring more than one has or needs (the practice of greediness) and embraces those who live a lifestyle of unlawful sex, orgies adulteries and sexual immorality to fulfil their own lust and to anyone whose heart is craving after and worshipping and exalting another person as a god (an Idolater).

By implication covet: can refer to those who are not honest and true and who use pressure or coercion to force or entice others to fulfil their own selfish need or ambition and to anyone who intentionally deprives somebody of money or property by dishonest means because they are greedy and eager for gain.

The commandment "You shall not covet" exposes human selfishness, pride, ego, lust, and greed etc.

It reveals the dysfunctions and aberrations that are imbedded within our fallen corrupted human nature that hinder us from attaining to the perfection of God's Holy law, it exposes our self-centredness in our desires for more than we need, our excessive avariciousness toward materialism, our overeating of tasty foods the craving to be important or esteemed, our sensual and lustful thoughts, the desire to be rich and have abundantly more than we need etc.

The commandment, "You shall not covet" shines a spotlight on our self-interest, it highlights our lack of willingness to give to those less fortunate and those in need, it exposes our degrading, resentful, bitter and jealous thoughts of others and the list goes on.

In summary the command, "You shall not covet" embraces all those attitudes and thoughts that dwell within our members that are contrary to the law of love and the Holiness of God which means the entire human race is held guilty before the law and therefore it legally has the right and the power to condemn us all to both temporal and eternal death which it does without hesitation, compassion or mercy.

Thus, the Royal Majesty, the wonder and the glory of the Good News of the Gospel.

- God through Christ has cancelled the record of debt that stood against us with its Legal demands" (the debt being all our trespasses and sins) (Col 2:13-14).

Putting off the Old-Self.

Sexual immorality, evil desire, covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, slander, obscene talk and lying are all referred to as being earthly and belonging to the Old-self. the Old-Self is also called the Old Man and the Flesh it is that nature in us that is contrary to the nature of Christ i.e. humble kind, forgiving, compassionate merciful which is called the New Man or the Spirit this is what the Bible means when it says put off the Old Man and put on the New Man or walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh.

Though not all in Christ are called to serve the Lord in full time ministry all are called to put off the Old Man and to put on the New Man.

In modern language the Spirit is called the higher nature while the flesh is referred to as the lower nature. It is because of this lower nature in us all that not one of us can attain to the Holy perfection the law demands and why we need to trust in Christ for our righteousness and not our own self-effort because the flesh, the Old Man, the lower nature hinders and limits us from attaining to that standard of righteous we desire.

Thus: the reason Paul says, "The new-self, is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (Col 3:10) showing that Paul understands that putting on the New-Self will be an ongoing process until that glorious, awesome and breath-taking day when the Lord Jesus Christ returns.

Until this majestic world changing event comes every brother and sister in Christ is saved by faith in Christ and by God's grace, and all called to put on the New Man and walk in the Spirit (doing what is right, good and noble) until the trumpet sounds and Christ returns so that while living here on earth our life honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of Christ.

The Old Nature (Flesh) ----- The New Nature (Spirit).

Attracted to sin ----- Attracted to righteousness.

Not with Christ ----- With Christ always.

Is condemned already ----- Justified already.

Sinful always ----- Righteous always (by faith).

Feed by Satan's power ----- Feed by Christ power.

Will decay ----- Has eternal life.

The flesh is carnally minded, meaning it sensuous and full of cravings which incite to sin, it is always minded to satisfy the demands of its own selfish needs and desires, but is never satisfied. It never considers God and is opposed to the higher divine nature and therefore will never subject itself to God.

From a worldly view the flesh may appear to be very decent and good in many instances, but from a heavenly view is sinful because the nature of the flesh is such that it denies God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Putting no confidence in the flesh means never trusting in self-effort to be counted righteous before God or to earn salvation that leads to eternal life.

Put on the-New-Self, which is Being Renewed after the Image of its Creator.

Colossians 3:10-11 -- ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. ¹¹Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

The words "Put on the New-Self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (v10) shows that it is God who has created the New-Self. This New-Self is the Spirit of Christ that dwells within every brother and sister in Christ.

God in His eternal mind planned and purposed before the foundation of the world that His Son the Lord Jesus Christ would be the Saviour of the world and that every humble and repentant sinner who came to Christ in faith would be indwelt by the Spirit of Christ and in this manner their heart, mind, passions and desires would be transformed by Christ's indwelling love from seeking after earthly, worldly and temporal things to desiring and seeking after God and the eternal things above.

This is what takes place in the heart of every repentant sinner who humbles themselves before God and accepts Christ as their Saviour to eternal life. From this moment on every brother and sister in Christ is called to live according to this New-Self that God has created within them through their faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ is All, and in All.

The glorious, majestic and uniting words, "Christ is all, and in all" (v11) means that all the eternal promises made to Abraham, Isaac Jacob and Israel are no longer restricted to the Jews, since all these promises are all in Christ therefore whoever is in Christ whether Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, noble or lowly, male or female it matters not since everyone in Christ is the Lord's treasured brothers and sisters, and the adopted children of God and as such become rightful heir to all the eternal promises made to Israel.

This is what the words, "Christ is all, and in all" means, he is no longer only the Messiah and Christ of Israel but the Christ and Lord of whoever humbles themselves before God and accepts him as their Saviour to eternal life. Jesus himself said, "Whoever comes to me I will never cast out (John 6:37) it is in this sense that Jesus is all in all (i.e., he is in all who come to him).

God's chosen Holy and Beloved Ones.

Colossians 3:12-15 - ¹²Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

How beautiful and comforting are Paul's words, "God's chosen ones, holy and beloved" (v12) this is how the eternal Almighty God the source of all life and creator of all things views those in Christ. We may not see ourselves as very holy or worthy of being loved by such an awesome and Holy God, but in spite of how we may view ourselves if we are in Christ God looks upon us as chosen, holy and with love since it is our faith in His beloved Son that God counts as our righteousness and not our own self-effort.

Knowing that God loves every brother and sister in Christ with the same love and the same grace we are all called to treat each other with same love, compassion and kindness as God has shown to us through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, being quick to forgive each other since not one of us is without sin.

NOTICE: the glue that holds the body of Christ together is not dogmatic, legalistic doctrine but love (v14). It is not forcing every brother and sister in Christ to agree to every detail of the Bible (outside of the gospel of Christ) as we understand it to be that unites the body of Christ in perfect harmony, but love as verses twelve to fourteen so clearly detail, it is these attitudes of love and acts of kindness that are the cement that holds the body of Christ together.

Let the Word of Christ Dwell in you Richly.

Colossians 3:16-17 - ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Paul's words, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom," (v16) primarily refers to behaviour not legalistic dogmatic doctrine we know this because Paul goes on to say, "Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus" (v17) meaning live and speak as though Christ is alongside you.

Four reasons God calls us to live in this manner: -

1. So that whatever is said or done will honour God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Living in this way will hold the body of Christ together in unity and harmony.
3. It will keep us from physical, sexual, emotional and spiritual harm and from getting into trouble.
4. Living this way will encourage those with a right heart attitude to seek after God.

In God there is No Partiality.

Colossians 3:18-25 --- ¹⁸Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. ²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. ²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. ²²Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. ²³Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. ²⁵For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

Notice the balance in these relationships: -

Husbands and Wives: wives are called to submit to their husband, while the husband is called to love his wife. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians he said: -

- Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephes. 5:25).

And in his letter to the Colossians he wrote: -

- Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them" (Col. 3:19).

So this is not about a wife submitting to a domineering controlling man, but to one that is prepared to sacrifice his life for her. For this type of husband his wives well-being and happiness is more important than his own so in this sense the picture is of a wife submitting to her husband's love and not one of a woman submitting to an overbearing, oppressing, dominant controlling and intimidating man.

Parents and Children.

Children are called to obey their parents, while the parents are called not to provoke their Children, meaning they are not to do anything to cause the child to become discouraged (in themselves and in their faith) which means that the parent is to do everything from love.

Masters and Slaves.

Slaves are called to obey their masters and in the next chapter masters are told to treat their slaves justly and fairly, knowing that they also have a Master in heaven (Col 4:1). When one meditates on the overall teaching of Paul in these verses in contrast to focusing on one aspect it becomes obvious that in all human relationships everyone should treat each other justly and fairly regardless of the position of authority or lack of it especially when one considers that the Lord Jesus Christ is our master (Col 4:1) and as such laid his life down for us clearly showing that we are all called to treat others with fairness and with respect.

Paul sums this all up by saying, no matter who you are or what position in life you hold or don't hold, no matter whether single, or married, noble or lowly, rich or poor, a boss or a worker whatever your state in life or whoever you are do everything as if you were doing it for the Lord because, In God there is no partiality (v25) meaning God has no favourites and will judge all of us according to how we treat other humans.

NOTE: since the Bible is God's word it reveals His perfect will and teaches the perfect standard since it cannot teach anything less, thus the reason and need for grace since neither husbands, wives, children, parents, bosses or workers attain in utter perfection to the high calling in Christ, nevertheless this should be the aim and focus of those who are in Christ.

End