

MESSAGE

RELATIONSHIPS WITH JESUS AT THE CENTER

JESUS AT THE CENTER | COLOSSIANS 3:18-4:1 | MAY 14/15, 2016 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

We Have Been Changed in _____:

Four Images of Who We Are Now (Colossians 1:2, 18)

The _____ - new identity

The _____ - new belonging

The _____ - new joining

The _____ - new beginning

We Have Been Changed in _____:

The Church as a Community of Communities (Colossians 3:18-4:1)

City-state (*polis*) and household (*oikos*) in the ancient world

The church as the new *polis* and our relationships as the new *oikos* in Christ

We Have Been Changed in _____:

Households Transformed for the Lord (Colossians 3:18-4:1)

Wives and Husbands - with the _____ of Christ

Children and Parents - for the _____ of Christ

Servants and Masters - in the _____ of Christ

STUDY GUIDE

1. What changed in your life most dramatically after you became a follower of Jesus? How did that change occur in your everyday life?
2. As we continue our series, "Jesus at the Center," we look this week at Colossians 3:18-4:1. Whether you are on your own or with a small group, begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through His word, and then read that portion aloud.
3. Background: This portion of Colossians builds from a common concept discussed at the time known as a household code. Aristotle and other ancient thinkers upheld the idea of the father as the head of the household with authority over 'lesser' members, including the wife, children, and servants. This household was seen as the basic unit of the greater society. If the households were strong, then the society would be strong.
4. Before looking at the specific guidelines for relationships seen in Colossians 3:18-4:1, read Colossians 3:1-17 again. What are a few key concepts about relationships within the church from this earlier section that should shape the way we read the coming section?
5. Now, look at the first relational grouping of wives and husbands in 3:18-19. What is the theme of this relationship in the household and what are both called to do?
6. Regardless of whether you are married, do you think these verses are easy or difficult to live out? Why would you say that?
7. Turn now to the next relationship of children and parents in 3:20-21. How would you characterize the relationships? What is Paul calling each party to do?
8. In the ancient world, the relationship of children toward parents was important throughout life. What do you think this looks like for us today?
9. The third and final relational grouping is that of servants and masters. These relationships were vital to household relationships, though very different from what we may understand about servitude. What instructions does Paul give to each party? What is common to both of them?
10. In some ways our work, whether inside or outside the home, parallels the instructions in 3:22-4:1. What does it mean for us to take these attitudes into our workplace?
11. If the church is the new society of God and the household is the basic unit of the society in the ancient world, what would you say is the significance of the household for our life together in the church? Why is this important for all of us?
12. What is one significant thing that God is speaking to you through this study? If you are on your own, you may want to write it down, pray about it, and then share it with someone later. If you are with a small group, share these things with one another and then pray for one another about these things.

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