

# Living With Each Other



## SABBATH—MARCH 14

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Colossians 3:18, 19; Proverbs 22:6, 15; Colossians 3:22–25; Colossians 4:2–4.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “When you speak [talk] to people, always speak [say] kind [loving] words. Say things that will help them. Then, when someone asks you a question, you will know how to reply [answer]” (Colossians 4:6, EASY).

**WHEN PEOPLE LIVE AND WORK TOGETHER** in close relationships, they may have problems with each other. Sometimes they may argue or disagree. So, it is very important for everyone in the relationship to do their best to get along.

Of course, our closest relationships are with family members. The home is sometimes named “the family business.” That’s because there are many things that are the same between our running a business and a home. Family members should agree about beliefs and plans. Everyone should get along with each other. All members of the family should do their part to make the home a success and a happy place to be. What about the church? The church is really a large family. So, the same important rules for success and happiness should be followed in the church, too.

In our memory verse for this week, Paul gives us some important rules for how a Christian family works best. The Christian home should follow Bible rules. Of course, the Christian home will be different from the Roman home in Paul’s time. Paul also gives other important Bible rules to help us in our relationships, both inside and outside the home.



**All members of the family should do their part to make the home a success and a happy place to be.**

**HUSBANDS AND WIVES (Colossians 3:18, 19)**

The New Testament includes good advice for Christian homes (read Ephesians 5:21–6:9; Colossians 3:18–4:1; Titus 2:1–10; and 1 Peter 2:18–3:7). These “home rules,” as this advice is named, are not just about who is in charge in the family. The rules also include advice to help families make their relationships happy and healthy.

**Read Colossians 3:18, 19. What advice does Paul give in these verses? What other words of advice does Paul add in Ephesians 5:22–25, 33?**

Many husbands love this quote from the Bible: “Wives, understand and support your husbands by submitting to [obeying] them” (Colossians 3:18, MSG). But these men leave off the last part of the verse, which says, obey them only “in ways that honor the Master [Jesus]” (MSG). The New Testament doesn’t teach anywhere that women must obey ALL men. The New Testament also doesn’t teach that women should be the same as slaves or do whatever their husbands want or ask. Paul is saying that the wife must be loyal to the Lord first and her husband second. The husband must not control his wife’s personality. He also must not decide for her what is right and wrong. The Bible and the Holy Spirit will help her decide for herself.

Jesus loved the church and gave His life to save her. Jesus’ love shows husbands how they should love their wives (Ephesians 5:25). Husbands must not cheat on their wives. They must honor their marriage vows. Husbands will make decisions that are a blessing to their wives. When a husband loves his wife in this way, he helps her to obey the command to respect him (Ephesians 5:33).

In a healthy Christian marriage, the husband and wife will do things together as a couple. They will make decisions and plans together as a couple. Sometimes they may need to include their children in their talks and plans. But parents must never fight or argue in front of the children. What if the husband and the wife can’t agree? The Bible tells us what to do. The wife must accept her husband’s decision, if his plans don’t go against Bible truth. This advice will bring peace to the family. At the same time, many husbands can remember times when their wives gave them wise advice. When the husband and wife work together as a team, their marriage will be happy.



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**PARENTS AND CHILDREN (Proverbs 22:6, 15)**

**When parents train their children to follow the Lord, children will be a blessing to others.**

Children are an important part of the family. Children need to know that their parents love them. Parents must also teach children that God loves them. God wants children to be members of His kingdom in heaven. Family worship is important. Families should worship together every day, morning and evening. At an early age, children should be taught to help clean the house and to do other chores. Most important, children should obey Paul's command: "Children, obey your parents in everything. The Lord is pleased when you do" (Colossians 3:20, NLV).

**Read the following verses. What Bible rules do these verses teach us about raising or training our children?**

**1. Proverbs 22:6, 15** \_\_\_\_\_

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**2. Matthew 19:14** \_\_\_\_\_

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**3. Deuteronomy 6:6, 7** \_\_\_\_\_

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**4. Proverbs 1:8, 9** \_\_\_\_\_

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Parents must show their children how to live. They also must teach their children Bible truth. When parents train their children to follow the Lord, children will be a blessing to others. Paul warns parents not to teach and punish them in anger. "Fathers, do not nag [scold; blame; or accuse] your children. If you are too hard to please, they may want to stop trying" (Colossians 3:21, ICB). So, parents must be loving when they teach and punish their children. The father, even more so than the mother, has a big part in the success of the spiritual lives of the children.

Studies show that when both parents go to church, the children continue to go to church, too, when they grow up. If the father goes to church every week, the children will stay in the church as adults. So, fathers should do their best to be strong spiritual leaders in their families.

**WORKING TOGETHER (Colossians 3:22–25)**

**In Colossians 3:22–25 and Colossians 4:1, what advice does Paul give to slaves? What important rules do these verses teach us about working with people?**

People today sometimes use the topic of slavery as an excuse to throw out parts of the Bible. But when we study the topic of slavery in the Bible, we must look at Bible history in both the Old and New Testaments. The Bible teaches that God made people as copies of Himself. He made us to be free. That's why the law of Moses commanded that the Israelites must not be slaves forever (Deuteronomy 15:12). A person couldn't be a slave for more than six years. Six years was the most that a person must work to pay back all the money he owed (Exodus 21:2–6; Leviticus 25:39–43). Slavery during New Testament times was not the same as slavery in our modern times. The slavery of the last few hundred years is a crime too terrible for words.

In New Testament times, the church needed to follow Roman law. Roman law allowed the Roman people to own slaves. But Roman law also gave slaves many rights or permissions. These rights included the permission and legal power to do many of the same things that regular Roman people did. If Christians tried to end slavery during New Testament times, their efforts would hurt the work that God gave them to do.

As a church member, the slave must be loyal to God first. Christian masters must be fair and kind to their slaves. Paul tells masters, "Remember that you also serve a master, and he is in heaven" (Colossians 4:1, EASY). Also, Paul told Philemon, a church member, not to think of Onesimus as his slave any longer. Yes, Onesimus was a slave. But both Onesimus and Philemon were Christians. So, Paul told Philemon to love Onesimus the same as his brother (Philemon 1:16). Did you know that in both the Old and New Testaments, God's people are named slaves or servants of God? (Read Psalm 34:22; Luke 17:10; and 1 Peter 2:16.) That should help us to remember to have hearts empty of pride.

We may not like some things that happened in Bible times. Slavery is one example. But we must accept what the Bible says. If we don't, we make our own ideas more important than Bible truth. Let's look at everything the Bible says first about a topic. Then we can better understand what the Bible says about it.



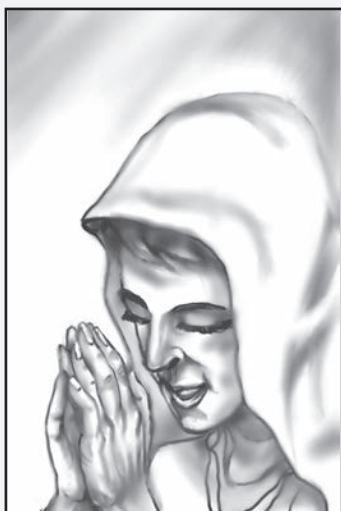
**The Bible teaches that God made people as copies of Himself. He made us to be free.**

## PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER (Colossians 4:2–4)

**Read Colossians 4:2–4. What important rules for prayer do these verses teach us? What does Paul ask for people to pray for?**

Some of the most important words we can say to someone who needs help are “I’m praying for you.” Prayer is heaven’s way of communicating and connecting with us. “Part of God’s plan is to give us those things we ask for. God gives them to us in answer to our prayer of faith. God will give them to us because we ask Him. If we don’t ask Him, we will not get these things.”—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, page 525, adapted.

Notice the words that Paul uses to talk about prayer: “continue,” “stay awake,” “watch carefully,” and “remember to thank God” (Colossians 4:2, EASY). These words tell us that Paul’s prayer is a prayer of faith (Colossians 4:2). Elsewhere, Paul tells us to pray “always” (Ephesians 6:18, EASY) and to “never stop praying” (1 Thessalonians 5:17, ERV). Also, “we do not know how we ought to pray. But God’s Spirit Himself prays for us. He cries to God on our behalf [for us] in a way that nobody could say with words” (Romans 8:26, EASY).



**Prayer is heaven’s way of communicating and connecting with us.**

**Read again Colossians 4:3. In this verse, Paul says, “Pray that God will open the door for us to preach the Word [the Bible]” (NLV). What “door” do you think God will open for you to share your faith?**

Paul also prayed for the right words to say. Sometimes, when we read Paul’s letters, we may think that Paul didn’t doubt or worry about what he should say. But here he asks for prayer to help him preach the Good News about Jesus so that everyone can understand (Colossians 4:4). Paul understands that it is very important to preach the message to the most powerful leaders in the Roman government, including the members of the king’s house.

“We don’t always need to get on our knees to pray. Start the habit of talking with the Savior when you are alone, when you walk, and when you are busy doing your daily chores and work. Say a silent prayer in your heart for help. Pray this way all the time. Pray for strength and knowledge. Let every breath be the same as a prayer.”—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, pages 510, 511, adapted.

**BE CAREFUL HOW YOU LIVE (Colossians 4:5, 6)**

As Christians, what is the most important Bible truth that we can know? Of course, that Jesus Christ died for our sins. He also gives us the strength to win the fight against sin. When we believe in Jesus, we can have everlasting life. We couldn't learn this Bible truth on our own. God needed to tell us about it. God showed this truth to us in the Word of God, the Bible, and in His Son, Jesus.

We know so much about truth, knowledge, and wisdom because God showed us these things in His Word, the Bible. God gives us much knowledge and wisdom. God wants our lives to show that we are filled with this knowledge and wisdom.

**Read Colossians 4:5, 6 and answer the following questions. At what times does Paul say we must be careful to be wise? Why do you think that is so?**

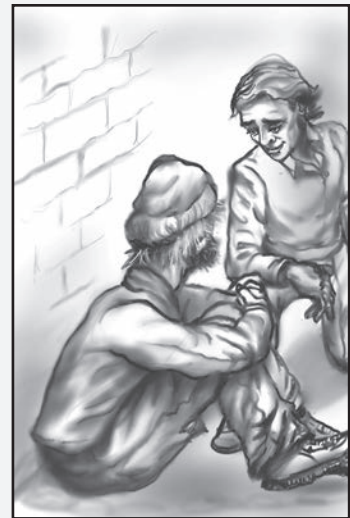
Sad to say, as Christians, sometimes we are not very Christian! Paul says that Israel caused other people to insult God because of their terrible behavior: "Because of you Jews, the Gentiles [non-Jews] say bad things against God" (Romans 2:24, EASY). Our behavior matters a lot. So, we should be kind to everyone, including people who don't believe in Jesus (read Titus 2:5 and 2 Peter 2:2). A Christian home can help people to see Jesus in us. Also, we must stay patient and kind when people make us angry. Then they will see that our faith is real.

In Colossians 4:6, Paul talks about the words we say: "When you speak [talk] to people, always speak [say] kind [loving] words. Say things that will help them. Then, when someone asks you a question, you will know how to reply [answer]" (Colossians 4:6, EASY). Paul's advice to us in this verse about our words has three parts. First, our words must be more than nice and kind. Our words and behavior must show God's love.

Second, we should say things that help people.

Third, we need the Holy Spirit's help to know what to say. Only the Holy Spirit can give us the right words to say at the right time. The Holy Spirit also helps get the minds and hearts of people ready to hear the message we must share with them.

**Think about your words and behavior. What message do they send to other people about your faith in Jesus?**



**Our words must be more than nice and kind. Our words and behavior must show God's love.**



**“All members of the family should understand that they must do their part to make the family happy.”**

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** “All members of the family should understand that they must do their part to make the family happy. One family member shouldn’t work against another family member. All members of the family should encourage each other. They should be loving, patient, and kind. They should talk softly. They should not say anything confusing. They all must do their part to help the mother around the house. . . .

“All family members should understand that they are expected to work together. All children, ages six years and older, should understand that they must help with the chores in the house.”—Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, pages 179, 180, adapted.

“We must let Jesus into our hearts and homes if we want to be happy. We should make our houses a home in every way we can. Home should be a little heaven on earth. Home should be a place where we can show our love and not hide it. Our happiness depends on our love for one another. . . . We should not think of our own happiness. We should look for every chance to show our family members how much we love them for everything they do for us. We try to cheer them up and make their work easy. We can cheer them up when they are sad. We can do little things to show them how much we love them. The love that starts in the family will grow. We will show this love to people who are not part of our family. This love will help make our lives and the lives of other people so happy. When we fail to do the little things we can to help people, we cause other people to feel much sorrow in life.”—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 3, pages 539, 540, adapted.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① If you are married, what Bible rules help you in your relationship? What advice can you give to people who aren’t married? How can they best get ready for the problems that marriage always brings?
- ② Think some more about this idea of being careful in how you live your life (Colossians 4:5). Think about a time when you were careful in how you lived. Compare that to a time when you were not so careful in how you lived. What did you learn from each experience?

## **“NOTHING HAPPENS BECAUSE OF CHANCE”**

A short time after Rene arrived in the Philippines, ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) offered him a job as an accountant. Rene worked with ADRA for one and a half years. Then he worked for eight years as an accountant for the Seventh-day Adventist church in the Philippines. Rene loved working for the church. Life was simple and happy. When he was a boy, Rene thought that becoming Seventh-day Adventist would make him rich. But now, Rene didn't want to be rich. He just wanted to serve people until Jesus comes back.

Then Rene got a special job offer. The treasurer or money manager for the 1000 Missionary Movement was retiring. The 1000 Missionary Movement was part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This company trains hundreds of missionaries or Bible workers every year at its headquarters in Silang, Philippines.

Rene wanted to be part of the 1000 Missionary Movement since he gave his heart to Jesus. Rene's friend Rodel worked in the past as a Bible worker for the company. Rodel's friendship helped Rene give his life back to Jesus. Now Rodel worked as a pastor in the Philippines. Rodel would be so happy if he knew that Rene was the new treasurer. But Rene wondered, "Can I do the job of treasurer? I'm only an accountant."

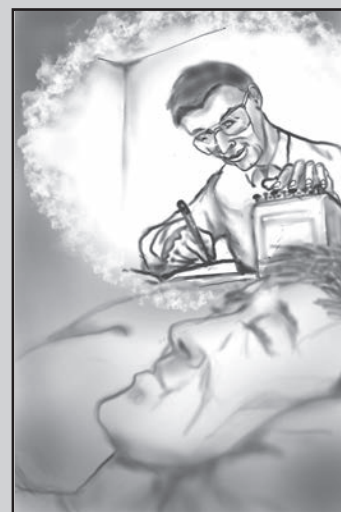
That night, Rene dreamed he was working at the 1000 Missionary Movement. After the dream, a church leader told Rene to ask for the job. A short time later, a group of church leaders met together and gave Rene the job.

Rene is very happy with his decision to accept the job and trust in God. God continues to bless him. Family members who hated his religion are now joining the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Two months after he moved back to the Philippines, his parents got baptized. Rene said, "That was God's gift to me. It was as if God said, 'Because you were loyal to Me. I have a gift for you.' " Rene's two sisters also were baptized.

In the meantime, the company where Rene worked in the Middle East went out of business during the COVID-19 pandemic. If Rene accepted more money and not the plane ticket home, he would have lost everything. Today, Rene says that he owes all his success to the Lord. " 'I know what I have planned for you,' says the Lord. 'I have good plans for you. I don't plan to hurt you. I plan to give you hope and a good future' " (Jeremiah 29:11, ICB). Rene Tualdo says, "Nothing happens because of chance. God had a plan for me."

Rene Tualdo is the accounting manager for the 1000 Missionary Movement, in Silang, Philippines. The headquarters were built with the help of a 13th Sabbath Offering, in 1996. Watch Rene's story on YouTube at: [bit.ly/Rene-1000MM](https://bit.ly/Rene-1000MM).

## *INSIDE Story*



**That night, Rene dreamed he was working at the 1000 Missionary Movement.**



**Rene Tualdo**