

The Christian Home (2): God's Institution Threatened

Colossians 3:18-25

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Colossians 3:18-25, the Word of God reads, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye service as men pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality." This is the Word of God.

Father, we come before You once again, asking, Lord, that You would now help us. Help us, Lord, to hear the Word of God, and I pray, O Lord, that You would speak to us through Your truth by the Holy Spirit, that our hearts would be enlarged to receive Your commandments and that we would be a people of discernment, a people that understand what the will of the Lord is. I pray that You would bless our time together now as we approach Your Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Well, last week, I mentioned that we are going to have a miniseries in our series through Colossians, and that miniseries is on the family. We began by considering the introduction to this topic, the introduction of the family, and particularly the family as God's institution. God, in the very beginning, defines and lays down what the family is, what the expectations of the family are: that it is one woman, one man, joined together in unity before God. We considered the purposes of marriage, those different things that are revealed to us in Scripture. The purpose of doing this was to show that, right from the very beginning, in the creation itself, rooted in creation, not in society, not in the opinions of men, but right there at the beginning, even before sin, God had intentions that were and are to continue on throughout all the generations. In a day of confusion, it is important for us to go back to the beginnings, to the foundations that God has laid, and then examine our lives, examine our culture, examine our families to make sure that they

are also in line with what God has said from the very beginning.

But today, we're looking also at another introductory point, and I probably never have done an introduction so long in my life: two introductory sermons. But the reason for that is clear, and I think it is this: to make it clear, anyway, to you all, that it's important for us to not only understand the foundations by which these commandments in Scripture extend from, but beyond that, not only to understand the foundations but to also see, which we'll see today, the threats that exist presently and have existed over the past however many years, which are problematic for our context. Meaning, we are now facing threats to those very foundations which God has laid, and so we need to understand not only the foundations by which we then can discern the threats, but also the connection there, and it's important for us to get both those before we come to the commandments.

As I've said to some of you privately, coming to the point of just getting up and saying, "Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands," is, particularly in a context like today, just sounds like a bunch of chauvinistic garb. But when you realize what God's created order is and the foundations that were laid and the current threats that are presented to the Christian home, then we start to see the significance of the very commandments of God and the importance of why He has done things the way He has done them. And so that's kind of the reason for why we're taking the time to lay the foundation.

Well, the question then has to ask ourselves: is the home threatened? And that's a good question to ask: is the home actually threatened, or is that just a figment of Christians' imagination? And for many of us who have grown up in a time where we haven't seen what the home once used to be, it's sometimes hard for us, not without knowing history, how threatened the family actually is and has been attacked today. So let me give some statistics as an introduction to show the current crisis in Australia concerning the family.

In 1901, there were 1,198 divorces. In 1920, 1,150. In 1940, 3,200. I'm just going to round the numbers off now. In 1960, 6,600. In 1980, 39,000 divorces in one year, and in 2020, 49,000 divorces. Now, can you see the trend? An increasing trend from 1901 to 2020, from 400-odd divorces to almost 50,000 divorces in the space of a year. And you can see the trend there. That is definitely a problem, an increasing problem in Australian society, and there must be an attack on marriage for there to be such an increase.

In fact, in 2019 (the reason why I say 2019 is because COVID kind of messed the statistics up a little bit), there were 113,000 marriages in Australia. But out of those 113,000 marriages, there were also 49,000 divorces. And you

can just see: 113,000 people coming together in marriage union and then 49,000 breaking that covenantal union in the same year. That's a problem concerning marriage.

What about Australian families? Well, out of the 5.5 million families in Australia, 1 million of those families are single-parented families, and quite sadly, four out of five of those single-parented families are parented by mothers, where the fathers are not present in the home. There are 2.5 million people divorced in Australia, and 46% of divorces involve children in the divorce process.

What about Australian couples? Well, in 1975, 16% of marriages were preceded by cohabitation, meaning two people coming to live together before they got married. So, 16% of people that entered into marriage said, "Look, let's just try before we buy," kind of an idea. "Let's just get together and see how things go." That was in 1975, but now it's consistently sitting around 80% of people cohabit together to make sure that they're compatible before they enter into marriage. That's 1975 to our present time, and what that has led to is the increase of de facto relationships, which are simply relationships of fornication. People that have not committed themselves in marriage that are living together under the same roof, and that basically has increased and tripled since 1986. People are basically preferring de facto relationships over marriage relationships because they don't want, I guess, to put a ring on it or, you know, to have the commitment aspect there. So, this has led to a great decline in marriage altogether. People are thinking, "Well, forget marriage, let's just live together. I mean, what's marriage anyway?" And that's a problem in our society according to the Word of God.

We also have the increase of same-sex couples. In 2017, Australia said "yes" to the further demise of the family and basically legalized same-sex marriage. And in 2021, there were counted 78,000 homosexual couples living together, and a third of them were married. That's 30% of them, and 17% of those homosexual couples had children living with them. Now, that's a redefinition of the family, and coupled with this, our culture and society have created many books, written many books in the world today that they have put in schools and in libraries, which are trying to teach children that this is a normal part of the new family: two dads, two moms, or whatever. And this is, once again, a direct attack on what we looked at last week about the foundations of God's institution.

But that begs the question: what has caused these figures to trend in this direction? I mean, the answer that could be given to that could be manifold, like many different things that have caused that. But ultimately, we know what causes this is sin. We ultimately know what causes this is

Satan. In 1 John 5:19, it says that the whole world is under the sway of the wicked one. That's definitely true, but the question we have to also ask ourselves is: how does the wicked one hold the entire world under his sway?

Well, one of Satan's most powerful tactics is the tactic that he used from the very beginning, and it's the concept of lying. He said to Eve in the very beginning, "Hath God said?" as a direct attack on the authority of the Word of God, which was laid for them and told them at the very beginning that they should eat freely of all the trees of the garden, but of the one tree they cannot eat of it, for if they eat of it, they shall surely die. And Adam and Eve opted to listen to Satan's lie above the truth of the Word of God.

And so, when we're considering the threats that exist in our culture towards the home, towards the family, we really have to ask ourselves this: if this is truly the work of the devil, not the work of God, if this is truly the work of the flesh and not the work of God, these trends that we were looking at in the statistics, what lie has our society believed? What ideology has infiltrated our society that has caused us to turn away from the word of truth?

And let me just make a point of this before we move on: the intention of the church is not necessarily to return to the traditional family, although the traditional family is much more biblical than the family that is today, the modern family. But our intention is to return to the biblical family, the family as defined by the Word of God, and that would have a consistency no matter the culture in which we live.

So, what was this lie and what was this threat? Well, after much research trying to understand what this all was and what this is all led to, and looking at the statistics, what has become increasingly clear to me is that the ideology and the movement of the sexual liberation and of feminism has led to a great change in the way that we now view the family. And I'll seek to make my case from some quotes and other things here also.

And so, it's important for us to realize that when we looked at those statistics, there was a great shift from the 1960s, 1940s, 50s, 60s to the 80s and 90s. There was this skyrocketing of divorce, skyrocketing of these issues, and that was the very same years we could say that the second wave of feminism took hold of the Western civilization and drove the Western civilization, if I could argue further, away from the truths of the Word of God, particularly regarding the family.

So, what is feminism? Well, it's the advocacy of women's rights on the basis of the equality of the sexes. Let me just say that there's nothing really wrong with that statement at all. In one sense, we believe in the equality of

the sexes, according to as it's defined in the Word of God, that in the image of God made He him, male and female created He them, that they're both in the image of God. And we'll look at true equality as we go on later. And should not people have their rights? Of course, people should have their rights. They should be respected for who they are and who God has made them to be.

And so, the definition itself may not be necessarily wrong or very—it doesn't really give us enough, if I could say, because definitions don't really unfold to us ideologies. They simply just tell us a basic meaning, but we need to understand what do they mean by what is defined, what is said, and that's important for us to see. What does it mean by equality? What does it mean by equality of the sexes? What is meant by women's rights? What are the ideologies that move as a vehicle those very definitions and shape those definitions, should I say?

Well, let me also, before I move on and talk about these negatives, we need to also realize that it was not that feminism did not bring anything that was positive at all, and I think that's important to recognize as well. The awareness of the abuse of women in our society was greatly aroused during the time of the feminist movement to show and to help people be aware of much more abuse that has been going on regarding women in society. Also, the provision of equal opportunity for women in the workplace and things like that also has had a positive impact. And also, what's important to realize is that there was a sense of fairness that was recovered. There was this idea of, you know, if there's equal work, equal pay, it doesn't matter what gender you are, whether you're a man or a woman, equal work, equal pay. So, I think it's important and only fair to realize that we don't misunderstand that there weren't any positive outcomes.

But the issue is this: those positive outcomes didn't have to come from the ideologies of feminism. They could have come with biblical and scriptural grounding and understanding. And so, it's important that those things don't justify the ideologies of feminism, but it's important also that we give credence to what has happened as a result. And so, I just don't want to be misunderstood in saying those things.

But what really undergirded the fight for feminism was the ideology of, yes, equality, but let me just say this: it was essentially undefined equality. I mean, equality without limits and without walls, a fight for the free, unrestricted, expressive individualism of man. That you express yourself, you be who you want to be, you are who you want to be, and don't let anyone get in your way of doing what you want to do. And this was the idea that was really underlying it. There was this ideology of breaking free from the restraints of male headship, breaking free from the restraints of the

traditional family, breaking free from the restraints of what really is the Word of God. You can be what you want, you can do what you want, rather than being told by God, and even as so much even so today, and even by biology, who you are and what you are to be doing and how you are to behave.

Feminism led a march that basically redefined the traditional gender roles, and these liberation movements revolutionized society, and it was all done in the name of equality. So much so that during these marches and fights for women's rights included things like the right to the introduction of the pill, the introduction of abortion, and the legalization of abortion. These things led to the legalization of the no-fault divorce bill and the career-driven woman who essentially felt that she could do exactly what her husband had done at the expense of raising her children and at the expense of even educating their children. So they were shipped off at a very young age to childcare facilities, and I'm not undermining that there is a place for that in certain cases, but I'm just simply trying to make a point that their responsibilities were undermined.

It also led to the feminization of men who basically were made to feel in many respects that they were oppressors, oppressors of women. Don't get me wrong, many men were oppressors and should be corrected, but their gender was basically subject to this oppressive spirit, and so essentially they had to give up their rights so that there would be equality. Basically, to lead was made to feel like you were chauvinistic and oppressive. It also led to, ultimately, throughout history, the legalization of homosexual marriage and also led to transgenderism and the redefining of the sexes. Now, that didn't all come from feminism itself, but the ideology of equality is the offspring of all those things that we now see today in our society.

What's important for us to realize is that this ideology of equality has so infiltrated our society that the sexes are almost indistinguishable in our society today. If you ask someone what a woman is, they might struggle and be hard-pressed to give you a straight answer. Let me just back up what I'm saying with a few quotes from the voices of the feminists to help us understand what they mean by the advocacy of women's rights based on the equality of the sexes.

Betty Friedan said, "Women who are just housewives, who grow up wanting to be just a housewife, are in as much danger as the millions who walk to their own death in the concentration camps. They are suffering a slow death of mind and spirit." Annie Laurie Gaylor says, "Let's forget about the mythical Jesus and look for encouragement, solace, and inspiration from real women. Two thousand years of patriarchal rule under the shadow of the cross ought to be enough to turn women toward the feminist salvation of this world." Kate Millett said, "So long as every female, simply by virtue

of her anatomy, is obliged, even forced, to be the sole or primary caretaker of childhood, she is prevented from being a free human being." Dr. Mary Jo Bane said, "In order to raise children with equality, we must take them away from families and communally raise them." Roxanne Dunbar said, "How will the family unit be destroyed? The demand alone will throw the whole ideology of the family into question so that women can begin establishing a community of work with each other, and we can fight collectively. Women will feel freer to leave their husbands and become economically independent, either through a job or welfare." Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, said, "The most merciful thing a large family can do to one of its infant members is to kill it." Shulamith Firestone said, "The heart of woman's oppression is her childbearing and child-rearing roles." Laverne Cox, a transgender feminist, said, "I think trans women and trans people, in general, show everyone that you can define what it means to be a man or a woman on your own terms. A lot of what feminism is about is moving outside roles and moving outside of expectations of who and what you're supposed to be to live a more authentic life."

Now, these are just a handful of some of the quotes from feminists to understand the ideology that exists behind them. This ideology is unquestionably anti-scripture and anti-God. Let me just, for a moment, help us think of this in light of scriptural comparison. How do these ideologies line up with things like Titus 2:4-5, where the Bible teaches that the older women are to teach the younger women to be discreet, homemakers, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemed? I don't think it would line up too well with the oppressiveness of caring for children and raising children. How do they coincide with Peter's words in 1 Peter 3:7, where the husband is to give honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel? Weaker vessel? No way, this is oppressive language, Peter. Well, the Bible teaches that she's the weaker vessel so that the husband's duty is to protect her, to love her, to nurture her, to strengthen her, and to help her. What about Paul's supposed oppressive words in 1 Timothy 5:14, where he says, "I desire that the young widows marry, bear children, and manage the house"? You see, to the feminist, all these things that I've mentioned are weak and second-class things that women have been enslaved to for thousands of years that now need to be broken free from. But what are they being enslaved to? Is it the Word of God? Is it the truth of God? Is it the design of God? Is that the very thing that we're trying to overthrow? Because if the truth be known, our culture is enslaved in this day to sin; it is enslaved to divorce; it is enslaved to sexual immorality; it is enslaved to what Jesus basically says, "he that commits sin is the servant of sin." If anything, the problem in our society is not the enslavement of the Word of God, which we're trying to break free from; it's quite the reverse, isn't it?

And it's important for us to recognize that what the feminist ideology ba-

sically presses against is the Word of God. And so, the introduction of the pill, and the introduction of abortion, and the introduction of the no-fault divorce legislation was introduced for the purpose of being able to free the woman, meaning that she can have sexual relations like the man without the consequence of childbearing, without the nuisance of having to deal with children. So just take the pill, and it will kill the seed of life in the womb. And just in case that doesn't work, what we'll do is we'll legalize abortion, that you can just basically declare, "my body, my choice," and forget the child's body itself. Just so you can continue to be free and that you can continue to live freely without the consequences of childbearing and all these negative aspects also. And then the no-fault divorce legislation was right there to free women from the bondage of marriage and the need to be a helper to her husband. And so, all these things coupled together really spoke to the demise of the family and led to the demise of the home. It was these lies that were believed about unqualified equality that has constantly got an axe and been cutting at the root of the institution of God, the family. It is ultimately a rejection of Genesis 1 and 2 and God's design for marriage and God's purpose for marriage. And it leads, basically, and has led, basically, to effeminate men, a gender dysphoria, and confusion where people don't know who they are or what they are anymore, broken families, as the statistics clearly show, and the death of millions of unborn babies and a confused generation, all in the name of equality.

And what we need to realize as Christians is that there is a serious incompatibility between these ideologies and the ideology of the Word of God. That these two ideas cannot exist together. That these two ideas cannot live in the same house for a successful marriage. That these two ideas can't dwell together in the church of God or in the house of God or in the families that exist in the house of God. That these, you can't have feminism and God's design. They are contrary to one another. And therefore, the church is at the point where we are being called out from these things and called to the authority of Scripture. We are being called to what God has said rather than what the world has said. Feminism and this equality ideology are not friends of the gospel; they are foes to the Word of God. Clothed in expressions of positive expressions like freedom and equality, many Christians receive them as wholesale, as if they're good. But all they really are is a Trojan horse. If you know what a Trojan horse is, I'm not talking about the computer program, a computer program that stuffs up your computer, although that's what it's become to mean. It's a Greek old story that basically told about the city of Troy and how they tried to break in and couldn't get into this city. And so, what they did, basically, was - and I'm paraphrasing here, the story, I'm just simplifying it - what they basically did was they made a big horse, a Trojan horse, which was looked at as a gift to the gods. And this city, they put that Trojan horse right at the front of the gates of that city, and so the city opened the door to receive this

wonderful Trojan horse. What a gift! And so they took that Trojan horse in, as it appeared to be a wonderful gift given to the city. However, in the Trojan horse were a whole bunch of soldiers, and at night they came out of the horse and opened up the gates, and the enemy armies that tried to infiltrate that city for so long and couldn't get in now got in and overthrew the city.

And what I'm simply trying to say is that there are many lies of Satan that are like Trojan horses. They are covered in a facade of words like freedom, liberty, and liberation, and these are words that are not necessarily evil or bad, and they have positive expressions to our hearts and to our minds. And for many Christians, they receive the Trojan horse into their homes; they receive the ideology, the falsehood, the lie. And then, as time goes on, they start to see that this lie is only yielding fruit that is destroying my city, that is destroying our home, that is undermining the very foundations upon which our family has been built.

The question we have to ask ourselves is: what's wrong with God's design? Did God make a mistake when He made male and female? Did God make a mistake when He basically showed us that the woman was to be the helper for men? Did God make a mistake when He formed Adam first and made him the head of the Covenantal Union? That's the question we have to ask ourselves as Christians because if we accept wholesale these ideologies, we're essentially implying that God made mistakes here. But He hasn't made a mistake.

In fact, some Christians go so far as to say that the male headship was introduced only after the fall and is the result of sin, so then when God redeems man, women are free from headship in redemption, and therefore there's an equality amongst them, and they're free because rulership and headship were a result of the fall. But this is not true, and what we need to realize, and what we have to realize as men and women, is essentially to embrace the very designs of God for us that are outlined in His Word.

That God has made women different from men and men different from women, and women have qualities that men do not have or have strengths that men do not have, and men have strengths that women do not have. There are special qualities of care, tenderness, consideration, and a certain intelligence and these intuitions that women have that men lack. Trust me, I know; we just had a baby more recently. We had a baby a few weeks ago, and I'm realizing how much there's that motherly instinct that's not in the fatherly instinct, if I could say, and that's how God's designed my wife, and I praise God for that. That gives her special roles and responsibilities to our son, and I have roles and responsibilities to our son too, but I can't take her place, and she can't take my place, and those things we should

not undermine and look at them as threats that there are differences, but rather realize that we are to embrace them as the designs of God.

There's a lady by the name of Dee Jemsen who writes this: "It is important that women are allowed to bring these womanly qualities into every area of life. The whole fabric of our society needs to be touched by the qualities women possess, but Satan has diverted us. As women began to ask why they were regulated to positions of lesser importance in the world's eyes, he stepped in to tell them that men were doing all the important work. Consequently, child raising and homemaking came to be viewed as lesser occupations. The enemy has convinced many women to go so far as the other side that they have modeled themselves on the very men they have criticized. In the process, they have denied their own womanhood. Once that happens, logic says that you no longer have one problem but two problems."

Consider abortion. Women were created to be life bearers. Now the world is trying to tell us that it is actually noble for a woman to discard the fruit of her womb. She's simply exercising her right to choose, but what of the child's right to be born, to be nurtured and loved by its mother? What happens to women who opt for abortions, even though a mother's basic instinct is to protect her young? Such an action certainly does violence to a woman's soul.

The world has been telling us tremendous lies, and we have believed them. Our gullibility has caused us great stress and confusion. Some women are frustrated because they think they can and should be the best homemaker, the best mother and wife, and the very best in their profession all at the same time. Women feel pressured to become superwomen because of the message that society sends them, but there are no superwomen. Only frustrated individuals attempting to live as though they have no personal limitations. Some of us have more energy than others, but we all have a limited supply. Part of growing up involves realizing that one has limits, that there are trade-offs in this life.

It's really important to realize and understand that we cannot be everything and everyone at the same time. Therefore, be who God has made you to be. Quite sadly, we are trading off the very things that God has expected us to do and in His Word.

So, what does the Bible say about equality? I looked at this last week, so I'm not going to labor on this, but the Bible teaches that both men and women were made in the image of God. The Bible says in 1 Peter 3:7, it also says that they're heirs together of the grace of life. God has made men and women heirs together of the grace of life. Many people have looked at

that as the grace of eternal life, that they're coheirs of salvation. Others have looked at them as the grace of life in childbearing and raising children, having families. Whatever it may be, the point is there is an equality there.

The Bible says in Galatians 3:28, there's no difference between male and female, bond and free. That's talking about in Christ Jesus, there is no distinction, and those distinctions are the carnal, derogatory distinctions of the society that was there at the time where the Jews looked at women as lesser than themselves. But the Bible says that we are one in Christ Jesus, redeemed by Christ. The middle wall of partition has been broken down. We both enjoy and have the wonderful gifts of salvation and redemption.

The Bible talks about there being many levels on which men and women are equal, but not on all levels. There are differences and there are distinctions in not only their anatomy, roles, functions, responsibilities, which means the word inequality is not an evil word. The answer to "are women and men equal?" is a yes and no answer, not a wholesale yes answer.

Now the question we have to ask ourselves is this: can there be equality yet differences? Because people say if there's no full equality, then there's no equality at all. I think as Christians, we should be the first to realize that that can be the case. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 11:3 that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God. And so, right there, we have the order within the house, but we also have an order in the Godhead.

As Christians who are Trinitarian, we are the first and should be the first to understand that in the equality of the Godhead – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and these three being one – the different roles and functions that they play in the Godhead do not make one inferior to the other. And if anyone should be able to comprehend these things, well, it should be the Christian. We should understand that at the very center of our faith lies an equality wherein there are differences.

Paul brings that out in that passage in Corinthians in the context of the headship of the husband and the wife. And so, it's foolish to think that there can be equality and no differences, or that there can't be equality and there being differences. It's important to realize that Christ is equal and one with the Father, yet He was the one who came down to earth to give Himself a ransom for our sins, to redeem us from the punishment and penalty of sin, that the wrath of God may be satisfied. And then to realize that it's the Holy Spirit that is sent into the world to redeem those that the Son has died for and those the Father has given to the Son. To realize that there is this oneness within the Godhead, yet at the same time, there is this unity of purpose, yet at the same time, there are distinctions in the

roles in which they play, not only in creation but also in redemption.

And so, it's important for us to realize that these things are totally compatible with Christianity, that there can be equality yet differences. And there's a quote here from Raymond C. Ortlund Jr. that I'll finish with before we make some application. Raymond C. Ortlund Jr. says this: "I see this fallacy again and again in feminist argumentation: Subordination equals denigration, and equality equals indistinguishability. Whence this insight into reality? Is the Son of God slighted because He came to do the will of the Father? Is the church denigrated by her submission to her Lord? Are church members less than fully redeemed on account of their submission to their pastors and elders? Are children less than fully human by virtue of their submission to their parents?"

But some will say, "Doesn't hierarchy in marriage reduce a woman to the status of a slave?" Not at all. The fact that a line of authority exists from one person to another in both slavery and marriage, and for that matter in the Holy Trinity, in the body of Christ, in the local church, in the parent-child relationship – the fact that a line of authority exists from one person to another in all these relationships does not reduce them all to the logic of slavery. Feminists seem to be reasoning that because some subordination is degrading, all subordination must necessarily be degrading. On the contrary, what biblical headship requires and what slaveholding forbids is that the head respect the helper as an equally significant person in the image of God. And so, this whole idea that if there is subordination, there is slavery, is wrong. Just because there is a wrong kind of subordination in slavery, it doesn't mean all subordination is slavery. And this is what we must break free from in our thinking if ever we are going to build a godly home.

Let me ask you these questions in closing: Do you cringe at the thought of differences? Do the differences that exist between you and your spouse cause you to cringe? We need to self-examine ourselves at this point to see whether or not we have fallen prey to this philosophy and vain deceit of feminism in the home or in the church. The fact that you cannot, or the fact that you are not meant to do what another person is doing, does that make you feel like there is inequality? Does that make you feel like you are inferior? That you are lesser? Well, my friends, if that makes you feel lesser and inferior, then you may have succumbed to the lie of feminism at this point, to a false kind of equality.

As a woman, do you see yourself as a competitor against your husband or as a companion? In your home, is it about having one up on him and him having one up on you, and who can answer back more smartly than the other person, and I don't know, who can make more money this year

in their jobs, or however that battle might go on in your home? Is that what's happening in the household? Is there a sense of jealousy that exists between your fathers and mothers, and even with regards to children and parents, is there certain jealousy that we're not content and satisfied with that which God has given us to do?

Do you feel like you may be inferior to your husband or unimportant because he goes out and makes money while you go and you look after children, and you don't get to bring in the money, as if money is what the world is all about? Not realizing that it's a very high calling, much higher calling than making a bit of money, to raise a godly seed, to raise a generation of people that love the Lord Jesus Christ and uphold His truth in a degrading society. You see, these are lies that Satan has infiltrated and brought into our society and brought into the home that is bringing down our society.

Do I think that supporting my husband is oppressive and that I'm not really free because I can't just do what I want when I want? Well, I have news for you: your husband can't just do what he wants when he wants either. He is under God, and he has responsibilities before God to his wife, to his children, and so these are wrong thoughts about what leadership is. These are wrong thoughts about the distinctions in the home.

What about for men? Have we fallen prey to feminist ideology? Do we fail to see our wives as weaker vessels and as heirs together of the grace of life? Do we think that they are just like us, so when they don't do the things that we do, we get frustrated with them and angry and think, "What's wrong with you? How come you can't do that?" As if they are made exactly like you to do all the things that you do. The Bible says that you are to dwell with them according to understanding and giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, but when you take away weaker vessel and you take away that idea of her being made differently to you, you start to level the playing field in such a way that you start judging her by a standard which is not made for her, and the Bible condemns this.

Do I see my wife as an equal in every way so that I get angry with her because she's different from me? What about men that have become passive and they don't lead because they're afraid that if they take up the mantle of leadership in the home, they're going to be looked at as oppressive dictators or looked at as those that are taking the lead and chauvinistic? A lot of men have just simply opted out for the man cave to escape the troubles that exist within their very home when God is the one that holds them responsible for what takes place in their home.

When troubles come your way in the home and your wife is struggling, it's not your time to run away and just let her sort it out herself. You are to

be there to help her through her problems. When your children are struggling, your wife is struggling with their children, it's not time to run away to the man cave and let her handle it, but to rise up and help her, to take up the mantle of leadership and to love her. You are responsible, husbands, to teach your wives, to teach your children the Word of God. You're responsible for the sins that exist in your home and not to just ignore them and think, "Well, God will deal with them," or "God's called you to deal with them in love."

To take the Word of God and say, "Darling, I love you, but what is happening here is contrary to the Word of God, and for us to have a home that is going to be pleasing to the Lord, we must submit ourselves to the Scripture here. It's not right to continue on getting angry like that at the children. It's not right to continue on responding that way, even to me. I know I deserve all the wrath that I deserve because of my sin; however, it's not right, it's not good. A foolish woman plucks down her house with those things."

Husbands, it's our responsibility, in love, to do these things, to help gently turn the minds of our wives and children to the Word of God, and therefore, we must be first in the Word of God. We must be praying for our families, praying for our wives, being as priests to our household, like Job was, who offered up sacrifice just in case the kids, his wife, and the children had sinned against the Lord. This should be the concern of husbands, to carry the family through the problems.

The truth is, for many men, they retreat when problems arise, and they let and expect their wives to clean up the mess. It's sad because there are many hurting families, many hurting wives, many hurting children, and there are many hurt husbands. But the Bible is very clear that God has given us responsibilities and duties that we ought to fulfill, and we must not believe the lies of feminism, must not believe the lies of an ideology that makes everything equal in so much that there is no more distinguishing roles in the household.

I don't know where we have fallen at this point; that's between you and the Lord. But as we go through the next few weeks through the text of Colossians and look at husbands, wives, and children, let me encourage you to have a heart that's ready to return back to the authority of Scripture on this very important matter of God's institution and the Christian home. Let's pray.