



A new creation focus through Colossians ...

Some Family Dynamics

The backbone of every society, including the church of the living God, is the family. The devil, the god of confusion and the author of rebellion, therefore has always done everything possible to destroy the family unit. Men and women do not get married with the plan and intention of being miserable, but marriages often end up in divorce, or with major hard feelings or bare toleration between the husband and wife; from where did all this destruction come? The first family had to deal with the oldest brother in the family murdering the second son; the picture has not changed since the early chapters of Genesis, and whence cometh all this dissension and hatred? God,

then, in bringing into existence "a new and living way," is also presenting instruction which will restore and enhance the happy family living experience.

- ▼ **Wives** — The first set of exhortations is going to come to the women. "Wives," addresses the apostle Paul, "be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord" (Colossians 3:18). In this day and age, those tend to be "fighting words"! But the scripture paints a long and consistent picture that women are more designed to be in a supporting role, and that they in the marriage relationship are to be submissive to their husbands. The simple question that comes to mind here is: who is smarter, "us" or God? The obvious answer is God, but to get women to realize that the marriage is going to work much more harmoniously is they are subject to their husbands is a difficult challenge. So if the husband is not running contrary to the principles of the scripture, the wife should work to make it work, "as is fitting in the Lord." It is true, but it requires the Christian wife to be able really to trust God, as the apostle Peter put it: "Entrust [your] souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right" (1 Peter 4:19).
- ▼ **Husbands** — Next, some instruction for the men. "Husbands," says Paul, "love your wives and do not be embittered against them" (Colossians 3:19). "As Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her," affirmed the apostle in another place, so husbands ought to love their own wives (Ephesians 5:25). A loving husband oversees the family operation in an intelligent and disciplined manner, thinking ahead and planning ahead. He thinks of creative ways to communicate to his wife that he loves her, and reinforces that with all consideration, as he really lays down his life for the wife and family. Even Christian women, by nature, generally are more emotional than their men. The men have to understand those emotions, as Peter instructed, and because women are not men, and have different priorities and interests, the men "are not to be embittered against them."
- ▼ **Children** — Parents have the obligation to pass on to their children the instruction of the Lord. So, a pithy quote from the inspired apostle Paul is brought forward for the kids' edification and contemplation. "Children," he intones, "be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord" (Colossians 3:20). This is clear; no irrational arguments or tantrum-like behaviors are going to change this word from the Lord.
- ▼ **Fathers** — Dads have a tremendous responsibility, with the wife's full input and cooperation, to train children up in the ways of the Lord. "Fathers," is how the apostle calls them to attention, "do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart" (Colossians 3:21). Dads need to be consistent so the children already have a good idea of what is expected and what decisions will be rendered. They have to be reasonable, gathering input, before they hand out punishment or before they set a course or point out direction. Expectations need to be within the range of each child, and much instruction and training is necessary to help them meet those expectations. Those children need real encouragement, and wisdom is required to help them not to lose heart.

These instructions will help the family on its positive course, and defeat the devil's destructive efforts. May the modern Christian family heed all this inspired advice.

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