

Zion Lutheran Church, 15 S 4th St., Harrisburg, PA 17101

Tuesday Bible Study: Colossians / October 19, 2021

Opening Prayer Resource: *Lutheran Book of Worship*

O God, it is Your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of Your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to Your Church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Outline

Colossians & Philemon: 8 Studies for Individuals and Groups: N.T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides; InterVarsity Press

3:18-4:1 The Christian Household

Interpretation (A Bible Commentary for Teaching & Preaching): Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon by Ralph R Martin; John Knox Press

The flow of thought moves on to consider how the general principles, given out of 3:17, are to be worked out in specific situations. The call “Do everything in the name of Jesus” is an umbrella to cover all facets of life.

Colossians & Philemon: 8 Studies for Individuals and Groups: N.T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides; InterVarsity Press

Paul’s code for household relationships is remarkable for several reasons. Paul’s own fellow-workers included women and married couples, where it appears the women were, in our phrase, people in their own right. He doesn’t just tell wives, children, and slaves how to behave (as many pagan moralists of his day may have done). Their duties are balanced by the corresponding duties of husbands and parents and masters.

3:18-21

The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, by William Barclay; The Westminster Press

The wife is submissive to her husband; but the husband is to love his wife, and to treat her with all kindness. The practical effect of the marriage laws and customs of the times was that the husband became an unquestioned dictator and the wife became little more than a servant to bring up children and to minister to his needs. The one fundamental effect of this Christian teaching about marriage is that marriage becomes a *co-operation* and a *partnership* ...

The better a parent is the more he must avoid the danger of discouraging his child, for the parent must give discipline and encouragement in equal parts.

3:22-4:1

The Mighty & The Mysterious: A Study of Colossians by Heidi Goehmann; Concordia Publishing House

Slavery is a hot-button word and rightfully so. The term *bondservant* ... instead of slave more accurately represents the social conditions Paul and Timothy were addressing in Colossae. At the time of the New Testament, it was legal for someone to become a slave in order to pay off a debt. However, people also became slaves through conquest of their homeland ... Some masters cared for their bondservants, holding an employer-employee kind of relationship with them. Other masters were cruel and unjust...

When I read Colossians 3:22, the message that comes to mind is that even when the system is unjust, there is a way to reflect Christ, even as we work toward changing the broken system... The Letter to Philemon clarifies that Paul's message in Colossians 3 is *not* that slavery is good. Rather, his focus is on how believers are to act justly, even when others do not.

Questions for Personal Reflection

Colossians & Philemon: 8 Studies for Individuals and Groups: N.T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides;
InterVarsity Press

Paul offers only very brief guidelines about various relationships, and so he must have intended his audience to work out the details for themselves. It is no bad thing then, for us today to do the same. What different (but equally legitimate and biblical) ways of raising a family or relating to coworkers can you think of?

The Mighty & The Mysterious: A Study of Colossians by Heidi Goehmann; Concordia Publishing House

What responsibility does Colossians 4:1 bestow on anyone in charge of anything?

What are you in charge of, or whom do you have influence over? How does Colossians 4:1 apply to you?

Bible Memory Verse & Quote from Luther's Small Catechism

3:17 Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus

The Lutheran Study Bible, Concordia Publishing House

From the conclusion of the Table of Duties:

To Everyone

The commandments ... are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Romans 13:9

I urge ... that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone.

1 Timothy 2:1