

## Message #17

## Colossians 3:18-21

Before Paul even mentioned the home, he taught two plus chapters of heavy theology and doctrine. He believed that sound doctrine is what produces a sound home. Paul did not first get people into counseling, he first got them into theology. After he laid out in great detail their new position in Christ, he went to work on explaining how to live out this new position in old relationships. He moves from the heaven to the home.

**IN THE HOME, EVERY BELIEVER IS COMMANDED BY GOD TO LIVE OUT THEIR CHRISTIANITY IN THEIR FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS.**

We have been commanded by God to be certain types of mothers, fathers and children. Our new position in Christ demands a new character in the home. Husbands, wives and children all have certain duties and responsibilities.

**RESPONSIBILITY #1 – The command and responsibility to the Christian wife . 3:18**

Christian wives have been commanded by God to be subject to their husbands. Even though this whole concept is being attacked and challenged in our world today, this is the way God's Word commands wives to relate to their husbands.

The word "subject" is a military term used in the context of recognizing rank and submitting to it. This is obviously a very critical matter, for it is repeated several times in the New Testament Grace Age:

Paul wrote: "But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman and God is the head of Christ" (I Cor. 11:3).

Paul wrote: "Let the women keep silent in the churches for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says" (I Cor. 14:34).

Paul wrote: "Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord" (Eph. 5:22).

Paul wrote: "That they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the Word of God will not be dishonored" (Titus 2:5).

Peter wrote: "In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives" (I Peter 3:1).

Now the Greek word does not necessarily reflect inferiority of person, but it does reflect superiority of rank. The wife is to recognize the rank of her husband. He is above her in rank by ordinance and decree of God, and the wife is to willingly recognize that and submit herself to it.

Dr. Ogilvie said this simple principle of “submissiveness” is the basis of a great marriage (pg. 130).

Now the believer lives in four spheres of life: 1) The believer lives in Christ; 2) The believer lives in the home; 3) The believer lives in the church; 4) The believer lives in society.

Of these four spheres of life, we are equal in Christ. In Galatians 3:28 we read—“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Life in Christ is equal in position. However, life in the home, in the church and in society does have rank distinctions. There is authority structure in the home, in the church and in society and those authority structures are to be recognized and submitted to according to the Word of God. God is glorified by willing submission to rank structure which He has sovereignly ordained.

Now the adverbial clause “as fitting in the Lord” is very important. The verb “fitting” means as is due the Lord. Two things are implied: 1) Willing submission to a husband is something a Christian wife owes God. When a wife does this she obeys God; 2) Willing submission and subjection to a husband is to be in the context of what is fitting for a Christian woman to do. In other words, the submission is not to godless, immoral, or impure commands; the submission to the husband is in the context of what is “fitting in the Lord.”

## **RESPONSIBILITY #2** – The command and responsibility to the Christian husband. **3:19**

Certain feminists have classified Paul as a chauvinist—one blindly devoted to only the man, and as a misogynist—one who hates women; however, a text like this certainly contradicts any such heretical thinking.

Paul had the highest regard for Christian women and he was the one who commanded that they be viewed and treated as persons, not things.

## **Command #1** - A Christian husband is commanded to love his wife. **3:19a**

It is interesting that even though God commands the wife to submit herself to her husband, He does not command the husband to give commands to the wife; but He does command the husband to love his wife. H.A. Ironside said it is right here where many husbands fail. They demand submission from the wife but don't show the biblical love of Christ.

In the Greek language, there were three words used for love: 1) Eros—the passionate and erotic type of love; 2) Phileo—the affectionate and friendship type of love; 3) Agape—the divine and sacrificial type of love.

Wives may be legitimately loved in accordance with all three concepts, but the particular word used here by Paul is agapao, or the agape love, the highest level of love.

Husbands have been commanded by God to love their wives at the highest level of love—beyond the emotional, beyond the affectional, in the sphere of the sacrificial and the purposeful. Husbands are commanded by God to think through things pertaining to their wives and promote their best good, the biblical good.

**Command #2** - A Christian husband is commanded to not be bitter with his wife. **3:19b**

The word “embittered” is one that means to be sharp, to be harsh and to be pointed with his wife. The construction is a present imperative with a negative prohibition, which means a husband can continually and habitually demonstrate a harsh attitude toward his wife, and God is commanding him to stop it.

The passive verb indicates that there may be moments in which a wife does something that may cause the husband to become bitter, sharp and harsh.

However, the husband who continually and habitually demonstrates a bitter, harsh attitude toward his wife is one living in direct disobedience to the commands of God.

I Corinthians 7:33 tells us that the husband is to seek how he may please his wife, not push her around.

**RESPONSIBILITY #3** – The command and responsibility to the Christian children. **3:20**

The command given by God to Christian children is to obey. The word “obedient” is one that means to listen to, attend to, submit to, and obey your parents. The sphere of obedience is in “all” things, not just things you want to obey.

John Eadie observed—“Children are not the judge of what they should or should not obey in parental precepts” (p. 260). They have been commanded by God to obey parents in all things.

**Reason #1** - Because this is what Jesus did. Luke. 2:51

Jesus Christ was God. He was the second member of the Trinity, yet He willingly submitted Himself to Joseph and Mary. There were times when Joseph and Mary were wrong, but He still submitted Himself to them.

**Reason #2** - Because this is what will give you a long life. Eph. 6:3

If you want a life that goes well and a life that is long-lived, obey your parents.

**Reason #3** - Because this is what pleases God. **3:20**

When a child chooses to obey his parents, he is well-pleasing to God. Remember this young person, whenever or wherever you say—“I am not going to do this because dad or mom wouldn’t want me to,” you please God.

The Scriptures are very clear that as we near the end of the Church Age, an obedient child will be a rare child. In fact, the common norm for children will be “disobedient to parents” (II Tim. 3:2). But the child who obeys will be the child who pleases God and is honored by God. Therefore, “children, be obedient to your parents in all things.”

**RESPONSIBILITY #4** – The command and responsibility of Christian fathers . **3:21**

It is easy for parents to lose touch with and to forget about the feelings of childhood. This is especially easy for the father. That word “exasperate” is one that means to stir up, to stimulate, to provoke. Now the particular qualifying hina clause gives direction to all of this; the father is not to stir up his children in such a way that they lose heart.

I find the words “lose heart” intriguing. It is the Greek word athumos, which means to have no passion or impulse. The father is not to provoke or stir up a child to the point where he has no emotion, but just walks around as some meaningless robot.

As fathers, we must bring our children under our “directorship,” but we do not want them under our “dictatorship.” Frankly, we men need the wisdom of God to raise our children. We need to pray that God will give us wisdom in knowing when to be tender and when to be tough, for we never want to “exasperate” our children.

If you want to revolutionize your marriage and your home, put Jesus Christ first and obey God’s Word!