

Let's Worship God

8th-13th April 2019
Colossians



Colossians

Monday - Colossians 3:20; Proverbs 6:20-23 - Children

One of the great tragedies of the modern era is the lack of respect that children have for their parents. Many parents seem to have given up completely any idea that it is their responsibility to control or discipline their own children, and consequently children grow up with no concept of obedience to any authority.

The apostle Paul reinforces the clear teaching of the rest of Scripture (Ex. 20:12, Lev. 20:9, Deut. 5:16, Prov. 1:8 etc.) when he commands children to obey their parents 'in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord'. There is the obvious limitation to obedience if the command of the parents requires something contrary to the will of God, but in all other circumstances, children are to be obedient to their parents.

Such teaching is difficult in days when society teaches children to assert their own rights and to take command of their own lives. When parental attitudes and values are seen to be outmoded and old fashioned and any kind of restriction on personal liberty is an affront. For children growing up in a Christian home the choice is very clear indeed. Are they going to seek to go their own way, which may well gain the approval of their friends, even if it goes against the wishes of their parents, or are they going to follow the teaching of Scripture and be obedient to their parents, even when they think their parents are being too restrictive?

For the obedience to be 'well pleasing in the Lord' it must not be unwilling or resentful, but rather joyful, acknowledging that faithfulness to God requires cheerful obedience to those to whom God has given responsibility for their care and nurture.

Questions

1. How can we best encourage children - both at home and those in the congregation - to be more obedient to their parents?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the children in the congregation.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. Colossians 4:6

Praise: Psalm 81 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Colossians

Tuesday - Colossians 3:21; Deuteronomy 6:1-9 - Parents

One of the wonderful things about divine revelation is the absolute fairness that it exhibits. Paul did not simply exhort wives how they should act towards their husbands, he also directs husbands regarding their role in the marriage relationship. So it is with regard to parents and children. Having urged children to be obedient, he then turns the spotlight onto the parents, and especially, the fathers. If parents are to have a realistic expectation of the kind of joyful and willing obedience that they would like to have from their children, they must be very careful that their behaviour and attitudes do not exasperate their children and cause them to lose heart.

Although this injunction is directed specifically at fathers, the teaching contained in it should apply equally to mothers. It is the responsibility of fathers as the head of the home, to create an atmosphere of love and confidence, to take the lead in the discipline, teaching and training of the children. It is interesting that Paul does not focus attention here upon harsh discipline, but on encouragement. A father who is inconsistent in his teaching or in his discipline or in his own personal life, will quickly discourage his children and make them resentful. The child must never be made to feel that he can never do anything right and that anything that he does is inadequate. The child who is never appreciated nor commended will very quickly lose heart.

William Hendriksen puts it very well when he highlights how a Christian father should behave towards his children; 'a good father spends time with his children, teaches, entertains, and encourages them, and by his example as well as by outright, verbal instruction, points them to Christ'.

The role and responsibilities of parents are indeed onerous and can only properly be fulfilled in dependence on and in the strength and wisdom of God.

Questions

1. Is the atmosphere in your home such that children find it easy to obey?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the parents in the congregation.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. Colossians 4:6

Praise: Psalm 82 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Colossians

Wednesday - Colossians 3:18-4:1 - Slaves & Masters

Slavery was very common in the ancient world and although the practice was allowed under Old Testament law Gen. 15:16, Lev. 25:44-46, Ex. 22:1-3, it was always strictly controlled and its harshness mitigated Ex.21:7-11; Ex. 21:26-27. In the Roman world it is estimated that at one time about one third of the inhabitants belonged to the slave class through debt, kidnapping, purchase, birth from slave parents or as prisoners of war or convicts. The apostle Paul does not seek to overthrow the slave system nor yet encourage slaves to revolt against their masters; his message to both slaves and masters is designed to make the system as acceptable and pleasant as possible. He urged slaves to wholeheartedly serve and obey their masters and for the masters to be kind to their slaves.

The instruction Paul gives to the slave is very relevant for workers and students today! He tells them that they are to do their work for one purpose alone, and that is to please the Lord. What a revolution in working practices there would be if even professing Christians were really to do their work 'as to the Lord'. Whatever work is done, says Paul, must not be done merely to gain advantage, whether that be promotion at work or good grades at school or university, but to gain the approval and the reward of the Lord.

Masters too, are to recognise that they also have a master to whom they must answer. Masters or employers are to be fair and just, not making unreasonable demands on their employees and giving them a fair recompense for work done. The same principle applies to them as to the slave/employee 'whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord, rather than for men'.

Questions

1. In the light of Paul's injunction, should a Christian be involved in Trades Unions and if so, how can he bring these principles to bear?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that you would be faithful in your work.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. Colossians 4:6

Praise: Psalm 83 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Colossians

Thursday - Colossians 4:1-6 - Prayer

As Paul comes towards the end of his letter, he gives instructions to the believers about both their inner and outward lives. He begins by dealing with that most important aspect of the inner life of the child of God, that of prayer. Just as the reading of the Word of God is God speaking to his people, prayer is the child of God speaking to his heavenly Father. Both things are vital for true spiritual health. Paul urges perseverance, alertness and thanksgiving in prayer.

The Lord Jesus Christ reminded his disciples of the need for perseverance in prayer when He told them the parable of the widow who received justice from a wicked judge because she continued to ask. Luke 18:1 - 8. If even a wicked judge will respond to persevering requests, how much more will the believer obtain an answer from a heavenly Father who loves him?

The kind of alertness needed is not just the wakefulness urged upon the disciples in Gethsemane, Matt. 26:41, but has more to do with an awareness in his praying of his own needs and those of his family, church and society as well as the dangers that ever threaten the believer and the church.

Prayer should never be separated from thanksgiving for all the mercies received from the hand of a sovereign God. No matter what the circumstances of his life and the difficulties being faced, the believer always has abundant cause to give thanks to God. He should always be aware of a full and free salvation, a promised home in heaven and the constant presence and help of the triune God. If it is sometimes hard to be thankful because of unpleasant circumstances, remember that Paul wrote this letter when he was in prison in Rome.

Questions

1. Why do we sometime give up praying for somebody or something? Is it right to give up and if so, when?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that you would persevere in prayer.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. Colossians 4:6

Praise: Psalm 84 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Colossians

Friday - Colossians 4:4-5; Ephesians 6:10-20 - Praying for Opportunities

It is right and proper that Christians should pray for one another (Eph. 6:18; James 5:16, 1 Tim 2:1). One constant theme in Paul's letters is his concern to pray for his fellow believers, especially for their growth in grace and in Christian character Col. 1:9 - 12.

There is a considerable difference between the way that Paul prayed for believers and also for what he asked them to pray for on his behalf than we so often experience in our own church circles. Our praying is so often materialistic in that we pray for health, success in exams, good weather and such like. Not that it is wrong to pray for such things, but they are largely absent from Paul's prayers, where the emphasis is more directly spiritual.

When Paul asks prayer for himself, it is not that he would be released from prison nor even that his imprisonment should be less onerous; he requests prayer that he might have opportunities to preach the gospel and that he would be given the ability to make it clear to those to whom he spoke.

Paul's desire was for the spread of the gospel of Christ. He places no conditions on how this was to be achieved; he merely asks to be presented with an open door, whether that was to be the open door of the prison or the opportunity to speak to somebody about Christ.

We should also pray this for ourselves, for the minister of the Word and for our fellow believers, not just that we will be given opportunities to witness, but that we might have the boldness to take the opportunities presented and the ability to be able to present the truth in a clear and gracious way.

Questions

1. Think about the opportunities that are presented to you each day to speak for the Lord and consider how you may best use those opportunities.

Prayer Points

1. Pray that you would take the opportunities God gives you.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. Colossians 4:6

Praise: Psalm 85 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Colossians

Saturday - Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Peter 3:8-16 - Our Words

There was a time in the 'Christian' west when virtually every home had a copy of the Bible and a large percentage of the population was familiar with some of its teaching. That is no longer the case. Not only do many people have no concept whatever of Biblical truth, they do not possess and never have possessed a copy of the Bible. How then are they to be reached with the only gospel that can save them?

The apostle Paul gives us the answer in verse 5 & 6 of Colossians 4. The Christian is to 'conduct himself wisely toward outsiders' and to speak to them in such a way that if offense is taken it will be because of the message and not the way in which it is presented. The only Bible that many people will read is the life of a faithful Christian believer.

When Paul tells them to 'make the most' of every opportunity he is literally telling them to 'buy up' the opportunity; do not simply wait for the opportunity to come to you; go after it and search it out.

Gracious speech for the people of Paul's day was what might be called 'sparkling conversation', speech that was witty or clever. That was not Paul's meaning. He wanted the speech of believers to be free from malice or abuse or words that would wound to no purpose. Rather, gracious speech would always be truthful and loving. That does not mean that truthful and loving words do not sometimes wound or cause offense; the sinner does not like to be reminded of his sin, nor the erring Christian of his backsliding, but the purpose of those words is to bring to repentance and to restore to the favour of God.

Words that glorify God, exalt the Lord Jesus and show men how to please God are 'gracious words, seasoned with salt'.

Questions

1. Think about how you can ensure that you always 'conduct yourself with wisdom towards outsiders'.

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. Colossians 4:6

Praise: Psalm 86 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that
Ezra read from
the book of the Law
day after day
and that
the people of God
were filled with joy!**

Let's Worship God is produced for the RP Global Alliance
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