

LIVING AGAINST THE GRAIN – Colossians 3:18-21

After discussing the *characteristics* of the new (man) person in Christ (v.1-17), Paul *now* exhorts the Christian family to live “against the grain” of the world’s definition of family. Today we find the traditional family under attack. And why? Melanie Phillips, a journalist who writes for *The Times* of London, said it best: “...*the destruction of the traditional family had, as its real target, the destruction of biblical morality.*”

Melanie Phillips (Times of London) **Be assured that anything God ordains, satan seeks to *destroy or redefine!*** This is a message for *every* believer. Because it reminds us of the *biblical* mandate regarding roles within the family – roles which serve as a reflection of Christ’s character and bring **glorify** to His name!

Paul first briefly addresses the role of **WIVES** – (V.18) **Many wives refer to *submission as the “S” word!*** The idea of *submitting* to one’s husband, *in our culture today*, has been justifiably vilified, due to the *abusive* behavior of some men. Even in the church, some have *falsely* interpreted Paul’s words to imply that a wife is to render blind allegiance to her husband. **This is not Paul’s purpose here.** In fact, scripture reveals, submission should be a mutual act in Christian marriage. (Ephesians 5:21) “...**submitting to one another in the fear of God.**”

The Greek word for “**submit**” – **hupotasso; hupo – under / tasso – to arrange.** It’s a military term. An officer in the military is *responsible* for those serving in the ranks under him/her. Aug. 2017, USS John S. McCain collided east of Singapore; five sailors killed; two officers were fired as a result. They were there to watch out for the well-being of their sailors, and failed to do so. In design, submission is for the well-being of the wife. The Greek word for “**fitting**” – **aneko: to attain to, proper, that which is convenient.** A wife submitted to her husband, is meant to be a convenient relationship, rather than a curse, according to God’s order. (1 Corinthians 11:3) **But I want you to know that**

the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. In context, being head is not a position that *demeans another*, but a position of service! (Mark 10:45) “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” *We willingly submits to the Lord in response to His service. Show me a woman whose husband serves her, and I’ll show you a woman submitted to her husband!* Submission doesn’t mean wives are to become “Stepford Wives” – robots, without opinion or feelings. (Genesis 2:24) **Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.** As one, the wife’s views and opinions are not lesser, but equal to, her husband’s. Biblical submission, however, never requires a wife to suffer under domestic violence and abuse. Romans 13:4 reminds us, governing authorities “*do not bear the sword in vain.*”

Note: *wives submit*, to your own husband; *stay under his covering, and not that of another man!* Not because he’s worthy, but because **Jesus** is worthy! Even if he’s a non-believer. **1 Peter 3:1-4.** “*Without a word, through your chaste behavior.*” Submission is a reflection of Christ’s character; (Matthew 11:29) **Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.**

HUSBANDS – (v.19) Bitter – pikraino: irritate, to make bitter. The remedy for a husband’s embittered heart is found in giving and studying. Giving: (ttt) **Ephesians 5:25-29.** Give yourself to her by loving her, like Jesus loves her. **3 ways:** **1. Sanctify her** - (set apart; for special love; only for her); **2. Cleanse her** - by the washing of the word. *If Adam had of been in the word we never would have been in this mess!* Speak the word to your bride, pray the word over her! **Lastly, 3. Love her** - *like your own body* - (Ephesians 5:28b). Some husbands are abusive because they actually hate themselves, and take it out on their wives.

The second, Studying – (1 Peter 3:7) **Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.** The Greek word for “understanding” – gnosis: knowledge, science; seeking to know, inquiring, investigation. Which is exactly what the other guy is doing! USS FITZGERALD: June 2017 collided

with a ship in the Tokyo Bay; 7 sailors lost their lives – the Commander was fired for losing situational awareness.

It's not a good thing when we know more about our *golf game, cars, the Broncos, fantasy football*, than we do our brides! Marriage requires “homework.” We were assigned homework in school; in scripture God assigns homework for husbands: give and study your brides, lest bitterness consumes you! It will refresh and renew your marriage! Love is a reflection of Christ's character. Be the first to love like Jesus: **(1 John 4:19) We love Him because He first loved us.**

CHILDREN – (v.21) **(Deuteronomy 5:16) 'Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may be well with you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.** Number five of the Ten Commandments contains a promise. Disrespect for authority, *especially parental authority*, is on the rise; **2 Timothy 3:1-2** *disobedience to parents* is a characteristic of the last days! In the Old Testament, disobedience to parents was akin to rebellion against God! **(Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9).**

Obedience, however, pleases God. To obey means to conform to a **command or authority, in all things.** In a culture where disobedience is *in vogue*, we must teach our children to go against the grain – to obey in all things. **(Proverbs 22:6) Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.** Obedience is a reflection of Christ's character; *He became “...obedient to the point of death...”* **Philippians 2:8.**

FATHERS – (v.21) many fathers have been taught that children, *especially boys*, learn through provocation and intimidation. **(Ephesians 6:4) And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.** The Greek word for “provoke” **(Ephesians 6:4)** can also be translated “enrage!” The Greek word for **provoke**, *here in our text*, is similar; it means: **to stimulate to anger.** Question every father must ask: **“What am I stirring**

up in my children, especially my teenage children?" Discouragement or encouragement?

Notice: mothers are not given this charge, but fathers! Because fathers have a God-given *influence* over their children. (Proverbs 17:6b) "...And the glory of children is their father." One thing I've learned as a father, in order to not discourage my kids, I had to give them the freedom to fail, and room to get back up again! **Because that is *exactly* what God has given me; it's called grace!** Fathers be a reflection of God's encouraging grace; "*Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.*" John 8:11.

CONCLUSION: Submission, loving, obedience, and encouragement, are all reflections of Christ; they are characteristics of an individual or family that refuses to "drink the kool-aid" of godless human reasoning. May God help us to live out these characteristics this week!