

## Colossians

### “A Worthy Walk”

#### **III. Main Teaching:** 1:15-4:6

#### 3:1-4:6 **Walking in the Wisdom of Christ**

3:18-21 Pleasing in Christ

#### **3:20-21**

#### **“Grace Garments in the Family”**

#### **I. Intro.**

#### **II. 20 Adult making**

#### **III. 21 Parenting 101**

#### **I. Intro.**

Paul addressed what “*Grace Clothes*” looks on husbands and wives, now reveals what it looks like on children and parents. It is interesting that Paul is addressing human relationships, specifically the family unit. This reveals that these human interactions were very important to the early Church. Paul seemed to understand that what happened in the family and on the job had far reaching implications. We Christian’s can’t expect to leave a lasting impression with the truths about the person and work of Jesus if His impact isn’t visible in the most personal of our earthly relationships. Notice that Paul addressed the marriage and applying “*grace garments*” to both husbands and wives before he addresses children and parents. When a marriage is under the submission of Jesus Christ the family will be in harmony. There is no room in our witness for us to say to a lost and hurting world, “*Do as I say, not as I do!*” Instead what we hear over and over again is “**Imitate me as I imitate Christ!**”

## II. 20 Adult making

Vs. 20 If some chafed at the word “*submit*” in verse 18 as it relates to the wife’s exhortation to *voluntarily demonstrate love to their husband by support*; then children are going to have a similar reaction to this word “*obey*”. The Greek word has a dual meaning: “*to hear and to be under someone*”. A lot is mentioned today about “Children’s Rights” I believe they have the right and expectation in a Christian home according to Ephesians 6:4 to grow up in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord”. But they have responsibilities as well and the first is to obey their parents in all things, not just the things that please them. They are to recognize that their parents have authority over their lives. The only area where a child may disobey their parents is on the occasion where the parent is asking them to do something that that goes against God’s word. Children that grow up habitually not obeying their parents will grow up rebelling against all authority, teachers, police, employers and anyone else who tries to exercise authority over them.

- **Instruction is towards children**: Like the above two commands that Paul gave in the marriage this one as well is *mutually exclusive*. This command assumes that the “children” would be mature enough to comprehend and apply the command. As a parent and grandparent it is not the independence of the child that I object to. The truth is “*independence*” is a natural progression to becoming a productive adult. As parent’s we ought to be fostering independence, which ought to include good problem solving capabilities. What parents object to is the attempt to **exercise independence apart from personal responsibility**. Parents are in the “*adult making*” business not in the “*child rearing*” business. There are some in society with the mistaken notion that 30, 40 and 50 something *children* are cute!

This society has given people all the freedoms of adulthood without any responsibilities then wonders why people rebel at having to suffer the consequences of their actions. This has allowed some in the government to keep them attached to a seemingly never ending supply of sustenance, prolonging their irresponsibility and ensuring their continual support of that politician. I do not fault the children as they have a fallen nature that will always look to be on “*easy street*”. To many parents are:

1. **Either living through their children vicariously** in a false reality of wanting to be their child’s “*best friend*” or be seen as being “*cool*” (or whatever they are calling it today.) God has not placed us parents to be our children’s “*best friend*”! He has placed us there to instruct them and guide them into adulthood. Liking us will come when they are in the same position one day and realize that what we said no too and placed boundaries on had merit and reason to it.
  
2. **Or secondly, they lack instruction themselves in a cycle of irresponsibility that seems to be multi-generational.** I have observed this historical pattern of **generational irresponsibility** as “*adult children*” are raising “*adult children*” who have now started their own brood. This **generational irresponsibility** is spreading like a plague across this nation. Hard work, where a person has to forgo instant self-gratification has been replaced by an attitude that expects to be paid millions for no work. And again we have adult children (*called politicians*) who are ever so pleased (for a vote of course) to offer adult children just what they crave, more freedoms without any

responsibilities. This circular society has failed to anticipate one thing in their master plan for society....what happens when those who are responsible and hard-working stop working? Who is going to continue to pay for the Instant Fun when no one is responsible? The “*perpetual party*” will inevitably run out of “*party favors*” then what?

- **Children’s “Obedience” is not situational:** The **measure** of a child’s obedience is “*all things*” and the **motive** is to “*please the Lord*”. As adults, we understand that hard work and sacrifice it is the surest path to success. If our children are going to be successful the sooner they learn this, the better. **To prolong perpetual irresponsibility through willful disobedience is to diminish opportunity.**
- **Obedience greatest reward:** Obeying parents, motive is not to please the parents but it is “*well pleasing to the Lord*”. **It pleases the Lord because it preserves the sanctity and sanity of the family and society.** Obeying parents with the motivation of pleasing the Lord teaches the child that they are not just doing a duty, arbitrarily following a list of dumb and antiquated rules they are relationally living as pleasing the Lord. Parents need to impress upon children the need to develop and maintain their own personal relationship with Jesus. In “*obeying parents*” is a lesson of respecting all people and treating other better than one’s self. It is a way of life of peace, joy and love that makes a difference through self-denial and sacrifice for a great good and glory. Obedience makes a choice because it doesn’t want to lose the greater “*pleasing the Lord*” for the lessor “*the temporary pleasures of sin for a season*”.

### III. 21 Parenting 101

Vs. 21 The word translated “*fathers*” is translated “*parents*” in Hebrews 11:23. Notice that Paul starts out with a negative.... “*do not provoke*”. The word in the Greek means to “*stir up, arouse, or to irritate*” but in the context is in the present continuance tense which is saying: “*Don’t keep on badgering your children.*” It has to do with verbally harassing our children pointing out every little flaw to where they become convinced that they just can’t ever please us. They work hard doing their homework on time studying for their test but when the grade comes in all we can say is that they should have got an “A”. The goal of discipline and instruction is to build up not to tear down and destroy. There are three things parents do in their relationship with their children that can be irritating that they need to stop doing:

1. **Ignoring them**: Absenteeism is a great problem especially among fathers today. One survey in a town indicated that fathers spent only *thirty-seven seconds a day with their small children!* Parents who are so busy that they have no time for their children will soon find that his children will have no time for them. We can also ignore them when we don’t listen and just say no when they ask us for something. We need to give them the courtesy of at least listening to their request. Failure to do this will cause a child to feel as though they aren’t important and worthless. Cat Stevens sang a song called “*Cats in The Cradle*” about a father’s neglect and the sons promise that one day he would be just like you dad. And when the father got older the boy was disconnected to his father.
2. **Indulging them**: A second source of irritation is when the father tries to counter abandonment with materialism. Children know the difference between

***indulgence*** and ***intimacy***; and will not be “bought off ” for long. Children long for ***intimacy***, not for superficial ***indulgence***. If I was to ask most people what they valued most about their parents they would say that it was the TIME they spent with them. I can tell you as a father that my biggest regret is that I wasn't involved in their lives enough. It would also be what I would encourage young fathers today; you won't have another time like this to be involved in your children's lives.

3. ***Insulting them***: The third and final thing parents need to avoid that their children will find irritating is insulting them, putting them down. Parents try to live through their children and when they don't measure up to their expectations they often put them down. If you need to correct your child do so privately if possible so as to not embarrass them publically. When they are hurt don't be afraid to pick them up and hold them and tell them that you love them. Along with listening we need to pick our words of encouragement and instruction carefully and make sure that we pray with them. We must be careful not to compare or cause our children to have to compete against each other for our acceptance and approval. When a child doesn't receive the attention they need at home they will seek it elsewhere.