

Bring it Home

4 C's Content.. Context. Connection. and Conduct. Colossians 3:18-4:1

3rd C Connection: How does it relate? Shortest step but most challenging step Bring it back home. How does the text travel? We have looked at a passage...seen many things We have identified the main point of the passage We have looked at the context Understood the context we bring to the text Understood the first century context We know what it meant to the original readers Now we ask, How does this travel to the 21st Century? The passage today talks about wives submitting and slavery Context is going to be very important to us As we try to bring the timeless truth of this passage home Who controls the meaning...the reader or the author?

Think, for instance, of the parable of the Prodigal Son. When 100 North American students were asked to read the parable and retell it, only six mentioned the famine the prodigal experiences away from home. In a word, American readers tend to be "famine-forgetters," perhaps because most Americans simply have not experienced terrible famine. Compare the response of 50 Russian readers to the very same parable: 42 out of 50 mentioned the famine. Why? The cultural history of famine in World War II has deeply embedded itself in the Russian consciousness, and this cultural lens influences what Russian Christians see in a biblical text.

Do you remember when I said Context Rules. If you don't the right context in any matter, you will likely misinterpret it. Let me give you an example. If you don't know the context of the Wizard of Oz you will completely miss the author's point. The meaning is controlled by the writer....The Wizard of Oz's meaning must come from L Frank Baum the author....not the reader. Just like in Scripture if you want to know the meaning you must ask the Holy Spirit who wrote it.

Wizard of Oz. **PHOTO** 1 Nice Story, Toto, Dorothy Overcame odds and with help from new friends,overcame the bad guysAsk the reader and it is a nice children's story Confession...I have never seen it. I have tried. I really have. But when those munchkin voices start and the Lollipop gang kicks in....I'm out. I tried. I can't do it. But if you ask L Frank Baum the author....you may get a completely different idea of what that story is about

The huge issue facing the American Government at the time had to do with currency...Would our economy become based on a gold standard or a silver standard? The US Government had been based on gold but there was a huge political push to convert the currency to silver.

Baum's newspaper had addressed politics in the 1890s, and Denslow was an editorial cartoonist as well as an illustrator of children's books. A series of political references is included in the 1902 stage version, such as references by name to the President, to a powerful senator, and to John D. Rockefeller for providing the oil needed by the Tin Woodman. Scholars have found few political references in Baum's Oz books after 1902.

So at the time the Wizard of Oz was written...the words were written by a political newspaper man and the drawings were done by a political cartoonist....interesting.

The book was an immediate success with children when released in 1900 and led to a stage presentation similar to Broadway in 1902.

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Once Baum realized the gold mine....pun intended...that he had in this now children's book...the political satire was played down so as not to taint the book or play.

But since context rules and content belongs to the author....the original meaning of the Wizard of Oz never changed. Readers may interpret it as a nice children's story...but it is political satire on the issue of using Silver as currency.

"Follow the yellow brick road" was likely a reference to the idea of following Gold as the currency standard. This gold road led to the Wizard of Oz, but Dorothy discovers that he was a fraud. Dorothy's real hope laid is her shoes....her SILVER shoes. In the book her shoes are silver Hollywood changed them to ruby to show up in color better **PHOTO 2**

this book was political satire with each person representing a segment of society Scarecrow= Farmers No Brains. Tin Woodsman= Factory Workers No heart. Cowardly Lion= Political Leaders of the Day Wicked Witch of the East= East Coast Establishment. Wicked Witch of the West= West Coast Establishment The Heroine? Dorothy representing the Middle Class from Kansas.

So who determines the meaning? Reader (Children's Story) or the Author (political satire)? Or consider an additional example: How often have you sat in a Bible study, looked at a passage with other group members, and then had the leader of the group ask, "What does the passage mean to you?" A minute or two passes in silence; slowly individuals begin to respond: "To me this passage is saying" this, or "to me this passage means" that.

Of course, to ask what a passage means is praiseworthy. But to make the individual Christian the starting point for interpretation and the center of a text's meaning—the Western pattern—is problematic. We must avoid the Me First Western Pattern of understanding things.

This question is critical when it comes to understanding Scripture. Said simply...is the truth in these holy documents determined by the author or the reader? If you read the Bible as great literature and don't see a message in it for you from God....Your main question will be...What does this text mean to me?

But if you read the Bible as God's Word or revelation to you. If you read the Scriptures as God's Communication to you ...Your main question will be "What is the meaning God intended in this text?"

So when we read the Bible we are looking for God's intent when He wrote it, so our question is "What is the truth that God intended to communicate to us?" And only after that "How should I apply this truth to my life today?" So for now we are looking for God's truth that is communicated

Fortunately we don't do this alone. As a believer, we have a mentor. The Holy Spirit. God's Spirit in us teaches us all things. But we have to work to position ourselves to learn.

Having the Holy Spirit does not mean that the Spirit is all you need. Having the Holy Spirit in you does not make valid interpretation automatic. The Spirit expects us to use our minds, proper interpretive methods, and good study helps to interpret the Bible accurately. The Holy Spirit is our helper who teaches us all things....He doesn't do all the work for us.

Remember that when we come to Scripture we kneel under the text. The Spirit does not change the Bible to suit our purposes or to match our circumstances. We submit to and are looking for God's truth.

We call the Timeless Truth the Gold of Bible Study. It is why we have been panning....looking at everything...paying attention to the passage...the verbs, the lists, the metaphors, the content, the context....all of it so that we don't miss the gold...the timeless truth hidden and yet obvious to those who pursue it. So how do we tell real gold from fool's gold? What are the characteristics of the truth that God has placed in His text?

How do we connect the text from thousands of years ago to our lives today? Not every truth of the Bible is carried forward for all times....We have to identify the Gold....the eternal truth...and then make sure it is real gold. How do we do that? Well we have to know what to look for.

5 Characteristics of Timeless Truth

1) Biblical

Hopefully this goes without saying. But your timeless truth must be in the Bible.

2) Compatible

The timeless truth is not limited to one passage in Scripture. It is reflected in other passages as well.

3) Eternal

That is why it is called timeless...It is not tied to or limited by a specific situation.

Take Rebecca's Camel Test in Genesis 24:19. Abraham wants a wife for his son Isaac. So he sends Eliezer to find her. Obviously the question is how will I know which one God has chosen?

Enter the Famous Camel Watering Test to determine God's choice for a wife.

After his long travels, Eliezer would ask a young maiden for a sip of water, and if she offered to provide water for his camels as well, she would be the one! That is exactly what Rebecca does. It is true. It is a truth of Scripture....This test identified God's choice for a wife for Isaac. It is a biblical truth....but is it a timeless truth? The true biblical test for wife choosing throughout all of history and all of eternity?

4) Cross Cultural

The timeless truth has to travel across cultures. It should be relevant to both the biblical audience and the contemporary audience.

5) Applicable

It was applicable in the first century. It is applicable in our time....It will be applicable in the future.

So in order to bring it home we must take two steps.

First, we must identify the timeless truth that relates to both the original reader and to us.

Second, if the truth is in the Old Testament, we must see how that truth was managed in the New Testament. Jesus came to give us a new commandment...a new covenant. We studied this a few weeks ago when we looked at Jewish traditions.

So, when we study the Old Testament we have to ask if the New Testament added to that principle or modified the principle. Jesus was constantly adding to truths of the Old Testament.

You have heard it said...but I say...

So when you are looking at a truth that comes from the Old Testament you must look at it through the truth filter and lens of Christ.

Once we identify the timeless truth...The truth that God placed in His Scriptures for all people and for all time and all circumstances....then and only then are we to begin thinking about how to bring that home. We connect that truth to our lives. It is true for them....true for us...and will true for all people of all times. We have distilled God's truth...the meaning that He placed in the text...thousands of years ago....and bring it forward...bring it home to our lives today.

Unfortunately, many people have not been taught how to read the Bible...how to find the timeless truth and then bring it forward to our lives today. There were many truths in their lives that were not meant for us.

It was customary for the elder sister to marry before the younger sister, for women to carry water and other burdens on their shoulders, for people to get off their camels or donkeys as a sign of respect when they greeted other people, for individuals to bow before others, for parents to choose their son's bride for him, or for guests to wash their feet upon arrival at the home of their hosts. To sit in order of importance around a table.

Dietary Restrictions....Celebrating the Jewish Feasts as an obligation ...Circumcision...Women never cutting their hair...never wearing jewelry...never speaking in church...

Connection....the Third C....So we are to bring the text home. Take the truth that we have learned and bring it home. That is exactly what Paul is teaching in our text today. Last week we looked at love and unity as it plays out in the church family Now Paul is going to encourage us to take our new identity home...to our own family.

Paul has been teaching those in Colossae and us That the one characteristic that defines God people is Love Their love for God that spills over to each other and then everyone else. And it stems from their realization that they are chosen, holy and deeply loved by God. Our passage today is about how that love spills over to our families and relationships If Christ's love changes our church family It should also impact our own family This is not just a church thing...it is a life thing.

Yet as we look around our culture today...families are in trouble. Serious trouble. The majority of the problems facing our nation have come from generation after generation of the family progressively falling apart. **PHOTO 3**

Maybe your family is doing ok but you know God has something greater for you You have been praying for a tune up. All of us have families and relationships that could use some help Every family in this room has room to grow. But many have strained relationships at home. Many families are at or beyond the breaking point

The family situations in this room alone would break your heart. Marriages that have ended in divorce Children split between two adults who made a promise to stay together Parents struggling to maintain stability in the home Marriages that are stretched, breaking, and in need of repair Strained relationships with adult and aging parents. Sibling issues....Teenagers with parent frustrations Teenagers that ARE parents....and are frustrated

We pray and pour out our hearts to God...sleepless nights....anxiety and worry. God you have to intervene. You have to do something. I need you to step in and change my spouse, my kids, my marriage...my family. God please! Do something! My family is crumbling

We pray for the heart of our spouse to change. We pray for more respect from our kids. We pray that our family would just get along...without fighting....without all the drama. We pour out our hearts to God pleading for change.

The American Family is at its breaking point....and yet...God's Word tells us exactly what we need to do. It is in this passage in Colossians. But I must warn you that you might not like the truth that God has for you. In our passage, Paul tells us that Christians CAN build healthy family relationships. But the truth from God's Word is this. The change that your family desperately needs..... is for YOU to change. Paul is going to tell us that the change the family needs is for each of us to change. As Christ followers, we must bring the love of God into our families if we want to see them change.

Colossians 3:18–4:1 (ESV) 18 Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. 20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. 22 Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. 25 For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality. 1 Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

Submission and Slavery in the same text Thanks Paul... There are two hot buttons in our society. Two topics that scream for an understanding of context.

Paul mentions 3 Relationships. Each about to be the target of a love bomb. First it pours out on us.... When we embrace who we really are....when we position ourselves to be renewed in His love. Second, it pours out on us as a church family. And third, Paul says....it pours out on your family.

It is important to the context here to remember Paul is writing to Christ Followers. Christian husbands, Christian wives, Christian Children, Christian Masters and Christian Slaves. He is showing how their families should be different than others because of the Lordship of Jesus in their lives.

Let me show you 3 things from this passage that we need to change...to elevate in importance... in order to build Godly Families.

First Change: Elevate Christ

One of the problems of the family is that we have not elevated Christ to the proper position in our homes. Remember what Paul has been telling us about Jesus. He is above all things...including your home. Everything was made through Him, By Him, and For Him....including your family. In Jesus, all things hold together....if your family is falling apart...Jesus is what you need to hold it together. And above all else, you are to put on Love. Which holds everything together in perfect...what? harmony.

Yet God is not at the center of most families. Look at the repetitive theme here: Fitting In the Lord, Pleases the Lord, Fearing the Lord, For the Lord, From the Lord, Serving the Lord, Master in Heaven. No matter what relationship we are in...our focus should be on the Lord...In our families and our relationships, we are to Elevate Christ.

Your family needs Jesus to be preeminent and His Love to be predominant. And it starts with you...

But I am not the problem... Too many of us are waiting around for God to change everyone else. My spouse and kids don't even know Jesus I am the only one who knows Jesus I know that no one is praying for my family because I am the only one praying No matter what circumstance you find yourself in.. Elevating Christ in your life Will help

They don't know Jesus? Elevate Christ in your life and show Him to them You are the only one who knows Jesus? Then you are the only one who can change your family You are the only one praying for your family? Join us on Wednesday night for our prayer service, notify the prayer team on Moxtra, or ask others to pray for your family. Turn in a yellow card to the pastors. .

The change your family desperately needs...if for you to change.... in the name of Jesus. His power, His plan, His promise Don't wait for everyone else to change Elevate Christ in your life and trust God to do the rest.

Christ Followers must elevate Jesus in our homes and relationships When we do that we begin to see others differently. That leads to the second change we need to make In order to build strong Christian families...

Second Change: Elevate Others

Paul Highlights 3 Relationships as examples Wife and Husband Child and Father Slave and Master These were three common relationships in Jewish and Roman homes Social order was extremely important in the First Century

Remember what Paul has just said ? Jesus levels the playing field There is no Jew or Greek Slave or free. In God's plans Those who are oppressed are raised up...those who are dominant are brought down.

Jesus said it this way Luke 9:48 (ESV) 48 For he who is least among you all is the one who is great."

Paul is sometimes accused of being anti-woman. But he constantly elevates women in his writings. We just don't see it because we don't understand first century context. You have to know that just mentioning women was a bold step in their culture. But it is not just that he mentions them but how he does so

But he also elevates them by the way he writes Notice that in each relationship in this passage the subordinate is mentioned first Paul does the same in a parallel passage in Ephesians 5&6 Wives...then husbands Children...then fathers Slaves...then masters

Remember the order of lists is important. What you want to highlight...elevate...you mention first. Paul is taking the social order of the day and turning it upside down. Wives, Children, and Slaves get first mention Husbands, Fathers, and masters second Not only are they mentioned they are given advice Paul writes specifically to them...that was huge...by itself.

All 3 of these subordinates are specifically told to look beyond those with authority on earth.

Wives are not told just to submit but.. To submit "As is Fitting In the Lord" Children are told to obey in everything For this pleases the Lord

Bondservants or Slaves are told to obey in everything With Sincere hearts....Fearing the Lord Work hard for the Lord There is a promise or an inheritance from the Lord And a promise that those who are wrong doers will be paid back! They are NOT told to disobey the earthly authority but rather to look beyond it and see Jesus their real authority.

He elevates them by telling them to submit? Oh how our culture cringes at the word "Submission" Can you feel the tension of cultural context? In the first century...of course a wife would submit to her husband This caused no tension at all They couldn't really imagine it otherwise

But in the 21st Century....it is a male dominant oppressive view of women that devalues them. We recoil at submission because it has a strong cultural context for us. It grinds against many women to hear this. Ladies, your impulse is part of the curse. One translation of the Bible puts the Genesis curse on the woman like this: You will want to control your husband, but he will dominate you." (Genesis 3

The harmony between man and woman was damaged in the fall of man. The power struggle is the curse that came as a consequence of sin. But Paul says submission aligns better with God's Plan

4 Truths to Know about Godly Submission

1) Submission does not cancel our equality.

Jesus submitted His will to the Father but was no less equal

2) Everyone submits to someone

We are instructed as Christ followers to submit to one another

3) Submission can't be imposed. It is a choice.

It is a wilful choice to relinquish one's power and influence for a greater purpose.

Submission cannot be demanded. It is a choice. Paul did not write...Husbands make your wives submit.

4) Godly submission feels like love, not oppression

Submission to someone else...true selfless love...requires the presence of Jesus in the relationship When we hear submission, we think inferior, controlled, dominated and weak.

Oh but we agreed to kneel under the text....to understand context. This passage does not say women are to submit to men. It says Christian Wives are to Submit to their Christian

Husbands The context of this passage is to believers

It says within the context of the Marriage Covenant with God at the center. Christian Women are to submit to their husbands With a caveat... A caveat that would have shocked the first century followers They were not to submit indiscriminately and unconditionally "As is fitting in the Lord" Paul gave women the right to not submit to their husband If doing so would cause them to sin Or they feel threatened and unsafe.

When a woman is being subjected to domineering physical, emotional or sexual abuse, her submission is not appropriate. Her protection of her health and safety and that of her children is more appropriate and fitting in the Lord. That was hugely empowering to that audience He is encouraging a submission that is given for the Glory of God.

It is a voluntary attitude of cooperating, giving in, and assuming responsibility. It is more about leadership than submission It implies that in Christian Marriages the husband should lead and the wife should empower him to lead. Paul is telling the ladies at Colossae, If your man is a godly man...let him lead.

Stu Weber wrote a book called "Tender Warrior" He compares husbands and fathers to the wagon scouts in Westerns He rides ahead checking the trail, looking for danger, watches for Indians, searches for water.

The Wagon Scout looks ahead, sets the direction, prepares for the journey, anticipates needs and determines the destination Paul is not telling you to submit to the whim of Archie Bunker. What he is saying is that when your Christian husband is scouting your families' trail...let him lead.

He is telling wives to respect their husbands spiritual leadership. You as a wife, looking at your husband, and loving him enough to say. I am going to look to his heart, his thought, his wisdom, So that he can grow to be the man of God that God wants him to be. When I see my husband...it is Christ I see and serve.... standing over him. I can submit because I know he is submitted.

So Paul elevates Christian wives by listing them first, speaking to them, setting boundaries and choosing the word submit. Paul tells wives to submit

But there is a truth here that is often missed. A truth that completely changes the image of submission. A truth in the text that validates that submission does not mean inequality.

Did you notice that Paul tells wives to submit...but he tells slaves and children to obey?

Colossians 3:18

Being told to Obey means... A directive from someone else no real choice but with consequences if we disobey a dependent relationship when action not opinion matters. carrying out someone else's orders The action is being done to us and thus rather than being empowered We feel powerless Obedience is driven by fear

Being told to submit means... A choice..an option not to... a willful decision It implies an empowered relationship where your opinion matters It is an unselfish act to help achieve an outcome. The action is from us...we are empowered...we contribute by being selfless Submission is driven by love. Children and Slaves were told to obey...wives are not slaves.

With an understanding of First Century Context This passage completely changes Paul mentioned Christian wives first....unheard of Paul spoke directly to them....remarkable Paul gave them boundaries for their submission....unheard of They had always been told to obey....Paul teaches them to submit.....amazing.

Christian families should be known for elevating others. Not just their wives and children But those considered lowest in society....Paul turns to the topic of slaves in the home

Let's look at the context of Slavery Willful submission is one thing. Forced Slavery is something else. But there it is ...slavery in the Bible. Jesus came to set the oppressed free. Why didn't he speak out against slavery? So why didn't Jesus and Paul address this horrible treatment of these people?

Which do you think is better...to condemn it or to solve it?

The Holy Spirit led Paul to neither condemn or condone slavery. He was led to acknowledge it as a reality...and then tell people how to end it. Slavery was a key component of the First Century social structure. To not address how this new love and identity impacts the Master/Slave relationship would be ignoring a huge part of First Century life.

A key theme of the Bible is that every person matters. If they apply what Paul teaches in this passage. Slavery ends.

Sound naive? Since Jesus walked on this planet, every culture where Christianity has become the predominant religion Slavery has ended. You can condemn it...or you can solve it If you want to end slavery... Elevate Jesus in the lives of those involved You cannot truly follow Christ and enslave others

He tells CHRISTIAN slaves to obey With sincerity of heart Not in lip service Work hard as unto the Lord Remembering your reward You are serving the Lord Even a promise that evil things will be paid back.

Want some first century cultural context? No one told slaves those things...No one...Period. In their culture you didn't even address Slaves They were property. You could do whatever you wanted It would be like telling you to treat your coffee maker justly and fairly And yet Paul not only addresses them but elevates them!

Like Christian wives...not only did he mention them He wrote directly to them. Listen to the words he wrote to them and imagine that you are a slave owner listening to it.

Obey your earthly master but know that they aren't your real master Don't fear your earthly master...fear the Lord. Don't work for your earthly master....work for the Lord. You will receive a reward....not from your earthly master.....but from the Lord. You are not serving your earthly master...you are serving the Lord.

And if that is not radical enough....I will take care of your earthly master if he mistreats you. Then the throw down statement warning CHRISTIAN Masters that they better treat slaves fairly and justly because they have a Master in Heaven.

No one said these things.....in their culture...the teachings of Jesus turned social structure upside down.

Jesus and His teachings were absolutely Radical.

Paul is teaching Christians to change families by elevating others....Wives, Children, and even slaves.

So there it is. Wives submit....Children obey...Slaves and servants obey.... Ok men let's go get some hot wings..... Not so fast....

Christian families are strengthened when we Elevate Christ and when we Elevate Others. But the Holy Spirit is just getting warmed up. Paul is about to tread where others dare not travel

Paul addresses those Christ followers who are dominant in these relationships...The Men He doesn't just address them...he corrects them. on issues of how to manage their family a topic that was off limits in their culture In their homes, they had total dominance and control

That leads us to the third change that Christ followers must make in their families...They are to 1) elevate Jesus, 2) Elevate others, and now....

3) Elevate Your Attitude

Power is not inherently bad Power it has been said is simply influence. Power is not a bad thing Power can be used to bring about significant change. In our three scenarios, Paul now turns to those in power In most homes, the same person is all three Husband, Father and Master In their cultural context that person had all the power

Power is dangerous when it is used for selfish gain But when power is used to help those who are weaker. When someone of influence uses that influence not to benefit themselves but rather to benefit others Power becomes a tool in the hands of Mighty God to bring about great change.

In those relationships where Christians have influence and power Paul teaches that we must use our influence for the benefit of others...not ourselves.

We need to see others as God sees them And see ourselves as God sees us Equal and without partiality In other words...we need to get over ourselves Raise up others....pull ourselves down....use our influence to help others..not promote ourselves

First Christian Husbands, elevate your attitude about your wife. Love your wife. The impulse to dominate can overwhelm a man. It can blind him to his own lack of gentleness It can make him selfish and overbearing. The urge to dominate others is a result of the sinful fall of man as well.

John Chrysostom says it better than I could: "To love ... is the husband's part, to yield pertains to the other side. If, then, each one contributes his own part, all stand firm. From being loved, the wife too becomes loving; and from her being submissive, the husband learns to yield"

The cultural context here is huge.

We are shocked that God told the Christian wives to submit.

The original audience was shocked that God told Christian Husbands to love their wives. AND...do not be harsh with them.

We think of course husbands were to love their wives.. but not in the First Century. Wives were often much younger than their husbands. They had no status. They were enslaved in some ways. Husbands were required to provide for them...but not necessarily to love them. Some did of course. But not all.

Women were for managing the household chores and propagating. But Paul teaches that their new identity changes everything. Paul tells CHRISTIAN men that the love they have experienced in Christ is to pour over to their wives. They are to love them. Serve them sacrificially. Serve them selflessly.

Use their influence and power for the benefit of their wives. Not only in their actions...but even in their words. Do not be harsh with them. To engage with them in partnership under the covenant of marriage. It is hard for us to grasp how radical those words were To the people who first heard them

Then Paul tells Christian Fathers to elevate their attitude about their Children.

Notice Children are instructed here to obey BOTH parents in everything. But the warning about provoking children and discouraging them is addressed ONLY to the Fathers.

Fathers getting reprimands and instruction in how to lead their children was unusual in the First Century Think about how this must have empowered Their wives Their children

Christian Fathers are to elevate their attitude and use their influence to nurture their children.

Christian Fathers are so important in the lives of their children Bob Carlisle's 1996 ballad "Butterfly Kisses," which speaks of the tender love between a father and his daughter, makes Carlisle feel sad. "I get a lot of mail from young girls who try to get me to marry their moms," he says. "That used to be a real chuckle because it's so cute, but then I realized they don't want a romance for mom; they want the father who is in that song. That just kills me." Fathers use your influence to help your children. They are desperate for you.

Then Christian Masters are instructed to elevate their attitude about their slaves.

Paul tells Christian Masters how to treat their slaves Masters treat your bondservants justly and fairly. This comes immediately after a warning that wrongdoers will be paid back for the wrong they have done. If that was not enough...then the final warning...Know that you also have a Master in Heaven. Don't forget that you are my slave and I will punish you without partiality

Christians with influence and power are to Elevate their Attitude. Power demands a Christ like attitude. The change that your family needs is for you to change. To Elevate Christ, To Elevate Others, and To Elevate your attitude.

So here is your assignment This week serve your family In some tangible way...

Elevate Christ

Make sure that what you do at home is fitting in the Lord, serves the Lord, and pleases the Lord. Lead a family devotional. Pray with your spouse and kids. Read the Bible out loud together. Sing or play worship songs together

Elevate Others

Find a way to selflessly serve your spouse, your children or your family Christian Husbands...love your wives and don't be harsh with them Christian wives submit to your husband as is fitting in the Lord Fathers don't discourage your kids. Use your influence to nurture them.

Encourage those our culture overlooks The homeless Those who are handicapped The elderly Find someone for your family to serve together

Elevate Your Attitude

Find a coworker and elevate their status by diminishing yours. Make sure you treat those under you justly and fairly at work Find something that you normally consider beneath your status Something that you always leave for someone else in your family to do And do it Serving not only your family But serving your Master in Heaven

The American Family is in dire straits It threatens the very essence of our society and nation Each week, including this one, there is more evidence of children who have been provoked and discouraged Every week families are crashing. Yet in this amazing passage Paul ...

Rather than lamenting the ills and challenges facing marriages He gives us God's Solution Rather than lamenting the ills and challenges of parenting He gives us God's solution Rather than lamenting the ills and challenges of human slavery He gives us God's Solution Rather than lamenting the ills and challenges of families He gives us God's Solution

Christians can choose to have vibrant healthy God Honoring Families The change your family needs is for YOU to change. Elevate Christ, Elevate Others, and Elevate your Attitude Then watch God elevate your family