

# Redeeming Marriage

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*Rocking the Roles: The Christ-Centered Household*



# Colossians 3:12-17

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Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,<sup>13</sup> bearing 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.<sup>14</sup> And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.<sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.<sup>16</sup> Let 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. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.



# Colossians 3:18–4:1

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<sup>18</sup> Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. <sup>19</sup> Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. <sup>20</sup> Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. <sup>22</sup> Bondservants, 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. <sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. <sup>25</sup> For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality. <sup>4:1</sup> Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.



# Outline

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1. Understanding the Household
2. Christianizing the Household
3. Keeping Christ Central in Your Household



# 1. Understanding the Household

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Colossians 3:12–4:1



# 1. Understanding the Household

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## (a) The Household Code Was a Common Literary Form

- ❖ Similar codes appear in Aristotle's *Politics* and in Philo
- ❖ Three basic relationships: husband/wife, parent/child, master/slave



# 1. Understanding the Household

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## (b) Ancient Households Were Different Than Ours

- ❖ More like *Downton Abbey* than *Leave It to Beaver*
- ❖ The “paterfamilias” held supreme authority
- ❖ Arranged marriages
- ❖ Fewer legal rights



# 1. Understanding the Household

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## (c) How Do We Read These Texts? “Cultural Transposition” (Stott)

- ❖ Do not ignore the text
- ❖ Do not reproduce ancient social structure
- ❖ Apply enduring principles



## 2. Christianizing the Household

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Colossians 3:12–4:1



## 2. Christianizing the Household

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### (a) Paul dignifies every member of the household

- ❖ Ancient codes focused almost exclusively on the household ruler
- ❖ Paul directly addresses wives, children, and slaves



## 2. Christianizing the Household

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### (b) Paul subjects every member of the household to Christ

- ❖ “as is fitting in the Lord” (v. 18)
- ❖ “you are serving the Lord Christ” (v. 24)
- ❖ “you also have a Master in heaven” (4:1)

*The household no longer revolves around the paterfamilias. It revolves around Christ.*



## 2. Christianizing the Household

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### (c) Paul relativizes human authority under Christ's Lordship

- ❖ Husbands: love, do not be harsh
- ❖ Fathers: do not provoke
- ❖ Masters: be just and fair

*Authority remains — but it becomes delegated authority, accountable to the Lord Jesus.*



## 2. Christianizing the Household

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### (d) Paul situates the household code within broader instruction

- ❖ Prior to specific instruction to wives, husbands, etc. Paul gives “one another” commands
- ❖ Submission does not suspend the other privileges and obligations of discipleship.



## 2. Christianizing the Household

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### What Biblical Submission Is

- ❖ *A Christian woman's willing disposition to honor, support, and follow her husband's wise and godly leadership as they seek to follow Christ together.*



## 2. Christianizing the Household

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### What Biblical Submission Is NOT

- ❖ Bowing to a husband's every wish
- ❖ Following ungodly or unwise leadership
- ❖ Tolerating abuse



# 3. Keeping Christ Central in Your Household

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Colossians 3:12–17



# 3. Keeping Christ Central in Your Household

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## (a) Be Clothed in the Character of Christ (3:12-14)

### ❖ Practical Skill:

- ❖ Ask “What would a patient/humble/kind spouse do right now?”
- ❖ Then respond like that

“The only way to get a quality in reality is to start behaving as if you had it already.” — C.

S. Lewis



# 3. Keeping Christ Central in Your Household

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## (b) Be Ruled by the Peace of Christ (3:15)

❖ The harmony between believing spouses is more important than most disagreements

❖ Practical Skills:

❖ listening, apologizing, forgiving, de-escalating, seeking understanding



# 3. Keeping Christ Central in Your Household

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## (c) Be Filled with the Word of Christ (3:16)

❖ Parallel with Eph. 5: “Be filled with the Spirit” — Word and Spirit belong together

❖ Practical Skills:

❖ Build personal devotional habits; use Scripture to encourage your spouse before your correct



# 3. Keeping Christ Central in Your Household

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## (d) Be Thankful for the Grace of Christ (3:15-17)

### ❖ Practical Skills:

- ❖ Express gratitude and say thank you
- ❖ Learn to notice evidences of grace in your spouse
- ❖ 10:1



# 3. Keeping Christ Central in Your Household

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## (e) Be Devoted to the Name of Christ (3:17)

- ❖ The name of Christ becomes the governing priority for all of life
- ❖ Practical Skills:
  - ❖ Prioritize worship. Order family life around Christ.
  - ❖ Ask: What best honors the name of Christ in this situation?



# Summary

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1. Understanding the Household
2. Christianizing the Household
3. Keeping Christ Central in Your Household
  - ❖ Build your marriage around Christ's character, peace, word, grace, and name

