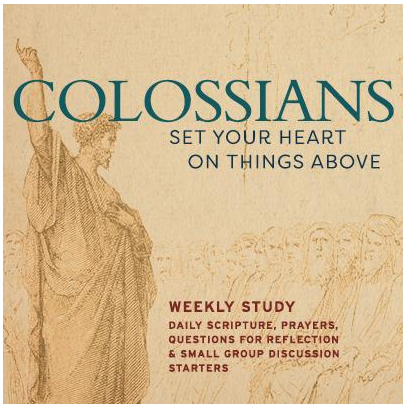


WEEKLY STUDY

Colossians - Week 10

We live in a world where roles and relationships have often been de-formed. Actually from the very beginning (see Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel), our misunderstanding, misuse, and even abuse of God's good creation has led to all kinds of brokenness in relationship. But as we submit to God, we find our hearts are better prepared to also serve one another with mutual love and respect. This week's teaching requires an understanding of the context of the Bible and the world we live in today. Take a deep breath, pray, and may God speak over you and the important relationships in your life.

Please note our prayer focus for the week in the box below. Join us in seeing what God will do as we unite in prayer.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from your own daily reflections and consider the Group Discussion questions below. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for the marriages of the people in your life. Pray for relationships between parents and children in all stages of life. May God be at the center of it all.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: COLOSSIANS 3.18-21 (NIV)

Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
[19] Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.
[20] Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
[21] Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

- Family relationships are never simple, but God has created us to love and serve one another in a way that allows each of us to thrive. Thinking through your own relationships, how do Paul's words instruct and challenge you? Where are you called to love, submit, obey and encourage? How is your relationship with God reflected in these words?

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- **Prayer Prompt: Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. (Colossians 3.12)**
- *Heavenly Father, I thank you for each of the close family relationships you have given to me. I ask for your guidance and grace as I grow. Amen.*

TUESDAY: MATTHEW 20.16 (NIV)

"So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

- Jesus said and did a lot of things that seem backwards in this world. Most things we see around us today would say that the first are first and the last are last! Even when his audience didn't know it, Jesus was pointing to the Kingdom of God. There, it is better to live humbly and put others before yourself. The most important thing that Jesus said about the Kingdom of God is that it is near—it is right at hand. So how are you called to live out the way of the Kingdom in your life right now?

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- **Prayer Prompt: If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. (Romans 12.18)**
- *Jesus Christ, Son of God, your life on earth demonstrated a different way to live. Help me to live in that way. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: EPHESIANS 4.2 (NIV)

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

- Let's admit it, relationships are hard. They require work, and work requires patience. To bear with one another love does not require pretending, rather it requires humility, gentleness, and patience. Which of your relationships are most challenging? What examples do you have of times when patience paid off?

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- **Prayer Prompt: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5.22-23)**
- *God, I confess that it is not easy to be completely humble, gentle and patient. I'm not yet complete in those traits. Would you show me one step I can take towards that aim? Amen.*

THURSDAY: JOSHUA 24.14-15 (NIV)

"Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. [15] But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

- "God reigns in this house and we will serve him!" To stick with Joshua's example, we must be determined that God's way is the best way. On our own, we waffle back and forth between the gods that we serve. So many things have been placed in positions of authority over us and our households. What if you practiced Joshua's declaration in your own home daily? What might look different? What little false gods might begin to fade away?

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- **Prayer Prompt: Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" (Matthew 4.10)**
- *God, you are the only one worth serving. As for me and my household, we will serve you! Amen.*

FRIDAY: PSALM 103.17-19 (NIV)

But from everlasting to everlasting
the Lord's love is with those who fear him,
and his righteousness with their children's children—
[18] with those who keep his covenant
and remember to obey his precepts.

[19] The Lord has established his throne in heaven,
and his kingdom rules over all.

- We are most alive when we are living full-out for our Lord who rules over all. God's kingdom is established in heaven but He reigns over us here on earth. The way that God reigns over those who fear him is rooted in his covenant with us. "I will be your God and you will be my people." When we submit our lives to him, his covenantal love holds us in our most important relationship of all.

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- **Prayer Prompt: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,**
  but fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Proverbs 1.7)
- Merciful God, I delight in your covenant with us. You didn't have to enter into such a relationship with me, but your promises hold true. You are my God and I am a child of God. Amen.

SATURDAY: COLOSSIANS 3.15-17 (NIV)

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. [16] Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. [17] And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

- As we return to last week's passage, consider how these words are also meant to inform our familial relationships between husband and wife, parent and child. As our relationships grow over time, we will find opportunities to teach and admonish one another. And when this happens in the context of Christ's message and a response of worship, we will find that we grow more and more in love with God and one another.

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- **Prayer Prompt: Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. (Philippians 1.27)**
- *God, will you come and transform each of my key relationships? Bring reconciliation, healing, and deep growth in your Spirit. Amen.*

GROUP DISCUSSION

Use the questions below to guide your conversation.

1. How do the qualities Paul describes earlier in Colossians 3, such as compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, forgiveness, and love, shape the way we understand his instructions about family relationships in verses 18–21?
2. Jacob described submission in healthy relationships as a willing choice to put others before ourselves, not a sign of inferiority. What might that look like in our everyday relationships, and what makes it difficult?
3. Paul calls husbands to love without harshness and fathers not to embitter their children. How can our words, tone, or habits either help people flourish or leave them discouraged? What might need to change in us?
4. Jacob emphasized that Scripture should never be used to justify mistreatment or silence someone facing harm. Why is it important to understand this when considering what it means to love and serve others as Christ calls us to?
5. Jacob pictured two people growing closer to one another as each grows closer to God. How have you seen your relationship with Christ change the way you relate to someone else? How can we pray for you?