

Colossians 3:18-25

Wives, submit 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 provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. 22 Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. 25 For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

As redeemed Christians, equal in standing before God, and heirs of the same inheritance of heaven, Christians will in this life strive to serve the Lord Christ in the ways He provides and in the vocations in which they find themselves. This service will not be seen as a burden, at least not when it is the obedience of faith, spurred by the spectacle of Christ's love on the cross. Rather, this service will be done heartily, that is, from the heart and with vigor. Our roles and vocations might not always seem impressive to men, to the people of this world, but insofar as they are carried out to the glory of our Lord, they are surely great and commendable, for they are performed according to our Lord's command and out of gratitude for His mercy.

As we look at things, our sinful nature is prone to devise rankings. It is better to be a parent than a child, for instance, it might tempt us to think. The parent is the boss, after all, we might suppose. But no, the parent is God's agent in the household, a servant of God serving for those entrusted to him or her. He or she does not wield authority according to his or her whim and for his or her own personal profit as a parent, at least not as a Christian parent, but for the good, temporal and eternal, of the children in his or her care. The same is true for the husband, not as the boss, but as the head of the household. He is to be like Christ for the Church, placing the well-being of those the Lord has committed to his care above his own. Any other such service would be service for men and not for Christ, whose love was selfless and not selfish, compassionate and not self-centered. In this way, the service of others in the household is made joyful and light, as love breeds love.

Everyone in the church stands as a child of God before the Father. Everyone has the same Christ. Everyone awaits the same heaven. Everyone serves the same Lord, although in different roles and vocations. When we remember that, and work to labor for the Savior with such an attitude—one centered in Christ and oriented toward His honor—good order is maintained and peace is fostered. May God grant us eager, willing, and glad wills, that we might bring glory to our Lord Christ and love to our brother or sister in Him through service of this sort. Amen.