

## “House Rules”

Colossians 3:18-4:1

Central Idea: Christ's rules should take precedent in all the believer's personal relationships.

### I. Wives - “Be subject”

- This command is not:
  - A command that women are subject to men in general, wives are to be subject to their own husbands
  - A statement on the value or worth of wives and women
  - License for husbands to treat their wives poorly
- This is based on the authority God has prescribed for the marriage relationship
- Be subject: To have an attitude that recognizes the husband's authority and to willingly defer to him
- Literally, in military contexts, “to arrange under rank”
- Should be done because this is suitable for the Christian
  - Jesus is the ultimate example of submission

### II. Husbands - “Love” and “Don't be Embittered”

- The husband is not to treat the wife as his subject
- This love is sacrificial love; Love that is all give, no take
  - Sacrifice your self-interests to do what is best for your wife
- “To no be embittered” is to not let a bitter attitude develop
- Being bitter is to be irritated mentally and cross verbally
  - Bitterness focuses in on the bad qualities, not the good

### III. Children - “Be obedient”

- Command is given directly to the children
  - Those old enough to understand, but not yet on their own
- Obedience implies a readiness to listen and carry out instruction completely
  - “All things” covers everything, but sin; No loopholes

- Children have ample opportunity to please God daily
  - Jesus is the ultimate example of obedience

### IV. Fathers - “Don't exasperate”

- Exasperate: To make angry or impatient; to annoy greatly
  - Don't habitually provoke, irritate, or antagonize
- The reason is so your children don't become discouraged
- Constant irritation can lead to discouragement and anger which can build up resentment

### V. Slaves - “Work heartily as to the Lord”

- Most slavery was due to extreme financial need or war
- Slaves should not just work while their master is watching, and then slack off when he leaves
- Work as if working for the Lord, Himself
  - This transforms attitude and performance, as any and all work becomes ministry and an act of worship
- Encouragement that deeds, both good and bad, will be repaid based on what has been done
- Slaves had no legal right to an earthly inheritance

### VI. Masters - “Grant justice and fairness”

- Treat slaves justly and fairly, as God does
  - Recognition of who God is transforms how we relate to, and treat, others
- Masters had complete control over their slaves, even to the point of death, but are spiritual equals
- Masters will give account for their treatment of their slaves
  - God's treatment of them should inform their own treatment of their slaves

Application:

- Allow Christ to be Lord of your relationships