



# WEEK SIX

COLOSSIANS:



**JESUS** at the  
**CENTRE**

..... of Our Families

Whitehill Church of Christ

July - Sept 2016

# JESUS - The Centre of our Families

Whitehill Church of Christ

Pastor Darryl Seip and Bonnie Seip

Sunday 4th September 2016

Sermon Notes



If Jesus is at the Centre of our FAMILIES

We Will Have to redraw the map

18 Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly.

20 Children, always obey your parents, for this pleases the Lord.

21 Fathers, do not aggravate your children, or they will become discouraged.

**Colossians 3:18-21 (New Living Translation)**

There are two Hebrews words used throughout the Old Testament that are translated as 'family'.

1. BAYITH : immediate family

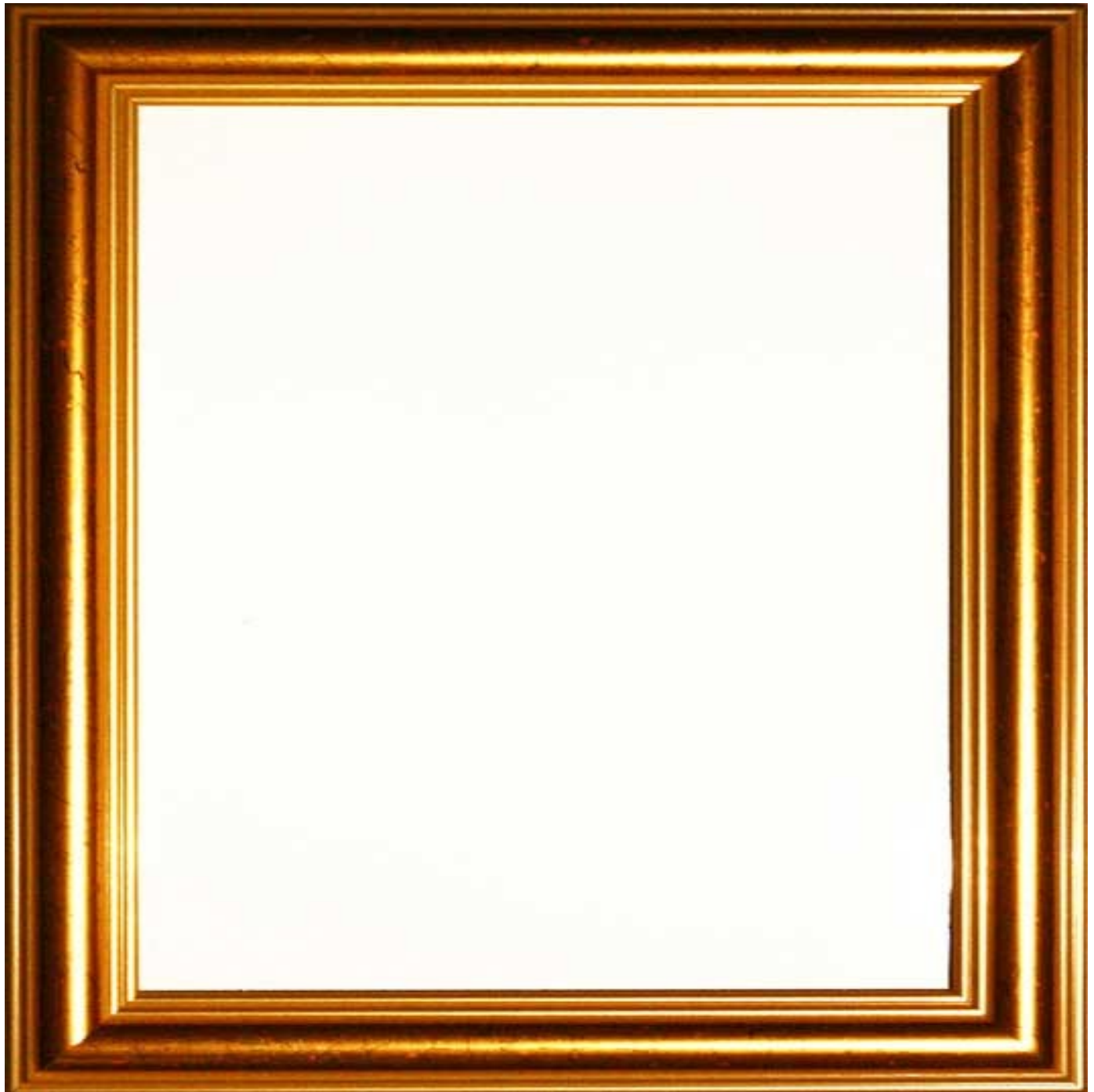
2. MISHPACHAH : tribe, clan or community

**Why is FAMILY so important in the faith formation process?**

1. God's design is family....

2. God's command is family....

3. God's strategy is family....



Write these commandments that I've given you today on your hearts. Get them inside of you and then get them inside your children. Talk about them wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night.

Tie them on your hands and foreheads as a reminder; inscribe them on the doorposts of your homes and on your city gates.

### **Deuteronomy 6:6-9 (The Message)**



# BIBLE STUDY NOTES

## (Home or Personal)

### INTRODUCTION:

This week we talk about Family Life. Briefly describe your family growing up. Your birth order. Grandparents. Aunts and Uncles and Cousins. What Family Gatherings were like if you had them. Changes in family situation—divorce death etc.

### OPEN:

Today we will look at what it is for Jesus to be the Centre of our Family. Whatever your family life was like when you were growing up and whatever family looks like for you now, we all can put Jesus at the Centre from NOW ON and change our family dynamic for the better.

### SERMON RECAP:

Go through the sermon notes once again.

Which parts or points stood out for you the most?

What does K.I.P.P.E.R.S stand for ?

### BIBLE STUDY:

Read Colossians 3:18-21

What strikes you as you read this short passage? Understanding family life in the ancient world, how would some of these statements seem to the new Colossian Christians?

Why is the issue of submission such a hot topic? What sort of things might submission include? What might it not include? Who is this specifically addressed to?

Fathers/Husbands are given 2 instructions. Why would this be the case? (Don't be harsh—don't aggravate your children)


What things do fathers ( or parents generally) do that exasperate or frustrate children?

### DISCUSSION

In pre-marriage counselling, one of the areas we address is family of origin. It is important for couples (and for everyone) to understand that the families we grew up in are usually very different. Most of the time there is no right and wrong way to do family life—just different ways. The challenge comes when people of 2 different sorts of families come together.

PREPARE / ENRICH, the pre-marriage course used by Darryl talks about 2 main issues in our family of origin - Family Closeness and Family Flexibility.

**Family Closeness** is defined as the emotional connection you felt growing up in your family.



Disconnected families act as a collection of individuals and tend to pursue interests outside of their family.

Overly Connected Families do EVERYTHING together and there is no independence. On a scale of 1-5 where would you see your family if 1 is totally disconnected and 5 is overly connected ?

**Family Flexibility** is about the family's ability to adjust to changes in roles as circumstances change.

Overly flexible families are so laid back that they never do anything the same way twice and there is no such thing as routine.

Inflexible families love schedules routine and regular habits. Everything is structured. On a scale of 1-5 where 1 is overly flexible and 5 is inflexible, where would your family be?

Discuss the differences between **Flexibility** and **Closeness** in your group.

Have you seen this type of dynamic at work in your family or others you know of?

Basically the point of this idea is that there is more than one way to have Christ at the Centre of our family life.

Of course what your family was like when you were growing up and what it has become when you left home (if you have) are 2 different things.

What things do you do differently to your family of origin?

What things do you do the same?

Read the following passages from Peter and Paul and see how they add to the understanding of what it is to be in a Christian household.

1 Peter 3:1-9

Ephesians 5:21-33

What "advice" would you give to someone about keeping Christ at the Centre of your family life—parenting, marriage, singleness or other relationships etc. From your experience to someone who may not have been through your family stage yet, what would you say? It may be.. "I have done this and it worked well for me" , or it may be "I have made these mistakes and I want to help you avoid making the same ones."

## **PRAYER**

Pray for each other that we can keep Jesus at the Centre of our Families.

# Jesus at the Centre ...of our Families

## Day 1

*“Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him. 11 In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us. 12 Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. 13 Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. 14 Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.”*  
*Colossians 3:10-14 (NLT)*

### **FAMILY SECRET.....**

One of our children (who shall be nameless) used to sleep in their school uniform. We didn't know this until years later, but the truth finally came out. When we would put them to bed in their pyjamas and turn their lights out, they would quietly get out of the PJ's and into their uniform and back into bed ready for the next morning.

I don't know if we were bad parents and didn't notice the crumpled uniform the next morning. We did appreciate the fact that the unnamed child was always up dressed and ready early. You've got to give them credit for time efficiency. You could have a sleep-in of an extra few minutes if you undressed from what you didn't need, to be wearing what you needed to wear for the next day.

In these verses today Paul talks to the Colossian Christians about the importance of getting dressed in the right “clothes”. He had talked previously about taking off the old nature like an old set of clothes. Now he addresses the importance of what the new wardrobe should look like. Some workplaces have a dress code. Schools usually require uniforms. Some functions require attendees to meet certain standards in what they wear. Some places even specify no shirt no shoes no service.


In this section, Paul says that it is fitting that we should wear certain attributes as our everyday outfits. Don't leave it out. Don't forget to wear these things. They are appropriate characteristics for people whom God has called to be holy.

Sometimes in our lives we have not been used to getting “dressed” like this. To pull out a suit if you haven't worn one for a while or to get into the high heels after wearing flats can be a bit uncomfortable. If we haven't been accustomed to acting that way it may take some time to get used to it.

But it is fitting to wear these attributes as God has saved us, reconciled us and called us to live like that.

What things listed in vs 12-14 could you add to your wardrobe?





**What did you hear?**

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**What did you think?**

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**What will you do?**

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**Now talk to God .....**

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# Jesus at the Centre ...of our Families

## Day 2

*“God loves you and has chosen you as his own special people. So be gentle, kind, humble, meek, and patient. [13] Put up with each other, and forgive anyone who does you wrong, just as Christ has forgiven you. [14] Love is more important than anything else. It is what ties everything completely together. “*

*Colossians 3:12-14 (CEV)*

### FASHION

Fashion is a fickle affair. What used to be trendy, now hangs in the retro section of your local Vinnies or Lifeline boutique. Actually you can pick up a bargain there... but I digress.

There used to be a set of rules for what should and shouldn't be worn with each other. Blue and green should never be seen except for another colour in between. Don't wear stripes and spots together. I'm sure you have your own set of rules for what you wear. (Does this go with that?)

We continue today thinking of the garment theme (taking off the old clothes and putting on the new) by talking about love as the item of clothing that goes with everything. (verse 14)

He begins this section by talking about the characteristic descriptions of the nation of Israel and applying them to the church. (verse 12) The qualities that he urges the Church to have are the ones recognised by Israel as the way God dealt with them – as His chosen or special people.

God wanted the nation to reflect His character to the people around them. Israel was to be God's "shop window" through which the Gentile nations could look and see the blessings that come to those who worship the Lord and serve Him only.


The nation of Israel failed miserably and instead the nations blasphemed God rather than worshipping him because of the conduct of the people. As it says in Romans 2:24 (God's Word Version) *As Scripture says, "God's name is cursed among the nations because of you."*

God's hope and Paul's prayer is that the Church, the new Israel, would treat others as God in Christ treated them and the world would know that we are Christ's disciples. Forgiveness, patience, gentleness and quiet strength are the sort of qualities that we are called on to possess. (verse 13)

But love is the accessory that matches everything. It is even more than that. Love is the overcoat, the garment that combines with everything. It is the item of clothing that never goes out of fashion. It is a cover for all other virtues. Love is the colour that matches anything. It is the thread that ties it all together.

As someone else said, the garment of Christian godliness isn't seamless. It is a patchwork of virtues sewn together with love. If love isn't closely tied to everything we do, the garment can be easily pulled apart.





**What did you hear?**

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**What did you think?**

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**What will you do?**

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**Now talk to God .....**

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# Jesus at the Centre ...of our Families

## Day 3

*“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. [17] And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”*  
*Colossians 3:16-17 (NASB)*

### **THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC**

*And I've often wondered, how did it all start?*

*Who found out that nothing can capture a heart like a melody can?*

*Well, whoever it was, I'm a fan*

*So I say Thank you for the music, the songs I'm singing*

*Thanks for all the joy they're bringing.*

I had to throw some more ABBA there for you. Of course God is the one who “invented” music. He is the one who saw that nothing can capture a heart like a melody.

In his book on worship Warren Wiersbe writes, “I am convinced that congregations learn more theology (good and bad) from the songs they sing than from the sermons they hear. Many sermons are doctrinally sound and contain a fair bit of biblical information but they lack the necessary emotional content that gets hold of a listener’s heart. Music however, reaches the mind and heart at the same time. “ That’s why Paul honed in on the importance of songs and singing as a way to build up the faith of the Colossian Christians.


In the early church, in the days before video data projectors, chorus’s or even hymn books and Bibles, singing was an important method of communicating truth. It most likely would have been antiphonal singing, where a leader would sing one line and the congregation would repeat it and so on.

Many Bible scholars believe that Colossians 1:15-20 and Philippians 2:6-11 are examples of early Christian hymns that Paul either borrowed or wrote himself. What a great way to educate and teach the people of God the great truths of the Gospel by having them put to music.

The craft of the song writer is a vital one. Sometimes Scripture can be put to music to help us remember a few verses of God’s word. Sometimes a profound Gospel concept that is difficult to communicate can be captured by a phrase or line from a song. A song may be able to tell a story that communicates truth and wisdom. Perhaps these are the differences between Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs.

Although there is much overlap between each phrase, the basic concepts mean songs from Scripture, songs about Christ and songs with a Spiritual message.

What is your favourite Christian song? If you had to come up with a list of songs for your funeral, which ones would you include? Why not spend some time now listening to or singing those songs with thankfulness in your heart to God?



**What did you hear?**

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**What did you think?**

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**What will you do?**

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**Now talk to God .....**

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# Jesus at the Centre ...of our Families

## Day 4

*“[18]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 embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. “*

*Colossians 3:18-21 (NIV)*

### FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

Having focused on a Christian's relationship to Christ, and then the Church, Paul now takes us to a Christian's relationship in their family life.

Wives come up for the first challenge- to be submissive. This statement is directed to wives not to their husbands. It is something that is asked for voluntarily. A husband can't force submission out of his wife. At times when a couple can't agree on a course of action submission is going be necessary to avoid a major conflict.

We will skip over the husband's responsibility and now talk about children.


Only joking. Husbands don't miss out; in fact in many respects they have the toughest role – to love their wives as Christ loves the church. Just as Christ sacrificed Himself to allow the Church to become all she can be, so husbands are to have a similar goal. That is to see their wives grow in her identity and personality in Christ and become all she can be. This takes the husband's responsibility to new levels. Husbands are to love not just with words but in the way they treat their wives – not acting in an overbearing overly harsh manner. No grumpy guys!

Children are to obey their parents. The fact that Paul addresses this command to children assumes that they are old enough to read or hear or at least respond to this message. It is their responsibility to obey the direction given by their parents. As an early J.B. Phillips translation says, at your age obedience is one of the best things you can do to show your love for the Lord.

I am saddened by what I see sometimes is the disobedience and disrespect of some children. Sometimes I think that the verses should be swapped around – that is children do not frustrate your parents. Parents would not exasperate their children if they obeyed them in the first place! Parents would not BE exasperated if their children obeyed them.

But inconsistency, favouritism, and again an overly harsh approach can frustrate children. When they don't know where they stand or can't seem to please their parents, kids can feel guilty, timid, fearful and have deep feelings of inferiority. A word of criticism needs to be balanced by many words of praise.

Spend some time now praying for your family. Also reflect on how you can apply these commands in your family.



**What did you hear?**

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**What did you think?**

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**What will you do?**

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**Now talk to God .....**

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# Jesus at the Centre ...of our Families

## Day 5

*“18 Wives, understand and support your husbands by submitting to them in ways that honour the Master.*

*19 Husbands, go all out in love for your wives. Don't take advantage of them.*

*20 Children, do what your parents tell you. This delights the Master no end.*

*21 Parents, don't come down too hard on your children or you'll crush their spirits.”*

*Colossians 3:18-21 (The Message)*

### **BOTH AND**

The advantage of going through just a single book of the Bible is that we can slow down and go deep into the message of the Word of God from that particular book.

The disadvantage is that we can miss out on the whole counsel of God from other Bible books that shed new light and give additional insight into the things of God.

When it comes to the idea of Jesus being at the centre of our families we saw in the sermon that this statement were a radical new teaching to family life. But we cannot just think that for parents ALL the responsibility for the spiritual health of children is ALL up to them.

What if Church leadership said to parents..., “Since you know more than we can ever know about your kids, and you have more time with them than we will ever have, and you care about them more than we ever will, the spiritual development of your children is really up to you as the parent.”

We could leave out or even misquote Deuteronomy 6 to convince parents it's their job alone, not the church's to raise their kids. Just skip or ignore the part of the text where Moses speaks to every leader in the crowd (not just parents).

Moses was actually the first guy with the idea, “It takes a village to raise a child.”


Sure, parents should be the primary influence in their kid's lives.

But research, experts, and statistics show over and over again that kids who have other adults in their lives, reinforcing what their parents have told them, have better odds at finding, maintaining and growing in their faith.

Bonnie pointed out that in Bible times, there were different words for family. Many times the Bible writers are actually referring to a wider extended family or even church family rather than the tight nuclear family that we think of today.

So let's not separate our families from the church and think it is all up to us. Also let's not abdicate our responsibility to the church and think it is all up to them. It's both / and. Let's combine together to be a great big family with Jesus at the Centre.





**What did you hear?**

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**What did you think?**

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**What will you do?**

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**Now talk to God .....**

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# Changing



# with Jesus



**Whitehill**  
church of christ

Phone 07 3288 0186

Website [www.whitehill.org.au](http://www.whitehill.org.au)

Address 219 Whitehill Road, RACEVIEW 4305

Postal P.O. Box 4002, RACEVIEW 4305