Colossians 3:18-4:1 (ESV)
   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 provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. **22** Bondservants, 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.
4 Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

1. What are some good things that family members can do for each other? What are some harmful things?

2. In verses 18-21 what are the underlying attitudes in how family members are to treat one another?

3. In many translations the key word in verse 18 comes out as *submit*. This brings up the image of a downtrodden woman, the victim of her husband's every command, unable to be herself, to think her own thoughts, to make a grown-up contribution to the relationship. What indications are there in this passage that this "downtrodden" image is not at all what Paul has in mind?

GREATER THAN

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4. What responsibilities do fathers and children have in verses 20-21?

5. If all members of the family lived up to these instructions what would the resulting relationships look like?

6. In Paul's day, husbands and masters could rule with supreme and unquestioned authority. How might Paul's instructions be revolutionary for the time?

7. What principles might employers and employees draw out of verses 3:22-4:1?

8. Where in this passage do you see that the work of Jesus is GREATER THAN all else?

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