



Sunday School Lesson
Ephesians 5:22-6:9
 by Lorin L. Cranford
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An Ancient Christian Family



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What was it like to be a family member in ancient Rome? Records coming out of that era provides fairly detailed depictions of family life. To be sure, how one experienced family life depended greatly on the social status of the family. Peasant families experienced life very differently than aristocratic families. In Paul's treatment of family relations in Eph. 5:22-6:9 and also Col. 3:18-4:1, he used the Roman aristocratic family as his model. His discussion of family relations, although using some of the typical Greek terms, depicts those relationships in a revolutionary manner in comparison to the usual discussion of this topic in ancient non-Christian literature. The Roman household included three sets of relationships for the male leader of the home. He related a certain way to his wife, another way to his children and to his slaves. In the discussion of such relations reaching back to the early Greek philosophers, responsibility flowed primarily one direction: to the male leader of the household. But for Paul, Christian values made that responsibility a two-way street -- something amazing in that day. And the intense obligation of the male leader to his wife, children, and slaves laid down by Paul was nothing short of revolutionary for that time. Amazingly, Christianity man-

Ancient Roman Family Structure



Wife
γυνή



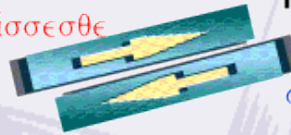
children τέκνα
son υἱός
daughter θυγάτηρ



slaves
δοῦλοι

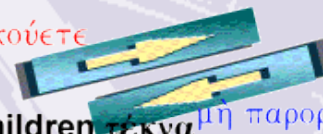
Christian Duties

ὑποτάσσεσθε



Husband
άνήρ
ἀγαπάτε

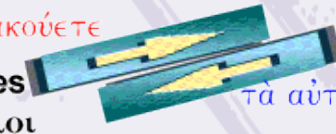
ὑπακούετε



Father
πατήρ

μη παροργίζετε...
ἀλλά ἐκτρέφετε

ὑπακούετε



Master
κύριος

τά αὐτὰ ποιεῖτε

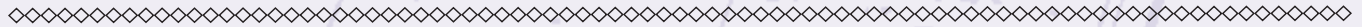


aged to severely tone down these principles by the middle of the second century as the Christian faith underwent reinterpretation that was defined by the non-Jewish culture of that time and not by the clear principles in the teachings of Paul.

With family life in such disarray in our contemporary culture, Paul's insight in family relationships merits renewed attention. And also careful understanding of its revolutionary nature when Paul set forth these ideas to first century Christians.

I. Context

As from previous studies, we will draw upon the background material from [earlier studies in Ephesians](#) for the bulk of this first section. The most detailed study is of [Eph. 1:3-14](#); we will use the summary of this material first given in the study of [Eph. 2:11-22](#). New material will supplement this summary.



a. Historical

External History.

Ephesians was most likely dictated to a writing secretary sometime during the two plus years of Paul's imprisonment in the eastern Mediterranean coastal city of Caesarea by the Roman governors Felix and Festus (cf. Acts. 23:26-26:32). This would have been sometime between AD 58 and 60. The actual writer of the original document is unknown, but during this period Paul had numerous very capable individuals helping take care of him during his confinement at the hands of the Romans, including Luke, Silas, and other associates.

The trip from Caesarea to Ephesus via sea was not a lengthy journey for Tychicus, Onesimus, and others to make as they carried this letter, along with the one to the Colossians and the third one to Philemon who lived in Colossae. Ephesians was to be the first letter to be read as a quasi "cover" letter, thus setting a tone for the other letters. Consequently the contents of the letter probe some of the most profound aspects of being a Christian. A tone of celebrating Christian experience also permeates the letter. The importance of being a part of the community, the body of Christ, is highlighted.

Internal History. Specific time and place markers inside 5:22-6:9 are very limited. The historical setting for the teachings here are general and relate to the broad cultural patterns of the first



century Roman world. In particular, Paul used the model of an ancient Roman aristocratic family as the structure around which to set forth his Christian perspective. Thus the challenge of this passage is between the "then" and "now" meanings of the passage. The problem posing this challenge is the enormous cultural distance between family life in ancient Rome and family life in twenty-first century America. We don't -- thank goodness -- have slaves as an integral part of the family in our culture. Neither do we typically have 13 year old wives and 30 plus year old husbands with a life expectancy reaching normally only to the late 40s. We don't have the discriminatory attitudes against a female child in favor of a male child, as was normal in ancient Rome. Although whether we have a better family structure than did the Romans might be questioned, undeni-

ably it must be acknowledged that family life in that world -- even for Christians -- was significantly different than it is for Americans today, and even for Christian Americans. Thus, the Bible student must

exercise due caution when building bridges of connection between the teachings of this passage and their application to contemporary American life. There is no legitimate place for dogmatism here!

b. Literary

Genre. As a letter, Ephesians follows both the style of ancient letters in general and those in the Pauline collection of letters in the New Testament. The typical elements of Praescriptio (1:1-2); Proem (1:3-23); Body (2:1-6:20); Conclusio (6:21-24) are found.

Since the translation of the *Luther Bibel* in the early 1500s, this passage, 5:22-6:9, has been identified under the genre label of *Haustafeln*. This was the identifying heading that Luther gave to this passage in marking it as targeting principles of family relations for Christians in the first century world. The German term *Haustafeln* can be translated into English as Family Duties.

The ancient philosophical world was especially concerned with social stability. This was also true of the military - political leaders of the Roman Empire. Since the family was the anchor of society, its stability and orderliness was of crucial importance to the stability of society in general. Consequently, frequent discussions of proper relationships inside the family that produced a stable family life can be found among many ancient writers.

The family had three sets of relationships, and they all revolved around the dominating male head of the family. He related to his wife, his children, and his slaves in predictable fashion. Or, more accurately, they were to relate to him in well defined patterns. Add to these philosophical discussions beginning in the fourth century BCE with Plato, the Roman tradition of the absolute authority of the male head inside the home -- the *patria potestas* -- to the extent of life and death power over all other family members.

For Christians living in such a cultural setting, the challenge was to function within its acceptable boundaries and at the same time implement Christian principles growing out of the teachings of Christ. These principles, especially as set forth by Paul in Ephesians and Colossians, took the basic prevailing structures of the day and radically redefined obligation. Whereas it mostly flowed from the supposed "inferior" segment to the male head with little, if any corresponding, obligation, Paul set forth obligation as a "two way" street flowing both directions in each of the three sets of relationships.

A brief note regarding the boundary markers

of the passage. Increasingly, contemporary English translations will begin their paragraphing of this material with verse 21, instead of verse 22. From what I've observed over the past several decades, this is driven by a craving to be "politically correct" by avoiding gender bias in Bible translation. The grave mistake made here is the complete ignoring of the syntactical structure of the underlying Greek text.

Verse 21 contains the final participle phrase of five that are linked to the core admonitions in the independent clauses in verse 18. Paul's clearly defined thought structure is as follows:

- 1) Don't be a drunkard with excessive drinking of wine...
- 2) Rather, be continually filled with the Spirit. Then he sets forth in five participle phrases the identifying qualities of the fullness of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believing community:
 - a) Speaking to one another in psalms, songs, and spiritual hymns,
 - b & c) Singing and making music from the heart to the Lord,
 - d) Giving thanksgiving constantly for everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father,
 - e) Showing submissive respect to one another inside the Christian community (v. 21).

The traditional "vertical / horizontal" perspective is maintained in the five participle qualifiers. The first four center on the vertical worship of God, while the last broadly defines the horizontal obligation as mutual respect. The full presence of God's Spirit comes with proper maintenance of this vertical / horizontal obligation of believers to Christ.

With the motif of respectful submission on the table for the entire community of believers, he next turns to the family and begins with an assumption of that same mutual submission as the foundational obligation for the Christian wife. The central reciprocity demanded of the husband is harder: to sacrificially love her in return to the same degree that Christ loved the church. The much heavier burden falls on the husband. She wasn't commanded to love him, interestingly. Quite curiously later Paul will instruct Titus to help



Submission is a Two Way Street



the older women teach the younger women how to learn to love their husbands in Titus 2:3. Love came after the wedding, not before it in the ancient world -- if it came at all. Only on rare occasions did love play a role prior to being married. Also, don't forget that these words were addressed originally to early teenage wives with thirty plus year old husbands.

By seeking to be "politically correct" most English Bibles today dilute the understanding of the passage in violation of the Greek syntax. The concern to underscore mutual respect between husband and wife can better -- and legitimately -- be achieved by following the clear thought structure of the Greek text.

Literary Context. The literary setting of 5:22-6:9 can be defined as follows.

Praescriptio (introductory materials): 1:1-2

The sender, recipients and greeting are contained in these initial two verses.

Proem (prayer expressions): 1:3-23

Comprised of two major sections, this passage begins with an eloquent praise to God in one long sentence in the Greek (1:3-14), and then moves to a more traditional prayer of thanksgiving and intercession for the readers (1:15-23).

Body of the letter: 2:1-6:22

The first major segment (2:1-3:21) focuses on the

marvelous redemptive work of God through Christ Jesus that has lifted us out of sin and into spiritual union and fellowship with Almighty God. This is brought to a grand climax with another doxology of praise in 3:14-21.

The second major segment (4:1-6:22) focuses on moral exhortation, technically known as *paraenesis*. The 'how we should live' emphasis here flows naturally from the 'who we are spiritually' first section in chapters two and three. Christian living has to be based upon spiritual relationship to the Heavenly Father for it to be authentic.

This section can be divided out into the following pericopes:

- (1) 4:1-16 (Christian unity as the collective Body of Christ);
- (2) 4:17-24 (The Old and New Ways of Living);
- (3) 4:25-5:5 (Guidelines for the New Way of Living);
- (4) 5:6-21 (Walking as Children of Light);
- (5) 5:22-6:9 (Living as a Christian Family);**
- (6) 6:10-22 (Doing Battle with Evil).

Conclusio: 6:23-24

The concluding prayer of blessing for peace and grace.

For further details see <http://cranfordville.com/letlstp.htm>.

Thus, our passage stands as the fifth topic of six sets of moral admonition given by the apostle in the so-called "practical" second section of the letter Body. It is particularly significant in coming immediately after the general admonitions to the community as a whole in 5:6-21. Verse 21, as discussed above, stands as a connecting link between the two units.

II. Message

Literary Structure. The literary structure of the passage is quite well defined both internally by signals in the Greek text, and externally, by the wide spread discussion of family obligations in the literature of that day in both Greek and Latin. The threefold relation of the male head of the family to his wife, children and slaves form the subunits of the passage.

a. Husband - Wife, 5:22-33

Greek NT

²² αἰγυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,
²³ ὅτι ἀνὴρ ἔστιν κεφαλὴ τῆς γυναικὸς ὡς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλὴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος
²⁴ ἀλλὰ ὡς ἡ ἐκκλησία

NASB

22 **Wives**, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.
23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior

NRSV

22 **Wives**, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord.
23 For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior.

NLT

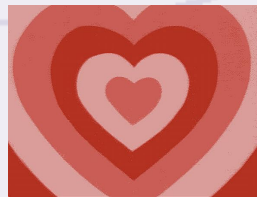
22 You **wives** will submit to your husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of his body, the church; he gave his life to be her

ὑποτάσσεται τῷ Χριστῷ, οὕτως καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐν παντί. ²⁵ Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπάτε τὰς γυναῖκας, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπησεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ ἑαυτὸν παρέδωκεν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς, ²⁶ ἵνα αὐτὴν ἀγιάσῃ καθαρίσας τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι, ²⁷ ἵνα παραστήσῃ αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἔνδοξον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, μὴ ἔχουσαν σπίλον ἢ ῥυτίδα ἢ τι τῶν τοιούτων, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἦ ἀγία καὶ ἄμωμος. ²⁸ οὕτως ὀφείλουσιν [καὶ] οἱ ἄνδρες ἀγαπᾶν τὰς ἑαυτῶν γυναῖκας ὡς τὰ ἑαυτῶν σώματα. ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα ἑαυτὸν ἀγαπᾷ. ²⁹ Οὐδεὶς γάρ ποτε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σάρκα ἐμίσησεν ἀλλὰ ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει αὐτήν, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, ³⁰ ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ. ³¹ ἀντὶ τούτου καταλείψει ἄνθρωπος [τὸν] πατέρα καὶ [τὴν] μητέρα καὶ προσκολληθήσεται πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἕξονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν. ³² τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο μέγα ἐστίν· ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω εἰς Χριστὸν καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. ³³ πλὴν καὶ ὑμεῖς οἱ καθ' ἓνα, ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα οὕτως ἀγαπάτω ὡς ἑαυτόν, ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ἵνα φοβῆται τὸν ἄνδρα.

of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. 25 **Husbands**, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; 29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, 30 because we are members of His body. 31 FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. 32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.

24 Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. 25 **Husbands**, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, 27 so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind — yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” 32 This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. 33 Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

Savior. 24 As the church submits to Christ, so you wives must submit to your husbands in everything. 25 And you **husbands** must love your wives with the same love Christ showed the church. He gave up his life for her 26 to make her holy and clean, washed by baptism and God’s word. 27 He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. 28 In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man is actually loving himself when he loves his wife. 29 No one hates his own body but lovingly cares for it, just as Christ cares for his body, which is the church. 30 And we are his body. 31 As the Scriptures say, “A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.” 32 This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. 33 So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.



Notes:

Because of the very close parallel of the Haustafeln material in Colossians, we will use that parallel as a backdrop for understanding the words

of Paul here in Ephesians. Additionally some insight from the parallels that surface in the somewhat similar 1 Peter 3:1-7 passage will be treated as well.

Eph. 5:22-24 NRSV

22 **Wives**, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. 24 Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands.

Col. 3:18-4:1 NRSV

18 **Wives**, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.



1 Peter 3:1-6 NRSV

1 **Wives**, in the same way, accept the authority of your husbands, so that, even if some of them do not obey the word, they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct, 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 3 Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair, and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; 4 rather, let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight. 5 It was in this way long ago that the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves by accepting the authority of their husbands. 6 Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord. You have become her daughters as long as you do what is good and never let fears alarm you.

The issue of the core verb, and thus the foundational obligation of the wife, has already been treated above in the [Literary genre](#) discussion. The Greek verb ὑποτάσσω is commonly used through all three discussions in Paul and Peter, as well as in the Greek philosophical discussions of wives' obligation to their husbands. Interestingly, the NRSV deviates from Ephesians and Colossian in the way it translates the same verb in 1 Peter, even though the Greek text is the same verb - object construction in all three passages. The etymological background of the verb is that one puts himself under the other person in the sense of showing respect for the importance and authority of the other person. Soldiers were to do this to officers in the military. In 1 Peter 2:18, slaves are to do this toward their masters, although in Ephesians and Colossians a different verb, ὑπακούω, is used for slaves, along with children.

Does this imply that the wife is to make a "blank check" commitment to her husband? Hardly. And several signals in the text point to redefining of the term with a much softer Christian perspective than would have typically been understood in the surrounding Greco-Roman context. First, in both Eph. 5:21 and 1 Peter 2:13, the submission of wives to husbands is defined in broader contexts. In Eph. 5:21, wifely submission is to be modeled after the mutual submission of all believers in the community of faith to one another. In 1 Peter 2:13, Christian submission to earthly institutions of authority by all believers defines submission both for slaves (2:18) and for wives (3:1). Clearly, such contextual definition provides no

room for any blank check obligation by the wife to her husband. Her obligation has limits. Additionally, in Paul's summarizing of husband - wife obligations in Eph. 5:33, the idea of ὑποτάσσω is equated with that of φοβέω, to show respect.

Second, the expansion elements in the two core declarations of this verb clearly set up boundaries to her commitment to her husband. These are diagrammed out in the [Greek text diagram](#) in the larger internet version of this study. They underscore both religious and practical modification of the relationship between a young teenage wife and a thirty plus year old husband in Paul's world. Let me reproduce them in English translation of the Greek text here.

- 1 **Submit yourselves to your own husbands**
as to the Lord
because the husband is the head of the wife...
- as the church submits itself to Christ
so also
- 2 **wives are to submit themselves to their own husbands**
in everything



As can be seen from this diagram several qualifiers are attached to the concept of submission. The wife is to model her commitment to her husband after her spiritual commitment to Christ. In Colossians

a somewhat different angle is set forth; she is to exercise her commitment to her husband according to “[what is fitting in the Lord](#)” (ὡς ἀνῆκεν ἐν κυρίῳ). Central to the wife’s commitment to her husband is her spiritual commitment to Christ. It defines the context of her obligation to her husband. For Peter (1 Pet. 3:1-6), this same context played an even larger role for the woman who was married to a non-Christian husband. It would be this spiritual commitment that saturated her commitment to her husband that could be used by the Lord to win her husband to faith in Christ.

Thus Paul indicates that the foundation for



the wife’s commitment to her husband is the model of Christ and the church. That relationship has already been depicted in Eph. 1:22-23 where the church is described as Christ’s body: “[22 And he \[God\] has put all things under his feet and has made him \[Christ\]](#)

[the head over all things for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.](#)” The relation between Christ and the church is described figuratively as “head” (κεφαλή). Much of biblical interpretation has seen this as a metaphor for authority. But traditional Jewish use of the head of a physical body is as a symbol of life’s source. Paul’s quick redefining of κεφαλή by σωτήρ in the appositional phrase makes the meaning clear: as the church’s head Christ is its Savior:

ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλή τῆς ἐκκλησίας,
αὐτὸς σωτήρ τοῦ σώματος

Thus the wife looks to the husband as her deliverer and source of life. In Paul’s world where wives were hardly allowed outside the walls of the home, this relationship of dependence was easy to understand. We live, however, in a very different world where economic and social dependence on the husband are not nearly as great as back then. So what can a modern Christian wife glean from these verses? At minimal, there must be a level of respect for and commitment to her husband, if the relationship is to be healthy both psychologically and spiritually.

When Paul switched perspectives to the husband’s obligations to his wife (5:25-32), he “lowered the boom” on the husbands at Ephesus. This is very unlike in Col. 3:19 where he stated that obligation in the most basic manner: “[Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly](#)” (Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ μὴ πικραίνεσθε πρὸς αὐτάς). The obligations are stated in antithetical parallelism: do this and don’t do that. Love for the wife is to be on going. Its opposite, harsh treatment, is then entirely forbidden. In the Greco-Roman world where the principle of [patria potestas](#), the absolute power of the male, ruled the day, Paul’s words were extremely radical.

Add to that the ancient mind-set that love at best should play only a very minor role in family life, if any role at all. The glue that held families together in that world was legally binding obligation established in the marriage contract signed by the fathers of the couple. For Romans and Greeks this was predicated on a keen sense of social obligation to create stable families as an integral part of a peaceful clan and for a stable society at large. The Jewish tradition was similar in many ways.

In light of this background, one should note that Peter never mentions love in his admonitions to the husband in relating to his wife (1 Pet. 3:7): “[Husbands, in the same way, show consideration \[συννοικούντες\] for your wives in your life together, paying honor to the woman as the weaker sex, since they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life — so that nothing may hinder your prayers.](#)” He reflects a perspective with greater cultural tones and a less radical view, than does Paul. Yet, even for him a sense of equality and mutual respect are significant. The phrase “[paying honor](#)” has the sense of “[treating them like queens](#)” (ἀπονέμοντες τιμὴν). The warning that Peter attaches is that if the Christian husbands don’t treat their wife’s this way, their prayers to God will be blocked and not reach God in a way that He will receive them. Thus mistreatment of the wife cuts off access to God in prayer!

So Paul laid a radical agenda on the table for Christian husbands: they are to love their wives. Note the present imperative verb form defining this as an ongoing obligation.

Our culture has migrated toward love as the glue binding husbands and wives together, but in the process we have let Hollywood define love mostly as sexual passion toward our spouse. Consequently, marriages in our culture come unglued as often as they hold together.

When Paul speaks of love as the foundational

commitment of the husband to his wife, he means something far different than the English word love as romantic love in our world. The Greek verb used is ἀγαπάω, not ἐράω, the Greek verb for sexual love from which the English word erotic comes. The love called agape in that world was self-sacrificing and focused on the other person rather than on itself.

But the lengthy expansion of this foundational commitment to love one's wife provides rich content to the idea of the love that Paul had in mind for husbands. The first expansion in verses 25b-27 sets the measuring standard for the husband's love. His love is to equal the love that Christ demonstrated for the church. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. That's the benchmark for husbands to reach.

This self-sacrificing put its attention on its object, not on itself. That is, Christ took this stance toward the church with the threefold objective of consecrating the church and getting the church ready as his bride to be for the great wedding day at the close of the age. This would enable the church to be holy and blameless on that day.

The second expansion element in vv. 28-32 defines the husband's love obligation to his wife in terms of the OT principle of marriage as set forth in Gen. 2:24 (NRSV): "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh." But this text does not speak of, nor imply that love is a part of the union between a man and a woman in marriage. Indeed, in the Old Testament and in the Judaism that emerged from the Israelite people love was never understood to be essential to marriage, at least at the beginning. It certainly wasn't considered a basis for getting married, since the arranged marriage tradition meant the fathers made the decision of whom their children married almost completely on the basis for what brought greatest benefit to the clan. When the OT describes Jacob's love for Rachel in Gen. 29:18, 20, the text never mentions any love for Leah, his first wife. The love for a wife described in exceedingly blunt terms in the Hebrew text of the Song of Songs is focused on an acquired love after the wedding night. All of this to say that Paul's use of the Gen. 2:24 principle of a husband and wife becoming "one flesh" as



a basis for the husband's obligation to love is wife takes some extending before it works.

Paul in his old Jewish scribal mode from his days as a Pharisee sees the link in the concept of flesh. Every sensible man has a strong feeling about his own body. In that Roman world which put emphasis upon physical strength and physical prowess, such would clearly be the case. Well, in God's eyes one's wife is a part of his body just as much as his own flesh. If he cherishes and nourishes his own flesh, he is obligated to do the same for his wife, since she is his flesh.

Thus the husband is to love his wife as the foundation of his relationship to her. In that world it meant an older man loving a wife some fifteen to twenty-five years younger than he. This love was defined by Christ's love for the church. It grew out of her having become his flesh in marriage. Paul put on the table a plan for the Christian family that would revolutionize relationships. Only rarely would one have observed families functioning in a manner somewhat similar. There were husbands who did love their wives in the Roman societies of that time, but this love was voluntary and could be set aside when absolute power over the wife was claimed. Thus Paul's agenda in reality challenged the heart of the Roman *patria potestas* tradition by placing the husband under absolute accountability to God for his relationship to his wife.

What can a modern husband glean from these instructions of the apostle to the Ephesian men? Several things, in my opinion. First, we husbands are ultimately accountable to God for how we treat our wives? Second, we have no freedom to mistreat them that grows out of their commitment to us. Peter issues the warning that to disregard our obligation to our wives severely hinders our own relationship to God. Paul's more idealized presentation stresses

only the positive side without any warning directly stated. But the implication is present. God holds us to this standard.

Third, our commitment to our wife is a love that translates into positive, beneficial action for her. Christ's example of self-giving sets the standard. We must cherish her and nourish her to the same extent that we do our own

bodies. In marriage we have become one flesh before God. Thus she takes priority over everyone else around us.

What a revival of family life would take place in our coun-



try were just Christians to seriously implement the obligations for wives and husbands that Paul sets forth. This, not to even mention what would happen if our entire country moved toward these ideals. God help us as Christian husbands and wives to set the example for the rest of our world.



b. Father - Child, 6:1-4

Greek NT

^{6.1} Τὰ τέκνα, ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν ὑμῶν [ἐν κυρίῳ]· τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν δίκαιον.
² τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα, ἣτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ,
³ ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται καὶ ἔσῃ μακροχρόνιος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.
⁴ Καὶ οἱ πατέρες, μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν ἀλλὰ ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νοουθεσίᾳ κυρίου.

Notes:

In a pattern similar to the wife-husband material above, we will utilize the parallels from elsewhere in the New Testament in amplifying Paul’s thoughts to the Ephesians. The most significant parallel comes from the Colossian Hausfafeln section in Col. 3:20-21. Note the similarities and differences in the charting of the two passages below:

Eph. 6:1-4

6.1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. **2** “Honor your father and mother”—this is the first commandment with a promise: **3** “so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” **4** And, **fathers**, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Clearly the Ephesian passage is longer and, although the core structure is very similar, noticeable differences surface with some of the details. The most significant difference is the appeal to the OT Israelite principle in Exod. 20:12 and Deut. 5:16 in the

NASB

6.1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. **2** HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), **3** SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. **4 Fathers**, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

NRSV

6.1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. **2** “Honor your father and mother”—this is the first commandment with a promise: **3** “so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” **4** And, **fathers**, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

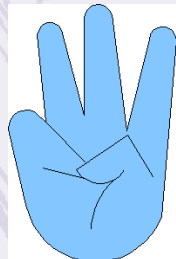
NLT

6.1 Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. **2** “Honor your father and mother.” This is the first of the Ten Commandments that ends with a promise. **3** And this is the promise: If you honor your father and mother, “you will live a long life, full of blessing.” **4** And now a word to you **fathers**. Don’t make your children angry by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction approved by the Lord.

Ephesian material. This extends out the children’s side of the relationship in Ephesians.

This second appeal to OT scripture, as evidence for Paul’s position in this section in contrast to the complete absence of any appeal to the OT in the Colossian parallels, raises the question of whether Paul sensed more Christians of Jewish background in his anticipated Ephesian readership than he did with the Colossian material. One could certainly make the claim for a Jewish segment in the Ephesian Christian community on the basis of the establishment of the community there in the book of Acts (cf. 18:18-20:1). This may be a factor in his greater use of the Old Testament in Ephesians.

In both Ephesians and Colossians the children’s obligation to their parents -- not just their father -- is cast with the verb ὑπακούω. In classical Greek this verb underscored the idea of “listening to” or “paying attention to” and could be used in a wide range



of settings all the way from a porter answering the door when someone was knocking on it to a judge listening to a complaint from a plaintiff in the court. The emphasis is upon the children listening to the verbal instructions of their parents and obeying what the parents tell them to do.

The expansion of this idea is done in several ways in Eph. 6:1-3. First, the children are to pay attention to their parent's instructions "in the Lord" (ἐν κυρίῳ). Paul's assumption is of a Christian family and that the parent's instructions will be appropriate to their Christian commitment. Also, the children, if old enough to be Christians, will respond out of their spiritual commitment to Christ, and not just out of obligation to parents generally.

The basis for this admonition is "for this is right" (τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν δίκαιον). Paul sees this obligation as entirely justified and appropriate. This opens the way for his citation of the OT principle "Honor your father and mother... so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." (τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα... ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται καὶ ἔση μακροχρόνιος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς). The appropriateness of the admonition to "pay attention to parents" is justified on its OT foundation of Jewish children being commanded by God to show honor to their parents. This citation is taken from two places in the OT Law:

Exod. 20:12. "Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."

Deut. 5:16. "Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you, so that your days may be long and that it may go well with you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."

Careful analysis of both the Hebrew and Greek (LXX) texts of these two passages will reveal that Paul's quote comes the closest to the wording of the LXX reading of Exod. 20:12 than to the Hebrew text of Exod. 20:12, or either to the Hebrew or the Greek texts of Deut. 5:16. This text reads:

τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα, ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται, καὶ μακροχρόνιος γένη ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τῆς ἀγαθῆς, ἧς κύριος ὁ θεός σου δίδωσίν σοι.

This in comparison to Paul's citing of it:

τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα... ἵνα εὖ σοι

γένηται καὶ ἔση μακροχρόνιος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

Of note is his parenthetical insertion of the comment that "this is the first commandment with a promise" (ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ). He reflects a Jewish understanding of the significance of this fifth command of the Decalogue. The second commandment in Exod. 20:4-6 contains a promise of divine blessing for those who do not make idols. But the command to honor one's parents stands as the first command regarding obligations to others (the horizontal section that follows the vertical section). This could be the sense of Paul's comment. Or, possibly its 'first' place is due to it being so foundational to proper human relationships. Correct relations with others begins with correct relations with one's parents.

The connection of the Ephesian expansion to the Colossian parallel is fairly clear: "obey your parents in everything, for this is your acceptable duty in the Lord" (ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν κατὰ πάντα, τοῦτο γὰρ εὐάρεστόν ἐστιν ἐν κυρίῳ). To the Colossians Paul simply bases his admonition on the principle that obedience to parents is appropriate to Christian union with Christ. He felt no need to reach back into OT principle to further evidence his assertion.

When Paul reverses the perspective he focuses on the father, rather than on both father and mother -- in consistency with the Haustafeln genre structure. The father's obligation to his children is stated somewhat differently between Ephesians and Colossians:

Eph. 6:4. "And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Καὶ οἱ πατέρες, μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν ἀλλὰ ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ κυρίου).

Col. 3:21. "Fathers, do not provoke your children, or they may lose heart" (Οἱ πατέρες, μὴ ἐρεθίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἀθυμώσιν).

Some slight difference exists between μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν in Eph. and μὴ ἐρεθίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν in Col. But the meaning of both expressions is almost identical. Fathers are to not impose their unlimited authority down on children in ways that are destructive to the children. The Colossians "ἵνα μὴ ἀθυμώσιν" simply means to "take the fire out of them" in the sense of breaking their drive, their spirit through excessive disciplining. The use of persuasion as the first teaching tactic is advocated.

The positive side, expressed in Ephesians, centers on nourishing one's children. This is done



έν παιδεία καὶ νουθεσία κυρίου. The terms underscore instilling values and self-control in children, and these values are to be derived from the Lord,

not just the father.

Wow! Here we have parenting guidelines that can transform a Christian family. Even in our world!



c. Master - Slave, 6:5-9

Greek NT	NASB	NRSV	NLT
<p>⁵ Οἱ δούλοι, ὑπακούετε τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου ἐν ἀπλότῃ τῆς καρδίας ὑμῶν ὡς τῷ Χριστῷ, ⁶ μὴ κατ' ὀφθαλμοδουλίαν ὡς ἀνθρωπάρεσκοι ἀλλ' ὡς δούλοι Χριστοῦ ποιοῦντες τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκ ψυχῆς, ⁷ μετ' εὐνοίας δουλεύοντες ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις, ⁸ εἰδότες ὅτι ἕκαστος ἐάν τι ποιήσῃ ἀγαθόν, τοῦτο κομίζεται παρὰ κυρίου εἴτε δούλος εἴτε ἐλεύθερος. ⁹ Καὶ οἱ κύριοι, τὰ αὐτὰ ποιεῖτε πρὸς αὐτούς, ἀνιέντες τὴν ἀπειλήν, εἰδότες ὅτι καὶ αὐτῶν καὶ ὑμῶν ὁ κύριός ἐστιν ἐν οὐρανοῖς καὶ προσωποληψία οὐκ ἔστιν παρ' αὐτῷ.</p>	<p>5 Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; 6 not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. 7 With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. 9 And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.</p>	<p>5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as you obey Christ; 6 not only while being watched, and in order to please them, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. 7 Render service with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not to men and women, 8 knowing that whatever good we do, we will receive the same again from the Lord, whether we are slaves or free. 9 And, masters, do the same to them. Stop threatening them, for you know that both of you have the same Master in heaven, and with him there is no partiality.</p>	<p>5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ. 6 Work hard, but not just to please your masters when they are watching. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. 7 Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. 8 Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free. 9 And in the same way, you masters must treat your slaves right. Don't threaten them; remember, you both have the same Master in heaven, and he has no favorites.</p>

Notes:

Here again, the parallels in Colossians and 1 Peter provide helpful backdrop. Paul's general perspective on slavery in his day can be gleaned from several sources in his writings:

Gal. 3:28. "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

1 Cor. 7:20-24. "20 Let each of you remain in the condition in which you were called. 21 Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. Even if you can gain your freedom, make use of your present condition now more than ever. 22 For whoever was called in the Lord as a slave is a freed person belonging to the Lord, just as whoever was free when called is a slave of Christ.

23 You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of human masters. 24 In whatever condition you were called, brothers and sisters, there remain with God."

Philemon 15-17. "15 Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, 16 no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. 17 So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me."

From these statements one can easily see that Paul saw the ending of slavery coming through Christianity, but he was careful to not advocate a religious call for slaves to rebel against their masters. Andrew T. Lincoln (WBC, Logos Systems) has

a helpful comment about attitudes toward slavery in the first century world:

As we have seen, the master-slave relationship was mentioned in the traditional discussions of household management where the focus was on how a master should rule his slaves. Aristotle (*Pol.* 1.1253b–1254a) deals with this relationship at greater length than with the other two, and Philodemus (*Concerning Household Management* 30.18–31.2) is fairly typical with his advice that slaves' work, food, and punishment should be kept moderate. Elsewhere, Aristotle expounds his view that the relationship between master and slave in the household is one in which it is inappropriate to talk about justice, because there can be no injustice in relating to things that are one's own, and a slave is a man's chattel (cf. *Eth. Nic.* 5.1134b). He can say, "for where there is nothing common to ruler and ruled, there is not friendship either, since there is not justice; e.g., between craftsman and tool, soul and body, master and slave; the latter in each case is benefited by that which uses it, but there is no friendship nor justice towards lifeless things.... For there is nothing common to the two parties; the slave is a living tool and the tool a lifeless slave" (*Eth. Nic.* 8.1161ab). Later Stoic views were, however, much more humanitarian. Seneca (*Ep.* 47) provides the most well-known discourse on treating slaves as human beings: "these people are slaves.' No: they are human beings. 'These people are slaves.' No: they are those with whom you share your roof. 'These people are slaves.' No: when you consider how much power Chance can exert over you both, they are fellow-slaves." Seneca goes on: "I don't want to let myself go on this vast topic, and give you a homily on how to treat your slaves: we behave toward them in a proud, cruel and insulting fashion. The sum of what I wish to preach is this: treat those whose status is inferior to your own in the same manner as you would wish your own superior to treat you." Impressive as this rhetoric is, Seneca did nothing to try to change the actual institution of slavery, and Wiedemann's comment (*Greek and Roman Slavery*, 233) is that in practice "Seneca is much more interested in writing exciting Latin than in improving the conditions of his readers' slaves." Palestinian Judaism accepted the institution of slavery, with slaves being viewed as the property of their masters. According to Philo, the Therapeutae and the Essenes rejected it (cf. Philo, *Quod Omnis* 79; *De Vita Cont.* 70). As far as the Essenes are concerned, this attitude toward slavery probably holds only for the core community in the desert, and not for any Essenes, like the early Christians who continue to live in society, since the Damascus Rule contains instructions on the treatment of slaves (cf. CD 11.12, 12.10-12, cf. also Stuhlmacher, *Philemon*, 47). Although Josephus (c. *Ap.* 2.3 § 215–17) can call for slaves to receive severe punishments for their offenses, in general Hellenistic Jewish writings

reflect contemporary Hellenistic appeals to masters to treat their slaves reasonably (cf. Sir 4:30; 7:20, 21; 33:31; Philo, *De Spec. Leg.* 2.66–68, 89–91; 3.137–43; Ps.-Phocylides 224). Philo saw slaves as indispensable, "for the course of life contains a vast number of circumstances which demand the ministrations of slaves" (*De Spec. Leg.* 2.123). Although he does not address slaves directly, he talks of instructions given "to servants on rendering an affectionate loyalty to their masters, to masters on showing the gentleness and kindness by which inequality is equalized" (*De Decal.* 167).

The emphasis between Ephesians and Colossians is similar:

Eph. 6:5-9

5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as you obey Christ; **6** not only while being watched, and in order to please them, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. **7** Render service with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not to men and women, **8** knowing that whatever good we do, we will receive the same again from the Lord, whether we are slaves or free. **9** And, **masters**, do the same to them. Stop threatening them, for you know that both of you have the same Master in heaven, and with him there is no partiality.

Col. 3:22-4:1

22 Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything, not only while being watched and in order to please them, but wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord. **23** Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, **24** since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ. **25** For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong has been done, and there is no partiality. **4.1 Masters**, treat your slaves justly and fairly, for you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

In both passages slaves are to "pay attention" (*ὕπακούετε*) to their masters, just as the children were to do so with their parents. This listening to masters is not to be selective (Col. 3:22, "in everything"). Rather, it is to be sincere because it grows out of obedience to Christ for the Christian slave. Heavenly reward is promised to the faithful Christian slave. Colossians extends this to promised divine retribution for mistreatment of the Christian slave by his master. The admonitions to the masters is very close between the two passages. Christian slave holders, e.g., Philemon, are to treat their slaves with justice and equity. These masters are reminded that they are in reality slaves to Christ and thus answerable to him in judgment.

Application to our world? Most closely to those we employ to work around our house. But generally application comes in the workplace. Employees and employers are the closest modern parallel.

Greek NT

²² αἰγυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ, ²³ ὅτι ἀνὴρ ἔστιν κεφαλὴ τῆς γυναικὸς ὡς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλὴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος ²⁴ ἀλλὰ ὡς ἡ ἐκκλησία ὑποτάσσεται τῷ Χριστῷ, οὕτως καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐν παντί. ²⁵ Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπάτε τὰς γυναῖκας, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπησεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ ἑαυτὸν παρέδωκεν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς, ²⁶ ἵνα αὐτὴν ἀγιάσῃ καθαρίσας τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι, ²⁷ ἵνα παραστήσῃ αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἕνδοξον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, μὴ ἔχουσαν σπίλον ἢ ῥυτίδα ἢ τι τῶν τοιούτων, ἀλλ' ἵνα ᾗ ἁγία καὶ ἄμωμος. ²⁸ οὕτως ὀφείλουσιν [καὶ] οἱ ἄνδρες ἀγαπᾶν τὰς ἑαυτῶν γυναῖκας ὡς τὰ ἑαυτῶν σώματα. ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα ἑαυτὸν ἀγαπᾷ. ²⁹ Οὐδεὶς γάρ ποτε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σάρκα ἐμίσησεν ἀλλὰ ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει αὐτήν, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, ³⁰ ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ. ³¹ ἀντὶ τούτου καταλείψει ἄνθρωπος [τὸν] πατέρα καὶ [τὴν] μητέρα καὶ προσκολληθήσεται πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἕξονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν. ³² τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο μέγα ἐστίν· ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω εἰς Χριστὸν καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. ³³ πλὴν καὶ ὑμεῖς οἱ καθ' ἕνα, ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα οὕτως ἀγαπάτω

NASB

22 **Wives**, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. 25 **Husbands**, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; 29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, 30 because we are members of His body. 31 FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. 32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless, each individual

NRSV

22 **Wives**, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. 24 Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. 25 **Husbands**, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, 27 so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind — yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” 32 This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. 33 Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

NLT

22 You **wives** will submit to your husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of his body, the church; he gave his life to be her Savior. 24 As the church submits to Christ, so you wives must submit to your husbands in everything. 25 And you **husbands** must love your wives with the same love Christ showed the church. He gave up his life for her 26 to make her holy and clean, washed by baptism and God’s word. 27 He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. 28 In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man is actually loving himself when he loves his wife. 29 No one hates his own body but lovingly cares for it, just as Christ cares for his body, which is the church. 30 And we are his body. 31 As the Scriptures say, “A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.” 32 This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. 33 So again I say, each man must love his wife as he

ὡς ἑαυτὸν, ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ἵνα
φοβῆται τὸν ἄνδρα.

^{6.1} Τὰ τέκνα,
ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν
ὑμῶν [ἐν κυρίῳ]: τοῦτο
γάρ ἐστιν δίκαιον.
² τίμα τὸν πατέρα
σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα,
ἧτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ
πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ,
³ ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται καὶ ἔσῃ
μακροχρόνιος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.
⁴ Καὶ οἱ πατέρες, μὴ πα-
ροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν
ἀλλὰ ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν
παιδείᾳ καὶ νοουθεσίᾳ κυ-
ρίου.

⁵ Οἱ δοῦλοι, ὑπακούετε
τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις
μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου
ἐν ἀπλότητι τῆς καρδί-
ας ὑμῶν ὡς τῷ Χριστῷ,
⁶ μὴ κατ' ὀφθαλμοδουλίαν
ὡς ἄνθρωπάρεσκοι
ἀλλ' ὡς δοῦλοι Χριστοῦ
ποιοῦντες τὸ θέλημα
τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκ ψυχῆς,
⁷ μετ' εὐνοίας δουλεύ-
οντες ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ
καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις,
⁸ εἰδότες ὅτι ἕκαστος ἐάν τι
ποιήσῃ ἀγαθόν, τοῦτο κο-
μίσεται παρὰ κυρίου εἴτε
δοῦλος εἴτε ἐλεύθερος.
⁹ Καὶ οἱ κύριοι, τὰ αὐτὰ
ποιεῖτε πρὸς αὐτούς,
ἀνιέντες τὴν ἀπειλήν,
εἰδότες ὅτι καὶ αὐτῶν
καὶ ὑμῶν ὁ κύριός ἐστιν
ἐν οὐρανοῖς καὶ προσω-
πολημψία οὐκ ἔστιν παρ'
αὐτῶ.

among you also is to
love his own wife even
as himself, and the wife
must see to it that she
respects her husband.

6.1 Children, obey
your parents in the Lord,
for this is right. 2 HON-
OR YOUR FATHER AND
MOTHER (which is the
first commandment with
a promise), 3 SO THAT
IT MAY BE WELL WITH
YOU, AND THAT YOU
MAY LIVE LONG ON THE
EARTH. 4 **Fathers**, do
not provoke your chil-
dren to anger, but bring
them up in the discipline
and instruction of the
Lord.

5 Slaves, be obe-
dient to those who are
your masters according
to the flesh, with fear
and trembling, in the sin-
cerity of your heart, as
to Christ; 6 not by way
of eyeservice, as men-
pleasers, but as slaves
of Christ, doing the will
of God from the heart.
7 With good will render
service, as to the Lord,
and not to men, 8 know-
ing that whatever good
thing each one does,
this he will receive back
from the Lord, whether
slave or free. 9 And
masters, do the same
things to them, and give
up threatening, knowing
that both their Master
and yours is in heaven,
and there is no partiality
with Him.

6.1 Children, obey
your parents in the Lord,
F26 for this is right. 2
“Honor your father and
mother”—this is the first
commandment with a
promise: 3 “so that it
may be well with you
and you may live long
on the earth.” 4 And, **fa-
thers**, do not provoke
your children to anger,
but bring them up in the
discipline and instruc-
tion of the Lord.

5 Slaves, obey your
earthly masters with
fear and trembling, in
singleness of heart,
as you obey Christ; 6
not only while being
watched, and in order
to please them, but as
slaves of Christ, doing
the will of God from the
heart. 7 Render service
with enthusiasm, as to
the Lord and not to men
and women, 8 knowing
that whatever good we
do, we will receive the
same again from the
Lord, whether we are
slaves or free. 9 And,
masters, do the same
to them. Stop threaten-
ing them, for you know
that both of you have the
same Master in heaven,
and with him there is no
partiality.

loves himself, and the
wife must respect her
husband.

6.1 Children, obey
your parents because
you belong to the Lord,
for this is the right thing
to do. 2 “Honor your fa-
ther and mother.” This
is the first of the Ten
Commandments that
ends with a promise.
3 And this is the prom-
ise: If you honor your
father and mother, “you
will live a long life, full
of blessing.” 4 And now
a word to you **fathers**.
Don’t make your chil-
dren angry by the way
you treat them. Rather,
bring them up with the
discipline and instruc-
tion approved by the
Lord.

5 Slaves, obey your
earthly masters with
deep respect and fear.
Serve them sincerely as
you would serve Christ.
6 Work hard, but not just
to please your masters
when they are watching.
As slaves of Christ, do
the will of God with all
your heart. 7 Work with
enthusiasm, as though
you were working for
the Lord rather than for
people. 8 Remember
that the Lord will reward
each one of us for the
good we do, whether
we are slaves or free.
9 And in the same way,
you **masters** must treat
your slaves right. Don’t
threaten them; remem-
ber, you both have the
same Master in heaven,
and he has no favor-
ites.

Col. 3:18-4:1 Greek NT

¹⁸Αἱ γυναῖκες, ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ὡς ἀνῆκεν ἐν κυρίῳ. ¹⁹Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπάτε τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ μὴ πικραίνεσθε πρὸς αὐτάς,

²⁰Τὰ τέκνα, ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν κατὰ πάντα, τοῦτο γὰρ εὐάρεστόν ἐστιν ἐν κυρίῳ. ²¹Οἱ πατέρες, μὴ ἐρεθίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἀθυμῶσιν.

²²Οἱ δούλοι, ὑπακούετε κατὰ πάντα τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις, μὴ ἐν ὀφθαλμοδουλίᾳ ὡς ἀνθρωπάρεσκοι, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀπλότητι καρδίας φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον. ²³ ὁ ἐὰν ποιῆτε, ἐκ ψυχῆς ἐργάζεσθε ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις, ²⁴ εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπὸ κυρίου ἀπολήμψεσθε τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν τῆς κληρονομίας. τῷ κυρίῳ Χριστῷ δουλεύετε. ²⁵ ὁ γὰρ ἀδικῶν κομίζεται ὁ ἠδίκησεν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν προσωπολημψία. ^{4.1} Οἱ κύριοι, τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὴν ἰσότητα τοῖς δούλοις παρέχεσθε, εἰδότες ὅτι καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔχετε κύριον ἐν οὐρανῷ.

NA27

¹⁸Αἱ γυναῖκες, ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ὡς ἀνῆκεν ἐν κυρίῳ. ¹⁹Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπάτε τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ μὴ πικραίνεσθε πρὸς αὐτάς,

²⁰Τὰ τέκνα, ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν κατὰ πάντα, τοῦτο γὰρ εὐάρεστόν ἐστιν ἐν κυρίῳ. ²¹Οἱ πατέρες, μὴ ἐρεθίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἀθυμῶσιν.

²²Οἱ δούλοι, ὑπακούετε κατὰ πάντα τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις, μὴ ἐν ὀφθαλμοδουλίᾳ ὡς ἀνθρωπάρεσκοι, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀπλότητι καρδίας φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον. ²³ ὁ ἐὰν ποιῆτε, ἐκ ψυχῆς ἐργάζεσθε ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις, ²⁴ εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπὸ κυρίου ἀπολήμψεσθε τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν τῆς κληρονομίας. τῷ κυρίῳ Χριστῷ δουλεύετε. ²⁵ ὁ γὰρ ἀδικῶν κομίζεται ὁ ἠδίκησεν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν προσωπολημψία. ^{4.1} Οἱ κύριοι, τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὴν ἰσότητα τοῖς δούλοις παρέχεσθε, εἰδότες ὅτι καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔχετε κύριον ἐν οὐρανῷ.

UBS4

Col. 3:18-4:1 NRSV

¹⁸ **Wives**, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹ **Husbands**, love your wives and never treat them harshly.

²⁰ **Children**, obey your parents in everything, for this is your acceptable duty in the Lord. ²¹ **Fathers**, do not provoke your children, or they may lose heart.

²² **Slaves**, obey your earthly masters in everything, not only while being watched and in order to please them, but wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord. ²³ Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, ²⁴ since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ. ²⁵ For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong has been done, and there is no partiality. ^{4.1} **Masters**, treat your slaves justly and fairly, for you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

Greek NT diagram

- 22 **Αἱ γυναῖκες**
1 (ὑποτάσσεσθε) τοῖς ἰδιοῖς ἀνδράσιν
ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,
23 ὅτι ἀνὴρ ἐστὶν κεφαλὴ τῆς γυναικὸς
ὡς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλὴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας,
αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος,
24 ἀλλὰ
ὡς ἡ ἐκκλησία ὑποτάσσεται τῷ Χριστῷ,
οὕτως καὶ
2 **αἱ γυναῖκες (ὑποτάσσονται) τοῖς ἀνδράσιν**
ἐν παντί,
- 25 **Οἱ ἄνδρες,**
3 **ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναῖκας,**
καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπασεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν
καὶ
ἐαυτὸν παρέδωκεν
ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς,
26 ἵνα αὐτὴν ἀγιάσῃ
καθαρίσας
τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος
ἐν ῥήματι,
27 ἵνα παράσχη ἑαυτῷ ἑνδοξὸν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν,
μὴ ἔχουσαν σπίλον
ἢ
ρύτίδα
ἢ
τι τῶν τοιούτων,
ἀλλ'
ἵνα ᾖ ἁγία,
καὶ
ἄμωμος.
28 οὕτως
4 **ὀφείλουσιν...οἱ ἄνδρες**
καὶ
ἀγαπᾶν τὰς ἑαυτῶν γυναῖκας
ὡς τὰ ἑαυτῶν σώματα.
- 5 **ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα**
ἑαυτὸν ἀγαπᾷ,
29 γὰρ
6 **οὐδεὶς ποτε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σάρκα ἐμίσησεν,**
ἀλλὰ
7 **ἐκτρέφει**
καὶ
8 **θάλλει αὐτήν,**
καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς (ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλλει) τὴν ἐκκλησίαν,
30 ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ.

³¹
9 ἀντὶ τούτου
καταλείπει ἄνθρωπος τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα
καὶ
10 προσκολληθήσεται
πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ,
καὶ
11 ἔσονται οἱ δύο
εἰς σάρκα μίαν.

12 ³² τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο μέγα ἐστίν,
δὲ
13 ἐγὼ λέγω
εἰς Χριστὸν
καὶ
εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν.

³³
πλήν
καὶ
ὕμεις
οἱ ...
14 ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα οὕτως ἀγαπάτω
καθ' ἓνα
ὡς ἑαυτόν,
δὲ
15 ἢ γυνή (εστω)
ἵνα φοβῆται τὸν ἄνδρα.

^{6.1}
16 **Τὰ τέκνα,**
ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονευσιν ὑμῶν
ἐν κυρίῳ,
γὰρ
17 τοῦτο ἐστὶν δίκαιον.

18 ² τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα,
ἣτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη
ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ,
³
ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται
καὶ
ἔσῃ μακροχρόνιος
ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

⁴
19 Καὶ
οἱ πατέρες,
μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν,
ἀλλὰ
20 ἐκτρέθετε αὐτὰ
ἐν παιδείᾳ
καὶ
νουθεσίᾳ κυρίου.

5 Οἱ δούλοι,
21 ὑπακούετε τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίου

μετὰ φόβου

καὶ

τρόμου

ἐν ἀπλότητι τῆς καρδίας ὑμῶν

ὡς τῷ Χριστῷ,

6 μὴ κατ' ὀφθαλμοδουλίαν

ὡς ἀνθρωπάρεσκοι

ἀλλ'

ὡς δούλοι Χριστοῦ

ποιῶντες τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ

ἐκ ψυχῆς,

7 μετ' εὐοίας

δουλεύοντες,

ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ

καὶ

οὐκ ἀνθρώποις,

8 εἰδότες

ἐάν τι ποιήσῃ ἀγαθόν,

ὅτι ἕκαστος... τοῦτο κομίζεται

παρὰ κυρίου,

εἴτε δούλος

εἴτε ἐλεύθερος.

9 Καὶ
22 οἱ κύριοι,
τὰ αὐτὰ ποιεῖτε

πρὸς αὐτούς,

ἀνιέντες τὴν ἀπειλήν,

εἰδότες

ὅτι καὶ αὐτῶν καὶ ὑμῶν ὁ κύριός ἐστιν

ἐν οὐρανοῖς,

καὶ

προσωποληψία οὐκ ἔστιν

παρ' αὐτῷ.

Semantic Diagram

				Αἱ γυναῖκες							
		1	-----	1	(Pres Mid Imp+ 2 P					ὕμεις)	
A	--									ἀλλὰ	
		2	-----	2	(Pres Mid Ind 3 P)					αἱ γυναῖκες	
										Οἱ ἄνδρες,	
		1	-----	3	Pres Act Imp+ 2 P					(ὕμεις)	
										οὕτως	
									a)	-----	
										4 Pres Act Ind 3 P οἱ ἄνδρες	
									i	--	
										καὶ	
									b)	-----	
										5 Pres --- Ind 3 S ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα	
									a	--	
										γὰρ	
									a)	-----	
										6 1 Aor Act Ind 3 S οὐδεὶς	
									ii	-	
										ἀλλὰ	
									1)	----	
										7 Pres Act Ind 3 S (αὐτός)	
I	--	B	--							b)	-
										καὶ	
										2)	----
										8 Pres Act Ind 3 S (αὐτός)	
										ἀντὶ τούτου	
									i	-----	
										9 Fut Act Ind 3 S ἄνθρωπος	
									b	--	
										καὶ	
									a)	-----	
										10 Fut Pass Ind 3 S (αὐτός)	
									ii	-	
										καὶ	
									b)	-----	
										11 Fut --- Ind 3 P οἱ δύο	

									a	-----	
										12 Pres --- Ind 3 S τὸ μυστήριον	
									3	--	
										δὲ	
									b	-----	
										13 Pres Act Ind 1 S ἐγὼ	
										πλην	
									1	-----	
										14 Pres Act Imp+ 3 S ἕκαστος	
									C	--	
										δὲ	
									2	-----	
										15 Pres Mid Subj 3 S ἡ γυνὴ	
										Τὰ τέκνα	
									1	-----	
										16 Pres Act Imp+ 2 P (ὕμεις)	
									A	--	
										γὰρ	
									a	-----	
										17 Pres --- Ind 3 S τοῦτο	
									2	--	

II	-								b	-----	
										18 Pres Act Imp+ 2 S (σου)	
										Καὶ οἱ πατέρες	
									1	-----	
										19 Pres Act Imp- 2 P (ὕμεις)	
									B	--	
										ἀλλὰ	
									2	-----	
										20 Pres Act Imp+ 2 P (ὕμεις)	
										Οἱ δούλοι,	
									A	-----	
										21 Pres Act Imp+ 2 P (ὕμεις)	
III										Καὶ οἱ κύριοι,	
									B	-----	
										22 Pres Act Imp+ 2 P (ὕμεις)	

Summary of Rhetorical Structure

The Haustafeln nature of this material sets up a threefold core structure for the passage. The topic is regarding family relationships. In the ancient family, this meant that each core segment -- wife, child, slave -- related to the male head of the house in prescribed ways. Paul took this model, largely based on the Roman aristocratic family model where slaves were present, and used both the structure and much of

the terminology in the Greek discussions to set forth the Christian ideal for the family. Also important for consideration is the close parallel of the core structure in Ephesians to the much abbreviated Haustafeln passage in Col. 3:18-4:

¹⁸Αἱ γυναῖκες, ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ὡς ἀνῆκεν ἐν κυρίῳ. ¹⁹Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπάτε τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ μὴ πικραίνεσθε πρὸς αὐτάς,

²⁰Τὰ τέκνα, ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν κατὰ πάντα, τοῦτο γὰρ εὐάρεστόν ἐστιν ἐν κυρίῳ. ²¹Οἱ πατέρες, μὴ ἐρεθίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἄθυμῶσιν.

²²Οἱ δούλοι, ὑπακούετε κατὰ πάντα τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις, μὴ ἐν ὀφθαλμοδουλίᾳ ὡς ἀνθρωπάρεσκοι, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀπλότῃ καρδίᾳ φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον. ²³ ὃ ἐὰν ποιῆτε, ἐκ ψυχῆς ἐργάζεσθε ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις, ²⁴ εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπὸ κυρίου ἀπολήμψεσθε τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν τῆς κληρονομίας. τῷ κυρίῳ Χριστῷ δουλεύετε. ²⁵ ὁ γὰρ ἀδικῶν κομίσεται ὃ ἠδίκησεν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν προσωποληψία. ^{4.1} Οἱ κύριοι, τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὴν ἰσότητα τοῖς δούλοις παρέχεσθε, εἰδότες ὅτι καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔχετε κύριον ἐν οὐρανῷ.

The Colossians passage presents basically only core expression in the first two sets of relationships, but expands considerably the third set of relations of slaves with their masters. This stands in sharp contrast to the Ephesians passage, which presents minimum material on the child-father and slave-master sides. But Paul, evidently motivated by a perceived need among his targeted readers, felt the need to present elaborate detail on the obligation of the husband to the wife.

Something similar may have been the case for the greater details regarding the slaves' obligation to masters in the Colossians text. Tempting but uncertain is the thought of whether the situation with Onesimus and Philemon who lived at Colossae may have prompted this more detailed treatment. Both Colossians and Philemon were sent to the same geographical destination originally.

First, wife-husband relations. Statements #1 and #2 focus on the wife with a highly elliptical expression. The core verb, ὑποτάσσω, is implied from the larger context of 5:21 with submissive respect is mandated for the entire community of faith and is seen as a fifth indicator of the full presence of God through the Holy Spirit in the community. Just as it was to be true inside the Christian community of believers, it was also to be true inside the Christian home.

The expansion elements building off the implied verb form the primary focus of attention. The extent of the submission is within the boundaries of spiritual union with Christ, ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ. Any action inappropriate to Christian commitment is outside the bounds of obligation by the wife to her husband. The foundation of this is the relation of Christ to the church: he is its head, which is then defined as Savior. Thus the figure of head is source of life in the traditional Jewish understanding of the metaphorical significance of the head. In that first century world the woman was totally dependent on her husband to provide a "living" for the family. Only rare exceptions to this can be demonstrated in the ancient literature. She as a young teenager wife needed to show respect and appreciation for her husband.

But the husband's obligation was defined in terms of self-sacrificing love for his wife. This is predicated on two foundations in the elaboration of Paul. First, he continues the background model of Christ and the church as the standard. Christ loved and sacrificed his own life for the church. This is the standard for the husband. Secondly, the nature of biblical marriage as defined in Genesis 2:24 as husband and wife become "one flesh" in marriage stands as the basis for the husband's obligation to love his wife. Since love for one's wife wasn't a part of that OT principle, Paul gets at love through appealing to human nature. A man normally loves and respects his body. His wife is a part of his body through the "one flesh" principle in the OT.

At the end, v. 33 and statements 14 and 15, Paul summarizes the husband - wife responsibility. Although impossible to reflect in English, he puts major emphasis on the husband's obligation to love his wife (statement #14). Secondary emphasis is placed on the wife's responsibility toward her husband (statement 15), which is now defined in terms of φοβέω rather than ὑποτάσσω. This shift in terminology is important for understanding what Paul had in mind with the original term ὑποτάσσω: respect for her husband.

Second, the child-father relations. In 6:1-4, Paul sets forth the obligations of the children to their father, and his to them. The child's obligation is extended beyond that stated in Colossian passage with the citation of the OT code in Exod. 20:12 and Deut. 5:16. Otherwise the structure is identical: admonition

based on a reason.

Third, slave-master relations. In 6:5-9 (statements 21 and 22), this relationship is defined. The major emphasis falls on the slave's responsibility to the male head of the house with a series of qualifiers defining the manner of serving the master of the house. They grow out of the slave's Christian commitment. The master of the house is to treat his slaves like he will be treated by his Lord, Jesus Christ, particularly on the Day of Judgment.

One common assumption throughout both the Ephesians and Colossians material is that everyone involved in the family is Christian. Paul builds an idealized model on this assumption. This stands in contrast to the somewhat similar Haustafeln passage in 1 Peter 2:18-3:7, where Peter treats the slave's obligations, followed by those of the wife and then the husband's. In both the slave and wife side of the treatment the common assumption is that Christian slaves are serving a non-Christian master and that wives are married to non-Christian husbands. This discussion is couched in a larger framework of the believing community's obligation to all people in authority, particularly governmental leaders (cf. 2:13-17). At one level, it has general affinity with the Ephesian linking of submissive respect to one another inside the community of believers to the stance of the Christian wife to her husband.