

Liberty University

**The Family Unit as a Form of the New Temple and Reflection of the Universal Christian
Family Structure: An Exposition of Ephesians 4:17–6:9 and Colossians 3:1–4:1**

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by

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To my wife, Jennifer, and my sons, Julian, John, and Jacob:

Your love, support, and encouragement have made this goal possible. Watching our family grow
in Christ has inspired me to achieve this goal.

“Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will
lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!”

(Eccl. 4:9–10, ESV)

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.” (Matt. 18:20, ESV)

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Abstract

When focusing on the new temple after Jesus' ascension to Heaven while studying the household codes of Ephesians and Colossians, the intent of the codes becomes clearer. Jesus transferred these codes to Christians for the Holy Spirit to dwell when He ascended to Heaven. In light of the new temple, the household codes provide instructions on how the Christian family is to work together and reflect the created order under the kingdom of God. Thus, the household codes of Ephesians 5–6:9 and Colossians 3–4:1, when viewed with the conjunction of the ascension of Christ, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the transfer of the new temple to Christians, provide not only a structure for the immediate family but ultimately for the Christian family under the Kingdom of God.

During the Second Temple era, the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ created a new temple under the Kingdom of God. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit after Jesus's ascension transferred the new temple to all Christians. The household codes are applied within this new temple. In the new temple, the family unit needs to be clean and pure as a reflection of worship of Jesus Christ. All within the family fall under the headship of Jesus Christ. Under the head of Christ, the family works and functions in a mutually submissive arrangement with the missional purpose of spreading the gospel.

Keywords: household codes, new temple, family structure, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, kingdom of God.

Chapter 1: Introduction

An Introduction to the Problem

Many academic works have been published regarding the new temple¹ and the household codes of Colossians and Ephesians² as they relate to the Christian throughout the years. Yet,

¹ Major contributions to the topic of the new temple for the purposes of this dissertation are in part from: G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004); Nicholas Perrin, *Jesus the Temple* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010); Louis Bouyer, *The Church of God: Body of Christ and Temple of the Spirit* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011); Trevor J. Burke and D. A. Carson, *Adopted into God's Family: Exploring a Pauline Metaphor* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006); Constantine R. Campbell, Michael J. Thate, and Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *"In Christ" in Paul: Explorations in Paul's Theology of Union and Participation* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2014); Ervin N. Hershberger, *Seeing Christ in the Tabernacle* (Harrisonburg, VA: Vision Publishers, 2010). These works, along with other academic contributions, are addressed in Chapter 3.

² Major contributions to the *haustafeln*, also referred to as household codes, are from John H. Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless: A Social-Scientific Criticism of 1 Peter, It's Situation and Strategy* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1990); Carolyn Osiek, Margret MacDonald, and Janet Tulloch, *A Woman's Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006); J. Paul Sampley, *"And the Two Shall Become One Flesh": A Study of Traditions in Ephesians 5:21–33* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1971); John Paul Heil, *Ephesians: Empowerment to Walk in Love for the Unity of All in Christ* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007); Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997); Ralph P. Martin, *Husbands, Wives, Parents, Children: Foundations for the Christian Family* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1983); Allan R. Bevere, *Sharing in the Inheritance: Identity and the Moral Life in Colossians* (London: Bloomsbury, 2003); David C. Verner, *The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles*, SBL Dissertation Series 71 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983); John Stott and J. Alec Motyer, *The Message of Ephesians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984); T.K. Abbott, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians* (Dublin: Trinity College, 2009); Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts, *Christian Origins and Greco-Roman Culture: Social and Literary Contexts for the New Testament*, vol. 1, Texts and Editions for New Testament Study 9 (Boston: Brill, 2013); N. T. Wright, *Colossians and Philemon* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008); Vicky Balabanski, *Colossians: An Eco-Stoic Reading*, Earth Bible Commentary (New York: T & T Clark, 2020); St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Ephesians* (Albany, NY: Magi Books, 1966); John Calvin, *Commentary on Galatians and Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 2010); Halvor Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family As Social Reality and Metaphor* (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 1997); Ernest Best, *Ephesians*, New Testament Guides (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2010); Mark D. Roberts and Scot McKnight, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2016); Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, Barbara E. Reid, and Linda M. Maloney, *Ephesians* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2017); N. T. Wright and Lin Johnson, *Ephesians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009); David E. Aune, ed., *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament*, vol. 21, Society of Biblical Literature (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988); Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*, 10th anniversary ed. (New York: Crossroad, 1994); Matthew Scott Collins, "Rhetoric, Household and Cosmos: A Rhetorical and Sociological Analysis of the Letter to the Colossians with Particular Focus on Colossians 3:18–4:1" (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1995); Karl Barth et al., *The Epistle to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017); F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984); John MacArthur, *Ephesians*, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, 1986); Te-Li Lau, *The Politics of Peace: Ephesians, Dio Chrysostom, and the Confucian Four Books* (Boston: Brill, 2009); John E. Crouch, *The Origin and Intention of the Colossian Haustafel* (Göttingen,

little has been written on the connection between the new temple and the *haustafeln* (household codes) in Colossians and Ephesians.³ More specifically, there are no in-depth studies on how the conceptualization of the family unit as a form of the new temple impacts both the immediate family unit and the universal Christian family under Christ.

Due to Paul's understanding of Christ's ascension and transfer of the new temple to Christians through the Holy Spirit, he intended the *haustafeln* of Ephesians 5–6:9 and Colossians 3–4:1 to not just focus on the immediate family unit but to reflect the universal Christian family, which is the family structure under the kingdom of God in which Christ is at the head of all Christians,⁴ while providing the instructions for proper worship and purity required to be the new dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. With this insight, the Christian will better understand the importance of maintaining the purity of the new temple and how they fit into the structure of the kingdom of God. Others have extensively covered the two topics of the new temple dwelling of

Germany: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972); Lynn Cohick, *Women in the World of the Earliest Christians: Illuminating Ancient Ways of Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009); Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, vol. 42, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1990); Peter T. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, vol. 44, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1982).

³ The closest to come to depicting the family unit as a form of the new temple can be found in Wendall Forsythe Hollis, "Become Full in the Spirit: A Linguistic, Contextual and Theological Study of Plerousthe En Pneumati" (Ph.D. diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2001). Hollis has the premise that the whole building of God's household grows into a holy temple in Christ, in whom believers are built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. However, Hollis focuses on the verses before the *haustafeln* of Ephesians, making no connection between the status of the immediate family and the universal Christian family as a form of the new temple and how that affects the translation and understanding of the *haustafeln* provided in Ephesians.

⁴ The definition for headship or Christ as the head for this dissertation comes from *Kephalē* defined by Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996). The term *head* can carry both literal and metaphorical meanings. *Head* refers to the most prominent position within the family. In ancient writings, the *head* denoted the most significant part of the body or family. The head was thought to be the source of all life. Writers such as Aristotle, Philo, and Paul used the term *head* to denote the uppermost position. For the family, this was the *paterfamilias*. Paul employed the image of a body when teaching about Christ as the head of the church (1 Cor. 12:21) and the source of everything (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22). For the family unit, Christ holds the position of the ultimate authority.

the Holy Spirit and the haustafeln separately but not together. However, the new temple and the haustafeln connect through the themes of purity and unity.

This dissertation seeks to establish that the universal Christian family, which includes the immediate family unit, is a form of the new temple. The dissertation establishes an argument that the purity lists of both Colossians and Ephesians and the haustafeln as one continuous unit that focuses on bringing order and unity to the entire body of Christ under the headship of Jesus Christ.⁵

Glossary

Household codes/haustafeln: Throughout ancient cultures, an individual's position within a family unit, or household, had to be defined to provide structure and efficiency in carrying out the daily tasks required for the family's survival. The roles were in place to signify the responsibilities of the father/husband, mother/wife, child, and, in the cases of antiquity, the enslaver and the enslaved person. The *Lexham Bible Dictionary* defines household codes as “a type of text found in ancient Greek literature including the New Testament that described the relationships between different household members in the domestic and public life. Academic circles sometimes refer to the category by its German name, *haustafeln*, usually translated as ‘household codes.’”⁶ Household codes appear in literature throughout history and not just within Scripture. This research defines household codes as a written set of instructions to define the roles and structure within the boundaries of an individual within the family unit.

⁵ Stephen B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1980) provides a strong defense of the connection the purity lists and the haustafeln. Along with Clark's contribution to the study, in Chapter 4, the Greek connecting words between the purity lists and the haustafeln will be part of the exposition of Colossians and Ephesians to continue the defense of Paul's connection of the two points for unity of the household under the headship of Jesus Christ.

⁶ David Cortés-Fuentes, “Household Codes,” in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, eds. John D. Barry et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

Individual or immediate family: Here, the term *immediate family* refers to individuals residing within a single household.⁷ The *Lexham Bible Dictionary* presents a standard definition: “Members of a household who may or may not be related biologically. Responsible for the care of its members. The chief collective through which property is passed.”⁸ For this dissertation, the family unit consists of one husband/father, one wife/mother, and children. When referring to the historical context, the family will also include enslaved people in the household. The family unit would not include enslaved people in the modern post-slavery era. This dissertation presupposes children when referring to the immediate family unit. However, a Christian does not need to be married or have children to fall within the household codes regarding their function within the universal Christian family structure.

New temple: For the Israelites, worshipping God centered around God’s dwelling place. Until Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem, the dwelling places were the Ark of the Covenant and the Tabernacle. The Babylonians destroyed Solomon’s temple during their conquest and the exile of the Jewish population. The returning Jewish population built the second temple after the exile, which King Herod later refurbished. With the temple rebuilt, there was a restored worship center for the Israelites. The time from the rebuilding of the temple until AD 70 is known as the Second Temple era. During the Second Temple era, the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ took place. The Roman Empire destroyed the second temple in AD 70. According to John 2:19, where Jesus claims to be the temple, the proper place of worship was not a building located in Jerusalem. Furthermore, Scripture states that the Holy Spirit filled

⁷ The term *immediate household* carries two different connotations depending on the period. At the time of Paul’s letters, an immediate household was larger than the modern nuclear family found in Western civilization. At that time, the household contained multiple generations, whereas the typical modern-era Western household consists of parents and children.

⁸ Michelle J. Morris, “Family,” in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, ed. John D. Barry et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

Jesus Christ or that the Spirit dwelled in Him (Luke 4:1; John 3:34). Jesus promises that anyone who follows Him will also receive the filling of the Spirit (John 14:15–20). Christ’s promise came to fruition when the disciples received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4). Later, Paul also received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit after he met the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus during Paul’s encounter with Ananias (Acts 9:17). In his epistles, Paul depicts the individual as the Holy Spirit’s temple (1 Cor. 16:19–20) and explains that Christians are the temple because of their union with Christ (Eph. 2:18–22). Therefore, the new temple is both the individual believer and household after the ascension of Christ and the receiving of the Holy Spirit upon an individual’s conversion.

Universal Christian family: The term *universal Christian family* describes the collective of believers. Scripture often notes this as “the body of Christ” or the “one body in Christ” (Rom. 12:5, English Standard Version). The head of the body of the universal Christian family is Jesus Christ (Col. 1:18–19). In Matthew 12:46–50, Jesus redefined what the family consists of for the Christian. All who follow Jesus Christ and do the will of God the Father are within the family of Jesus Christ.

Proposal

The purpose of this dissertation is to show that the universal Christian family, which includes the immediate family, has been established as a form of the new temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell in and that the *haustafeln* within Ephesians and Colossians are instructions for the universal Christian family to keep the new temple pure. The dissertation starts with an investigation of the historical background of the *haustafeln* and the new temple to show the connections between them. The background research provides insight into how the universal

Christian family is a form of the new temple.⁹ Then the author performs an exegesis and exposition of Ephesians 5–6:9 and Colossians 3–4:1. The historical background research, exegesis, and exposition reveal further that the *haustafeln* apply to the universal Christian family as a form of the new temple. This dissertation also ties the *haustafeln* to the purity lists that precede the *haustafeln* section and argues that the purity lists can be seen as instructions for keeping the new temple pure.¹⁰ The connection between the immediate and universal family units and the new temple brings the Christian to understand the importance of keeping the new temple pure in worshipping Jesus Christ.

Each chapter contains an examination of the methodology in greater detail. Chapter 2 presents the context of the ancient household and various *haustafeln* from Scripture and secular sources. This chapter includes a discussion of the roles that individuals occupied within their family units and society. The analysis of the historical context of the immediate family unit focuses on the cultural disconnect between the Second Temple period and the present Western thought.¹¹

The similarities between the *haustafeln* of Ephesians and Colossians and secular sources such as Aristotle's *Politics* are evident. A primary similarity is the call to structure the family for

⁹ Two resources that attempt to focus on unity of the Christian church through the *haustafeln* are: Lincoln, *Ephesians*; Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World*. Even with a focus away from hierarchal structure, Lincoln and Osiek and Balch cannot avoid addressing the patristic, hierarchical structure that Paul presents in Ephesians and Colossians.

¹⁰ The connection between the purity lists and the *haustafeln* is a debated topic. Among those arguing in favor of a connection are: Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*; Aquinas, *Commentary on Ephesians*. A solid defense of the *haustafeln* being a separate and unrelated unit within both Ephesians and Colossians can be found in Ben Witherington III, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), 181–88. More will be addressed on the connection between the purity list and the *haustafeln* and academic studies on the topic.

¹¹ The concept of family status and honor was considered in the everyday life and decisions of the family members. For a more detailed study into how honor shaped how the family interacted with each other and with greater society see, David A. deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).

the greater good of nature and society. Along with the teaching of Aristotle, this dissertation addresses the household structure as directed by the Roman Empire and the emperor. Likewise, this dissertation briefly addresses *haustafeln* found in other New Testament letters and Christian sources.

The eldest male, or *paterfamilias*,¹² directed the household during the Second Temple period. Under Roman law, the father had all the legal authority and standing within society, and this authority was considered the natural order. The mother did not even have legal authority over the household children.¹³ Jewish customs differed from the prevailing Greco-Roman culture. Jewish women had more freedom to appear in public but were not free to act as they wished in public. While the husband still carried the house's authority, the Jewish woman was a more significant influence on the household functions and the children. Likewise, Jewish women had greater protection from the authority of their husbands. While the Roman husband could discipline as he saw fit, the Jewish husband could not strike his wife.¹⁴

While the Second Temple period was patristic in structure, women played an essential role in the survival of the immediate family and the universal Christian family. In the last two decades, archaeological excavations, along with more intense studies conducted on the role of women in the Second Temple period, have increased knowledge and awareness of the inner

¹² Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010) explain that the *paterfamilias* had ultimate authority and rule over the household until laws were passed in the first century AD. The *paterfamilias* had the authority to decide life and death for anyone inside the household. If a child was not wanted, the child could be left exposed to nature. More will be covered on this subject later in this dissertation.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 357.

¹⁴ Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2014), 87–88.

functions of the typical Second Temple period household.¹⁵ In early Christianity, house churches were the main form of meeting, and since private houses were the main congregation areas, women played a crucial role in the early spread of the gospel.¹⁶ Yet, secular and Rabbinic writings of the Second Temple period literature portrayed women as inferior and often vile.¹⁷ From birth until death, the majority of women were subject to the authority of the eldest male within their household. Still, philosophies such as Stoicism attempted to teach that men and women shared an equal standing.¹⁸ If a man aspired to be in civic government, he was required to manage his household efficiently and effectively.¹⁹

Childhood in the Second Temple period was vastly different from childhood today. The mortality rate for children was very high. Because of the high mortality rate, the naming of a child was often delayed and was celebrated with a ceremony.²⁰ The child's education would mainly occur in the household, often focusing on the family business. The mother would be the primary teacher until age six, at which point the father took over a significant part of the education.²¹ As male children aged, they gained a share of the governance of the household, but

¹⁵ The increase of feminist studies in the mid- to late twentieth century has produced valuable insight into the role women had in family survival. For a deeper understanding of the historical background of women's role in the family, see the following sources: Amy-Jill Levine, *Feminist Companion to Paul: Deutero-Pauline Writings* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004); Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World*; Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*; Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*.

¹⁶ A detailed study of the growth of the early church and the role of women can be found in Osiek, MacDonald, and Tulloch, *A Woman's Place*.

¹⁷ Bonnie Thurston, *Women in the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998), 15.

¹⁸ Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2003), 23. Meeks explained that even though the Stoics wrote about equality, it was rarely put into practice during the Second Temple period.

¹⁹ David A. deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods, and Ministry Formation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004). 139–40.

²⁰ Evans and Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 357–58.

²¹ deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*, 188. The education received also varied. Boys would receive an education in the family business while girls would be instructed on the care and maintenance of the household.

the *paterfamilias* maintained the overall authority within the household.²² Even in childhood, the temple played a central role in the family. The parents dedicated the firstborn male to God, often requiring a pilgrimage to the temple (Lev. 12:6–8; Luke 2:22–24).

Slavery in the Second Temple period was legal in both the Roman Empire and within Judaism. The treatment of enslaved people varied among social classes. While some enslaved people were treated well, others suffered horrible abuse under their masters.²³ The most common ways of acquiring an enslaved person within the Roman Empire were through Roman military conquest, debt slavery, and the recovery of infants from abandonment. While many enslaved people were owned by the wealthy, the Roman government also enslaved people for hard labor, such as mining.²⁴ Women captured in conquest or raised into slavery were often ill-treated and lacked marketable skills. Many enslaved women were used for pleasure by their masters and subjugated into prostitution until they were no longer desirable.²⁵

Household management literature was standard in the Greco-Roman world. Males of upper-class status produced the household codes, meaning they were well educated and wealthy.²⁶ Aristotle's *Politics* is an often-cited work for household management and gives valuable insight into how the elite expected all households to be managed. Works from Philo and 1 Clement help establish the household's Hellenized-Jewish and early Christian philosophies.

²² Evans and Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 357.

²³ Benjamin Reaach, *Women, Slaves, and the Gender Debate: A Complementarian Response to the Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2012), 29. In the Roman Empire, enslaved people had to obey their enslavers and were subject to punishment and discipline as the head of the house saw fit. Even sexual abuse was allowed. The enslaved had no rights or control over their own bodies.

²⁴ James S. Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era: Exploring the Background of Early Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 221–24.

²⁵ Cohick, *Women in the World of the Earliest Christians*, 215.

²⁶ Derek S. Dodson and Katherine E. Smith, eds., *Exploring Biblical Backgrounds: A Reader in Historical & Literary Contexts* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018), 236.

Overall, the family's status was a constant consideration in everyday life in the Second Temple era. Maintaining family honor was paramount and factored heavily into how the patriarch managed the household.²⁷

Chapter 3 covers Jesus Christ as the new temple and the transfer of the new temple to the Christian, fulfilling Christ's promise to the disciples concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit after the ascension of Jesus Christ and during the event of Pentecost. Like the family, religion played an enormous role in everyday life during the Second Temple era for both the pagan Roman Empire and Jewish populations. The religious epicenter in many civilizations was the temple building, and the Jerusalem temple was the center of religious activity for the Jewish population.²⁸ The temple was of the utmost importance, and all significant aspects of life and the worship of God were related to the temple in some way.²⁹ Even the ministry of Jesus had a focus on the temple.³⁰

This dissertation explores the verses from the Gospels focusing on the new temple, giving special attention to John 2:13–22, Matthew 21:12–17, Mark 11:15–19, and Luke 19:45–48,

²⁷ For a detailed study on the importance and centrality of the family unit in the Second Temple era please see the following: deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*; Richard P. Saller, *Patriarchy, Property and Death In The Roman Family* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 1994); Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*; Verner, *The Household of God*.

²⁸ For detailed studies on the role and importance of the temple of Jerusalem for the Jewish population, please see the following: J. Daniel Hays, *The Temple and the Tabernacle: A Study of God's Dwelling Places from Genesis to Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016); Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*; Alfred Edershiem, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services as They Were at the Time of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1997); Dodson and Smith, *Exploring Biblical Backgrounds*; Margaret Barker, *King of the Jews: Temple Theology in John's Gospel* (London: SPCK, 2014).

²⁹ In *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services as They Were at the Time of Jesus Christ*, Edershiem outlines and explains various aspects of life, vows, and sin offerings that were conducted by the Israelites at the temple of Jerusalem.

³⁰ In David L. Stubbs and John D. Witvliet, *Table and Temple: The Christian Eucharist and Its Jewish Roots* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2020), the authors use current studies to examine the connection between how the Israelites viewed the temple and how Christians view Jesus Christ and the roles of hope, expectation, fear of God, and worship practices. The authors explain how the events surrounding Jesus's mission and the temple were cause for the Jewish religious leaders to seek the death penalty against Jesus for blasphemy.

20:17–20³¹ concerning the clearing/cleansing of the temple, temple imagery, and Christ’s claim would raise the temple in three days (John 2:19).³²

With the establishment of Jesus as the proper dwelling of the Spirit, the ascension of Christ and the event of Pentecost in Acts establish the transfer of the dwelling of the Spirit from the rebuilt Solomon’s temple to Jesus as the new temple.³³ The event of the ascension and the fulfillment of the promise of reconciliation with God through Christ has changed creation.³⁴

After the ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Paul clarifies that the Christian is now the temple that houses the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). Since the believer is the temple of

³¹ In J. Bradley Chance, *Jerusalem, the Temple, and the New Age in Luke-Acts* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1988) the author presents an interesting argument that Luke and Acts do not explicitly note that the temple functions are transferred to Jesus or the church. While Luke 20:17–20 is often described as temple imagery, Luke does not portray Jesus as the temple stone. Instead, the focus is on Jesus being the stone as a metaphor for the rejection of Jesus Christ as the exalted Lord of salvation.

³² The following works are major contributors to the studies of the Gospels’ portrayal of Jesus as the new temple for the purposes of this dissertation: Barker, *King of the Jews*; Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*; Richard A. Burridge, *Imitating Jesus: An Inclusive Approach to New Testament Ethics* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2007); Jacob Chanikuzhy, *Jesus, the Eschatological Temple*, *Biblical Exegesis and Theology* 58 (Walpole, MA: Peeters Publishers 2012); Mary L. Coloe, *God Dwells with Us* (Collegetown, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2001); William G. Fowler and Michael Strickland, *The Influence of Ezekiel in the Fourth Gospel: Intertextuality and Interpretation* (Boston: BRILL, 2018); Timothy C. Gray, *The Temple in the Gospel of Mark: A Study in Its Narrative Role* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); Hays, *The Temple and the Tabernacle*; Hershberger, *Seeing Christ in the Tabernacle*; Alan Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus’ Body: The Temple Theme in the Gospel of John* (London: Bloomsbury, 2002); Gary T. Manning Jr., *Echoes of a Prophet: The Use of Ezekiel in the Gospel of John and in Literature of the Second Temple Period* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004); Brian Neil Peterson, *John’s Use of Ezekiel: Understanding the Unique Perspective of the Fourth Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015); Stubbs and Witvliet, *Table and Temple*; Anthony C. Thornhill, “The Resurrection of Jesus and Spiritual (Trans)Formation,” *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 5, no. 2 (2012): 243–56; Charles Williams, *The Descent of the Dove* (Oxford, UK: Benediction Classics, 2017).

³³ Studies used for this dissertation concerning the events of the ascension and Pentecost come from the following: Margaret Aymer, Cynthia Briggs Kittredge, and David A. Sanchez, *The Gospels and Acts*, *Fortress Commentary on the Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2016); Andy Chambers, *Exemplary Life: A Theology of Church Life in Acts* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2012); Gerhard Krodel, *Acts*, *Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament* (Minneapolis MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1986); Eckhard J. Schnabel and Clinton E. Arnold, *Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2012); Thornhill, “The Resurrection of Jesus and Spiritual (Trans)Formation”; Ben Witherington, *The Indelible Image: The Theological and Ethical Thought World of the New Testament: The Individual Witnesses*, vol. 1 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009).

³⁴ For detailed studies on the importance of the ascension, please see: Thornhill, “The Resurrection of Jesus and Spiritual (Trans)Formation”; Coloe, *God Dwells with Us*; Chanikuzhy, *Jesus, the Eschatological Temple*.

the Holy Spirit, instruction on how to keep the temple pure³⁵ was needed so the individual Christian could function appropriately within the more prominent Christian family structure.³⁶ Terms such as *in Christ* and *slave of Christ* will be addressed to show how Paul established that the Christian is the new temple or the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.³⁷ Establishing Pauline theology of the new temple will be the second basis for the concept of the household being a form of the new temple.

With the family unit established as a form of the new temple, the focus of Chapter 4 will be a detailed exegesis of Ephesians 5:1–21 and Colossians 3:1–17. The focus will be on interpreting through the lens of the theology of Paul concerning the family structure culminating in the household codes provided later in both epistles. The purity of the believer is paramount for

³⁵ For an extensive study and explanation on purity and the temple in connection with the Corinthian epistles see, Yulin Liu, *Temple Purity in 1-2 Corinthians* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

³⁶ In Matthew 12:46–50, Jesus declared that the people who believe in Him as the Son of God are his family members. This teaching differs from the traditional family structure, as is noted by the statement that the mother and brothers of Jesus were presented within the crowd. Jesus instead stated that the disciples were his mother and brothers, which redefines the overall connection of Christians as a family. For more detailed study on how Christ redefined the family unit see the following: Seung Ki Min, “The Biblical Purpose of Family: A Study of Jesus’ Teachings on Family in the Synoptic Gospels” (Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global; Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*; Serge S Verhovskoy, “Creation of Man and the Establishment of the Family in the Light of the Book of Genesis,” *St Vladimir’s Seminary Quarterly* 8, no. 1 (1964): 5–30.

³⁷ The topic of being in union with Christ has been extensively covered. The following works are major contributors to the development of this dissertation concerning Paul’s theology on the bond the Christian shares with the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ: Benjamin C. Blackwell, “You Are Filled in Him: *Theosis* and Colossians 2–3,” *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 8, no. 1 (2014): 103–23; Burke and Carson, *Adopted into God’s Family*; Constantine R. Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2012); Campbell, Thate, and Vanhoozer, “*In Christ*” in Paul; Coloe, *God Dwells with Us*; Gordon D. Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1996); Stephen Finlan, *The Apostle Paul and the Pauline Tradition* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008); James D. Gifford Jr., “Union with Christ: A Third Type of *Perichoresis*” (Ph.D. diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global; Michael J. Gorman, *Participating in Christ: Explorations in Paul’s Theology and Spirituality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019); Murray J. Harris, *Slave of Christ: A New Testament Metaphor for Total Devotion to Christ*, vol. 8, *New Studies in Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999); Russell D. Moore and C. J. Mahaney, *Adopted for Life: The Priority of Adoption for Christian Families and Churches* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009); John Nielson, *In Christ: The Significance of the Phrase ‘in Christ’ in the Writings of St. Paul* (Kansas City, MO: The Foundry Publishing, 2010); Anthony Chadwick Thornhill, “To the Jew First: A Socio-Historical and Biblical-Theological Analysis of the Pauline Teaching of ‘Election’ in Light of Second Temple Jewish Patterns of Thought” (Ph.D. diss., Liberty University, 2013), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

the stability of the family unit.³⁸ Proper stability leads to the Christian family's ability to effectively carry out the Great Commission and provide an example of a life reflective of Jesus Christ.

After the Christian family is established as the new temple after Jesus' ascension, it is prudent to understand what the responsibility of purity means to the household members. Paul established the purity of the family in Ephesians 5:1–21 and Colossians 3:1–17.³⁹ There are laws within Leviticus that resemble Paul's instruction for the Christians in Colossae and Ephesus. Paul would have had the vices listed in Leviticus memorized as a former Pharisee. Since a significant portion of Christians in Colossae and Ephesus were Gentile converts to Christianity, there was a need to reiterate the purity standards set forth by God and revealed to Moses in the Pentateuch.

The behaviors are outlined by Paul for the preservation of the family unit and ultimately to help keep the family unit adequately aligned to the new creation family structure.⁴⁰ By

³⁸ For more detailed study concerning purity and the filling of the Spirit for the unity and the stability of the believer and the entire church body, see Hollis, "Become Full in the Spirit"; Williams, *The Descent of the Dove*.

³⁹ For the purity lists, the following scholars and works are major contributors to the understanding of the lists and their connection to the unity of the household of God under the headship of Jesus Christ for this dissertation: Liu, *Temple Purity in 1-2 Corinthians*; Michael D. Barram, "Colossians 3:1–17," *Interpretation* 59, no. 2 (April 2005): 188–90; Balabanski, *Colossians: An Eco-Stoic Reading*; Blackwell, "You Are Filled in Him"; Collins, "Rhetoric, Household and Cosmos"; John Frederick, *The Ethics of the Enactment and Reception of Cruciform Love: A Comparative Lexical, Conceptual, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Colossians 3:1-17* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2019); David H. Johnson, "The Image of God in Colossians," *Didaskalia* 3, no. 2 (April 1992): 9–15; O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 44; Roberts and McKnight, *Ephesians*; Wright, *Colossians and Philemon*; Abbott, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*; Barth et al., *The Epistle to the Ephesians*; Ernest Best, *Ephesians*; William W. Combs, "Spirit-Filling in Ephesians 5:18," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 19 (2014): 23–52; William Sydney Campbell, "Unity and Diversity in the Church: Transformed Identities and the Peace of Christ in Ephesians," *Transformation* 25, no. 1 (January 2008): 15–31; Hollis, "Become Full in the Spirit"; Jeremy Foreman Hultin, "Watch Your Mouth: The Ethics of Obscene Speech in Early Christianity and Its Environment" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2003), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global; C. Mack Roark, "Interpreting Ephesians 4–6: God's People in a Walk Worthy of His Calling," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 39, no. 1 (1996): 32–42; Richard A. Wright, "Drinking, Teaching, and Singing: Ephesians 5:18-19 and the Challenges of Moral Instruction at Greco-Roman Banquets," *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 47, no. 3–4 (2017): 85–104.

⁴⁰ The following provide a strong defense of Ephesians and Colossians being written specifically for unifying the church; Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*; Lincoln, *Ephesians*; Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New*

adhering to the purity guidelines, the family unit is a living example of family structure and the proper dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Along with the purity of the family, Paul also outlines worship procedures for the Christian. By mentioning hymns, Psalms, and spiritual songs, Paul provides that the Christian family unit also needs to produce worship to God.⁴¹

Finally, Chapter 4 examines Colossians 3:17 and Ephesians 5:20–21 as the connecting verses between the haustafeln and the purity lists. While the general message of Colossians and Ephesians would be unchanged if the haustafeln were removed, by connecting the purity lists to the haustafeln, a more accurate meaning of the structure of the immediate family and universal Christian family can be ascertained.⁴²

With the connection to the purity list in place, Chapter 5 provides an exposition of the haustafeln in Colossians 3:18–4:1 and Ephesians 5:22–6:9. There is no scholarly consensus on the interpretation of the haustafeln. Some of the different positions are that the haustafeln provided the early Christians with a sense of a unified community⁴³ and that the writing of the haustafeln was an attempt to provide security from pagan authorities who saw the Christian

Testament World. While each of these works provide a different reason for the need of unity, the conclusion is similar that overall unification was the reasoning behind the writing of Ephesians and Colossians.

⁴¹ Allan R. Bevere (*Sharing in the Inheritance*) and Wright and Johnson (*Ephesians*) believe the purity section is best read using the framework of the “New Perspective of Paul.” For Bevere and Wright, the purity lists were Paul’s attempt to align the Gentile Christians into the Jewish morality and purity system. While the purity lists do have a Jewish connection and it is prudent to understand Paul’s Jewish background, I conclude that the purity lists are more likely to be connected to the dwelling of the Holy Spirit and the household of God than an attempt to Judaize the Gentile believers.

⁴² The scholars who provide argumentation for purity lists that aided the development of this dissertation are: Balabanski, *Colossians: An Eco-Stoic Reading*; Crouch, *Origin and Intention*; Aquinas, *Commentary on Ephesians*. Witherington (*Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*) provides a strong counterargument as to why the haustafeln should be considered separate, stand-alone topics within Ephesians and Colossians.

⁴³ Among the scholars arguing in favor of a unified Christian community as the purpose of the haustafeln are: Lincoln, *Ephesians*; Martin, *Husbands, Wives, Parents, Children*.

movement as a destabilizing movement.⁴⁴ Another view of the *haustafeln* is that Paul intended to provide instructions to Christians countercultural to societal norms.⁴⁵ This dissertation intends to show that while the *haustafeln* in Colossians and Ephesians are countercultural, their intention is to unify the Christian community into the universal Christian family and as a form of the new temple of the Holy Spirit under the headship of Jesus Christ.

Following the exposition of the *haustafeln*, the final chapter explores the implications of the family unit as a form of the new temple. Chapter 6 presents the areas of further research opportunities and the overall conclusion for the dissertation. It is important to understand that a hierarchical structure exists in the *haustafeln*, but the focus is not on human hierarchical relationships. Instead, the focus is on keeping the family unit pure under the headship of Jesus Christ.

Assumptions and Limitations

Original Literature

Scholars have not reached a consensus on the authorship of Colossians and Ephesians. A growing number of New Testament scholars conclude that Paul was not the author of the Colossian and Ephesian epistles. Instead, it is argued that the author was someone familiar with the writings of Paul. These scholars categorize Colossians and Ephesians among the letters with the designation of Deutero-Pauline.⁴⁶ The scholars who follow the Deutero-Pauline theory cite

⁴⁴ The following works provide a defense that the *haustafeln* was necessary to provide Christians with a defense against the charge that they were destabilizing the Roman Empire by not following the correct structure of the family household: Aquinas, *Commentary on Ephesians*; Crouch, *Origin and Intention*; Osiek, MacDonald, and Tulloch, *A Woman's Place*; Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*.

⁴⁵ Proponents of the countercultural view of the *haustafeln* are: Porter and Pitts, *Christian Origins and Greco-Roman Culture*; BurrIDGE, *Imitating Jesus*.

⁴⁶ The following works provide detailed study on the linguistic and stylistic differences between the epistles of Colossians and Ephesians and the accepted Pauline letters: Lincoln, *Ephesians*; Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World*; Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*; Wright, *Colossians and Philemon*.

stylistic and theological differences when comparing Colossians and Ephesians to the authentic Pauline writings.

Some New Testament scholars still defend the traditional view of Pauline authorship of Ephesians and Colossians.⁴⁷ This dissertation will follow the traditional view based on arguments found in O'Brien's *Colossians, Philemon* and van Roon's *The Authenticity of Ephesians*. Both O'Brien and van Roon provide adequate answers to the challenges presented by the scholars that adhere to the Deutero-Pauline theory and explain how Paul is the most probable author of these epistles.

Influential Literature

The topics of the new temple and the haustafeln have been the subject of many scholarly works. While many of the sources helped develop the author's understanding of the topics for this study, a few works were instrumental in the development of the thesis for this dissertation. Each of the sources mentioned in the literary review below has helped to guide this study to the conclusion that the haustafeln is best understood within the context of the family unit as a form of the new temple and that Paul provided instructions on how to keep the new temple pure and structured properly under the headship of Jesus Christ.

The collection and study of resources started with works by scholars versed in Colossians and Ephesians, with a focus first placed on the haustafeln or the vice and purity lists and then on resources concerning the status of the Christian as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit. Each of the authors surveyed has made major contributions to specific areas pertaining to the thesis of this dissertation.

⁴⁷ For solid defense of Paul as the author of Colossians and Ephesians see: O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*; A. van Roon, *The Authenticity of Ephesians* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1974).

Ernest Best

Ernest Best argued for reading Ephesians as behavioral instruction for Christians. According to Best, the purpose of Ephesians, as well as the household codes contained within, was to instruct Christians on how to function as the church.

Best stated that the theme of unity was the author's primary message to Christians.⁴⁸ The Christians in Asia Minor were unsure how they fit within society and within the church. The author of Ephesians repetitively used the word *one* to highlight the importance of unity. In this unity, it is the individual contributions that solidify the unified community. Best contends that even though there is no apparent threat to the church's unity, it is not surprising that a section on ethics is also present along with the teaching of unity.⁴⁹ To be a unified church, the individual Christians had to understand the ethical implications of following Christ and what that would entail in their everyday lives.

Best believes that because of Paul's desire for a unified church, he provided a "vice list" in Ephesians. The list of vices is similar to other New Testament exhortations on vices and the continuous battle with sin that Christians face in their everyday functions. In Ephesians, Paul used the vice list in conjunction with descriptions of positive action. By presenting the relationship between vice to positive action, Paul produced a way for Christians to understand how they can fall into sinful actions and how they can also move past sinful action by completing that positive action.⁵⁰ He gave an example about not sinning in anger and not letting

⁴⁸ Best, *Ephesians*, 46.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 46–47. Best argued since there is no apparent person or church that Ephesians is written to, and instead is a general circular letter, that there is no specific issue or heresy that Paul is attempting to correct. Instead, Paul focused on teaching the Christians in Asia Minor how to live ethically as the new creation under Christ.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 50–52. The vice lists move from sinful actions to virtues that will bring the community together and improve the relationships within the Christian community. Paul starts with seemingly minor vices but ends with

the day end while holding on to anger. Best noted that the vice list of Ephesians had a different tone than other New Testament vice lists. The lists of vices and positive actions in Ephesians focused on how Christians treated other Christians, not how Christians related to the secular community.⁵¹

The Ephesians and Colossian household codes, Best explained, differed from the codes in 1 Peter. The household codes of 1 Peter omit the parent-child relationship information, and there is an added section on the relationship between a person to their community. The omission of the discussion of community in Ephesians and Colossians solidifies the idea that the household codes from Ephesians and Colossians are for the structure regarding the faithful and not for conforming to the standards found within secular society. According to Best, the author of the epistles purposely structured the household codes in such a way as to remind the family about the overall church with Jesus Christ as the head. Best ended his argument on the household codes with the remark, “While we do not know the ratio of slave owners or slaves in the early church. We are all under the master Jesus Christ.”⁵²

Best’s connection between the household codes and the church is a good start for the conversation concerning the connection of the vice lists to the *haustafeln*. Best even began to

the sacrificed Christ’s love. Paul wrote the lists in a way that would deeply inspire the Ephesians and move them into the actions of love and forgiveness.

⁵¹ Best, *Ephesians*, 50. According to Best, Paul wrote Ephesians specifically to instruct the Christian community on how to act with other Christians. While Christians would still have daily dealings with people outside the Christian community, Paul was not concerned with the vices of outsiders. Paul was only speaking to the corporate Christian community in a way that would occupy their attention and have a significant impact on how they lived as a new creation.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 58–59. The appeal to treat enslaved people well ended with the reminder that all are under Christ and accountable for their actions. Since Christ is the master over everyone, there should be obedience and no attempt to deceive either Christ or others within the Christian community. Proper obedience to Christ is reflected in proper actions that lead to a heavenly reward.

make a connection between the vice lists and the *haustafeln*. However, Best has left room for the conversation on the connection of the vice lists to the *haustafeln*.

John Elliott

John H. Elliott produced a highly influential work called *A Home for the Homeless* based on his study and interpretation of the household codes. Though Elliott focused solely on the epistle of 1 Peter, isolating and understanding the social-political context of the recipients of Peter's letter brings a new perspective to the household codes.

To interpret the intended meaning of the epistle of 1 Peter, Elliott used a methodology that centered almost exclusively on the social situation of Asia Minor during the first century. Elliott explains that the addressees of 1 Peter lived in a period of conflict and hostility. The new movement of Christianity faced fierce opposition from the Gentiles in Asia Minor.⁵³ The conflicts weighed heavily upon the Christian population, as often these conflicts were also present in mixed Gentile and Christian households.

Elliott places significant importance on the Greek word *οἶκος*. Elliott stated that throughout 1 Peter, *οἶκος* is to be understood as meaning “spiritual house” or “temple of the Spirit.”⁵⁴ When addressing the household codes in 1 Peter, however, Elliott changes position and claims that *οἶκος* should be understood only as household and does not apply to the Spirit or

⁵³ Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*, 78–84. Elliott explained that the new Christian movement was viewed by the local Gentile population as an invasion by outsiders. To the pagan Gentiles, the Christians portrayed strange behavior in the social and religious ways of life. The pagan Gentiles saw the differences in the ways that the Christians acted in comparison to the social norm of the period as destabilizing to the local community and to the Roman Empire. Elliott stated that it was because of ignorance to the Christian movement that the pagan Gentiles became suspicious, with the suspicion at times becoming hostile. While the hostility was mainly verbal, it could be manifested in physical abuse.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 182. For Elliott, *οἶκος* should be translated differently depending on if it is used for secular society or for the Christian community. For the secular society, *οἶκος* should simply be translated as household.

temple of the Spirit.⁵⁵ The change in Elliott's position is because of the social-political aspect of how the Roman Empire had a system for the household that had the emperor as the head of the house.⁵⁶ In addition to the social aspects of the Roman Empire, Elliott investigated the role that the Hellenization of Asia Minor played in how household codes were formed. The view of hierarchical structure concerning household management of influential scholars and philosophers before and during the conversion of Christians in Asia Minor heavily influenced the writing of the codes in 1 Peter.

Elliott asserted that the purpose of the secular household codes was, at its roots, to ensure economic efficiency for society.⁵⁷ Proper functioning was imperative for the household's financial stability, which had ramifications beyond the immediate family unit. The system represented by the household codes bonded artisans and politicians together to carry out their respective communities' economic tasks efficiently. People found a place where they felt they belonged and could function within these household systems. Given humans' need for belonging and acceptance, it is little wonder that Christians also had written household codes.

Elliott identified the suffering of Christians as a central focus of 1 Peter. Noting how Christians who lived among the Gentiles in Asia Minor suffered hardships because of their

⁵⁵ Ibid. Elliot then uses secular Greek to explain that *οἶκος* can mean a variety of buildings or structures including houses and temples. Drawing from the Old Testament and Jewish tradition, Elliott concludes that because of the worship practices of the Israelites, the house played a part in the religious activities of the Israelites.

⁵⁶ The Roman household code with the emperor as the head of the household was established by Augustus. As the head of the house, Augustus encouraged marriage and bearing children within the marriage to expand the Roman Empire's population. This topic is expanded upon in Chapter 2. Part of the reason that Elliott posits that *οἶκος* in the *haustafel* of 1 Peter should be translated as the secular form is the political background of various household codes. This position is explored in more detail below in Lau, *The Politics of Peace*.

⁵⁷ Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*, 188–90. For economic reasons, the stability of the household was imperative to the stability of society. The economy of local areas in the Second Temple period often relied on multiple households accomplishing different tasks for the overall production of goods. Therefore, artisans and craftsmen often had a close relationship. If one of the households failed to produce efficiently, the production and distribution of food and goods could become disrupted. This need for efficiency and structure also assisted the early Christian movement by allowing them to interweave religious activity into the daily business in a way that was absent within the pagan households.

affiliation with the new religious sect, Peter teaches how to overcome this suffering.⁵⁸ It is because of this theme of suffering that Elliott abandons the typical interpretation of *οἶκος* as a spiritual household and favors the idea that *οἶκος* describes a regular household. Elliott argues that Peter gave the household codes to help alleviate the ridicule, harassment, and even violent hostility against Christians in Asia Minor. The Christians were to model their houses after the Gentiles to function in the Gentile society.⁵⁹ Elliott contends that since the family house was vital in all aspects of life, the Christian household could not be disruptive to the economic and political flow of the Gentile society in which they lived. The Christian household codes were intended to conform the Christian house to what society believed to be acceptable, which would lighten the suffering of Christians and ultimately evangelize the Gentile society.

While Elliott did exemplary work researching the structure of society in Asia Minor and how society influenced the writings of the time, his conclusion on the household codes strays from what Peter and other New Testament authors taught. Elliott acknowledges that there is a connection between the household and the temple of the Spirit in how New Testament authors generally use *οἶκος*. However, he strays from this meaning because of his view of how Peter approached the suffering of the Christians of Asia Minor. Contrarily, my conclusion is that it is because of the status of the Christian as the new temple that the Christian household is a form of the temple of the Spirit. While the structure of the household codes on the surface may appear to conform to the Gentile system, Jesus Christ, rather than a human, leads the Christian house. The

⁵⁸ Ibid., 200–201. The harassment and ridicule that the Christians faced left them disorganized and contributed to the feeling of a lack of social community. The Christians of Asia Minor needed solidarity and unity so that they would fit within the society in Asia Minor.

⁵⁹ Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*, 223. Elliott asserts that even though there is extensive background for the Peter to draw from, including Jewish tradition and the Old Testament, it is of higher probability that to address the need to alleviate the suffering of the Christians in Asia Minor, he used readily available household codes and directives from the surrounding areas. The goal for Peter was to end the suffering and bring a unifying stability to the Christians living among the pagan Gentiles within Asia Minor.

structure of the immediate family household reflects the universal Christian household under the headship of Christ. It does not conform to what society states a household should be, even if it means the Christian will face hardships.

Te-Li Lau

Like Elliott, Lau focuses on *οἶκος*. However, Lau's premise is that the political world of the Second Temple period provides the context for Ephesians.⁶⁰ Lau puts forth that the themes of Ephesians are unity, peace, and reconciliation. These themes are also frequently used by Augustine. Therefore, the author of Ephesians was writing on a political level to organize the Christians in Ephesus. The political motivation permeates the entirety of Ephesians, and the *haustafel* needs to be read within its political context. Because the ancient world believed the household was the foundation of all of society, the Christians organized under Paul would have been established in the same way of thinking.⁶¹ According to Lau, Paul uses similar language as Plato and Aristotle when discussing the household and marriage.⁶² Like the early philosophers, the kings of Egypt believed the entire land to be their *οἶκος*. Because of the evidence of the connotation of *οἶκος* in the surrounding cultures as well as in the writings of early philosophers,

⁶⁰ Lau, *The Politics of Peace*.

⁶¹ Ibid., 127. It is because of the prevailing thought on the household and societal structure that the Greek *οἶκος* and all its forms need to be understood to ascertain the motif of how the society, including Christians, are an organized unit much like a household. Paul wrote the *haustafel* in Ephesians to unite the Christians much like political writings from government officials.

⁶² Ibid., 128–30. To make this connection, Lau compares Paul's use of *οἶκος* with the *πόλις* in the beginning of Aristotle's *Politics* and with Plato's writings concerning marriage and citizenship. For Lau, the works of Aristotle and Plato were meant to inform citizens on their civic responsibility. Failure to follow the rules on marriage and household structure meant that the person was attempting to politically subvert the governing authorities.

Paul would have understood *οἶκος* to carry a political connotation when he wrote the *haustafel* in Ephesians.⁶³

After setting the political context of *οἶκος*, Lau equates the usage of God the Father and the Israelites to the household from excerpts from the Old Testament. The Ephesians would have understood the political nature of *οἶκος* and would have understood the meaning as the view of God and the nation of Israel in the Old Testament. It is precisely the use of *οἶκος* that makes the *haustafel* of Ephesians political.⁶⁴

For Lau, the reason to believe that the *haustafel* found in Ephesians is to be understood and read as political is the similarity in style and structure to Aristotle's *Politics*.⁶⁵ In the relationship pairings found in the *haustafeln*, Lau emphasizes the usage of *σωτήρ* and the similarity of its usage in the LXX to its use by writers in the Roman Empire to denote military or political hierarchical standing.⁶⁶

After explaining the political background of the Epistle to the Ephesians, Lau states that the purpose of the *haustafel* is to bring peace, unity, and stability to the Christian family and the

⁶³ Ibid., 131–32. Lau also concluded that the language Paul uses is like the Roman writings and the thought of the “house of Cesar” in 2 BC. The Roman Senate declared Augustus as “father” of the Roman Empire. The title would pass down to the emperors after Augustus.

⁶⁴ Lau, *The Politics of Peace*, 133. Lau argues that language used in Romans and 1 Corinthians differs from how Paul presents the structure and hierarchy of the household. While Romans and 1 Corinthians are, for Lau, pieces concerning ethics, Ephesians speaks to the political sphere within the Roman Empire.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 134–37. Lau highlights the similarity of style in the three pairings of relationship for both Ephesians and *Politics*. While similarities exist in that there are three pairings and that the pairings are husband/wife, parent/child, and enslaver/enslaved, Lau does not distinguish that the Pauline form is slightly different in how it addresses the pairings, and that *Politics* emphasizes the enslaver/enslaved relationship in a significantly larger way than Ephesians.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 136. Lau argues that *σωτήρ* in the LXX Old Testament referred to Yahweh as the deliverer of Israel in the same manner as the Romans depict emperors and generals that fought in the early wars of the Roman Empire. For the Christian, the depiction of Christ as authority in Ephesians is much like both the LXX Old Testament and Roman depictions of leaders. Therefore, for Lau, this indicates that Ephesians and the *haustafel* are to be understood through early first-century politics.

Roman Empire.⁶⁷ The political nature of the message to the Ephesians brings the ethical transformation that Paul intends for the people of Ephesus.⁶⁸ For Lau, the message is about political unity and stability within the Roman Empire. While there is mention of submission to Christ or God the Father, Lau does not connect the unity of the *haustafel* to the new temple and the Kingdom of God.

Eduard Lohse

Eduard Lohse considers the household codes of Colossians to be traditional pieces from different cultures that provide a tried-and-true structure and order.⁶⁹ Lohse initiated the position that Ernest Best expanded upon, which was that the household codes existed for the church's unity. Yet, Lohse's approach differs slightly. For Lohse, the household codes were meant to instruct the first two to three generations of Christians that had questions on aspects of everyday life.⁷⁰ Since the household codes were created by the secular and Jewish philosophers and adopted by Paul in Colossians, there should be little to no application for the modern Christian.

Lohse argued that the Jewish philosophers and rabbis studied the work of pagan philosophers concerning the household codes and found the household codes to be strong

⁶⁷ Ibid., 140–42. Lau states that Ephesians is different from Colossians because Colossians inserts the *haustafel* in a way that is abrupt and interferes with the flow of the overall message. In Ephesians, the *haustafel* is carefully placed and woven into the overall theme of unity and submission to Christ. Lau does partially disconnect Eph. 5:21–22 from the *haustafel* but maintains that even though verses 21–22 are separate from the *haustafel*, the theme of submission to Christ still applies to the section containing the *haustafel*.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 141. For Lau, if the Christians in Ephesus follow Paul's political instruction in the *haustafeln*, it will show that they have been filled by the Holy Spirit to walk in a way that is worthy of the Lord.

⁶⁹ Eduard Lohse, "Rules for the Household," in *Colossians and Philemon*, ed. Helmut Koester, A Commentary on the Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon (Philadelphia, PA: 1517 Media, 1971), 154. Lohse asserts that because of the author's Jewish background, he often used Hellenistic-Jewish traditions within his exhortations. Rules of conduct that were effective, such as the household codes provided by the Jewish and Greco-Roman philosophers, were incorporated into their teachings. The author did not develop a new set of instructions for the early Christians. Instead, he reiterated the societal norm of the household structure to bring unity to the early Christian movement within the second and third generations.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 153–55.

ethically. The Jewish philosophers changed the style slightly by replacing obedience to a pantheon of gods with instruction to obey the one true God. Christians then removed the text concerning God and governments to focus solely on the immediate household. The Christians who wrote the household codes heard the ethical household codes within Hellenized synagogues. Since there was no formal written establishment of ethical household management in the early Christian church, the early Christians had to adopt writings from the surrounding cultures and religions that were reasonable within their framework of faith.⁷¹ Lohse defended his position by quoting Paul's words in Philippians 4:8.⁷² The New Testament authors recognized that the household codes provided by the philosophers of other ideologies worked and were morally appropriate for the time in which they lived.

Lohse recognized Colossians 3:18–4:1 as the earliest Christian household ethic. According to Lohse, "It is clearly discernible how the ethical teaching was adopted and Christianized. Not only the individual warnings but also the reference to what is fitting and generally valid correspond to Hellenistic moral teaching: 'as is proper,' 'pleasing,' and 'justly and fairly,' which were all prominent in the Hellenistic household codes."⁷³ Paul added the line "in the Lord" to make the household code Christian.⁷⁴ Therefore, the household codes of

⁷¹ Ibid., 155–56. The validity of Lohse's position depends on the *haustafel* in Colossians being inserted in a later addition to the letter, or Colossians being a pseudonymous letter written after Paul's death. The author used codes they were familiar with from outside sources since the first Christians provided no household codes at the beginning of the Christian movement.

⁷² "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things" (Phil. 4:8).

⁷³ Lohse, "Rules for the Household," 156. The prevailing thought during the Second Temple period was that the patristic structure of the household codes was morally and ethically correct. Paul's writing of Phil. 4:8 allowed for secular instructions and actions, such as the household codes, that were seen as proper to be adopted by Christians.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 156–57. Lohse explained that the addition of "in the Lord" is critical for the Christianized version of the secular household codes. With the addition of "in the Lord," all relationships need to depend on the central

Colossians are a direct result of the adoption of the Hellenistic codes prominent within society when Paul wrote Colossians.

For Lohse, Christians in the era of Paul were to conduct their lives following the accepted societal order. There was nothing exclusively Christian within the household codes. Society had dictated what was ethical and morally acceptable, so Paul did not need to give an explicit Christian directive on household management.

Overall, Paul wrote the household codes to promote unity in the early Christian families and answer questions about family structure for the first several generations of Christians. The codes were not a new social program and did not promote any new order that stood counter to the proven ethics of the era.

While the connection between the household codes and the Hellenistic household codes made by Lohse helps shed light upon the societal norms of the Second Temple era, Lohse placed too much emphasis on the Hellenistic codes. Paul added more than “in the Lord” to the household codes. By providing the vice list before the household structure, the combined verses provide the ethical structure needed for the individual Christian within the immediate family and within the universal Christian family.⁷⁵ While Lohse was correct that the household codes did provide unity for the early Christians, his limiting the codes to the first two to three generations is of concern. The household codes are still relevant today for unity and structure and are vital to understanding how the universal Christian family functions in the kingdom of God.

relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. For Lohse, while the *haustafel* was only intended for the second and third generations of Christians, the appeal to have relationships that reflect living life “in the Lord” is the timeless lesson to be learned for the modern Christian.

⁷⁵ Lohse, “Rules for the Household,” 154. Lohse believes that there is no connection between the *haustafel* in Colossians and the purity lists. Lohse concluded that the *haustafel* is a stand-alone exhortation inserted into Colossians meant for the second and third generations of Christians to bring unity and answer questions on how to function in everyday life.

G. K. Beale

After reading Revelation 21:1–22:5, G. K. Beale set forth to understand the role of the new temple and the new world that John stated he saw in a vision from God. Beale concluded that this new temple is the representation of the new world. Ultimately, it is the new tabernacle inhabited by God. Beale believes that throughout the Bible, there are images of the temple, and each of these temples establishes the path to the cosmic eschatological reality that God's presence on the Earth, formerly limited to the holy of holies within the early temple and tabernacle, is extended throughout the whole Earth.⁷⁶ One of these images was Jesus Christ.

Both the Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John portray the Holy Spirit's role in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Because the Spirit descended upon and dwelt within Jesus, the Spirit had left the Jerusalem temple. Beale stated that further evidence that Jesus and the disciples knew that Jesus was the new temple is found in the presentation and teaching of the Great Commission. To Beale, Matthew structured his gospel message to reflect Chronicles' beginning and ending.⁷⁷ Because of the structure of Matthew in relation to Chronicles, it can only be understood that Jesus was the greater temple to come that would be for the entire world.

Furthermore, since Jesus claimed the authority to forgive sin (Luke 7:49–50), He had already begun replacing the temple while performing his ministry.⁷⁸ Finally, Jesus Christ became

⁷⁶ Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 25–26. The tabernacle, followed by the subsequent temples, were temporary dwellings for the Spirit of God. These buildings were pointing the way to the eventual new creation and a new temple that would not limit the presence of God to a specific place called the "holy of holies" within the temporary structures.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 177. The style of the Gospel of Matthew differs from 1 and 2 Chronicles. In 1 and 2 Chronicles, the commission to build the temple is given by a pagan king to the nation of Israel. In Matthew, Jesus is speaking to the remnant of the nation of Israel, or as Beale stated, "the true Twelve," when he proclaimed the Great Commission. Beale believes that the two events are connected. The events portrayed in 2 Chronicles foreshadow the work of Jesus Christ as the new temple, and subsequently, the proclamation of the Great Commission.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 176–77. During the Second Temple period, the Jewish leaders saw the claims of Jesus Christ as blasphemy, for Jesus was proclaiming the divine authority of God. By claiming to have the authority to forgive sin, Jesus was claiming that He has divine power. For the Jews, only God has the power to forgive sin. To receive

the sin offering. Since the only place that sacrifice could take place was the divine temple, as the ultimate sin offering, Jesus was the divinely appointed location for forgiveness and salvation. Beale concluded that God's presence had manifested itself in more significant ways than in prior physical structures throughout history in the Gospels.

Next, Beale discusses the presentation of Jesus in Acts, when the new temple was transferred to the disciples during the event of Pentecost. The Spirit entered the house where the disciples were staying and descended upon them. After the Spirit entered them, they could perform miracles once attributed to Jesus. Beale states that Acts 4:11 contains the most substantial evidence that Jesus Christ is the new temple; Christ was the stone rejected but has become the cornerstone. Beale connects Acts to Revelation with the event of the stoning of Stephen. Before Stephen dies, he has a vision of the new Heaven. The Stephen narrative underscored that Solomon's temple, and the later second temple, were mere placeholders for the more significant future temple, the temple that man's hands would not make.⁷⁹ Stephen had identified the inadequacy of the old creation compared to the new creation under Jesus Christ.

Beale connects the transfer of the new temple to the church. Ephesians 2:19–22 are the key verses of Beale's argument. In these verses, Paul demonstrated that he believed that the church is the fulfillment of the role of the Old Testament temple. Paul does not believe that the church is *like* the temple; Paul believes that the church *is* the temple. The church as the temple has the cornerstone of Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:19–22 concludes with the continuous

forgiveness from God, the devout Jew had to present an offering at the temple, which was the divinely instituted place. For Jesus to proclaim that he could forgive sin also meant that he is the divinely appointed place for the Spirit to receive the offering. Ultimately, Jesus is also the true sacrificial offering for the forgiveness of sins.

⁷⁹ Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 223. Even though Solomon's temple was the centerpiece of Jewish life and religion, it was not the fulfillment of the promise that David's son would build the temple. Human-made temples are insufficient due to the inherent sinful nature of humankind. The promised new temple was "made without hands," which Christ declares in Mark 14:58. Jesus, who is in the family line of David, fulfilled the promise of being the temple "made without hands."

construction of the new temple as the dwelling of the Spirit.⁸⁰ Paul referred to Christ as the end-times temple in connection to Psalm 67. The Spirit had left the temple of Jerusalem and had fully dwelt within Jesus.

The work done by Beale on the new temple is exemplary. Ephesians and Colossians describe the transfer of the new temple to the church with Christ as the cornerstone. Beale leaves room for the conversation to expand on what this means for the structure of the church or the universal Christian family. Paul's household codes explain the proper and pure structure concerning the new temple. Since the church has the status of the new temple, and the individual is also the temple of the Holy Spirit, the immediate family unit also is a form of the new temple.

Margaret Barker

Margaret Barker produced an exegesis of the Gospel of John based on the Jewish temple tradition. Barker centers the argument around the wording John chose in the prologue. John used the word "tabernacled" instead of a more common word like "lived or came" to enhance the imagery of the light coming into the darkness.⁸¹ John was teaching that through Jesus Christ, the Christian has now inherited the temple tradition.

For Barker, reading the Gospel of John using the framework of Revelation is essential. John had the vision of the *parousia* (Rev. 10:1–11) and then wrote the gospel that taught the new

⁸⁰ Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 260. In Ephesians 2, Paul quotes Isa. 57:19 to prove that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ reconciled both Jew and Gentile to God and one another. They are part of the new creation, "one with the Spirit." Having open access to the Father through the Spirit is explained in Eph. 2:19–22 as the new temple and the cornerstone of being in Christ. The new temple is constantly growing, with individuals being united into the dwelling place of the Spirit. The imagery of the growing temple is like the borders of Eden and all the temples that followed. The temples were to expand until God's presence filled the entire Earth. With Christ, the issuing of the Great Commission, and the inclusion of the Gentiles, the actual expansion of the temple happened. The expansion of the new temple was not limited to the Second Temple period, as it continues today.

⁸¹ Barker, *King of the Jews*, 135–36. Barker stated that the use of the word *tabernacled* is significant for understanding how John understood the deity of Jesus Christ. John believed that Jesus saw Himself as the only true priest-king. The word *tabernacled* helped John portray the light that came to the darkness, God coming to live with His people.

concept of the Eucharist. In Revelation 21:3, John declared that God will “tabernacle” with men from his vision. The connection of Revelation 21:3 to the Gospel of John is the specific mention of the feasts concerning the temple of Jerusalem. Specifically, John mentioning two “Feasts of Tabernacles” before the death of Jesus, in contrast to how the Synoptic Gospels mention only the death of Jesus and not the feasts, highlights that John understood that Jesus knew that He was the Davidic priest-king. Yet, tabernacles meant different things to different schools of Jewish thought, and tradition played a role in John’s view of Jesus in light of tabernacles.⁸² John’s use of the temple feasts demonstrated that Jesus was the anointed one, the Son of God.

John’s account also differs from the Synoptic Gospels in its presentation of how Jesus came to Earth. The Synoptics provide genealogies of Jesus, while John instead explained the spiritual aspect of Jesus as the Logos coming into the world.⁸³ The coming of Jesus, who was full of the Spirit before birth, signified that the Spirit had left the temple in Jerusalem and was now dwelling within Jesus.

Like Beale, Barker moved from the indwelling of the Spirit to the atonement sacrifice and the significance of the sacrifice. To properly atone for their sin, Israelites provided a sacrifice at the temple. For some, the length of the journey made it challenging to bring the

⁸² Ibid. Barker concluded that there were different beliefs regarding the Feast of Tabernacles. Initially, the Feast of Tabernacles represented the end of the autumn festivals and coincided with the harvest to portray the divine judgment and gathering of God’s people. Under the reformations of Josiah, the Feast of Tabernacles moved to the spring near Passover. One of the rituals was sunrise worship that celebrated the light coming into the darkness. This ritual was later ended due to its resemblance to worship of the sun and not God. Barker noted that Ezekiel had condemned the sunrise ritual, claiming that it was polluting the temple because of the appearance of men worshipping the sun.

⁸³ Ibid., 142. The Synoptic Gospels’ portrayal of the genealogy of Jesus Christ firmly roots Jesus in the world. In contrast, the Gospel of John opened with the divine starting point of Jesus Christ. The beginning of Jesus is outside of time and space. From the opening words of John’s Gospel, the deity of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

required sacrifice, explaining the marketplace within the temple selling sacrificial animals.⁸⁴

Jesus performed the ultimate sacrifice away from the temple building because He was the temple, the dwelling place of the Spirit.⁸⁵

The connection of Christians to Christ is more profound than experienced throughout history with the people and their connection to a temple building. With Jesus being the new temple and transferring the temple at Pentecost, Christians have a profound union with Christ. Because of this union with Christ and the Spirit dwelling inside them, the Christian enters into the universal Christian family. With the family as a form of the new temple, one must understand purity and function to provide proper worship to God as representatives of his kingdom family.

Concluding Thoughts

While there have been extensive works on both the new temple and the haustafeln, there has been little written on the family unit as a form of the new temple, which affects the interpretation of haustafeln. By connecting the haustafeln to the purity lists in Colossians and Ephesians through the family unit and the new temple, one can ascertain an interpretation of the haustafeln that is true to the theme of unification of the Christian body. The connection also deepens the understanding of how the family as a form of the new temple impacts the Christian and the pure worship of Jesus Christ.

⁸⁴ The Synoptic Gospels' portrayal of Jesus overturning the money change tables and driving out the animals is another instance of how the Jewish people corrupted the temple building. The significance of a pure temple should not be ignored and foreshadows how Jesus as the Son of God is the pure temple.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 480–85. Barker noted that Jesus died upon the cross on the eve of Passover, coinciding with the sacrifice of the Passover lambs at the temple. When Jesus died on the cross, the people there to witness the death would have heard the rituals marking the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. At this time, John recorded darkness over the land for three hours. While the land was dark, the veil within the temple that covered the holy of holies was torn, officially exposing the holy of holies. The second part of the opening of the holy of holies comes with the resurrected Jesus Christ and the stone being rolled away from the tomb.

Chapter 2: Family Structure in the Old Testament and Second Temple Era

One of the disconnects between the cultural surroundings of the authors of Scripture and the modern Western setting is the structure and function of the family unit. It is essential to examine the historical context of the household from the perspective of Paul when he wrote the letters to Colossae and Ephesus to understand the *haustafeln* better. While this chapter covers the Second Temple period household structure, it is not an exhaustive study of the history of the household.¹

This chapter provides an overview of the importance that family and maintaining family honor had on the everyday decisions of the household members, which consists of the husband/father, the wife/mother, the children, and the household enslaved people. The chapter explores each of these household roles. Next, this chapter will examine the early household codes provided in the works of ancient philosophers and other writings of early Christianity. Finally, the author briefly addresses the other New Testament *haustafeln*.

The Centrality of the Family

Within the Roman Empire, the eldest male, known as the *paterfamilias*, ruled the household. Under Roman law, the *paterfamilias* was the only one who could own property. Even when a son left to establish his household after marriage, he was still subject to and under the legal authority of his father as the *paterfamilias*.² While the Hellenistic household tended to be more multigenerational, the eldest male still ruled. The Hellenistic father did not have the same authority as the Roman *paterfamilias* on a legal level but was still the ultimate authority over all

¹ For in-depth studies of the Second Temple period background for the New Testament see: deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*; deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*; Dodson and Smith, *Exploring Biblical Backgrounds*; Evans and Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background*; Martin Goodman, *Jews in a Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999); Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*; Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*.

² Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 239–40.

household members.³ While the Israelites differed from the dominant Greco-Roman culture within the Second Temple period in religion and family size, there were points of similarity. The Israelites' household structure was like that of their Greco-Roman rulers and neighbors.⁴

At the heart of the household was the notion of family honor, and a person's parentage was the starting point for honor in societal standing.⁵ Children were instructed to follow honorable paths and perform honorable actions to avoid family disgrace from an early age.⁶ What constituted honor differed depending on whether one was born into a Roman or Jewish family.⁷ Jewish people tended to marry others of the same faith, often within the same family, without violating laws concerning incestual relationships. Persons of Roman descent often married based on strategic or economic alliances to improve the family's standing.⁸ Commonalities in Roman and Jewish values included the individual's need of the status of the family group, the intertwining of the family group's honor with the actions of the individual members,⁹ and the household as the center of religious life.¹⁰ While Jewish households tended to be larger than Roman households, the oldest male as the head of the family was the typical

³ Ibid., 240–41.

⁴ Goodman, *Jews in a Graeco-Roman World*. 4–5.

⁵ deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*, 25–28. deSilva illustrated this point by explaining that someone born into the “house of David” would be viewed as having a higher standing than someone born into the “house of Herschel.” To insult one in the Second Temple period often meant verbally assaulting the other person's line of descent.

⁶ Evans and Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background*. 518.

⁷ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 80. Ferguson explained that while family heritage was a point of honor for both the Jewish and Roman population, the Romans also considered acts of bravery to increase honor. In contrast, the Jewish population favored piety and considered worshipping God a means of proving honor.

⁸ deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 140.

⁹ Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 20–23.

¹⁰ J. Julius Scott Jr., *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1995). Scott explained that the Jewish household had a three-level approach to religious activity. First and foremost, the temple played the prominent role. The local synagogue was the second level, and the household was the third level. Each level had its purpose: the temple for offering sacrifice, the synagogue for instruction, and the home for continued worship and religious education.

structure for the Jewish and Roman populations. Christian households would have more closely resembled the Jewish structure than the Roman structure due to how Roman law viewed marriages in the non-Roman population.¹¹

The stability of the Roman Empire centered on robust, procreating families. Around 18 BC, Augustus enacted laws to bolster marriage and families.¹² While enacting these laws, Augustus also declared himself as the *paterfamilias* to all Roman citizens and subjects.¹³ Any attempt to subvert the societal expectations of family structure or appearance thereof would be viewed as potentially attempting to destabilize Roman rule.¹⁴ For the citizens of Asia Minor,¹⁵ the role of the emperor as *paterfamilias* was taken seriously. The cities of Colossae and Ephesus participated in the cult of emperor worship, and Ephesus erected two temples devoted to Augustus.¹⁶

¹¹ Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 240–41. The Roman marriage laws strictly reinforced the patriarchal system. Jeffers concludes that since Christian and Jewish marriage relationships were not legally legitimate in the Roman Empire, it made for a weakened *paterfamilias* and patriarchy for the Jewish population and Christian households. However, this does not mean that the societal norm was not followed, as both the Christian and Jewish households still adhered to a form of patriarchy.

¹² Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 86. The laws enacted by Augustus were meant to increase the birth rate among the upper classes. These laws provided incentives for having three or more children while penalizing families that did not have children. However, the number of official exemptions handed out by the Roman government rendered the laws ineffective in helping to increase birth rates among the upper class.

¹³ Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World*. Osiek and Balch use this historical decree made by Augustus in their defense of non-Pauline authorship for Colossians and Ephesians. The Deutero-Pauline author, in their conclusion, appropriated the household code and decree of Augustus and attempted to portray the codes as a Christian document by adding the qualifier of Jesus Christ as the head.

¹⁴ Osiek, MacDonald, and Tulloch, *A Woman's Place*. Refining the position that the decree and codes were appropriated by the Deutero-Pauline author, Osiek, MacDonald, and Tulloch explain that the author inserted the household codes to create the appearance that Christians were following the societal norms, and therefore were not destabilizing the family unit or the Roman Empire. Yet, at the core, the codes were only for appearances to non-Christians, as the Christian would read the codes as being countercultural in how the Christian is to live their life in submission to Jesus Christ.

¹⁵ The cities of Colossae and Ephesus are both in the Asia Minor province under the control of the Roman Empire during the time that Paul wrote both Colossians and Ephesians.

¹⁶ Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 265. Jeffers then detailed how the later emperors Domitian and Hadrian named Ephesus as the official location of the emperor's temple for Asia Minor. The emperor being viewed as the head of the family and requiring worship at the temple brings similarity to how Judaism worships God at the Jerusalem Temple and within their households.

Honor and religion played prominent roles no matter the size of the household, and the household attaches frequently to honor and the temple through hospitality practices. For both the Romans and the Jews, wealthy and poor alike, the view was that households that provided exceptional hospitality, especially to travelers on their pilgrimage to a temple, were servants of God and were worthy of honor and praise.¹⁷

To provide honor, hospitality, and the proper worship of God or the patron deity tied to the city temple, each family member during the Second Temple period adhered to roles within the household as dictated by societal norms and customs. The following paragraphs provide a brief survey of the roles within the household during the Second Temple period.

Men: Husbands and Fathers

As the *paterfamilias*, men were the head of each household. The title of *paterfamilias* belonged to the oldest male within the family bloodline. The *paterfamilias*'s duty was to execute all decisions for the family's well-being.¹⁸ While the *paterfamilias* may seek advice from other family members, once the *paterfamilias* decides on the course of action needed for a situation, the other family members must accept that decision. Writings from the Second Temple period and prior emphasize the right of the husband and father to rule over the household.¹⁹ It was commonplace for household instructions and writings of the period to detail that it was the natural order for the husband and father to be superior to the wife, children, and enslaved people in the household. The authors of the household instructions, such as Aristotle, saw the household's functioning and structure in relation to the nation's structure and the stability of that

¹⁷ Evans and Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background*. 524.

¹⁸ Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 81–83. Included within the power and authority of the *paterfamilias* were the finances, whether a child would be kept or exposed, how the child would be educated, the child's eventual marriage arrangements, and the decisions around and legal rights to any enslaved person that was owned.

¹⁹ deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*. 180.

nation.²⁰ Therefore, the Roman government often required that the male head of house kept order to be considered for governmental positions within the Empire.²¹

Under Roman law, men had more freedom than other household members. For instance, if a man caught his wife in adultery, he had the legal option to divorce her.²² At the same time, Roman culture considered it normal and expected for a man to have sexual relations with someone other than his wife.²³

Men generally married at a later age than women. Because of the young age at which a woman would enter the marriage, the husband would often instruct his wife on adequately maintaining the household.²⁴ The age difference also contributed to the husband's control over his wife within the hierarchal structure since the wife would enter the marriage with minimal life experience.

The husband and father often educated his wife and the children in business dealings. Everyone in the family needed to be able to produce labor or products to remain economically viable.²⁵ While crafts and trades played a role in places like Colossae and Ephesus, many

²⁰ Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*, 171–73.

²¹ deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 140.

²² Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 86–87. To curb divorces, laws were passed that the husband who divorced his wife would have to return the dowery acquired in the marriage arraignment. While this was a deterrent, divorce was still a common practice within the Second Temple period.

²³ Evans and Porter, in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, explain that husbands committing adultery was a problem even within the Jewish population, especially the Hellenized Jewish people. Adultery and sexual immorality are among the vices named within the purity lists provided by Paul in both Colossians and Ephesians. While Goodman, in *Jews in a Graeco-Roman World*, elaborated further by explaining that even though both the Roman and Jewish cultures at large thought less of a man who engaged in homosexual behavior, homosexual behavior was still common. The man was often chided for not possessing self-control. However, heterosexual adultery was generally overlooked and expected for the man. For the Christian, even heterosexual adultery was forbidden, as will be explained more below in the discussion of the purity lists of Colossians and Ephesians.

²⁴ deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*, 182. The age disparity was generally greater within the Roman household than the Jewish household. Jewish men were encouraged to marry starting at age eighteen. Yet, it was not unusual for the husband to be in his thirties while the wife was still in her teenage years.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 188.

families in the Second Temple period were in the agricultural business.²⁶ In times of planting and harvest, the entire family would need to work for the maximum possible profitability. The father typically took over responsibility for the children's education when they reached the age of six and would generally focus the children's education on the family business.²⁷

The rule of the enslaver over the household enslaved person was absolute. Only men could own property, including enslaved people, during the Second Temple period.²⁸ The husband could assign or give an enslaved person to his wife, but he maintained the legal possession of the enslaved person. This author covers more on household enslaved people below.

Women: Wives and Mothers

The second role within the hierarchical Second Temple period household structure is the role of the wife and mother. With the advancement of feminist studies in the mid to late twentieth century, there has been an influx of information concerning women's roles in household management and the early Christian movement.²⁹

Women and young girls were kept in or near the household, often in a particular room or space not accessible to others.³⁰ For the entirety of their lives, women were subject to the

²⁶ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 91.

²⁷ deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*, 188. Many children would receive only the education required to maintain the family business, and even this education differed between boys and girls. Children within the upper class would often receive a more formal education, sometimes with a prominent teacher for instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Upper-class Jewish boys often were sent to gain religious instruction from rabbis.

²⁸ deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 141–42.; Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 227–28.

²⁹For more detailed study on the role of women within the Second Temple period please see Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World*; Osiek, MacDonald, and Tulloch, *A Woman's Place*; Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*; Thurston, *Women in the New Testament*.

³⁰ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 87. Ferguson explains that while the notion of women being secluded is often exaggerated, there were limits to their movements and who had access to women within the household. The main purpose of the restrictions was to ensure the purity of the woman and establish the legitimacy of children. Female children were also protected in such a manner to ensuring purity for the arrangement of their future marriage.

paterfamilias.³¹ Girls' lives began the care and authority of their fathers, and after marriage, and as adults, they were subject to their husband's authority.³² If the woman were divorced or widowed,³³ she would return to her father's authority.³⁴

The primary responsibilities of the woman of the Second Temple era were in the upkeep of the household, with duties of meal preparation and cooking, spinning wool for clothing, and maintaining tidiness of both the house and her physical appearance to bring honor to her husband.³⁵ Women's duties were often separated from the duties of men. The cultural norm of the Second Temple period was for men to be in the public-facing sphere, such as agricultural works and political offices. Managing the private life³⁶ of the household and family was the role of women.³⁷

The wife held authority over others within the household, but she had no authority over her husband.³⁸ Properly functioning and well-kept houses were essential for the spread of the early church since, in the early movement, Christians would gather within a house of a host or

³¹ Thurston, *Women in the New Testament*, 14–15. Until the daughter reached the age of twelve, the father was able to arrange a betrothal for her or sell her into slavery. After the age of twelve, she could not be betrothed against her will, but this was rarely the case, as the father would align a betrothal early in the girl's life.

³² deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*, 177.

³³ In Osiek, MacDonald, and Tulloch, *A Woman's Place*, the authors explain that it was common for a woman to be widowed at an early age due to the age differences between men and women during marriage. The young widow would often remarry within a reasonable timeframe. To preserve any financial gain from the previous marriage, a widow could remarry but stay under the authority of her father, known as *potestas*.

³⁴ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 88–89.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 78.

³⁶ Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 23–25. It is notable that there are exceptions as there were women also involved in the political and public spheres.

³⁷ Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World*, 40–41.

³⁸ deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*, 182. The wife was viewed as the manager of the household and its affairs under the direction of her husband. In upper-class households this could mean that the wife held considerable power, dependent upon how many household enslaved people were under her direction on maintaining the general upkeep of the house and food preparation processes. Within Jewish households, the wife/mother was the authority except for the husband.

patron to hear the gospel and for fellowship.³⁹ Unlike the present-day period, the home was not an escape from public life during the Second Temple period. Maintaining order and appearance was crucial for political and business opportunities alike.⁴⁰

Within the Greco-Roman legal system, women held minor status. Women could not own property unless they were under the guardianship of their husbands or fathers.⁴¹ While a woman may have authority over some household enslaved people, the enslaved people were still owned by the male head of the house. During the Second Temple period, Roman women gained more freedom in property ownership.⁴²

Before the spread of Christianity, the Stoics taught that women should share equal status with men and pushed for higher education for women.⁴³ The Christian movement sometimes resembled the Stoics' teaching about women having equal status with men.⁴⁴ However, the philosophy put forth by the Stoic philosophers generally was not practiced by the Stoics.

³⁹ deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*, 227–29.

⁴⁰ Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World*, 54–56. While the woman's role was primarily within the private sphere, she was not completely removed from the public. The house played a central role in the daily life of the Second Temple era world. Many businesses were run from the family house, with all members of the family participating in some fashion. For those in the upper-class and political realms, the home was a place to entertain important clients.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁴² *Ibid.* The freedom to own property for some women was reliant on their status within the Roman upper class. For the lower-class women, both Greco-Roman and Jewish, the traditional position that only men could own property was adhered to almost without exception.

⁴³ Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 23–24. The motive for the push for higher education was not as noble as it appears. The stoic philosopher Musonius Rufus pressed for educational equality, but he believed that this education would assist the woman to better perform her traditional household duties.

⁴⁴ Balabanski, *Colossians: An Eco-Stoic Reading*. Balabanski provides a detailed analysis of first century Stoic writings and the similarities to some of the teaching of Paul found in Colossians. Among the Stoic and Pauline similarities is the *haustafeln* in Colossians. More will be addressed on this topic below.

Children

Limited literature exists that could shed light on children's everyday lives. In the Second Temple period, the mortality rate for children was high,⁴⁵ and life was not easy for children. All activities, including play, were intended to prepare the child for adolescence, which was viewed as the transition into reasoning and functioning as an adult.⁴⁶ Fathers woke their children early in the morning to perform duties that would help the family produce for their business. The goal was for the child to learn the family trade and provide for themselves once they reached adulthood.⁴⁷

Overpopulation was an issue within the Roman Empire in the Second Temple period. Overpopulation led to scarcity within the food supply and other resources. One remedy for the problem was exposing the child or attempting infanticide. If a father rejected a child at birth, the common practice was to expose the child to nature, usually with the trash. The practice of exposure generally impacted daughters since many fathers wanted sons. Sometimes, children were recovered from exposure by another person, but the intent was to raise the child to be sold into slavery.⁴⁸ The Greco-Roman population did not consider infanticide immoral, but the Jewish and Christian populations were prohibited from the practice.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 61. Factors contributing to the high mortality rate included the lack of resources, poor hygiene, and the rampant disease that thrived in the unsanitary conditions that were prevalent, especially among the lower-class citizens within the Roman Empire.

⁴⁶ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 90–91.

⁴⁷ Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 246–47. Within the Greco-Roman world, many families engaged in the agricultural business. It was generally believed that by teaching their sons to continue the family farming business, the parents would be cared for in their old age.

⁴⁸ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 90.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 90.

Once children reached the age of six, they were expected to receive a formal education, generally arranged or given by the father.⁵⁰ The formal training was strict and viewed as necessary for the child's development to train them to provide for themselves upon adulthood. Society required children to honor their parents.⁵¹ Once the parents reached old age, providing the care that their parents would need was one way the child would honor them.⁵²

Household Enslaved People

Slavery was a common practice in ancient eras. Almost every culture practiced some form of slavery.⁵³ Enslaved people held no legal status and were often referred to as “tools” or “things,” removing their status as humans.⁵⁴ While there were some legal protections for enslaved people and directives from governmental authorities on their treatment, the head of the household had authority over all aspects of the enslaved person's life and, at times, could have the enslaved person put to death. Unlike the enslaved people in the West, enslaved people of the Roman Empire were not exclusively from a single race.⁵⁵ Because the enslaved person often had the same appearance as the Greco-Roman citizen, the Roman senate debated legislation on a standard dress code for the enslaved. However, legislation was ultimately decided against for

⁵⁰ deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*, 188.

⁵¹ deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*, 186; Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 249.

⁵² deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity*, 186–87.

⁵³ Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 221. Most enslaved people within the Roman Empire were from the nations conquered by the Romans. Other forms of slavery prevalent within the Second Temple period were debt slavery, and slavery of children who were exposed by their parents at birth and recovered by enslavers.

⁵⁴ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 72.

⁵⁵ deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 141. Eastern Germanic people were among the most numerous of the enslaved people within the Roman Empire, but enslaved people were brought from all conquered lands.

fear that enslaved people would soon recognize their vast numbers within the Roman Empire, which would ultimately lead them to band together for a rebellion.⁵⁶

There was a wide range of work and responsibilities for enslaved people within the Roman Empire. Depending on education level and skill sets, an enslaved person could be working within the government or doing physical labor in the mines.⁵⁷ The focus of this dissertation is on the household enslaved person.

Generally, households had one or two enslaved people.⁵⁸ Enslaved people also earned some forms of compensation that they could eventually use to purchase their freedom.⁵⁹ Enslaved people could be worked harder and for more extended hours than hired labor, but the enslaved person also needed to be fed, housed, and clothed by the enslaver, leading to more significant expense.⁶⁰

The head of the household held complete authority as enslaver over the enslaved person. While enslaved people were generally treated well to keep them productive, there were abuses within the system. Young women generally suffered at the hands of their enslavers, often being forced to provide sexual pleasure for the enslaver. The enslaver could also legally sell the sexual services of the enslaved person, forcing the enslaved person into prostitution. As the female enslaved person grew older and less desirable, the enslaver could dispose of her as he saw fit.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 72.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁵⁸ Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era*, 222. Only the wealthiest of Roman citizens would own more than two enslaved people.

⁵⁹ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 73. Enslaved people could also earn their freedom through someone purchasing the enslaved person through either the pagan temple or the Jewish synagogue. The enslaved person was then legally seen as redeemed by the temple deity and was recorded into the records as a freeman.

⁶⁰ Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era*, 221–22.

⁶¹ Cohick, *Women in the World of the Earliest Christians*, 215.

Written Household Codes from Philosophers and Early Christianity

The haustafeln of Ephesians and Colossians were not the first or last codes about household structure. One of the primary sources of household codes was Aristotle's *Politics*, which outlines Aristotle's thoughts and ideas on how a society should operate. The following is a brief examination of Aristotle's *Politics* and works from Philo, the household codes found in 1 Clement, and finally, the Didache.

Aristotle

People often study and quote the classic philosopher Aristotle. The Pharisees educated Paul well and would have been familiar with Aristotle's classical teachings. Aristotle's *Politics* would have been the guide to household structure and the roles of the household members used in the Second Temple period.

In *Politics*, Aristotle expounds on the world's natural order. According to Aristotle, humans are part of nature, much like plants and animals.⁶² The natural world has a specific order, with men being the natural head of that order. Women were next on the list, specifically the women of Aristotle's society. Aristotle wrote, "Among the barbarians, however, the female is in the same position as the enslaved person. But that is because there is nothing among the barbarians with the natural capacity to rule, and their community is that of the male and female enslaved people. Therefore, it is reasonable for Greeks to rule barbarians."⁶³ Greek men were to rule over Greek women. Because of their natural superiority, Greek men and women dominated

⁶² *The Politics of Aristotle*, trans. Peter L. Phillips Simpson (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997). Aristotle in *Politics* (1252a24) makes the claim that men and women marry not because they have made a distinct choice, but instead because there is a natural animalistic desire for the reason of procreation. It is this desire and marriage that lead to household formation, and ultimately to nations being formed through the interconnecting of households and villages.

⁶³ Aristotle, *Politics* (1252a34).

and enslaved all non-Greek “barbarians.” The Greeks viewed the barbarian enslaved person as nothing more than a tool made specifically for use as they saw fit.⁶⁴

Aristotle divides the household into three relationship pairings. The most significant pairing is enslaver over enslaved, followed by the husband-and-wife relationship, and finally, the parent-child relationship. Aristotle claims that a man that has mastery of the household will also be able to be trusted with the state’s political and governmental affairs.⁶⁵

The first pairing is that of enslaver and enslaved person. Aristotle reiterates that an enslaved person is a tool, nothing more than a living piece of property, much like a farm animal. The enslaver uses whatever tool or property is at his disposal to flourish his business. The enslaver commands the enslaved person to make the necessary goods to allow the business and the household to survive. The main goal is to procure wealth, which is paramount to acquiring more property. With property acquisition, the Greek male only does what is right by nature. In turn, nature rewards the Greek male by bestowing the blessings of greater wealth. If the Greek enslaver proves efficient in dealing with his property, the government sees fit to entrust him with governmental duties for society to flourish.⁶⁶

The second relationship Aristotle discussed that between the husband and wife. Aristotle wrote that it is natural that men rule over women because men are more fit to lead. For a woman to rule over a man would contradict the world’s natural order. Likewise, the older male is to rule

⁶⁴ Ibid. Aristotle believed that a person could only serve one purpose. For the enslaved person or barbarian, that purpose was the physical labor required for the functioning of Greek society. The barbarian lacked the capacity to govern civilly, so it was the duty of the Greeks to rule over and enslave the barbarians.

⁶⁵ Aristotle, *Politics* (1253b1).

⁶⁶ Aristotle, *Politics* (1254a17, 28; 1254b2, 14, 20, 27, 39) According to Aristotle’s thought, the Greek was naturally superior in intellect and wealth. For a Greek man to be considered for leadership positions within the governing body, he must first prove that he can procure wealth and manage the property under his care. Property, in this case, includes the people within his household: his wife, children, and enslaved people.

over the younger male.⁶⁷ The proper ruling and structure of the household separate humanity from the animal kingdom.⁶⁸ Like the relationship between enslaver and enslaved, the marriage relationship and structure revolved around the acquisition of wealth and adequate management of that wealth. The woman/wife's most significant contribution to society is bearing children.⁶⁹

The third and final pairing is that of the parent and the child. While the husband was to rule over his wife politically as equal free persons, the father ruled over his children as a king ruled over his subjects. Aristotle viewed it as the man's responsibility to educate women and children for a productive and efficient society.⁷⁰ The father can prove his fitness for governmental positions by properly providing for and educating his children. In all, the father's purpose was to ensure that a wealthy and robust society would continue through the next generation of Greek males.

Philo

Where Aristotle is an excellent source of secular philosophical thought on household structure and function, Philo provided the Jewish philosophical position on the household. When discerning Paul's probable thought when he wrote the haustafeln in Colossians and Ephesians, it

⁶⁷ Aristotle, *Politics* (1259a37). In the husband-and-wife relationship, the man rules over the wife, but not in the same way that an enslaver rules over the enslaved person. A Greek wife is a free person, just as the husband is. At the same time, the wife is part of the husband's property. The arrangement of husband and wife should be viewed as a political ruling position of man ruling over woman.

⁶⁸ Aristotle, *Politics* (1259b21; 1260a2). Aristotle instituted his version of what it is to have a soul in this section of *Politics*. There is a difference between the souls of the freeman and the enslaved person. The same is true for men and women. Men have the soul to rule, and while women do have a soul, it is different from that of a man, which is why she is subject to the man's authority.

⁶⁹ Aristotle, *Politics* (1260b8). Aristotle stated that since Greek women are free like Greek men, bearing children is paramount for the longevity of the city and Greek society. The woman must bear the heirs that will continue Greek dominance, and it is these women who bear children who make a significant difference and contribution to society.

⁷⁰ Aristotle, *Politics* (Chapters 10–12). With the three pairs of relationships, Aristotle decreases the amount of focus. The enslaver-to-slave relationship received the most attention, followed by the husband-to-wife relationship. There is only a minor mention of the father-to-child aspect of household management. The father's primary responsibility was to provide food, shelter, discipline and ensure the child received education to be a productive member of society.

is essential to understand what other Jewish philosophers within the Second Temple period were teaching concerning the subject. To compare the haustafeln in Colossians and Ephesians to Jewish philosophical thought, this section examines Philo's *Hypothetica: Apologia Pro Judaeis*.

Like Aristotle, Philo mentions the actions of enslavers over enslaved people as the first relationship for consideration in the household structure. Unlike Aristotle, Philo directs the enslaver to treat the enslaved person like a free person.⁷¹ Mistreating an enslaved person is an insult to the image of God and a dishonor to the family. Philo stated that those who abused enslaved people or engaged in capturing and selling them had committed a capital offense for which death should be the punishment. The difference between Philo's and Aristotle's viewpoints is tremendous. In Aristotle's view, the enslaved person or barbarian is merely a living tool for the enslaver to use as he sees fit. It was a Greek enslaver's duty to impose their dominance over the enslaved person. Alternatively, Philo taught that the Jews needed to respect enslaved people and treat them as free people because God made them in His image.

Philo also addressed the husband-and-wife relationship. The wife is told to be reasonably obedient in all things, but the husband has an obligation as well. While Aristotle taught that the husband needs to provide for the wife/family, Philo wrote that while wives need to serve their husbands, the husband must treat the wife respectfully and not insult them.⁷² The husband is to

⁷¹ *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged* (updated ed.), trans. C. D. Yonge (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993) was utilized for the understanding of Philo's position on the structure and the function of the household. In *Hypothetica: Apologia Pro Judaeis* (7.2) Philo wrote that words and actions harmful to the enslaved person should be treated like the same actions to the free person. To capture a person and lead them into slavery is sinful and an act of impiety. The maltreatment of an enslaved person was equated to stealing and dishonoring parents. For this infraction, Philo stated that the death penalty was just and that the execution should be carried out by stoning.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 7.4. In *Hypothetica*, Philo wrote the wife was to be respected and supported by the husband. She is to be considered sacred, and both husband and wife receive all things in subordination to God. Again, the difference between Philo and Aristotle is astounding. The Greek was directed to acquire wealth, and wealth was the end goal of all endeavors, including household management. For the Jewish people, since everything belongs to God, the proper treatment of all people is emphasized. While wives are still called to obey and submit to the husband, the husband is required to treat the wife with respect as valued and sacred.

do more than provide for the family. Philo instructed that the husband must treat the wife with the utmost respect and care because he is obedient and subservient to God.

Like Aristotle, Philo addressed the parent-child relationship as the third pairing. Similarly, the instruction is relatively short. Parents must provide for their children to preserve and benefit them.⁷³ Children were to honor their parents and avoid bringing disgrace upon the family.

While Aristotle focused on how the household fit within greater society and proper household management was a prerequisite for holding government positions, Philo's household codes were part of a more extraordinary moral teaching. Philo instructed the Jewish readers to live a life that reflected their position as subservient to God. Therefore, the enslaver/husband/parent was to treat all people in the household with respect and dignity since they were all made in God's image.⁷⁴ Failure to adhere to the guidance was akin to impiety, and severe punishment was administered.

1 Clement

The writing of *1 Clement*⁷⁵ provides an early example of Christian writing and references household structure. While the recipients of *1 Clement* were the people of Corinth, the household

⁷³ *The Works of Philo*, 7.4. In *Hypothetica*, Philo used the term "govern" for the first time regarding household relations to refer to the parent-child relationship. Alternatively, Aristotle had instructed men to rule in all the household relations. For the Jewish people, raising the child was a shared responsibility with the goal of preserving not only the family line but also their family's religious traditions and obligations. Children, even when they reach adulthood, are to continue honoring their parents (7.2). To dishonor the parent and family was considered an unpardonable offense.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.1–7.20.

⁷⁵ For this dissertation, the collected works of early church fathers by Philip Schaff, ed., *Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, vol. 1, Ante-Nicene Fathers (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1885) has been examined for its inclusion of the complete work of 1 Clement. Clement wrote to the Christians in Corinth because younger Christians were removing elders and deacons from their positions within the church. This event was causing turmoil and division.

structure found in *1 Clement* helps illuminate how the early church fathers viewed household structure.⁷⁶

Clement initially mentions the husband-wife relationship, breaking from Philo's and Aristotle's formula of mentioning the enslaver-slave relationship at the beginning. The author mentioned that the elders and deacons have faithfully instructed the wives within the congregation to remain pure and to be obedient in all things.⁷⁷ The theme of purity for the household continues in 1 Clement 21. The church leaders and husbands must teach the women to be pure in all aspects of life.⁷⁸ Parents also must teach purity to children and instruct them how to show humility and love the Lord.⁷⁹

Clement followed a different household code style than the other writers. The writings from the secular world and Jewish philosophers and even the *haustafeln* found in the New Testament had a methodological structure to the codes; they expounded on the three different relationships. *1 Clement* primarily focuses on the husband-and-wife pairing. Clement also interweaved purity standards and lists into the discussion of the household relationships, and *1 Clement* notably lacks discourse on the enslaver-enslaved relationship prevalent in the household codes provided by Aristotle and Philo. The interweaving of the lists helps to establish that the purity of the household is paramount, for the Lord will return to His pure temple.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Schaff, *Apostolic Fathers*. In 1 Clement 1:4, Clement calls attention to how the younger generation of men was being taught how to be pure and of sober mind, and how the women were instructed to be blameless by performing their duties of loving and being obedient to their husband and adequately managing the household.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 1 Clement 21. Clement stated that purity is shown by a woman's meekness and how she conducts her speech within the public setting. A woman also shows she is pure and a Christ-follower by her attitude, which should be gentle and loving toward all who follow Christ.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 1 Clement 23. Clement cites proper care of the Lord's temple as the reason for purity. When one keeps a simple mind and a pure heart, the temple is prepared for the arrival of the Lord. The arrival will be swift and sudden, much like how fruit can ripen and go sour, according to the author of 1 Clement.

Didache

The *Didache*, like *1 Clement*, helps facilitate understanding of household codes within the early church period.⁸¹ The themes of unity and purity are prevalent within the *Didache*, specifically in the examination of the roles within the household.⁸² Like Colossians and Ephesians, the *Didache* presents vice and purity lists before addressing relationships within the household.⁸³

The parent-child relationship is first mentioned in Chapter 4 of the *Didache*. Parents have an obligation to teach their children to fear the Lord and follow Christ.⁸⁴ The parent must not withhold from imparting the wisdom of knowing and fearing the Lord to the child.⁸⁵ Discipline of the child must be gentle and loving. Through this guidance, the child will grow to know the love of Jesus Christ.

The love and direction of the parent to the child must also be present in the enslaver-enslaved relationship within the household. The author of the *Didache* wrote that an enslaver should not give commands to a servant out of anger or bitterness, nor should an enslaver strike

⁸¹ The works used for the purpose of this dissertation are the following: Philip Schaff, trans., *The Oldest Church Manual Called the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles: [Didache Ton Dodeka Apostolon]: The Didachè and Kindred Documents in the Original, with Translations*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1885); Shawn J. Wilhite, *The Didache: A Commentary*, vol. 1, Apostolic Fathers Commentary Series (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2019).

⁸² Didache 4. Chapter 4 of the *Didache* focused on promoting peace and unity. The community was being taught to address the Christian community's needs and assist anyone who may need help. The teaching includes being mindful of words and actions. Whether the person being addressed is a child or enslaved, the Christian warned against acting or speaking in a harmful manner.

⁸³ Didache 3–4. In the *Didache*, vice and purity teachings appeared in chapter 3, with household relationships in chapter 4. The author of the *Didache* instructs Christians to turn away from all “evil,” including anything that may represent evil.

⁸⁴ Didache 4:9.

⁸⁵ Didache 3–4:9. Not only are parents instructed to teach their children about the Lord, but parents are also not to withhold provisions from their children. While the instruction to “withhold your hand” does not prohibit corporal punishment, any excessive punishment or abuse is strictly forbidden. Children are to be brought up in the ways of the Lord. According to chapter 3 and the beginning of chapter 4, the love of God and neighbor are to take precedent. Parents are to instill this Christian love into their children by providing an example.

an enslaved person. Likewise, the servant must be obedient to the enslaver just as they should be obedient to God.⁸⁶ Enslavers are to talk to their servants and act in a way that will benefit the spiritual formation of the servant.⁸⁷

Just as *I Clement* had a distinct absence of the enslaver-enslaved relationship, the *Didache* lacks a specific reference to the husband-wife relationship. The author of the *Didache* wrote as a reminder that regardless of appearance and condition, the Spirit comes to all who accept Christ.⁸⁸ Both men and women are equally called into Christ and receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The husband, wife, parent, child, and servant are to ensure that their actions and words honor Jesus Christ.⁸⁹

Household Codes from Other New Testament Letters

Colossians and Ephesians are not the only places where the haustafeln are found within the New Testament. 1 Peter 2:18–3:7, 1 Timothy 3:1–8 and 6:1–2, and Titus 2:1–10 contain other haustafeln teachings. Each is focused on a different challenge than those Peter and Paul addressed within separate Christian communities. Yet, each also employs haustafeln to unite the Christian community. Since this dissertation focuses on the purity lists and haustafeln of Colossians and Ephesians, this section contains only a brief background of the three other New Testament examples of the haustafeln.

⁸⁶ Didache 4:10.

⁸⁷ Didache 4:10–11. The teaching is reminiscent of Eph. 4:31 and Rom. 3:14 in that the enslaver in this situation must ensure the language they use is reflective of their Christianity. Not only must the enslaver watch their tongue, but they must also be able to control their anger. The enslaver can lead the servant(s) into spiritual harm if the enslaver speaks in a manner that hinders the wisdom of the Lord. Anger and harsh words used by the enslaver can lead to a barrier for the servant to know and follow Christ. This same teaching also applied to the parent-child relationship.

⁸⁸ Didache 4:10.

⁸⁹ Didache 4. The Holy Spirit is available to all people since all people are made in the image of God. Regardless of gender, social status, and age, each person who accepts Christ receives the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Each is also called to follow the purity lists and avoid the sins of the vice list. By watching their actions and words, Christians will live a life that will not hinder the spiritual growth of others inside the Christian community.

1 Peter

The epistle of 1 Peter was written to a Christian community facing persecution.⁹⁰ The recipients, like the Colossians and Ephesians, were from Asia Minor.⁹¹ The hostility that the Christian community was facing from the local population and authorities was causing the Christians to experience a high level of uncertainty and discomfort, or suffering, that they were unsure how to address as Christians.⁹² Because of this persecution and suffering, Peter presented a form of the *haustafeln* in verses 2:18–3:7. Peter follows a formula similar to Aristotle and Philo by addressing the enslaver-enslaved relationship first, followed by the husband-wife relationship. However, there is a stark difference between 1 Peter and *Politics* and *Hypothetica: Apologia Pro Judaeis*. Peter first addressed the enslaved person/servant directly instead of the enslaver.⁹³ Also, absent from 1 Peter is a reference to the parent-child relationship within the household.

Peter wrote that servants must be obedient and submissive to their enslaver, even if the enslaver acts unjustly. Even if the servant were mistreated, God would receive the servant well

⁹⁰ Craig S. Keener, *1 Peter: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2021), 42–44. How one approaches the authorship and date of 1 Peter affects the severity of the persecution that the Christian community faced at that time. While martyrdom may not have been likely at this point, it can be deduced that Christianity was illegal within the Roman Empire. Thus, practicing Christians found themselves facing hardships within their community. Much of the persecution would have been visible as hostility from the local population and authorities, and Christians often faced legal challenges. The legal challenges often came from the Christian not participating in civic cults and worship or having withdrawn from Roman customs and society.

⁹¹ Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*, 21–22. Elliott stated that the tone and style of the letter reveals the possibility that the letter was to circulate within four or five of the Roman-held provinces located in Asia Minor.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 167–69. Elliott concluded that even though the language used throughout the New Testament and 1 Peter specifically lends to the imagery of a temple or temple building when it comes to the formation of the Christian community and the household, the *haustafeln* in 1 Peter should not be understood with the majority literary imagery found in the similar New Testament writings. Instead, the *haustafeln* is understood as separate from the temple imagery and rendered merely as the household of human institutions.

⁹³ Keener, *1 Peter*, 133–35. Keener concluded that because the enslaved/servant was addressed first, the audience of 1 Peter must have mainly been enslaved people or people from the lower classes that would perform servant duties. Yet, the audience was urban household enslaved people and not enslaved people from the more dangerous and abused occupations away from the household. These household enslaved people, although treated better than other enslaved people, still faced abuses.

for acting graciously and doing what is good. All are to serve God, and Christ endured suffering for everyone, including the servant. Absent from Peter's *haustafeln* is an appeal to the enslaver.

Peter addressed wives next with the same teaching on submission. The qualifier "in the same way" connects this teaching on submission to the previous section on how the servant is to live in obedience and submission to the enslaver.⁹⁴ Unlike Aristotle and Philo, Peter addressed women directly, giving them the position of being agents of spreading Christianity.⁹⁵ While 1 Peter 3:1–6 is addressed to the wife, the husband is given his only instruction in verse 7. Peter instructed the husband to understand that the wife is weaker, but husbands need to honor their wives in a way that reflects that women also share in the inheritance of God.⁹⁶

1 Timothy

Paul wrote 1 Timothy to help guide the church leader in Ephesus, Timothy, when false teachers had emerged, causing a lack of unity in the Christian community.⁹⁷ In the *haustafeln* found in 1 Timothy, Paul explained how the households of the prospective church leaders needed to be for the person to be qualified for a leadership role. The husband-wife and parent-child relationships were the focus of the instruction. Each relationship gets a brief address from Paul (3:1–8; 6:1–2), unlike the extensive teaching in Colossians and Ephesians.

⁹⁴ Keener, *1 Peter*, 248–49, Keener put forth that Peter explained that Christians need to obey authority, and even though these relationships are human institutions, the Christian has the opportunity to present the gospel for the community. The husband-wife relationship is one of the human institutions consisting of an authoritative hierarchy, and it is the wife's duty to adhere to the established system.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 247.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 268. Unlike Colossians and Ephesians, 1 Peter instructs men to honor their wives and not necessarily to live in mutual submission. The omission of mutual submission should not be a surprise since Peter has consistently addressed the function of human institution and hierarchy throughout the letter. While Paul was teaching about a universal unity for the Christian community, Peter focused on providing the structure that would help the Christian cope with the suffering from persecution by adhering to the expectations surrounding human institutions within their local community.

⁹⁷ Aida Besancon Spencer, *1 Timothy: A New Covenant Commentary* (Havertown, UK: The Lutterworth Press, 2014), 18. Paul's purpose for the letter to Timothy was to promote sound doctrine to be taught to the church of Ephesus.

In 1 Timothy 3:1–8, Paul set the qualifications for men to be considered for leadership positions within the church. Part of the appeal is that the man must control his household well, for if the man does not run his household well, he will likewise not be able to keep the church running well. If the church leader’s house is embroiled in scandal, it can be expected that this scandal will overflow into the church.⁹⁸ If the prospective leader is uncaring toward his wife or household, this uncaring attitude will also manifest within the church community.⁹⁹ The leader must also be able to demonstrate that he can lead spiritually. If his children are unruly and fail to adhere to Christian teaching, the prospective leader cannot nurture his church into a spiritual relationship with Christ.¹⁰⁰ After teaching Timothy what to look for in a qualified leader, Paul focused on how the leader’s wife should act. The women needed to be highly respected and not gossip.¹⁰¹

It is not until verses 6:1–2 that Paul addressed the enslaver-servant relationship, presenting a significant break between sections of the haustafeln. The focus is entirely on how the servant should act toward the enslaver.¹⁰² The servant is to give the enslaver all honor and

⁹⁸ Lee Gatiss and Bradley G. Green, *1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2019), 161.

⁹⁹ Spencer, *1 Timothy*, 100. The key to the qualification list is self-control. If the prospective leader lacks self-control, they will bring hardship, scandal, or other calamities upon the church community. A properly run household reveals the quality of its leadership.

¹⁰⁰ Max Anders and Knute Larson, *1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon* Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2000), 182.

¹⁰¹ Spencer, *1 Timothy*, 185–86. There is a discussion on whether this was a call specifically for the wives of male deacons or if this was for the qualification for women to become deacons. Regardless of the intention, significant damage can be done if gossip or malicious talk occurs in the church community. Women were reminded that their reputation was also a key contributor to the church’s stability. Like the prospective male leader, women too had to be aware of their actions and words. They had to act in an honorable and respectable way in all situations.

¹⁰² In *Politics*, Aristotle only addressed the enslaver in the enslaver-enslaved relationship. In 1 Timothy, Paul addressed only the servant. Paul’s opposite approach to the normal formula for addressing this relationship would not have gone unnoticed.

respect due to them based on the authority they hold.¹⁰³ By respecting their enslaver, the enslaved person would be actively resisting evil.¹⁰⁴ In all, the servant was to do good works reflective of being a Christian for the benefit of all believers to help strengthen the unity of the universal Christian family and the immediate family.

Titus

In the letter to Titus, Paul addressed teaching sound doctrine to the church in Crete.¹⁰⁵ The letter is short and direct. Much of what was discussed in reference to 1 Timothy also applies to Titus. Yet, despite the letter's brevity, the *haustafeln* has a continuous flow and occupies a significant portion of the teaching. Another notable feature is that the vice/virtue list is part of the structure of the *haustafeln*. Likewise, the *haustafeln* addresses the three relationships simultaneously using the overall theme of teaching sound doctrine and living morally as Christians.

First, men are the teachers of sound doctrine regarding all aspects of the three relationships. To do this, Paul instructed that the older men must display the virtues of being a Christian.¹⁰⁶ Older men are specifically addressed, which is of little surprise since the oldest man

¹⁰³ Anders and Larson, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 232–33. Paul introduced a new perspective to the enslaver-enslaved relationship in 1 Timothy. In this instance, enslaved people are taught that if they have an enslaver who believes in Christ, the enslaved person must still show respect and honor the enslaver as the enslaver even though they are equals in the eyes of Christ. Even if the enslaved person has accepted Christ and has a Christian enslaver, Paul does not free the enslaved person from servitude.

¹⁰⁴ Spencer, *1 Timothy*, 143.

¹⁰⁵ Ben Witherington III, *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 86. The population of Crete had a high concentration of Jewish people. While Paul was addressing similar issues that faced the church at Ephesus in the letter of 1 Timothy, it needs to be considered the extensive contact that Christians would have with Jews in Crete compared to more contact with Gentiles in Ephesus.

¹⁰⁶ George T. Montague, Peter Williamson, and Mary Healy, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 228–30. Even though the surrounding cultures participated in the vices that hindered Christian living, the same cultures would judge Christians harshly for participating in the same vices. Paul was urging the church in Crete to behave in a way that would demonstrate the gospel. The nature of the gospel is not merely intellectual. It is structure changing even in the

was considered the head of the household.¹⁰⁷ The older men were instructed to stay sober to impart wisdom to other Christians.¹⁰⁸ Men were to be of good faith, show their family love, and be steadfast in proper words and actions.

Paul focused on the older Christian women after initially addressing the older men. The older women taught younger women proper household management and relationships.¹⁰⁹ Paul highlights the virtues of purity, submission, and self-control as the proper actions for Christian women. As in 1 Timothy, women are instructed not to gossip or spread lies.¹¹⁰ Instruction to younger men is included in the section addressed to the older women, who teach younger men how to have self-control.

Finally, Titus 2:9–10 briefly addresses the servant. Again, self-control is the inherent teaching. Servants must be submissive to their enslaver and not act inappropriately or argue with the enslaver.¹¹¹ By being submissive and using proper language, the enslaved person lives within the sound doctrine of God.

household relationships. By listening to false teachers and not adhering to sound Christian doctrine and morals, Christians live in the secular world's style.

¹⁰⁷ Witherington, *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, 129–30. For Witherington, the style in which Paul presented the household order in Titus was based on the way the surrounding Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures portrayed households. Paul merely interposes the word “Christ” to the outside cultures’ lists and ideals to make them appear to be Christian teachings.

¹⁰⁸ Montague, Williamson, and Healy, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 230–31. The oldest man needs to stay sober since he is the natural leader of the household and the church. It should be noted that the oldest men were not being told that they could not partake in wine, but they were to stay sober of mind so they could effectively and efficiently run the affairs of the household and the church. This instruction ties into the greater teaching of exhibiting self-control.

¹⁰⁹ Witherington, *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, 131–32. It is interesting that Paul specifically instructed the older women to teach younger women when the directive to older men is broader and lacks a specific address to teach the younger men how to live a life of morals and avoid vices.

¹¹⁰ Montague, Williamson, and Healy, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 231. Montague et al. conclude that the traits of proper speech and household management would have come naturally for older women by virtue of their age and life experience. It was the duty of the older women to guide the younger women in these aspects. The goal was for the household to be pure and express proper worship to the Lord as part of the temple.

¹¹¹ Witherington, *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, 141. Unlike the secular writers, Paul directly addressed the enslaved people/servants instead of instructing enslavers to provide his instruction to their enslaved people. The

The Redefinition of the Family

While Jesus was teaching a crowd, his mother and brothers approached. Their arrival brought forth an exciting moment and teaching provided by Jesus. When someone in the crowd drew attention to the fact that Mary and the brothers of Jesus were there, Jesus' response was unexpected. Jesus acknowledged the disciples and explained that because the disciples do the will of God the Father, they are the family members of Jesus (Matt. 12:46–50).

With this acknowledgment, Jesus introduced a new formation of the family unit.¹¹² However, this does not mean that Jesus failed to acknowledge his birth mother and the other sons that she had after the birth of Jesus.¹¹³ There is the indecision of Mary and her other sons in the extent of ministry of Jesus and his divine status. In essence, they had not fully grasped the sonship of Jesus with God the Father. The fact that the mother and brothers of Jesus were listed as “outside” of the area in which Jesus was teaching lends credence to the position that they did not fully understand the position of Jesus. Being outside gives the impression that they were merely half-heartedly following Jesus. Bruner concludes that Matthew took a softer stance than Mark, who stated that the family of Jesus thought he was insane (Mark 3:21, 3:31). To Mary and the other brothers, Jesus was not their Lord. He was a family member who needed to be cared for and not followed.¹¹⁴ Their initial indecision allowed Jesus to explain that the family of God is

direct address of the enslaved person places on the enslaved an equal responsibility to make moral decisions. In writings such as Aristotle's *Politics*, the enslaved person is portrayed and understood as lacking the cognitive ability to make morally and correct decisions.

¹¹² Anna Case-Winters, *Matthew: A Theological Commentary on the Bible* (Louisville, KY: Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 2015), 172.

¹¹³ St. Hilary of Poitiers and D. H. Williams, *Commentary on Matthew* (Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 151–52. Christ established that it is not just being born into a household that makes a person a member of a family. Instead, since Christ is the Son of God the Father, all who follow God and do His will belong to God the Father. They become family members of Jesus, his actual siblings.

¹¹⁴ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), 202–204.

much larger than the individual family.¹¹⁵ With this proclamation, Jesus stated there is a new family. The person who does the will of God and believes in Christ comes into the family of God the Father under the headship of Jesus Christ.¹¹⁶ The disciples were described as brothers to Jesus, implying a relationship deeper than religious affiliation. They are now considered family members,¹¹⁷ with all the responsibility being family entails.¹¹⁸

Since the disciples are in communion with Christ, their inheritance involves all the rights associated with the kingdom of God.¹¹⁹ Paul explained in 1 Corinthians 15:23–28 that since the disciples belong to Jesus Christ in the universal Christian family, once Christ triumphantly returns, the disciples belong under his headship, properly subjected to Him, and the kingdom of God will be delivered. Paul further developed the new family's identity by elaborating on the new creation being reconciled to Jesus Christ in 2 Corinthians 5:17–19. With Jesus as the head of the universal Christian family, the believer becomes a new person because of Christ. In the creation account in Genesis 2:21–24, Eve's creation from Adam's rib placed Adam into a deep sleep. Likewise, the Romans placed Jesus Christ on the cross; He died and then was resurrected.

¹¹⁵ St. Hilary of Poitiers and Williams, *Commentary on Matthew*, 152. There is thought that this teaching needs to be understood as symbolic. Figuratively, the image of the mother and brothers of Jesus being on the outside reflects the Israelites rejecting the teaching of God. Jesus first came to the Israelites, His people, and they did not recognize Him for who He is, the Son of God. The mother and brothers of Jesus represent the religious Israelites who heard Jesus yet failed to approach or enter. While this is an interesting portrayal of the event, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the teaching of Paul regarding adoption into the family of God, a literal interpretation also can be rendered.

¹¹⁶ Bruner, *Matthew*, 205. Jesus intentionally mentioned that all who believe are his mother, brothers, and sisters, yet did not mention father as part of the human family. There is only one father for Jesus Christ, and that is God the Father.

¹¹⁷ D. A. Carson, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelain (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 300. D.A. Carson concluded that Matt. 12:46–50 marks the point in time the formal establishment of the Christian community takes place. The Christian community, or the universal Christian family, has begun to form around Jesus Christ.

¹¹⁸ Case-Winters, *Matthew*, 172. Or as Case-Winters called it, “finding our true family.” Christians are bound together as a family because of their faith in Jesus Christ.

¹¹⁹ St. Hilary of Poitiers and Williams, *Commentary on Matthew*, 152.

Adam and Eve bonded in marriage as one flesh. The believer is bound to Jesus in the same manner as a new creation under the headship of Jesus Christ. Paul understood the significance of the marriage between Christ and the believer and the believer's betrothal to Christ (2 Cor. 11:2). In Ephesians 5:22–33, Paul provides greater detail on the union of all believers to Christ as the ultimate head of the Christian family, with all within the universal Christian family taking the role of the bride of Christ.

Not only did Jesus establish the universal Christian family, but He also connected all believers into one dynamic household under his authority. The Gospel of Matthew reflects this expanded view of the household. In his review of how Matthew portrayed the household after he followed Jesus, Crosby stated:

The persons connected to “house” in Matthew’s gospel consist of a large group ranging from kinfolk and visitors to heirs and business associates. Resources include almost as many variations, ranging from possessions and provision bags to grain and vineyards. The largest number of words reveal relationships, dynamics, and activities that revolved around the household.¹²⁰

The universal Christian family’s duties as part of the household is evident in the theme of sharing resources. Sharing resources is necessary for providing for the family’s security and is directly addressed throughout the New Testament. Paul highlighted this theme in Ephesians 4:28, Hebrews 13:16, Romans 12:13, and Philippians 2:3–4. John also addressed the responsibility of being within the universal Christian and immediate family of Christ in 1 John 3:16–18. The first movement of Christians united as the universal family appears in Acts 2:45–46. Withholding resources was a serious offense akin to denying faith (1 Tim. 5:8).

¹²⁰ Michael Hugh Crosby, “The Matthean House Church and Political Economy: Implications for Ethics and Spirituality Then and Now” (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1989), 99.

In addition to sharing resources, Jesus called his disciples to leave behind everything, including their birth households, to follow Him and join the new household (Luke 14:25–27). The calling is to submit to authority of Jesus Christ as the ultimate head of the new household.¹²¹ Paul described likened the universal Christian family to the immediate family under the authority of Jesus Christ in Ephesians 1:19–23 and 2:11–22.

The language used by Jesus in Matthew 12:46–50 set the stage for the redefining of the idea of family in the Second Temple era without using traditional bloodlines.¹²² The new rendition of the family is for all who believe in Christ. Even though the message of Christ came forth to the Israelites first, the universal Christian family would grow to include people from all ethnic backgrounds. While Jesus in no way was abandoning His brothers and Mary, since He revealed the will of God the Father, Jesus was establishing the community that would be obedient to Him.¹²³ The community bound to Jesus Christ moved the universal Christian family into the structure of the immediate family under the direct headship of Jesus Christ. Paul highlighted the new creation of the family unit as coming directly from Christ in Ephesians 5:29–31. Believers are members of Christ’s body, flesh, and bones. The believer enters into the family of God through unification to Christ, just like Eve was bound to Adam through her creation in Genesis 2:21–24. Believers are the new creation made of the same human flesh and

¹²¹ Crosby, “The Matthean House Church,” 101.

¹²² Herbert Bassler, *Mind behind the Gospels: A Commentary to Matthew 1-14* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2009). 310-311. According to Bassler, the language Jesus used not only is for the disowning of the immediate family, but it also separated the past from the future, and the Jews from the Gentiles. No longer is there a difference among ethnicities; all who believe in Christ are part of the new universal Christian family.

¹²³ Kenneth L. Barker and John R. Kohlenberger III, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary - Abridged Edition: New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2004), 64. Barker and Kohlenberger stated that while believers do not become close relatives, or “blood relatives,” of Jesus Christ, they can now identify as part of the family of Jesus. The identification as being part of the family of Jesus is manifested by obedience to Christ and doing the will of God the Father.

bone of Christ, becoming His own flesh body.¹²⁴ Paul claims that the husband and wife are one flesh,¹²⁵ Jesus Christ is the new Adam/husband, and all who believe in Him are the new Eve/wife.¹²⁶ Through this unique union, believers are brought into the household of God as family members created in Christ.

Concluding Thoughts

In the Second Temple period, the family unit was the foundation of society and everyday life. How one acted was reflective of their upbringing and affected the family honor. For survivability, the structure was essential. Society had dictated that the oldest male was the authority within the household, and legally the oldest male held the status within the courts of law. There were differences between Jewish society and the greater Greco-Roman society. Jewish women tended to hold more power within their households than Greco-Roman women. Rules governing the treatment of enslaved people varied as well. The importance of the family unit was essential to the point that Augustus declared himself, and the majority of the Roman Empire received him as *paterfamilias* of the families under his rule.

Leaders and philosophers published household structure codes to keep society functioning efficiently. The cultures of the Second Temple period in the Roman Empire all had variations of these codes. The Romans widely circulated Aristotle's *Politics*; the well-educated leaders within the Empire understood it, and families received basic instruction from it. The Jewish culture read Philo's *Hypothetica: Apologia Pro Judaeis*, like Aristotle's *Politics*. Paul was aware of and influenced by both previously mentioned writings. There are differences in

¹²⁴ John Paul Heil, *Ephesians: Empowerment to Walk in Love*, 251–52.

¹²⁵ Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 540–41.

¹²⁶ Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 550–51.

structure and style among the New Testament haustafeln, including the haustafeln produced by Peter. Generally, within the Pauline haustafeln, everyone was treated as equals under Christ. Secular philosophers never put the enslaved person on equal footing with the enslaver.

Religion and family played a significant role in everyday life within the Second Temple era. It was common for entire households to follow the same deity. Pilgrimages to temples would have been a common occurrence, and each city generally had at least one temple for worshipping the city's or nation's ruling deity. The house was the central place for Christian teaching and worship. Christ had established that He was the head of the new creation household with all believers as his bride, thereby creating the universal Christian family.

Chapter 3: The New Temple: The Ascension of Jesus Christ and the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

When Jesus came to Earth and later ascended into Heaven, everything under creation significantly changed. The disciples were considered family under the headship of Christ and, ultimately, God the Father. The Holy Spirit also came to the disciples while they were gathered like a family under the roof of one house. Jesus became the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit and then transferred the temple to all Christians. This chapter discusses the transformation of the temple, starting with an overview of how the Gospels portrayed Jesus as the new temple. John 2:13–22, Matthew 21:12–17, Mark 11:15–19, and Luke 19:45–48 receive special attention concerning the clearing/cleansing of the temple¹ and Christ claiming to raise the temple in three days (John 2:19). The Gospel of John 17:20–23 also teaches that the Holy Spirit dwells within believers. Moving on from the Gospels, the author explores the events of the ascension and Pentecost, as presented in Acts. After the ascension of Christ, the arrival of the Holy Spirit to dwell in the New Covenant of believers is an event of significance. Christ fulfilled his promise to send the Holy Spirit to dwell within all who believe and follow Him. The Holy Spirit filled the house that the disciples were occupying, completing the process of transferring the new temple to the believer. 1 Corinthians 6:19 teaches on the believer being the temple. The believer must keep the temple pure to function appropriately within the universal Christian family. Since a Christian is “not [their] own” (1 Cor. 6:19), the Christian needs to understand how to relate to the universal Christian family as the new temple and dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

¹ The Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John present a different timeline for the cleansing of the temple by Jesus. The Gospel of John describes the incident early in the ministry of Jesus. The Synoptics place the account at the end of the ministry. Many scholars believe that there was only one cleansing event, and for this dissertation, it is discussed as a single event. The exact timing of the event does not impact the thesis of this dissertation.

Jesus as the New Temple

Some instances within the Gospels describe Jesus as the temple dwelling of the Spirit designated by God the Father. The cleansing of the Jerusalem temple, found in all four Gospels, is of particular interest for this dissertation. The temple cleansing encounter depicted within the Gospels emphasizes the need to keep the temple pure.

During the Second Temple period, the temple authorities provided animals for purchase because pilgrims arrived from long distances and could not bring the required sacrificial animals on the journey. Money changers were needed since the temple used its own currency, not Roman or Greek coins. The consumer paid the required temple tax upon using the money changer.² Jesus' departure from the temple after the incident is symbolic of the presence of God leaving the temple of Jerusalem.³ Jesus described the presence of God leaving the temple when He stated that neither Jerusalem nor Mount Gerizim would be the place to worship (John 4:21).⁴

Both the Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John explain that the Holy Spirit had a role in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Since the Spirit had a role in the Word becoming flesh, the Spirit had left the temple of Jerusalem and dwelt within Jesus. Further evidence that Jesus and the disciples knew that Jesus was the new temple comes in the Great Commission. In an extensive study on the new temple in *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, G. K. Beale explains how Matthew structured his gospel message

² Carson, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 441. The money changers and animals were not the problem. The location of the vendors is what caused the issue. The vendors were located inside the temple, in the courtyard of the Gentiles. The location of the braying animals and the typical commotion and noise that would arise from the money changers' transactions would have been a nuisance for the people who were required to worship in the courtyard of the Gentiles. The location for worship had now been effectively turned into a commercial center.

³ Peterson, *John's Use of Ezekiel*, 109. Petersen explained that the cleansing event and Jesus' departure from the temple reflected Yahweh left the first temple because of desecration. Even though Jesus had cleansed the temple, the impurities within the hearts of the religious leaders and the Israelites had sealed the fate of the second temple.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 116.

to reflect Chronicles' beginning and ending.⁵ Furthermore, since Jesus claimed the authority to forgive sin (Luke 7:49–50), He had already begun replacing the temple while performing his ministry.⁶ Jesus also was aware that He was the new temple and had self-identified as such (Matt. 12:6).⁷

After the temple was transferred from a building structure to the individual believer and Jesus established Himself as the head of the new creation's immediate family and universal Christian family, the need for purity remains. Paul gave instructions on keeping the new temple pure in Colossians 3:1–17 and Ephesians 5:1–21; these passages are explored in the next chapter.

The Synoptic Gospels Account of the Temple Cleansing Action

The Synoptics' accounts of the cleansing of the temple appear within sections focusing on Israel's coming judgment.⁸ The Synoptic Gospels vary slightly in their accounts of the temple cleansing, with each focusing on a different aspect of the role of Christ the Messiah.⁹

⁵ Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 177.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 176–77.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 178–80; Coloe, *God Dwells with Us*, 136–37. As Beale stated, Jesus is more significant than all previous prophets and kings that God had anointed before the incarnation. Likewise, Jesus is greater than the temple building. God's presence was now dwelling within Jesus and not residing within the temple building. Jesus was not only to be identified as the temple through his ultimate sacrifice and resurrection, but Jesus was the only place on Earth where God's glorious presence was located. Coloe explains that Jesus' knowledge that He was the proper dwelling place of the Spirit was the basis of the "I Am" statements. The Pharisees rejected these statements to the point that they did not follow the legal requirements of the nation of Israel. The Pharisees were to provide witnesses that Jesus was guilty of blasphemy, yet the Pharisees called upon Jesus to provide witnesses to testify on His behalf.

⁸ Diane G. Chen, *Luke: A New Covenant Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 257–59. Before and after the temple cleansing, Jesus brought forth charges of the shortcomings of the Israelites and the religious leaders. Between the charges is the prophecy of the coming destruction. Israel had once again been disobedient. Because of the continued disobedience, the city of Jerusalem, including the temple, would be destroyed with no stone left on top of another. The religious leaders had fallen into corruption by allowing commercial transactions to take place in an area dedicated to the worship of Yahweh.

⁹ Chanikuzhy, *Jesus, the Eschatological Temple*, 106–120. Chanikuzhy details the different perspectives of Jesus Christ within the three Synoptic accounts of the temple cleansing. In Mark, the Israelites believe that Jesus has come to restore the line of David to the throne. The reestablishment of the Davidic kingdom was widely expected for the coming Messiah. However, Jesus came to the temple, looked around, and left for Bethany. The following day, Jesus returned to perform the cleansing. The Gospel of Matthew portrayed Jesus as the coming king, prophet, and Messiah. There is a focus from Matthew on the reception of Jesus by children and Jesus healing the lame. Luke

The action of Jesus should not be overblown and taken as a revolutionary or even a reforming act.¹⁰ Since neither the captain of the guard for the temple nor the close-by Roman garrison intervened, it can be deduced that Jesus was not attempting to take over the temple.¹¹ The action is tied closely to the prophetic teaching of Jesus that the temple would be destroyed and that Gentiles would worship God. Jesus asserted that there would be a new temple and that He was the “stone” the builders had rejected. The action in the temple and the teaching encompass that Jesus is the ultimate replacement for the temple.¹²

Luke 19:45–20:8

Luke gave a short rendering of the temple cleansing performed by Jesus. Jesus arrived at the temple, drove out those who sold pigeons, and proclaimed that his house was a house of prayer turned into a den of robbers. Jesus’ proclamation comes from Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11. The temple authorities and the people of Israel had transformed the temple from a place of

omitted the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, focusing on the journey before His entrance to Jerusalem and Jesus weeping over the city, much like the prophets of the Old Testament.

¹⁰ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, vol. 33B, World Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1995), 600; Jeannine K. Brown, *Matthew*, Teach the Text Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2015), 245; Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Mark: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 266–78. Hagner and Schnabel agree that the action of Jesus overturning tables and chairs while expelling the money changers and merchants from the temple would have been disruptive, it was done in a nonviolent and nonthreatening way. The nonviolence is evident in that security forces did not attempt to intervene. Brown disagreed to an extent. While the actions of Jesus were nonviolent, the people who witnessed the actions would have interpreted the temple incident as a production of the revolutionary position of the expected Messiah. It is precisely this type of action that made Jesus a threat to Rome and one of the reasons Jesus was able to be crucified.

¹¹ Darrell L. Bock and Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of Luke and Acts: God’s Promised Program, Realized for All Nations* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2012), 77. The action of Jesus forced the temple authorities to act and question the authority of Jesus since Jesus had entered the sacred temple and acted as expected for the Messiah. The religious leaders mistakenly believed it was they who would provide authority to the coming Messiah, a notion that Jesus promptly rejected with the explanation of receiving the Spirit through the baptism provided by John. While the religious authorities refused to answer the challenge of Jesus, so Jesus did. Likewise, the point was clear. Jesus received the Spirit from God the Father. Jesus’ constant communion with God the Father through the indwelling of the Spirit provided Jesus with authority.

¹² Schnabel, *Mark*, 266–78.

proper worship into a center for commerce.¹³ Before Jesus could teach at the temple, He first needed to reclaim the temple as a sacred place of worship.¹⁴ The action of driving out the merchants and the teaching ministry angered the chief priests and scribes to the point that they sought to destroy Jesus. Still, the leaders and scribes could not act at that time due to the crowd of people listening intently to Jesus preach (Luke 19:47–48).

During one of Jesus' teaching sessions at the temple, the chief priests and scribes approached Jesus to question Him on where He had received the authority to preach the Word of God. Jesus responded with a question concerning the authority of John the Baptist. By asking if John had the authority to baptize because he received the authority from Heaven or was the authority because humans had given him that authority, Jesus had put the temple leaders into a difficult position (Luke 20:3–6).¹⁵ If the chief priests and scribes acknowledged that John the Baptist had received his authority to baptize from Heaven, they would be legitimizing the baptism that Jesus received. By denying that John the Baptist had authority from Heaven as a prophet, they would risk blasphemy charges and face the punishment of death by stoning (Luke 20:5–6). While Jesus refused to provide an answer to the original question since the religious leaders would not answer his challenge, Luke had made it clear that Jesus understood that during

¹³ John T. Carroll, *Luke* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 387–91. Carroll concluded that the corruption in the temple was put in place by the temple custodians to increase their overall power among the Israelites. The way for the temple authorities to gain power over the people was to engage in exploitive business practices by providing the necessary elements to the Israelites to worship and provide the required sacrifice to God for a cost that included having to use specific currency obtainable at the temple.

¹⁴ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997), 556; Carroll, *Luke*, 387. After Jesus reclaimed the temple, the temple became an important center for His teaching ministry. While Luke does not give specifics as to what Jesus taught, the temple leaders became angered and would question where Jesus had received the authority to act and teach in that manner.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 561. The question of authority posed a problem for the religious leaders since they had received their authority through Roman connections. During the Roman occupation, the position of the chief priest was no longer given in the manner prescribed within the Old Testament. Instead, the position was political and often given to the highest bidder. The priests and scribes only had what authority men had given to them.

His baptism from John the Baptist, He had received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It was because the Spirit was dwelling in Jesus Christ, and not the temple building,¹⁶ that Jesus had received the authority from his Father to cleanse the temple and preach the Word of God.¹⁷

Mark 11:15–19

In the account of the temple cleansing action in Mark, Jesus enters the temple and drives out the sellers by overturning the table of the money changers and the chairs of the merchants who sold sacrificial pigeons (Mark 11:15). Mark also explains that Jesus did not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple, effectively shutting down temple activity.¹⁸ Matthew's and Luke's accounts focus upon the corruption of the temple authorities. Mark presents Jesus' actions as preventing even the people who came to worship properly from carrying their offerings into the temple.¹⁹ At the time of the cleansing, Jesus provided teaching on the proper use of the temple as a house of prayer, but it had been turned into a den of thieves. The actions of Jesus within the temple were prophetic. Soon, the temple building was permanently destroyed.²⁰

Mark's account of the reaction of the temple authorities after the cleansing differs from the accounts in the other Gospels. While the chief priests and scribes still sought to eliminate Jesus, Mark notes that the religious leaders were afraid of Jesus because the crowd was

¹⁶ In *Jerusalem, the Temple, and the New Age in Luke-Acts*, Chance acknowledges that the Spirit does reside within Jesus Christ, but Luke was not portraying Jesus as the cornerstone of the temple. Instead, the focus should be on Jesus as the stone and temple as a metaphor for the rejection of Jesus Christ as the exalted Lord of salvation. While this position has merit, the remainder of New Testament Scripture lends credence to the position of Jesus as the new temple and not a metaphor describing salvation.

¹⁷ Carroll, *Luke*, 390–91.

¹⁸ Schnabel, *Mark*. 266; Gray, *The Temple in the Gospel of Mark*, 25–26. Expelling the merchants and forbidding anything from being carried in the temple effectively shut down functions within the temple. With no sacrificial animals to be purchased or brought into the temple, the Israelites could not provide the sacrificial offering.

¹⁹ Gray, *The Temple in the Gospel of Mark*, 28.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

astonished by His teachings (Mark 11:18).²¹ Absent from the account of Mark is the question of authority posed by the chief priests and scribes.

Matthew 21:12–17

The key to understanding the temple cleansing in Matthew 21:12–17 is found in Matthew 12:6, where Jesus proclaims, “Something greater than the temple is here,” and in Matthew 12:13, where He declares, “My house shall be called a house of prayer.” Before the cleansing, Jesus had already taught that the Spirit was residing within Him and that He was doing the will of God the Father. Because the Spirit was in Jesus, He is greater than the temple built by man’s hands.²²

Matthew’s account of the temple cleansing closely resembles the account written by Mark.²³ Jesus entered the temple and drove out the sellers and buyers while overturning the money changers’ tables and the pigeon sellers’ chairs. The activities at the change tables prevented the proper use of the temple by the “outsiders,” such as foreigners and women, by interfering with their ability to pray and worship God. Likewise, Matthew records the same charges leveled by Jesus to all in the temple about His house being for prayer but is turning into a den of thieves (Matt. 21:12–13). Matthew breaks from the account of Mark by expressing that the blind and lame had come to the temple to see Jesus, and Jesus healed them.²⁴ Because of these healings, the lame and the children rejoicing at the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem before the

²¹ Schnabel, *Mark*, 273–74. Schnabel explained that even though the chief priests were political appointees, they, along with the scribes, would have understood what Jesus was teaching the crowd. The prophetic teaching would have been a threat to the status quo and the priests’ and scribes’ power over the population.

²² Hays, *The Temple and the Tabernacle*, 159. With the Spirit residing within Jesus, the second temple Herod built had become obsolete. With the rejection of Jesus and ultimately God the Father, the Israelites condemned the temple building they cherished to ultimate destruction. The prophecy would be fulfilled in AD 70 when the Romans destroyed the temple building.

²³ For this dissertation, it is presupposed that both Luke and Matthew knew of and incorporated the Gospel of Mark.

²⁴ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*. 602-03. The combination of cleansing the temple and healing the infirmed at the temple proved that Jesus contained the Holy Spirit and was working the will of God the Father. The actions were the sign that Jesus was sent by God the Father and was in constant communion with his Father.

temple cleansing, the chief priests and scribes had become indignant, prompting them to question Jesus about the praise He was receiving (Matt. 21:14–16). Absent from the account of Matthew is the desire of the religious leaders to kill Jesus.

The Gospel of John and the Temple Cleansing: John 2:13–16

The temple cleansing within the Gospel of John is in the section referred to as the Book of Signs (John 1–12). Each of the signs performed by Jesus within this section is significant as they represent Jesus replacing the traditional Jewish institution with His presence.²⁵ The account in the Gospel of John differs from the accounts in the Synoptics, but it also bears similarities with the historical recording of the actions of Jesus in the temple. The main difference between the accounts of John and the other Gospels is the chronological placement of the temple incident. John presents the temple cleansing early in the ministry of Jesus, whereas the Synoptics place the action late in the ministry.²⁶ John also adds oxen and sheep to the animals sold at the temple. In John, Jesus drives the animals from the temple and overturns the money changers' tables. Another difference between John and the other Gospels is that Jesus does not address the crowd in John's account. Instead, Jesus speaks directly to the merchants who were selling pigeons. He tells them to remove the animals because his Father's house is not a house of trade (John 2:13–17). Absent is a direct reference to the chief priests and scribes questioning Jesus about His authority.²⁷

²⁵ Gary M. Burge, *Interpreting the Gospel of John*, Guides to New Testament Exegesis (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1992), 76.

²⁶ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: 2 Volumes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 518. Keener stated that even though John chronologically placed the temple cleansing incident earlier than the Synoptics, this is not necessarily wrong or problematic. Ancient biographies did not need to portray events in chronological order, and ancient readers would not have expected a chronological account of events. Instead, the focus is on the crucial facts that John uses to describe the divine nature of Jesus Christ.

²⁷ John wrote "Jews" and not "chief priests and scribes." The Jews do challenge Jesus to provide a sign, which is akin to challenging the authority of Jesus and his actions. More will be covered on the interaction between the Jews and Jesus below.

Before Passover, Jesus entered the temple of Jerusalem. Once inside the temple, Jesus made a whip out of cords to drive the animals and the merchants at the change tables out of the temple.²⁸ To purify the temple, Jesus had to expel the traders who had put their businesses within the temple walls where worship of God was to occur.²⁹ The action of driving out the merchants and animals was symbolic, which later would be realized to represent Jesus being greater than the temple.³⁰ During the cleansing, Jesus addressed the merchants selling the pigeons with the teaching that commerce should not take place in his Father's house.³¹ The action of Jesus cleansing the temple is directly tied to what He would teach the "Jews" when they demanded a sign to authenticate that Jesus was acting in God's will.

Raising the Temple in Three Days: John 2:19–22

After the cleansing incident, the "Jews" demanded that Jesus perform a sign to authenticate his authority from God.³² With the claim that Jesus made in John 2:19 and the

²⁸ Barker, *King of the Jews*, 173–74. Barker explains that Jesus using a whip to chase out the merchants and animals is symbolic of the greater Day of Atonement where the high priest will sprinkle the cleansing blood "as though he wields a whip." John's account of Jesus using a whip is unique. There is no mention of a whip in the Synoptic accounts. The temple of Jerusalem needed to be cleansed since it had become the economic center of Jerusalem. The sacrificial animals and money changers were only part of a much larger marketplace that had infiltrated the house of God.

²⁹ Marianne Meye Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, The New Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 71–72, Thompson detailed that in addition to the business being conducted, at times, the businessmen would engage in unethical transactions to exploit the wealth of the pilgrims. Jesus' purpose was to drive out the endeavors that were incompatible with pure and proper worship within his "Father's house."

³⁰ Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 522.

³¹ J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2010), 118. Michaels concludes that the words to the pigeon merchants would have been directed at all the merchants while Jesus was in the middle of driving out the animals from the temple. The words and actions are simultaneous events. Jesus used "house" instead of the temple and referenced God as his Father.

³² D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Chicago: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1990), 161; Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 119; Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Social-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 529–30; J. Ramsey Michaels, *John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1989), 46. John writes that the "Jews" questioned Jesus. These "Jews" were the temple authorities. The authorities were demanding an explanation about where Jesus had received the authority to purify the temple. Jesus provided the answer in a riddle that challenged the temple authorities. They had demanded a sign, and Jesus was providing them with the opportunity for a significant sign. The authorities misinterpreted the words of Jesus by stating that it took

subsequent reply by the Jews concerning the length of time required to build the temple building, John establishes that Jesus understood that He was the new temple dwelling of God.³³ John clarifies the answer that Jesus gave to the temple authorities by explaining that the temple Jesus spoke about was His body and not the temple building.³⁴ It was not merely the temple authorities who had initially misinterpreted Jesus' claim He would raise the temple in three days.³⁵ John notes that the disciples had remembered the teaching after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. As the restored temple, Jesus is the actual dwelling place of the Spirit of God. In a prayer to God the Father, Jesus would later expand on who has the status of being the new temple through the indwelling of the Spirit.

After being challenged to provide a sign of His authority, Jesus presented the prophecy concerning the ultimate sign He would give to the world.³⁶ Jesus tells the Jews who questioned Him that He would rebuild it in three days (John 2:19). The Greek word John used here, *egeirō*,

forty-six years to build the temple. Their question and response to Jesus betrayed their lack of emphasis on purity of worship, exposing their desire for power and authority.

³³ Peterson, *John's Use of Ezekiel*, 193. Petersen explains that the theme of the Gospel of John was Jesus as the Son of God. The sign that Jesus purified the temple and made a claim to raise the temple after three days established that Jesus is the spiritual successor to the temple building. The Spirit of God resided entirely within Christ and left the dwelling of the holy of holies within the Jerusalem temple. By condemning Jesus to death, the resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ restored the purified temple.

³⁴ Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 162; Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 121–22; Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 529–30. John clarifies that the implication of Jesus referring to the temple as His body was the intended message since Jesus and the Father had a mutual indwelling. There is a discussion on whether Jesus meant that the temple to be raised was His own body or that of the coming church. For a summary of the positions, please see Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, and Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew*. The position of Michaels presupposes that John is referring only to the physical body of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the starting place for the Spirit indwelling body as the temple. After the ascension and Pentecost, this status is later transferred to the individual and corporate group of believers, discussed below.

³⁵ Barker, *King of the Jews*, 177. Jesus' words about raising the temple were incorrectly taken in the literal sense by the authorities, who assumed He was referring to the temple building. However, the authorities deemed the answer of Jesus credible enough to declare it blasphemous.

³⁶ Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 530. Keener elaborates that Jesus poses the answer to the authorities in such a way they would not understand the allusion He was making. Since the authorities were thinking of the literal temple building, the sign that Jesus was offering to present was denied since they would never tear down to the last stone the temple building in Jerusalem.

is a different word than what is used in other instances of the teaching on temple rebuilding, *oikodomō*. The term *oikodomō* means “build,” while *egeirō* not only means “build” but also “resurrect.” John’s intentional double meaning helps to underscore not only the prophecy of the impending death and resurrection of Jesus Christ but also that Jesus was the proper temple dwelling of the Spirit.³⁷

The Jews’ response showed their lack of comprehension of the true meaning of the words of Jesus. They responded in disbelief that it took forty-six years to build the temple commissioned by Herod (John 2:20). The authorities only recognized the Jerusalem temple as where the Spirit of God would reside.³⁸ Because of the Jews’ misunderstanding, John writes plainly so all readers could understand. Jesus spoke of His body, not the temple building (John 2:21). The resurrection proved Jesus had the authority to perform the temple cleansing and that Jesus was the dwelling place of the Spirit of God, not the temple of Jerusalem.³⁹

The Indwelling of the Spirit: John 17:20–23

When it comes to the indwelling of the Spirit, John 17:20–23 provides substantial evidence that the believer enters a unique union with Christ and through Christ with God the Father. Not only is the believer connected to Christ and God the Father, but the believer is also connected to other believers because of the indwelling of the Spirit.⁴⁰ The union of the Trinity with the believer gives each believer a deep vertical connection, which facilitates a deep

³⁷ Ibid., 175–76; Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 161; Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 120.

³⁸ Ibid.; Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus’ Body*, 87.

³⁹ Michaels, *John*. 46.

⁴⁰ Gifford, “Union with Christ,” 41–43. Gifford states that since the Father and Son share a mutual indwelling, the entire Trinity dwells within the believer. The indwelling of Christ, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit is more than symbolic. The indwelling of the Trinity is an actual event for all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord.

horizontal connection with the universal Christian family.⁴¹ The indwelling has a purpose.⁴² Jesus prays that the believers become “perfectly one” to be the witness to the world to advance the kingdom of God.⁴³ Since God is perfect and holy, it is only fitting that the dwelling place of God is made perfect as well.⁴⁴ Only through Christ can humanity be brought to perfection.⁴⁵ As the new temple, the individual believer, the immediate family, and the universal Christian family must keep God’s dwelling place pure. The purity lists in Colossians and Ephesians, which provide the methods for keeping the new temple pure.

The prayer for all disciples, including those who will come, occurs during the high priestly prayer recorded in the Gospel of John. Jesus prays that all believers receive the same union Christ shares with God the Father (John 17:20–21). The interconnection of believers with Christ, God the Father, and each other creates a new unity for the universal Christian family.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2012), 968–69. Bruner connects John 17:20–23 to Acts 2:42 in an explanation of the early church seeking the deep vertical connection to the Lord by having a strong horizontal connection to each other. The early church, the universal Christian family, spent quality time with each other focused on honoring Jesus by hearing sound teaching about Christ, sharing meals together, sharing life together, and constantly praying individually and corporately.

⁴² Barker, *King of the Jews*, 443–44. With the indwelling of the Spirit, each believer contains the Logos. The transformation is necessary for the believer to spread the gospel, or the Word, to others, who then, once they accept Christ, also receive the indwelling of the Spirit.

⁴³ Johannes Beutler and Francis J. Moloney, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Chicago: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2017), 332.

⁴⁴ Thomas L. Brodie, *The Gospel according to John: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 507–9. It is not the prayer itself that makes the believer holy and perfect. Instead, as Brodie states, the believer receives the gift of being made holy and perfect from Jesus Christ. Even though the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is not explicitly mentioned in John 17:20–23, it can be assumed that the Holy Spirit is present within this union of the believer and Christ.

⁴⁵ Francis Martin and William M. Wright IV, *The Gospel of John*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015), 288–89. Martin and Wright state that the prayer made by Jesus is timeless and was not specific to the disciples who participated in the ministry before the death of Jesus on the cross. Regardless of the period in which they live, all believers receive special communion with the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, and God the Father. Communion brings the believer to perfection, a perfection that is visible in the mission of spreading the Word of God and the love of God throughout the world.

⁴⁶ Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 510–11; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1061–63; Barker, *King of the Jews*, 446; Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 531–32. By receiving the unifying presence of the Spirit, the believer and the universal Christian family can make known the gospel and the love of God through Jesus Christ. The prayer

With the prayer, Jesus confirms that His status as the new temple would be available to all His disciples: the individual believer, the immediate family of believers, and the universal Christian family. The universal Christian family with Christ as the head and source would soon become the new temple dwelling of the Spirit, for the outpouring of the Spirit required the ascension.

The Ascension

The event of the ascension and the fulfillment of the promise of reconciliation with God through Christ has changed creation. With the Spirit of God no longer dwelling within the Jerusalem temple since the Spirit had descended upon Jesus Christ, the ascension is important. With Christ ascending to Heaven on a cloud in front of witnesses (Acts 1:7–8), the Spirit of God has left Earth and now resides in Heaven.⁴⁷ Christ ascending into Heaven was necessary to fulfill the promise to send the Spirit to all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord.⁴⁸

Before the ascension, Jesus instructed the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they had received the Spirit (Acts 1:4).⁴⁹ Just as Jesus had waited to start his ministry until receiving the Holy Spirit at his baptism by John the Baptist, the disciples were instructed to wait until the outpouring of the Spirit before engaging in their witness to the world.⁵⁰ Jesus informed the

was not limited to include only the current disciples working with Jesus during his ministry. The prayer is for all disciples to come. Each believer, regardless of time, is eligible to receive the same unity of the Spirit.

⁴⁷ Krodel, *Acts*, 59–60. To fulfill His promise to send the Holy Spirit, Jesus first needed to ascend into Heaven to be at the right hand of God. That the ascension event happened at Bethany instead of at the Jerusalem Temple is of significance. The presence of God had left the Jerusalem temple after Jesus departed from the temple after the cleansing event.

⁴⁸ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 31, The Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1998), 208–9.

⁴⁹ John B. Polhill, *Acts: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 1992), 74. Polhill renders the Greek text as “stop leaving Jerusalem.” The implication is that the disciples were departing and returning to Jerusalem and probably still preaching the gospel. Jesus informed them to wait in the city until they received the promised gift of the Holy Spirit. Once the disciples received the Spirit, they could embark on the mission of being witnesses of Jesus Christ.

⁵⁰ Craig S. Keener, *Introduction and 1:1-2:47*, vol. 1., *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 676.

disciples that while He was baptized in water by John the Baptist, the disciples were to receive a greater baptism. Instead of water, the Holy Spirit immersed the disciples (Acts 1:5).⁵¹ The Spirit would empower the disciples to provide witness of Jesus Christ as Lord, assisting them in executing the Great Commission.⁵²

Before Jesus could send the Spirit, He needed to return to Heaven. The ascension is described in a short passage within the opening chapter of Acts. Luke briefly stated that a cloud lifted Christ and took Jesus out of the sight of the disciples (Acts 1:9). Jesus Christ did not covertly disappear from the Earth. The disciples witnessed the event of Jesus ascending into Heaven on a cloud.⁵³ Amazed at what they saw, the disciples are staring into the sky when confronted by two “men in white robes” asking why they are looking into Heaven. The two men then state that Jesus has gone into Heaven but will one day return in the way He left (Acts 1:10–11). It is of little wonder that the disciples would be staring into the sky after witnessing the miraculous event of the ascension. The two men instruct the disciples not to stand around waiting for Jesus to return.⁵⁴

Jesus, with the indwelling of the Spirit, returned to be with God the Father. Once again, the presence of God had left His people and the world. Before leaving, Christ promised that the

⁵¹ Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 70–71. The immersion in water signified repentance and the cleansing of impurity. The immersion in the Holy Spirit is the receiving of the overwhelming presence of the Spirit that transforms the Christian.

⁵² Keener, *Introduction and 1:1-2:47*, 681.

⁵³ Krodel, *Acts*, 61; Polhill, *Acts*, 77; Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 76–77. Luke emphasized “seeing” within three verses concerning the ascension of Jesus Christ. Luke explains that there were eyewitnesses to this historic event. Just as eyewitnesses had seen the resurrected Jesus, Jesus’ ascension on a cloud was also able to be corroborated by witnesses.

⁵⁴ Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 76; Krodel, *Acts*, 62; Polhill, *Acts*, 77; Keener, *Acts*, 727–30. There are differing viewpoints on the identity of the men in white robes, but there is consensus on the message they gave. The two men are reminding the disciples who witnessed the ascension of Jesus Christ that there is work to be done. The disciples are to leave the area where the miracle had happened and return to Jerusalem to be the witnesses of Christ per their instruction from Jesus. The disciples understand the message and leave the Mount of Olives to tell others what they had witnessed.

presence of God would return and baptize the disciples to empower them to be witnesses of God's kingdom. The disciples were to wait in Jerusalem until the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Once the Spirit descended upon the disciples, they would be the new temple dwelling of God's presence.

Pentecost: The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

After Jesus had ascended, the disciples obeyed the command of Jesus to remain in Jerusalem to wait for the Holy Spirit. While the disciples were meeting under one roof as Christian brothers,⁵⁵ the Holy Spirit entered the house in the commotion of wind and fire from Heaven (Acts 2:1–2). The coming of the Spirit is reminiscent of Exodus 19:16–19, where God visits His people.⁵⁶ The manifestation of God's presence is not only audible in the wind, but it is also visible in the tongues of fire. The Spirit enters the disciples⁵⁷ and empowers them to speak various languages.⁵⁸ From this point onward, all who were present in the house were under the

⁵⁵ While the account of the arrival of the Holy Spirit centers on the apostles, it is possible there were female believers present at the same time. Since the account focuses on the apostles, the term *brothers* is used to not read more into the text than what Luke provides.

⁵⁶ Osvaldo Padilla, *The Acts of the Apostles: Interpretation, History and Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 152–53. Padilla highlights that Luke's intention in the description of the Holy Spirit entering and filling the house is to emphasize theophany. Luke draws from the imagery of the visitation of God to Mount Sinai where Moses brought the Israelites to meet with God. Luke makes the point that the Spirit of God had returned to the world and resided within the disciples.

⁵⁷ Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 110; Polhill, *Acts*, 83; Keener, *Introduction and 1:1-2:47*, 794–95; Krodel, *Acts*, 72. The number of people who received the initial outpouring of the Spirit is debated. Schnabel and Arnold and Polhill number the initial recipients at 120. Keener posits that it was the twelve apostles plus the women and Jesus's immediate family. Krodel states that it was the twelve only. Krodel argues that there would not be space for 120 to gather under one roof. If all 120 had been speaking in tongues after the outpouring, it would have drawn the attention of the Roman authorities, who would have quickly mobilized to end the event. Keener takes a less literal approach than Krodel. For Keener, it is not about the location of the house. The message Luke conveys is that the disciples were united in prayer simultaneously, but not necessarily all under one singular roof. While Keener agrees with Krodel that this event did not happen in the temple, it encompassed more than just the twelve but probably fewer than the 120 proposed by Schnabel and Arnold and Polhill. Regardless of the initial number, the promise of Jesus had been fulfilled, and the Spirit had been sent to dwell within the followers of Christ.

⁵⁸ Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 107; Krodel, *Acts*, 72–73. Krodel stated that there is a significant connection between the tongues of fire and the proclamation and praise by the disciples in other tongues. Through the double imagery of tongues and the sound produced by the Spirit and then the human tongue, Luke underscores the external nature of the Holy Spirit and the power that a believer receives when the Spirit enters the individual. The primary effect is the Spirit's indwelling, which produces a secondary effect of the individual proclaiming the gospel.

guidance of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁹ After being filled with and empowered by the Spirit, the disciples preached to the crowds that had gathered in Jerusalem for the festivals, with each person hearing the gospel in their native language.

The arrival of the Spirit, as promised by Jesus, signified a shift in redemptive history. Forgiveness of sins comes not from the physical temple but from Jesus Christ.⁶⁰ The universal family receives the Holy Spirit's outpouring as part of their inheritance, while the individual believer and the universal family wait to join Jesus Christ in the Father's house.⁶¹ With Jesus' promise fulfilled in the arrival of the Spirit, Christians are now as new temple dwelling of the Spirit, and they are to reap the harvest and gather others to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord.⁶²

The Transfer of the New Temple to Christians

God's indwelling presence now resides within everyone who believes in Christ. In 1 Corinthians 6:15–20, Paul not only makes the case that the believer is the temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit, but also urges believers to keep the temple clean and pure by not partaking in immoral actions.⁶³

Acts 10 contains a story of an entire household receiving the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 focuses on the individual as the new temple. Ephesians 2:19–22 explains that the

⁵⁹ Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 235.

⁶⁰ Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 204.

⁶¹ Gary D. Badcock, *The House Where God Lives: Renewing the Doctrine of the Church for Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 101.

⁶² Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 237.

⁶³ Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 258–59. Since the believer is the dwelling place of God, or as Beale states, the dwelling place of God's glorious presence, it is imperative that the believer understands the implications of being the new temple. The life of the believer needs to reflect the glory of God. The believer reflects God's glory by moving beyond temporal pleasures and concentrating on eternal glory in Christ. The focus becomes spreading the gospel and growing the kingdom of God. The individual is to share the glorious indwelling of God with their immediate family and neighbors, thereby growing the universal Christian family.

universal Christian family is a form of the new temple.⁶⁴ The universal Christian family is not the temple based on the original religious functions and traditions. Instead, the universal Christian family is the proper temple because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁵

Acts 10

The conversion experience of Cornelius and his household shows how the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit impacts the immediate family. The individual believer not only contains the Spirit, but when immediate family members follow Christ, the immediate family becomes a form of the new temple. While the focus of Acts 10 is on the vision given to Peter by the Spirit⁶⁶ and the subsequent mission to and conversion of the Gentiles, the household of Cornelius showed how the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is available to the immediate family, not just the individual believer.

Cornelius, a Roman Centurion, was a devout man who followed God. He was a Jewish convert described as well-respected among the Jews who religiously followed Yahweh.⁶⁷ Cornelius led his household (*οἶκος*)⁶⁸ in religious activity, which implies that all who resided within his household also followed Yahweh. Cornelius received a vision from God that urged him to send messengers to Joppa to bring Peter to see him (Acts 10:1–8).

⁶⁴ Ibid., 258–60. Each believer is united to God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Likewise, they are bonded to each other since all believers carry the Spirit. The union of believers because of the Spirit transcends any national identity.

⁶⁵ Coloe, *God Dwells with Us*, 169–70. God has chosen to leave the Jerusalem temple to dwell among His people. Paul expands on the teaching that the individual is the temple. The new temple now includes not only the individual but also the immediate family and universal family.

⁶⁶ Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 490.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 494; Polhill, *Acts*, 233.

⁶⁸ The Greek *οἶκος* encompasses the entire household of Cornelius, as was mentioned within Chapter 2. The term *οἶκος* will be addressed in more detail below.

During prayer, Peter also received a vision. Peter's vision revealed to him what God declares clean. At the end of the vision, the Spirit informed Peter that Cornelius's messengers had arrived (Acts 10:9–16). After receiving the messengers from Cornelius as guests for one night,⁶⁹ Peter embarked on the journey with Cornelius's men back to Caesarea.

Upon arriving at Caesarea, Peter came to Cornelius's place. Cornelius had gathered his family and friends to hear the message that Peter would bring. After Peter rebuked Cornelius's attempts to worship him, Peter informed all present that it is unlawful for a Jewish person to interact with the Gentiles. Peter then told all who had gathered with Cornelius the gospel message (Acts 10:34–43). Peter delivered his sermon, preaching that Jesus is Lord of all, both Jew and Gentile.⁷⁰ After the sermon, all who were present in the house of Cornelius received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:44). While the number of people in attendance had grown beyond the primary household (*oἶκος*) of Cornelius, they still fit within the house building.⁷¹ Unlike the event of the outpouring of the Spirit to the disciples the Spirit was immediately received by Cornelius and those who heard Peter's sermon.⁷² The conversion experience of Cornelius reveals two major effects of the receiving of the Spirit: First, the Spirit will pour out onto an entire household, and second, the Gentiles, not just the Jews, will receive the Spirit.⁷³

⁶⁹ Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 497. Schnabel and Arnold explain that Peter's receiving Cornelius's messengers as guests should not be read as hesitation from Peter. The messengers had just traveled the distance of Caesarea to Joppa in twenty-one hours. Since the messengers were from a military detachment, this timeline is possible but would have left them exhausted. Peter was providing the messengers a rest as would be customary. Peter was performing the proper actions of supplying brotherly hospitality as expected by a Christian and not hesitating to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

⁷⁰ Polhill, *Acts*, 239.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 241; Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 512.

⁷² Krodel, *Acts*, 200–1.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 731. For the Second Temple period population, it would not be an unusual event for the entire household to convert to a religion. As seen in Chapter 2, the household and religion were intertwined. In the modern context, this point can often be overlooked, as within households in Western cultures, there is a more individualistic approach to life. What was unusual was the Gentiles receiving the Spirit. The Jewish religion was exclusive, and

1 Corinthians 6:15–20

The focus of Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:15–20 is on keeping the body and the new temple pure, specifically from the sin of sexual immorality. Paul wrote that since the believer is joined to Christ as one body, the believer should not engage in sexual immorality by joining their body to a prostitute (1 Cor. 15–17). Since the believer’s body is joined to Christ, the believer belongs to God.⁷⁴ Engaging in sexual immorality with a prostitute directly contradicts the union with Christ through the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁵ The believer is to flee from sexual immorality since sexual immorality is a sin that directly affects the status of the body (1 Cor. 6:18). Fleeing from sexual immorality helps keep the Holy Spirit’s sanctified temple pure.⁷⁶

After exhorting the readers of the First Letter to the Corinthians, Paul asks a rhetorical question and provides a sobering answer: “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body” (1 Cor. 6:19–20). Paul states that the believer is the new temple of the Holy Spirit. As the new temple, the bodies of the individual, immediate

Christianity was viewed as a Jewish sect early on. Yet, Jesus had foretold about his coming church that would extend to all people throughout the world. The household of Cornelius receiving the Holy Spirit was the beginning of the fulfillment of the promise that Gentiles would be in the plan of salvation.

⁷⁴ Preben Vang, *1 Corinthians*, Teach the Text Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2014), 87; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1987), 257–59; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 458–59. God has purchased the believer through Jesus Christ’s death on the cross, the ultimate atoning sacrifice. Engaging in sexual acts with a prostitute would bind the person to that prostitute. As described in Genesis 2:24, if the believer binds themselves to a prostitute, then there is no binding to God.

⁷⁵ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 258. Fee concludes that not all sexual actions are impure. Instead, the issue is sexual relations with non-Christians. It is my conclusion that the issue can be taken further. While prostitution is an action of a non-Christian, sexual immorality needs to be viewed as an adulterous action or improper relationship outside of the marital relationship. Engaging in improper sexual relationships unnecessarily strains relationships within both the immediate family and the universal Christian family.

⁷⁶ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 458–59. As the new temple, the Christian identity is inseparable from the Christian lifestyle. The individual and corporate body belong to the Lord.

family, and universal Christian family are set apart as the residing place of God's Spirit.⁷⁷ As the new temple, Christians are to live their physical existence in union with Christ as the proper dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁸ As the shrine of the Holy Spirit that God has purchased through Christ, the believer must flee from actions that do not glorify God.⁷⁹

Ephesians 2:19–22

In Ephesians, Paul brings forth the teaching of the universal Christian family and the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit. Jew and Gentile become united in Christ and are part of the household of God. As the household grows, so does the new temple of the Spirit of God.

To build the unity of the Christians in Ephesus, Paul writes that as Christians, they are no longer foreigners.⁸⁰ Instead, they belong to the household of God (Eph. 2:19).⁸¹ The Greek words for the household of God is *οἰκεῖτοι τοῦ θεοῦ*.⁸² The Christian converts should not feel out of place within the greater society since Jew and Gentile Christians are connected within the

⁷⁷ Vang, *1 Corinthians*, 89.

⁷⁸ Thornhill, "The Resurrection of Jesus and Spiritual (Trans)Formation," 250–51. Thornhill explains that the Christian's life no longer belongs to the individual. It belongs to the Lord. Because the body belongs to the Lord, the Christian must intentionally submit to the Lord. The intentional submission of the Christian, both individual and family, will be addressed in more detail below.

⁷⁹ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 265; Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 459.

⁸⁰ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 150; Grant R. Osborne, *Ephesians* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 71.

⁸¹ Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*, 31. To combat the "us vs. them" mentality that had permeated the new Christian community, Paul informs both Jew and Gentile that they were part of a greater loving community.

⁸² Abbott, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 68–69; Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 261–62. There are differing conclusions on how the Greek text should be viewed within Paul's context. Abbott believes that this is just a symbolic use of *household* and merely means that the believers are property of God. Witherington concludes that Paul intentionally uses a double meaning and a play on words. The household has two meanings, but both have the people belonging to the family of God. The household is the symbolic adoption of the Jews and Gentiles into the family of God. Likewise, the household is also the "temple of God" where the Spirit resides. The meaning becomes clearer within the context of the entire verse. Within this dissertation, Witherington's view has the highest plausibility and is used in conjunction with the *haustafeln* in Chapter 6.

universal Christian family.⁸³ Unified Christians also serve a greater purpose, like the apostles and the saints; all Christians are part of the building material of the church or universal family, built on the ultimate cornerstone of Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:20).⁸⁴

Paul then turns his focus from the household and building materials to the formation of the holy temple dwelling place for the Spirit of God (Eph. 2:21–22). God is not tied to a physical building like the temple of Jerusalem. Instead, God’s Spirit resides within the universal Christian family.⁸⁵ God has set apart His people, the followers of Christ, as the new holy temple dedicated to the proper dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁶ The unified conglomerate of believers brought together in Christ builds a form of the new temple.⁸⁷

Colossians 4:12

Paul uses the term “servant of Christ” when referring to Epaphras in Colossians 4:12. The term “servant” connects to the *haustafeln* by pointing to the ultimate Master, Jesus Christ. Understanding the terms “in Christ” and “slave/servant of Christ” is crucial in understanding how the *haustafeln* relates to the purity lists and the structure of the universal Christian family.

⁸³ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 71–72. Not only were Gentile converts left with the feeling that the Jewish converts were excluding them, but the Gentile converts were also now feeling out of place within society. Paul was teaching all new Christians that the household of God is more significant than society and that both Jewish and Gentile converts belonged to God and had been adopted into the house of God.

⁸⁴ Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on Chapters 1-3*, vol. 34, The Anchor Bible Commentary (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1974), 271; Osborne, *Ephesians*, 72-73; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 152-53; Benjamin L. Merkle, *Exegetical Guide to the New Testament: Ephesians*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Robert Yarbrough (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016), 81; Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 262–63; Abbott, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 71.

⁸⁵ John Stott, *The Message of Ephesians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2021), 80; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 190–91; Lionel J. Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians after Supersessionism: Christ’s Mission through Israel to the Nations* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 157; Frank Thielman, Robert Yarbrough, and Robert Stein, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 183. The Christian is not only the temple dwelling but is also part of the temple. While the individual Christian contains the indwelling of the Spirit, so does the universal Christian family.

⁸⁶ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 302.

⁸⁷ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 162; Barth et al., *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 99.

Paul uses the terms “in Christ”⁸⁸ and “slave of Christ”⁸⁹ to portray how the individual relates to the Lord Jesus Christ. While Paul does not use “slave of Christ” in Ephesians and Colossians, there is a connection with instructions to the enslaver concerning the treatment of the enslaved person within the household. Following is a brief overview of both terms for this dissertation.

The phrase “in Christ” appears in Colossians and Ephesians more than in the other Pauline letters.⁹⁰ Unfortunately, there is no consensus on the meaning of “in Christ” due to the range of meanings found in the New Testament.⁹¹ Paul used “in Christ” in conjunction with the metaphor of the body of Christ. Paul invokes a visual image of how the believer connects to the resurrected Christ.⁹² The connection to Christ is both individual and corporate.⁹³ In Ephesians and Colossians, Paul used “in Christ” to remind believers that this union with Christ impacts how the individual, the immediate family, and the universal family are to live.⁹⁴

The term “slave of Christ” in the modern context and the Second Temple period would invoke a generally repulsive and negative emotional response.⁹⁵ The description of being a “slave in Christ” is applied to all believers in Ephesians and Colossians. Paul instructed enslavers

⁸⁸ For an in-depth study of “in Christ,” see Campbell, Thate, and Vanhoozer, *“In Christ” in Paul*. For a study of how “in Christ” affects the interpretation of Ephesians, see Lau, *The Politics of Peace*. However, these are by no means the only studies on “in Christ.” A comprehensive list of these sources is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Please refer to the works below to continue a study on “in Christ.”

⁸⁹ For a comprehensive study of “slave of Christ,” see, Harris, *Slave of Christ*. Like “in Christ” there are a multitude of sources for “slave of Christ.” The work by Harris was selected to provide an overview of “slave of Christ” and how the phrase fits into the reading of Ephesians and Colossians.

⁹⁰ Lau, *The Politics of Peace*, 52.

⁹¹ Gifford, “Union with Christ,” 66.

⁹² Campbell, Thate, and Vanhoozer, *“In Christ” in Paul*, 68.

⁹³ Gifford, “Union with Christ,” 68.

⁹⁴ Lau, *The Politics of Peace*, 54.

⁹⁵ Harris, *Slave of Christ*, 140–41. Harris details how terminology equating a free person to an enslaved person would be repugnant to all who read the letter by Paul. Even for those who willingly placed themselves in servitude, the words of Paul would conjure a negative image.

not to be overbearing or dehumanizing toward those bound in servitude, for all Christians, regardless of status, are under the Master, Jesus Christ.⁹⁶ Paul intends to take a negative and turn it into a positive. The connection of “slave of Christ” to the *haustafeln* in Colossians and Ephesians is that Paul explains that Christians are to humble themselves into unquestioned obedience and submission to Christ.⁹⁷ By being a “slave of Christ,” the Christian will live a life for the kingdom of God, doing the will of God. The Christian’s life is pleasing to the Lord Jesus Christ.⁹⁸ Paul’s call to the enslaver in Colossians and Ephesians is to model their life after the ultimate Master and provide accordingly for the enslaved person.⁹⁹

Concluding Thoughts

The Gospels teach that Jesus is the new temple. Jesus then sends the Holy Spirit to dwell within the Christian. The event of Pentecost is the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit. With the sending and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the temple transfers from Jesus to the Christian.

After Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, the Spirit of God descended upon Him. With the Spirit dwelling in Him, Jesus began his ministry of doing the will of God the Father. During his ministry, Jesus makes it clear that the presence of God had left the physical temple building in Jerusalem and that Jesus was the proper new temple dwelling for the Spirit. Jesus promised the disciples that the Spirit would come to them after he had gone from their midst. After the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the subsequent resurrection, the presence of God again leaves His people and ascends to Heaven.

⁹⁶ Geoffrey Turner, “The Christian Life as Slavery: Paul’s Subversive Metaphor,” *The Heythrop Journal* 54, no. 1 (2013): 1–12.

⁹⁷ Harris, *Slave of Christ*, 142–43.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 149–52.

Pentecost brought the presence of God back to the world. The disciples, who had gathered either physically in one location or together through prayer, received the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The indwelling of the Spirit empowered the group to preach the gospel in the native languages of everyone who had gathered in Jerusalem.

The Spirit then fell upon the Gentiles, beginning with the household of Cornelius. While more people received the Spirit, the indwelling started with one faithful household. Much like the early spreading of the Christian message through house churches, the Spirit falling upon the family of Cornelius led the way for his household to reach the Gentile population with the gospel message. The Holy Spirit has become available for the individual, the immediate family, and the universal Christian family through Jesus Christ's headship of the new creation.

The new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit is not only the individual believer. All who believe in Christ form the universal Christian family. The universal Christian family does not lose its distinctive individual parts. Regardless of national origin and gender, the parts unite to build a holy temple.¹⁰⁰ All forms of the new temple need to reflect the status of the new temple and the status of the new creation established by Jesus Christ. The proper dwelling of the Spirit, whether the individual, immediate family, or universal family, must be clean, pure, and ordered in structure. The Holy Spirit, through Paul, provided the instructions for the upkeep of the new temple in the letters to the Colossians and the Ephesians.

¹⁰⁰ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 162–63.

Chapter 4: The Purity of the Family, Body, and Temple: Ephesians 4:17–5:21 and Colossians 3:1–17

Paul establishes what the purity for the household of God and the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit would look like in Ephesians 4:17–5:21 and Colossians 3:1–17. Before discussing how Paul presented the need for purity in Ephesians and Colossians, this chapter provides a brief overview of the purity laws involving the temple and worship in Leviticus. Leviticus is full of purification theology. Purification offerings have their fulfillment in the sacrifice of Christ, so the selected passages emphasize attitude and worship. The exposition of the Leviticus passages shows that God’s family and His temple have standards. Paul’s teachings in Ephesians and Colossians were a natural outflow of these traditions. This overview highlights Paul’s education and upbringing as a Jewish man and Pharisee affected how he presented the need for purity in the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

After the overview of the Leviticus passages, this chapter provides an in-depth exposition of Ephesians 4:17–5:21 and Colossians 3:1–17, dividing Ephesians and Colossians into verses focusing on the transition between the lists of sinful actions and proper actions and the reason for the need to no longer participate in the old and sinful lifestyle. The purity standards and the outwardly visible manifestation of the Holy Spirit resulting in vocal worship outlined by Paul are for the preservation of the family unit and ultimately to help keep the family unit adequately aligned to the new creation family structure that engages in fulfilling the Great Commission. By adhering to the purity guidelines, the family unit acts as a living example of the proper and pure dwelling place, or new temple, for the Holy Spirit.¹ Along with the purity of the family, Paul

¹ Vicky Balabanski, “The Holy Spirit and the Cosmic Christ: A Comparison of Their Roles in Colossians and Ephesians, or ‘Where Has the Holy Spirit Gone?’” *Colloquium* 42, no. 2 (November 2010): 173–87. Paul describes the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer in Colossians 2:9–10. All believers receive the fullness of

also outlines worship procedures for the Christian. By mentioning hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs, Paul explains that the Christian family unit also needs to produce worship to God. The purity lists provide the basis for the new Christian house churches to spread the gospel to the surrounding community.

Leviticus Worship Purity Laws

Purity standards were not a new construct of Paul, and Paul's upbringing in the Jewish traditions would have influenced how he presented the lists in Ephesians and Colossians.² There are laws found within Leviticus that resemble Paul's instruction for the Christians in Colossae and Ephesus. Paul would have had the vices listed in Leviticus memorized as a former Pharisee. Since a significant portion of Christians in Colossae and Ephesus were Gentile converts to Christianity, there was a need to reiterate the purity standards set forth by God and revealed to Moses in the Pentateuch. To be set aside as "holy and blameless" (Eph. 1:4), the recipients of the letters needed to understand how to become pure and holy. Paul instructs the new Christians to give up their sinful ways and instead follow the new way of holiness in Jesus Christ as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit and members of the household of God.

Leviticus 6:2–5

The first portion of Leviticus related to the purity lists provided by Paul in Ephesians and Colossians discusses types of sacrifices and the proper rituals accompanying the sacrifice.

the Spirit that dwelled within Jesus Christ. Balabanski concludes that Stoic philosophy and cosmology heavily influenced Paul's language in Colossians. While Stoic philosophy may have been widespread, Paul does not necessarily adhere to that philosophy. Indeed, Colossians does not have many direct references to the Holy Spirit, unlike other letters within the Pauline corpus, yet Colossians 2:9–10 provides the background for the entirety of the letter. The fullness of the Spirit is prevalent in all aspects of the believer's life. The fullness encompasses the individual, the immediate family, and the universal family. This connection is why Paul states that he is present in spirit with the believers (Col. 2:5).

² For an overview on how the life of Paul prior to his conversion had an influence on Paul's letters, see N. T. Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters: Some Contemporary Debates* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015).

Leviticus 6:2–5 addresses a person acting deceptively or speaking falsely to other Israelites (Col. 3:8–10; Eph. 4:25–28). Specifically, the issue at hand is the sin of defrauding one’s neighbor.³ The actions listed by Moses are intentional acts that go beyond harming another person. The actions directly defy God, and the actor must make reparations to both the victim and God.⁴

Like Moses, Paul addresses the specific covenant community. In the context of Paul’s letters, that community is the new Christian converts in Ephesus and Colossae.⁵ The unlawful acquisition of another person’s possessions causes strife within the community. This type of crime could be challenging to prosecute within the ancient legal system, specifically the Jewish system, where two or more witnesses were needed.⁶ Evident in both Leviticus and the letters of Colossians and Ephesians is that to steal from one’s neighbor was to sin against God and violate the individual’s status of belonging to the household of God.⁷

³ Ephraim Radner, *Leviticus*, Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008), 73; Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, *Genesis-Leviticus* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2008), 748.

⁴ John Hartley et al., *Leviticus*, vol. 4, World Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2015), 158; William H. Bellinger Jr., *Leviticus, Numbers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 42.

⁵ Bellinger, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 42–43. Bellinger concludes that the Israelites were deceiving their fellow countrymen and jeopardizing the whole community’s relationship with Yahweh. This conclusion can be applied to both Ephesians and Colossians. When the young church needs unity, acts of deception could potentially divide the community in ways that would lead to collapse. Furthermore, these acts of deception would leave the Christian community indistinguishable from the surrounding secular society. As the new temple dwelling of the Spirit, the believer cannot conform to the behaviors of the secular world.

⁶ Hartley et al., *Leviticus*, 159. Hartley et al. explain that the weakness within the Leviticus law is that if the crime was one person against another single person, then the perpetrator was to take a vow of innocence since there would not be enough witnesses to prosecute the crime. The person committing the crime most likely lacks moral standards and would have no problem offering a vow of innocence. It was expected then that the perpetrator would be punished by God since now not only had theft been committed, but the person also intentionally sinned against God.

⁷ Radner, *Leviticus*, 73–74.

Leviticus 18:2–5

In Ephesians, Paul informs the Christians in Ephesus not to act like the Gentiles (Eph. 4:17), reminiscent of the opening for Leviticus 18. In Leviticus 18, the Israelites are told not to act like the Egyptians and Canaanites. Each explicitly instructs the reader not to walk in the ways of the secular community (Lev. 18:3–4; Eph. 4:17).

God instructed Moses to teach the Israelites that they are not to participate in the actions that the Egyptians and Canaanites allow, for they belong to the household of God and are to be holy.⁸ As members of the household of God, the Israelites are to follow the rules established by the head of the household, God (Lev. 18:4–5). Just like God instructed the Israelites through Moses, Paul instructed the Ephesians that since they knew the truth of Christ, they were to live in the ways of Christ by shedding the old ways of their previous status of being outside of God's household (Eph. 4:20–24). The household of God is to remain pure and holy.⁹ The remainder of Leviticus 18 outlines the standards of morality concerning sexual unions and the consequences of violating the unique union that the Israelites have with Yahweh. Engaging in improper sexual union defiles the people and the land that God has set apart as His household, unlike the surrounding nations.¹⁰

⁸ Longman and Garland, *Genesis-Leviticus*, 875; Julia Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult: The Holiness Legislation in Leviticus 17-26* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 351; Victor P. Hamilton, *Handbook on the Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 287. Because the Israelites belong to the household of God, they are held to a higher. The Israelites are not to look back on the life they had in Egypt, nor are they to partake in the morally deficient ways that they would see when they inhabited the land of the Canaanites.

⁹ Walter J. Houston and James D. G. Dunn, *Leviticus*, Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2019), 29; Radner, *Leviticus*, 187; Bellinger, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 93; Hartley et al., *Leviticus*, 361.

¹⁰ Houston and Dunn, *Leviticus*, 29.

Leviticus 18:6–30

The sexual purity standards found in Leviticus 18:6–30 tie into Paul’s writings in Colossians 3:5 and Ephesians 5:3–5. Unlike the surrounding nations, the Israelites were not to engage in improper sexual actions that defile the family. The most extensive section of Leviticus 18 concerns incestuous relationships that Yahweh forbids (Lev. 18:6–18).¹¹ Proper boundaries were needed to maintain honor within the immediate household and the household of God.¹² While there were ancient laws concerning the immorality of incest, such as the Code of Hammurabi, the laws outlined in Leviticus are more conservative sexual ethics.¹³ The laws of Leviticus are more strict than what was practiced by the patriarchs within Genesis.¹⁴

Verses 19–23 move away from incest relationships and focus on boundaries against sexual acts to curb lust and coveting a neighbor’s spouse. The actions listed in these verses are perversions that make the perpetrators unclean. The first prohibition is that one should not engage in intercourse with a woman experiencing her menstruation cycle (Lev. 18:19). The second is that a person should not be involved sexually with their neighbor’s spouse, nor should the children of a believer be offered to their neighbor for sexual actions or prostitution within other religious cults (Lev. 18:20–21).¹⁵ Next, homosexuality is a forbidden practice (Lev.

¹¹ Hamilton, *Handbook on the Pentateuch*, 287; Bellinger, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 94; Longman and Garland, *Genesis-Leviticus*, 878.

¹² Hamilton, *Handbook on the Pentateuch*, 287; Bellinger, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 94. Bellinger notes that Leviticus is addressed to the male heads of household since most of the sexual relations forbidden would involve the head of the house. The rationale is that since the family unit is the basis of greater society’s social networks, any transgression against the family jeopardizes the foundation of societal structure. To violate the family is to commit a dishonor of significant proportions and ultimately dishonor God.

¹³ Longman and Garland, *Genesis-Leviticus*, 878; Hartley et al., *Leviticus*, 362.

¹⁴ Ibid. Longman and Garland use the example of Abraham marrying his half-sister as evidence that even the early members of the household of God participated in some forms of incest. Yet, Leviticus redefines the moral code for God’s household.

¹⁵ Bellinger, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 95. Bellinger states that this exhortation of Leviticus 18:20–21 is also a prohibition of child sacrifice, which was a practice of different cultures of the ancient Near East.

18:22).¹⁶ Finally, neither a man nor a woman should engage in sexual actions involving animals (Lev. 18:23). Each of these actions is a perversion and declared unclean before God.

After explaining what actions are unacceptable, God establishes the punishment for violating these laws. Anyone who violates the law will be cut off from the household of God (Lev. 18:29). To be members of the household of God, the Israelites needed to adhere to stricter sexual ethics than their neighboring cultures. If a person violated the morality laws about sexual relations, the entire covenant community was to reject and expel the person from the community.¹⁷ Effectively, the community removes the person and denies their entry into the household of God.

Leviticus 19:1–17

The Israelites are to be holy as God's chosen people because God is holy.¹⁸ To be holy, the Israelites must adhere to the covenant agreement and follow the laws God gave to Moses.¹⁹ The focus of Leviticus 19 is holiness through proper worship.²⁰ After an appeal to the members of the household of God to honor their earthly mother and father, Moses directs the people to stay faithful to God by adhering to the covenant and not committing idolatry. The call to be holy (Eph. 4:24) and the instruction that anything that interferes with worshipping God is idolatry (Col. 3:5) are points Paul focused upon when addressing the Christians of Ephesus and Colossae. Before instructing the Israelites on how to relate to others within the household of God, Moses

¹⁶ Longman and Garland, *Genesis-Leviticus*, 881. Longman and Garland explain that the language used within Leviticus specifically points to male-to-male sexual relations but does leave room for the inference that women are also prohibited from homosexual relations.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 884.

¹⁸ Radner, *Leviticus*, 201; Bellinger, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 97; Hartley et al., *Leviticus*, 308.

¹⁹ Longman and Garland, *Genesis-Leviticus*, 886–87. As the household of God, the Israelites stand apart from the neighboring nations. In an address to the entire nation of Israel, Moses reminded the people that their focus needed to be on God and following His commandments. The call is to be holy like God.

²⁰ Hartley et al., *Leviticus*, 308–9.

reminded the Israelites of their duty to bring honor to their parents and God (Lev. 19:3–4). Properly socializing with other members of the household of God is part of being God’s holy people.²¹

After the opening verses centering on maintaining the honor of the household of God, Moses provided the requirements for making a peace offering for instances in which a person has violated the ethical considerations in the next section of Leviticus 19. Since this section focuses on the sacrificial laws of the Israelites, the letters to the Colossians and Ephesians do not contain a parallel section. Yet, the addition of proper handling of the sacrifice offering is not out of place. Sacrificial laws came after the incident involving the idolatrous crafting of the golden calf.²² Worshipping God properly requires following the laws on sacrifice offerings. If a community member failed to adhere to the standards of proper worship, the community would cast the person out of the household of God (Lev. 19:8).²³

The discussion on holiness in Leviticus 19 then shifts from a focus on the proper worship of God to social justice actions among the Israelites. In Leviticus 19:9–17, Moses informs the Israelites how they were to interact with the other members of the household of God. Colossians and Ephesians also center around dealing honestly with one another by not cheating in business deals or lying to or slandering other members of the household of God (Lev. 19:11–17; Col. 3:8–

²¹ Hamilton, *Handbook on the Pentateuch*, 288–89. Hamilton states that the Israelites were to demonstrate their holy status by conducting their social interactions and relationships in a way that set them apart from other nations.

²² Longman and Garland, *Genesis-Leviticus*, 887–88. For Leviticus 19:5–8, the sacrifice is specific to the portion of the sacrificial animal that can be consumed. Since the meat can be consumed, there are extra precautions for maintaining cleanliness and holiness. Because of the implications, the community has a responsibility to dispose of any part of the sacrifice that is no longer suitable for consumption.

²³ Bellinger, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 98; Hartley et al., *Leviticus*, 389. Being removed from the household of God was considered among the severest of penalties that could be levied against an offender.

9; Eph. 4:25–29). At the heart of these actions is family honor.²⁴ Being members of the household of God equates the Israelites with the name of God. The name of God is profaned through theft, slander, and lying.²⁵

Concluding Thoughts on Leviticus

As a former Pharisee, Paul would have been familiar with the above passages from Leviticus. As the author of Colossians and Ephesians, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul would have written and expressed himself in a way consistent with his Jewish upbringing.²⁶ The vice lists in Colossians and Ephesians addressed below rely upon the holiness codes and standards expected of the Israelites. With the expansion of the household of God, Paul needed to inform the new Gentile Christians in Ephesus and Colossae on how to be holy and live in a way that honors God and the other members of the household of God as pure new creations under the headship of Jesus Christ. While Paul believed the law to have been fulfilled by Jesus Christ, he also understood that purity and holiness signified a person belonged to the household of God.²⁷ As members of the household of God and the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit, the new Gentile believers needed to walk away from their old habits.

²⁴ Hamilton, *Handbook on the Pentateuch*, 288. By telling the truth, the Israelites would rise above the temptation to act unjustly toward their brothers and sisters within the household of God.

²⁵ Hartley et al., *Leviticus*, 314–15; Longman and Garland, *Genesis-Leviticus*, 890; Bellingier, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 98. To deceive other members of the household of God, specifically by swearing in the name of Yahweh, is to use the name of God for evil purposes. The offender intentionally relinquishes their purity and ruins their reputation and the reputation of the household of God.

²⁶ Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters*. 230.

²⁷ Brian S. Rosher, ed., “Understanding Paul’s Ethics” (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1995), 294–95.

Ephesians 4:17–5:21

Keeping the new temple pure requires specific guidelines to be followed. In Ephesians 4:17–5:21, Paul instructs the new Christians, mainly Gentile converts,²⁸ to walk away from their old ways of living and enter into the new life with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.²⁹ Paul provides a list of actions to avoid, followed by counteractions that describe how a believer is to live as a reflection of Jesus Christ and the new creation.³⁰ Paul writes the vice list as a continuation of the development of the structure of the universal Christian family.³¹ As part of the universal Christian family, the believer is to “walk in a way worthy” (Eph. 4:1) of being an honorable member of the universal Christian family.³²

4:17–19

Verse 17 continues the teaching started in Ephesians 4:1 before expanding upon unity in and as the body of Christ.³³ Paul opens the section on improper actions by declaring that the

²⁸ Charles H. Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, Paideia: Commentaries on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 16. Paul had to develop a mutual understanding between the Gentile converts and the new Christian community. Therefore, Ephesians had to reflect a cultural reference point, which in the case of Paul was from his background as a devout follower of the Jewish religion. Paul was not necessarily Judaizing the new Gentile Christians. He provided the basics of ethical standards within the Christian community.

²⁹ Lau, *The Politics of Peace*, 111–13. Paul points out that there are differences in the accepted social ethics between the Gentile community and the Christian community. Each had adopted a set of rules to which members of the community would adhere to maintain social cohesion. Lau concludes that the vice list in Ephesians is another example of the new Christian community setting itself apart culturally and politically. Under the direction of Paul, the new Christian community was integrating Jews and Gentiles into a new people group under specific guidelines to ensure the new community stood apart from society as a whole.

³⁰ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 57. As the “new creation,” Christians cannot be satisfied with the status quo of secular society. As the new temple dwelling of the Spirit, the Christian is to act in a way that brings honor to God and keeps the temple pure.

³¹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 268.

³² Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 92–95. The new believer is to shed the old life and accept living within the ethical structure of the new temple dwelling of the Spirit. Lincoln states that by adhering to a standard set of ethics, the new Christians could form a cohesive unit within society. The individual has been transformed with the indwelling of the Spirit; the community of believers has also changed.

³³ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 216; Barker and Kohlenberger, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 771; Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians*, 197; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 291; Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, 418; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 268.

actions accepted within the secular society stand counter to what God expects from His chosen people, the universal Christian family under Jesus Christ.³⁴ The way of the Gentiles is that of futility and only leads to separation from the family of God. As part of the opening section for the teaching on improper and proper action, verses 17–19 paint a general picture of the improper lifestyle permissible for secular Gentiles.³⁵ Since the converts in Ephesus were mainly Gentiles and Paul came from the early Christian movement of mainly Jewish converts, the generalization of how the Gentiles lived would have affected how Paul approached teaching the life alteration that needed to occur to be part of the universal Christian family.³⁶

As the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit, the believer can allow the Spirit to enact changes from within the individual to the community.³⁷ The changes move the believer from the old identity into the household of God. Failure to make lifestyle changes leads to alienation from God like the non-Christian societies and communities.³⁸ The alienation comes from the ignorance resulting from living with a “hardened heart” (Eph. 4:18).³⁹ Paul states that continuing to walk as the secular Gentiles do is to walk in darkness. The person is “darkened in their

³⁴ Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 133–34. Paul was generalizing the Gentiles’ situation. Not all Gentiles were immoral or lived according to Paul’s vice list. Stott states that while not all Gentiles acted a certain way, there still was a typical view of how pagans acted, much like there is a particular way in which Christians are to act. The vices tolerated among the pagans do not fit within the Christian community.

³⁵ Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 122.

³⁶ Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*, 60; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 216. Paul, Jewish by birth and trained as a Pharisee, would have had the viewpoint that the pagan lifestyle of the Gentiles was morally inferior. The Gentile converts previously followed a false god or gods that allowed immoral actions and idolatry.

³⁷ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 269.

³⁸ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 418.

³⁹ Ernest Best, *Essays on Ephesians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 140, Best writes that a complete culture change was needed for the new converts since they had previously lived within the world of darkness. The new converts would have been influenced by their neighbors and their families to continue living in ways that were considered normal before their conversion into Christianity. The entire mindset of the new convert needed to be changed from the futility of living within the darkness to understanding truth in Jesus Christ.

understanding.”⁴⁰ Because of a darkened understanding, the life of the secular Gentile is futile and meaningless due to their separation from God and life within the new creation household of God established by Jesus Christ.⁴¹

While Ephesians 4:17–19 continues Paul’s thoughts on the unity of the universal Christian family, it also covers disengaging or not unifying with the secular society. As part of the universal Christian family, the individual member cannot maintain a place within secular society⁴² and must establish proper boundaries to differentiate them from the secular world.⁴³ Paul establishes the boundaries within the following few verses of Ephesians.

4:20–24

In direct contrast to the futile Gentile way of life is the wisdom and understanding of knowing Jesus Christ and living as members of the household of God.⁴⁴ While Paul is writing to converts to Christianity, the Christians in Ephesus have already heard the gospel and the ethical requirements of becoming a follower of Christ. With “that is not the way you learned Christ” (4:20), Paul makes it known that he is writing the letter to the Ephesians to the portion of the population that had already at least heard of Jesus Christ.⁴⁵

The terms *learned* (4:20) and *taught* (4:21) have no clear consensus within scholarship on the level at which the Ephesians understood the ethical requirements of living within the household of God under the headship of Jesus Christ. Barker and Kohlenberger state that the

⁴⁰ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 421.

⁴¹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 271–72.

⁴² Osborne, *Ephesians*, 137.

⁴³ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 294.

⁴⁴ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 279–80.

⁴⁵ Barker and Kohlenberger, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 772; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 217; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 426; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 276; Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 123; Roberts and McKnight, *Ephesians*, 150; Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 136–37.

Ephesians had already received enough teaching to be considered full disciples of Christ.⁴⁶

Lincoln concludes that since there is no parallel teaching to be found among the other verses in Ephesians, Paul understood the Christians in Ephesus to have only heard of the tradition of the gospel.⁴⁷ Witherington interprets the verses to indicate that Paul was aware that the Ephesians understood the ethical implications of knowing Christ to the point of knowing how Jesus would want them to act, but falls short of claiming that the Ephesians had reached the point of being disciples of Christ.⁴⁸ Talbert and Merkle understand “learned” to mean in the ancient context that the Ephesians knew Christ as the living example, and thus, they were to submit to Christ’s rule by responding to Jesus as the ideal ruler.⁴⁹ Within the context of the letter, it is probable that the Ephesians had received the gospel message and were in the process of becoming disciples of Christ. While they had the basic understanding and knew that there were ethical implications of following Christ, Paul had to provide the education that the Ephesians needed to continue maturing in their faith. Likewise, the new converts needed to understand purity to live within the structure of the universal Christian family, accomplished later with the section on the *haustafeln*. For this dissertation, the author interprets the vice lists provided by Paul in the following verses through the positions put forth by Lincoln and Witherington.

⁴⁶ Barker and Kohlenberger, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 772.

⁴⁷ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 279–80. For Lincoln, the Ephesian Christians were close to reaching the point of full discipleship. They had heard the gospel and were in the process of understanding the implications of following Christ. They were at the end of the process outlined in Acts 5:42 because they had received the Spirit, so they would be proclaiming Christ house to house and would display the ethical traits of Christian living.

⁴⁸ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*. 297.

⁴⁹ Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 140–41; Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 123. This position also falls short of declaring the Ephesian Christians as full disciples of Christ. While they understood that there were different ethics, the Ephesian Christians were focused more on the living rule of Christ. They had not fully grasped the application of ethical living within the household of God.

Paul finishes his general teachings in verses 22 through 24 by instructing the Christians in Ephesus that because they learned of Christ, the time has come for them to discard the “old self” and begin living as the “new self, created in the likeness of God.” The metaphor of putting on and taking off garments Paul used is common throughout Scripture.⁵⁰ Clothing is closely associated with a person’s identity within their respective culture.⁵¹ The old garment or self has been corrupted by deceitful desires (4:22) that look to feed the depraved cravings of deceit and greed continuously.⁵² To continue as the old self is to reject knowledge and truth in favor of darkness and depravity.⁵³ The way to remove the old self is to engage in the constant renewal of the mind (4:23).⁵⁴ The need for constant renewal is connected with the depiction of living within deceit and darkness.⁵⁵ There are two main thoughts on the interpretation of “renewed in the spirit of your mind.” Lincoln, Merkle, and Osborne adhere to an interpretation that the “spirit of the mind” is explicitly the human spirit.⁵⁶ Arnold, Barker, Kohlenberger, Bruce, Thielman et al., and Hoehner believe the section is best interpreted as the renewal of the mind by the Holy Spirit.⁵⁷ While it is possible that Paul was focusing on the human spirit, it is only through the Holy Spirit

⁵⁰ Barker and Kohlenberger, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 272.

⁵¹ Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, Stott explains that even within the ancient context, garments were closely linked to a person’s role and identity within society. To remove the garment of the old self was to step out of the previous group identification.

⁵² Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 304.

⁵³ Hollis, “Become Full in the Spirit,” 38.

⁵⁴ Barth et al., *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 101. The process of renewal is ongoing. Becoming what a Christian is called to be requires a constant evaluation of the mind not to fall back into the old sinful life. While the Christian is still a sinner, much like the nonbeliever, the Christian understands that they cannot continue to hold onto the sinful way of life.

⁵⁵ Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 124.

⁵⁶ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 286-87; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 143; Osborne, *Ephesians*, 145. While Paul was writing about the human spirit and condition, each scholar adheres to the idea renewing the human spirit of the mind can only happen through the work of the Holy Spirit.

⁵⁷ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 279–80; Barker and Kohlenberger, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 772; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 218; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 305; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 435–36.

that the human mind can be renewed from depraved darkness. The renewal being brought forth by the Holy Spirit instead of the human spirit is also a better fit within the context of the letter to the Ephesians.

With the renewal of the spirit, the Christian can put on the “new self”, which is a created being made in the likeness of the holy and righteous God, a theme that is continued in the *haustafeln* with the structure of the new creation family under the headship of Jesus Christ. While the “old self” is in a dark and depraved state, the “new self” is a creation deemed holy and righteous because of the Creator.⁵⁸ The new self emulates the ministry and actions of Jesus Christ and is declared righteous and holy.⁵⁹ Having established a broad definition of the old self and new self, Paul follows with the specific actions that the old self portrayed along with the counteraction that is required of the new self and of the new creation universal Christian family in Christ.

4:25–32

Paul did not provide the vices in verses 25–32 in a straight list. Instead, Paul names the correct counteraction after each vice. Paul focused on four main sinful actions that the readers of Ephesians were to put off: speaking falsely or lying, anger, stealing, and using improper language.

Paul informed Ephesians that as the new creation made in God’s likeness, lying to their neighbor was no longer an acceptable practice. The specific actions of truthful speech parallels Zechariah 8:16, where God’s chosen people are to speak truthfully to one another.⁶⁰ The heart of

⁵⁸ Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 307.

⁵⁹ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 219–20.

⁶⁰ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 300; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 147; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 219.

lying and falsehood is a rejection of God.⁶¹ As members of the universal Christian family, lying would bring dishonor to the family and portray God as untrustworthy, much like the pagan gods.⁶² The counteraction of falsehood and lies is to speak the truth (4:25).⁶³

In 4:26, Paul breaks away from the formula of negative followed by positive by stating the positive action first.⁶⁴ The emotion of anger is not a negative or sinful action. Paul understood that anger could be a healthy and proper response to a situation.⁶⁵ However, acting out in anger and failing to properly reconcile with the person because the Christian harbors anger are sinful actions.⁶⁶ To counter the possibility of anger turning into sinful action, Paul writes that the angry person should rectify the anger by sundown (4:26). Failure to reconcile the anger gives the devil an opportunity for a foothold in the life of the Christian (4:27).⁶⁷ Prolonged anger can lead to thoughts or actions of revenge. Giving in to thoughts of revenge due to anger is to accept

⁶¹ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 149; Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 299; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 311; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 441. Witherington states that Paul was prodding the new converts in Ephesus to break away from the pagan lie since the new self is a direct image of the God of truth. Along the same lines, Osborne concludes that by remaining in falsehood and lying, Christians were rejecting God to follow Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44). Hoehner identifies a close parallel in Romans 1:25 where a sinful person is noted as exchanging the truth of God to follow lies instead. Thielman et al. also connects the lying nature to following the pagan gods instead of the true God.

⁶² Arnold, *Ephesians*, 292; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 219.

⁶³ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 441–42. As the new creation, the Christian has received the designation of righteous and holy since they are made in the image of God. As a follower of Christ, the Christian is to conduct themselves in a way that reflects the status of righteousness and holiness. By speaking truthfully, the Christian adheres to the status of living within the household of God.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 443.

⁶⁵ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 293–94; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 220.

⁶⁶ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 150–51. Osborne states since even Jesus experienced anger (Mark 3:5), Paul understood that anger could be a righteous and holy emotion. Since anger is a reality, safeguards are in place to keep anger from turning into sin. Paul provides a safeguard by teaching that there needed to be substantial time constraints on when reconciliation would take place.

⁶⁷ Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 313–14. Thielman et al. write that the depiction of the devil gaining an opportunity fits with the Pauline corpus portraying Satan as a “schemer” (Eph. 6:11) that actively engages in trapping people (1 Tim. 3:7; 2 Tim. 2:26). According to Ephesians 4:26–27, holding on to anger beyond the time the sun sets allows the devil the opportunity to offer long-term anger that will result in sinful or mischievous action such as found in Ephesians 4:31.

the opportunity provided by the one who distorts the truth, the devil.⁶⁸ Lincoln states that connected with the first action in Ephesians 4:25, “Anger and falsehood together are a double-edged evil, and work together to perturb the reason. When the soul is continually perturbed, the Lord withdraws from it, and the devil rules it.”⁶⁹ The new temple dwelling of the Spirit needs to stay pure. Sinful actions may not necessarily equate to the evacuation of the Spirit from the believer. Yet, unresolved anger allows the devil to gain a foothold to further his goals, hindering the Christian from works for the kingdom of God.⁷⁰

The third adverse action Paul addressed was stealing. The eighth commandment forbids God’s chosen people from stealing (Ex. 20:15). Stealing causes harm to individual victims and can also have consequences for local economies.⁷¹ While all community groups considered stealing immoral, it was not uncommon for laborers, especially agricultural laborers in the changing season, to supplement their incomes by secretly taking from their employers.⁷² Paul addressed stealing in 1 Corinthians 6:10, stating that thieves will not have an inheritance into the kingdom of God.⁷³ Since Christians have been adopted into the family of God, complete with the inheritance that entails, stealing is directly counter to the status of being the new temple dwelling of the Spirit.

⁶⁸ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 446.

⁶⁹ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 302–3.

⁷⁰ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 294–95.

⁷¹ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 152.

⁷² Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 315; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 295. Even after converting to Christianity, many from the labor and enslaved classes may have continued to steal from their employers. The Greek *κλέπτω* is best understood as covert or secret stealing, not the action of a violent robbery. While violent robbery is also forbidden, Paul was most likely addressing acting in secret to steal property that belongs to others within the community.

⁷³ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 152; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 295.

Instead of stealing, the Christian is to engage in fruitful, honest labor to benefit the community (4:28). The Christian is not to gain without putting forth the required work.⁷⁴ By working to help others within the universal Christian family, the healthy members can support the family members in Christ who cannot work physically.⁷⁵ Doing good works and generously providing for the less fortunate reflect Christ. Paul provided the example of working with his own hands and not being a burden on the communities where he preached (Acts 20:34).⁷⁶ The appeal to produce good work and to share with those who may be in need not only leads the thief away from their previous behavior but also provides the teaching that reaching the basic needs of the poor will help in keeping the needy from stealing what may be needed for primary survival purposes.⁷⁷ In this way, the members of the universal Christian family help preserve the shared honor of being members of the family community.

In verse 4:29, Paul refers to verse 25 by addressing how the Christian is to speak and verbally interact with others within the community. The word for the type of communication forbidden by Paul has been translated as “corrupting,” “evil,” “rotten,” or “harmful.”⁷⁸ The Greek σαπρός depicts the verbal interaction that is to be avoided as dead and decaying objects.⁷⁹ Lincoln posits that the language referenced is lewd and obscene but could also include gossip.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 300.

⁷⁵ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 153; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 448; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 295; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 295–96.

⁷⁶ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 221–22.

⁷⁷ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 304.

⁷⁸ Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 151; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 305; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 450; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 316.

⁷⁹ Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 316. Thielman et al. translate σαπρός in the literal sense as rotten, as in fish that has gone bad or plant life that has decayed. If the words had a smell, they would be putrid like that of death. In the New Testament, σαπρός often refers to bad or useless fruit and trees (Matt. 7:17–18; 12:33). Christians engaged in this offensive language were considered as valuable as decaying pieces of fruit.

⁸⁰ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 305.

However, meaning of the language being used goes beyond that of crude sexual innuendo. Paul expands on the prohibition against speaking falsely in verse 25 to include anything that would cause another to stumble or be considered dishonorable to the universal family of God.⁸¹

Offensive speech would cause disunity among the universal Christian family, thereby breaking down the structure of the universal Christian family established in the *haustafeln*.

The correct way to speak to others for the Christian is to speak in a way that builds the community and brings honor to the universal family of God. The Christian has the ultimate example in Jesus Christ in how to communicate and build up others. Even in conflict, the Christian needs to apply the grace that Christ made visible by carefully choosing what is verbalized within the community.⁸² In proper language and with the teaching of Jesus in mind, Paul writes that all will be accountable for the careless words they speak at the time of the final judgment (Matt. 12:36).⁸³ Paul understood that words are powerful, that words can either bring disunity and dishonor or to build community and honor within the universal family.⁸⁴ The universal Christian family has no room for dishonorable language that will cause hardship and anguish.⁸⁵ In all, the Christian needs to speak in a way that shows the grace and honor of the Lord Jesus Christ, strengthening the universal Christian family into a unified and structured household under the headship of Jesus Christ.

Paul concludes the section in Ephesians 4:25–32 with an appeal to the readers to not grieve the Holy Spirit and a summary of improper and proper actions for the members of the

⁸¹ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 153.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 153–54.

⁸³ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 221.

⁸⁴ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 297–98.

⁸⁵ Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 317; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 151; Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 300; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 306; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 451.

household of God. Because of the union between the believer and the Spirit, words and actions counter to the Spirit's fruit cause strain and distress within the internal union.⁸⁶ Likewise, such words and actions would also strain the structure of the universal Christian family.

5:1–5:2

Ephesians 5:1–2 teaches how and why Christians are to put off the old self. These verses describe the living sacrifice of abstaining from vices that grieve the Holy Spirit and possibly hinder others from accepting a relationship with Christ. A point of interest for these verses is the conjunction οὐν. The interpretation of οὐν affects the application of the vice list and has implications for the coming teaching known as the *haustafeln*.

For Lincoln, Arnold, and Merkle, Paul's use of οὐν directly connects the teaching in 5:1–2 to the vice list in the preceding verses.⁸⁷ Lincoln concludes Paul uses γίνεσθε in 4:32 and 5:1 to intentionally draw out the consequences from the previous verses and highlight the act of forgiveness.⁸⁸ Arnold comes to a similar conclusion. Paul highlights the previous verses concerning improper behavior and the counteraction necessary. While forgiveness is a focal point, the primary teaching is that of love. Christians are to love each other unconditionally as God has proven His love.⁸⁹ Merkle connects 4:32 and 5:1, but οὐν also connects 5:1 to the teaching beginning in 4:1.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 452; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 318; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 221.

⁸⁷ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 310; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 301; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 154.

⁸⁸ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 310. Paul's emphasis is on the act of forgiveness. The Christian is an imitator of God the Father, who provided the ultimate forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Now, Christians are to live their lives according to the example of the active forgiveness God provided for them.

⁸⁹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 301. As imitators of God, Christians can only forgive others by understanding and exhibiting the same love that God had modeled through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Arnold states that Paul was reiterating the teaching of Jesus in Luke 6:36 and Matthew 5:44.

⁹⁰ Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 154.

Scholars have also posited that Paul uses the word οὐ̃ν to start a new section or teaching separate from the previous verses. Hoehner believes that the use of οὐ̃ν in 5:1 is such an instance. While Paul begins a new teaching in 5:1–2, he explains the need to imitate God by building from the teaching in the previous three chapters.⁹¹

Thielman et al. explain a third option: that 5:1–2 is not just connected to 4:25–32, but it is the conclusion of the section. Paul finishes his teaching on what the proper action of Christians should look like in reflection of God the Father. Thielman et al. summarize all the actions into the visual of acting as imitators of God the Creator.⁹²

For this dissertation, the term οὐ̃ν is understood to be used as described by Lincoln, Arnold, and Merkle. With οὐ̃ν, Paul was describing imitating the love and forgiveness of God the Father as the appropriate response to the issues that arise when Christians encounter one of the listed vices. Likewise, the transition continues into the *haustafeln* to establish the structure of the immediate family and the unity of the universal Christian family as the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit under the love and direction of Jesus Christ. The section of 4:17–5:21 is part of the broad teaching by Paul on the relational expectations of Christians that includes the immediate family with the addition of the *haustafeln* following in 5:22–6:9.⁹³

⁹¹ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 459. Paul specifically uses the terms οὐ̃ν and γίνεσθε to illustrate that the Christian is to continually be striving to imitate God. While Christians cannot become God, they nevertheless can imitate the love and forgiveness that God has provided through Jesus Christ.

⁹² Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 320. While this view is similar to Lincoln's, Merkle's, and Arnold's, it differs in that Lincoln, Arnold, and Merkle allow for the ethical teaching to continue to be developed by Paul. According to Thielman et al., the vice list and the appropriate ethics section end in 5:1–2, and new teaching begins. This view separates the ethics of the vice list from household structure and function ethics.

⁹³ Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 72. Paul's focus in the vice list and the *haustafeln* was the unity of Christian believers. Relationships needed to be ordered appropriately with rules to follow to foster the unity between believers. Central to the unity of believers is the union of the individual to the Lord Jesus Christ. All behaviors are to be modeled after the example of Jesus. Love and forgiveness are essential for building the unity of the Christian community.

To strengthen the unity of the Christian community, Paul appeals to the unity of the Christian with God the Father through the loving forgiveness that the believer receives through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. As imitators of God, Christians are to provide this same forgiveness and love to the community.⁹⁴ By imitating the love and forgiveness of God, the believers would make it known to the larger society, including the secular world, that the believers belong to the family of God as His children.⁹⁵ Likewise, the example of Christ's sacrifice is highlighted by Paul (Eph. 5:2). The Christian is to love each member of the universal Christian family unconditionally. This love is exhibited by the avoidance of negative actions and the provision of forgiveness to family members when one of the actions from the prior list has been committed.⁹⁶ By engaging in the proper actions of love and forgiveness, the Christian imitates Christ, who provided the fragrant sacrifice that allows the believer to have a union with God.⁹⁷

5:3–5

In Ephesians 5:3–5, Paul communicates the consequences of continuing to act in the old way of sexual impurity and covetousness. By remaining in an unconverted state, the person will find themselves outside the inheritance given to the saints as the adopted children of God.⁹⁸ It is not just the physical act of improper sexual relations that causes an issue. Paul taught that the spoken word alluding to improper sexual activity, even in jest, constitutes impurity. Yet, the speech to avoid was also more than crude joking; it was any foolish or unproductive speech.

⁹⁴ Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 464.

⁹⁵ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 223.

⁹⁶ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 304; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 461–62.

⁹⁷ Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 134. As Talbert concludes, to be an imitator of God requires divine assistance. The Christian receives the aid of the Holy Spirit to imitate God accurately.

⁹⁸ Barth et al., *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 101. Since Christians are members of the family of God, their lives need to be aligned with the kingdom of God. Failure to adhere to the ways of the kingdom result in the loss of the inheritance of eternal life within the kingdom of God.

A familiar problem that spans the ancient culture of the Second Temple period and the current period is sexual immorality. While societal standards may differ regarding what constitutes improper sexual activity, the Christian standard has remained. While πορνεία is often used to denote the act of prostitution, it is generally understood that Paul was referencing any sexual activity outside the marriage relationship of husband and wife.⁹⁹ Within the Second Temple period, it was not unusual for Gentiles to have sexual relations with enslaved people. For the Gentile converts to Christianity, their acceptance of these sexual encounters could pose an obstacle. Some Gentile converts came from religious practices where temple prostitution, incest, and homosexual encounters were a part of life.¹⁰⁰ That Paul connects sexual immorality to covetousness underscores the need for the new converts to stop believing sexual gratification could be pursued outside of wedlock.¹⁰¹ At the core of this instruction is the need to resist the sexual habits the Gentiles formed before hearing the gospel and accepting Christ as Lord.¹⁰² The need to overcome sexual vices also plays a role in how Paul represented the immediate family structure found within the *haustafeln*.

Paul reminds the Ephesians that they are saints since they have converted to Christianity. Since the Ephesian converts are adopted into the universal Christian family, as were the saints, the Ephesians need to pursue holiness and not the impure actions from their previous lifestyle.¹⁰³ The Christian lifestyle is to look different than the surrounding nonbelieving society to the point

⁹⁹ Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 329; Hoehner, *Ephesians* 465; Arnold, *Ephesians* 314–15.

¹⁰⁰ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 315.

¹⁰¹ Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 159.

¹⁰² Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 397.

¹⁰³ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 322.

where no one outside the universal Christian family has the opportunity to accuse the Christian of the vices rightfully.¹⁰⁴

Another way Christians should be distinguishable from the surrounding society is in the way they speak. Paul instructed the Ephesians not to engage in foolish talk, obscene language, or crude jokes. Previously, in Ephesians 4:29, Paul instructs the Christian to use speech that builds the community and unifies the universal Christian family in Jesus Christ. Here in 5:4, Paul highlights issues that cause division or dishonor to the universal Christian family.¹⁰⁵ As members of the universal Christian family, believers must conduct their speech to reflect their exalted status.¹⁰⁶ The Christian is to praise God in thanksgiving. Christians should be distinguishable to the outside community through their expressions of gratitude toward God.¹⁰⁷

Paul expresses the seriousness of sexual impurity and idolatry in Ephesians 5:5. Anyone who engages in the vices listed by Paul has remained in the prior way of life and does not have an inheritance in the kingdom of God.¹⁰⁸ Paul's stark warning does not remove hope from the

¹⁰⁴ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 315. Arnold states that naming a vice or violation to a person is akin to placing a mark against the family name and honor and could affect the status of the family within society. As holy ones in the family of God, Christians are to live in such a way that none of the vices can be named against the individual or the universal family of God.

¹⁰⁵ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 322–23. Just like the impure actions that can be named against an offender, how a person speaks also affects their reputation within society. A person's words can bring dishonor to the family name, in the same way as performing a dishonorable action. Speech and action are interconnected, and both require care to avoid bringing dishonor to the immediate and universal Christian families.

¹⁰⁶ Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 331.

¹⁰⁷ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 317.

¹⁰⁸ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 164–65, Osborne suggests that Paul addressed converts to Christianity that were attempting to intertwine their previous beliefs into their Christian faith. Since even after conversion, the Christian is still susceptible to sin, the message of Paul is that once the person accepts Christ and receives His grace and forgiveness, the Christian has to willfully separate from the immoral actions in which they previously engaged. Failure to disengage from the previous lifestyle is a rejection of Christ. Therefore, since the person has rejected Christ, they are not included in the inheritance of the kingdom of God and eternal life.

offender. The person involved in the sinful ways described by Paul still has the opportunity to repent and actively take part in the transformation into the new life under Christ.¹⁰⁹

Central to many vices is idolatry or worshipping something other than the one true God. There is no consensus among scholars on what the term *idolatry* applies to specifically in Ephesians 5:5. The term *idolatry* may cover all of the issues mentioned in 5:5, or it may only apply to the vice of greed that appears immediately before the word *idolatry*. Osborne, Merkle, Arnold, Hoehner, Bruce, Best, and Thielman et al. conclude that since Paul used a singular relative pronoun for *idolator*, it can only be attached to the specific vice of coveting or greed.¹¹⁰ Abbott, Witherington, and Lincoln conclude that the pronoun connects to coveting, a common denominator of sexual immorality and greed, making both sexual impurity and greed idolatry.¹¹¹ Sexual impurity can also be considered a form of greed. Lincoln pointed out that “because of the context, ‘covetousness’ should also be taken as the sort of unrestrained sexual greed whereby a person assumes that others exist for their gratification. The tenth commandment contains the injunction against coveting one’s neighbor’s wife.”¹¹² At the heart of sexual impurity is the greed to satisfy one’s sexual desires instead of keeping God’s commandments.¹¹³ Therefore, sexual

¹⁰⁹ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 225. Bruce points out that the offender initially is excluded from the kingdom due to their failure to move away from unrighteousness. However, with repentance, the person moves away from unrighteousness and into the family of God. The warning about not inheriting eternal life in the kingdom of God is indicative of the situation into which Paul wrote. The temptation to indulge in the ways of the pagans surrounding the new converts would have been tremendous.

¹¹⁰ Best, *Ephesians*, 482; Osborne, *Ephesians*, 164; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 162; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 318; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 470; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 225; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 332–33.

¹¹¹ Abbott, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 150; Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 308; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 322.

¹¹² Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 322.

¹¹³ Sexual greed was visible in how enslavers treated enslaved people as sexual objects for personal use. Understanding sexual impurity as a form of greed and idolatry gives context to the instructions Paul gives to the enslaver of the household concerning the well-being of the enslaved person in the *haustafeln* and how the members of the immediate family were to operate as the universal Christian family and the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

impurity and the desire to acquire money and possessions are both forms of greed that constitute idolatry. This form of covetousness also posed a problem to the structure of the universal Christian family, later addressed within the *haustafeln*.

5:6–14

In Ephesians 5:6–14, Paul associates wrongful actions and being deceived with belonging to the darkness or the pre-conversion life. On the opposite side is the kingdom of God, or the light. As members of the universal Christian family, the Christian is not only to walk in the light but also to expose and not participate in the unfruitful works produced within the darkness. The Christian is not to participate in the vices attributed to the way of the Gentiles. Still, the Christian is also not to speak of the vices because they bring shame to the immediate family and universal Christian family.

Paul informs the Christians in Ephesus that since they have converted, there will be people who attempt to lure them back in the sinful actions of their previous lifestyle through deceptive speech. Paul does not indicate who the people are who will use deceptive speech. Still, two prominent positions concerning their identity are false teachers within the church¹¹⁴ or pagans attempting to lure the Christians back to the pre-conversion life.¹¹⁵ Regardless of the identity of these individuals, acceptance of the deception makes the Christian partners with the pagan Gentiles and results the Christian sharing a fate with the Gentiles in the coming wrath of

¹¹⁴ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 226; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 334. Bruce and Thielman et al. use the connection of Ephesians and Colossians and Paul's previous mention of false teaching within Ephesians as the reason the reader should interpret 5:6–7 as an issue of the deception of false teachers within the church.

¹¹⁵ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 325; Osborne, *Ephesians*, 165; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 320; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 472. With this position, the Christians in Ephesus see that people still adhering to the sinful vices of the pagan world seem to have gone unpunished. Because of the lack of visible punishment or anguish, they may be tempted by the idle words and invitations to participate by the people engaging in the sinful activities. Paul does not have a specific person or people as the perpetrators of the deceitful speech. Instead, Paul is providing broad teaching as a general warning as a way to keep the Christians in Ephesus pure and honorable within the universal Christian family.

God. One does not need to avoid all interaction, including friendship, with the pagan Gentiles. However, listening to their deceptive speech without countering it with the truth of the gospel puts the Christian into the position of partaking in the sinful actions that incur the wrath of God as a son or daughter of disobedience.¹¹⁶ While the deceiver articulates the lie that God has not and does not judge, Paul encourages the believer to see the content of their speech as empty and unfruitful.¹¹⁷

In 5:9–14, Paul likens the contrast between the pagan life and the kingdom of God to the darkness and the light. To continue to engage in the vices of the pagan world is to continue to live in the darkness away from the light that is Christ. Along with the darkness and light analogy, Paul continues to express the need to avoid unproductive and unclean speech. The Christian is to discern the difference between the lies of the darkness and the truth of the gospel light. Discernment occurs with the knowledge of the difference between sin and false teaching and God’s will.¹¹⁸ It is not unusual for Paul to use contrasting elements within his writings. Hollis aptly explains, “The importance of the contrast between the darkness and light found within Ephesians. The broad, overriding contrast is eschatological, a contrast of the present age and the age to come representing holy and evil forces in heavenly realms, emphasizing the eternal, heavenly, and eschatological. Ephesians contrasts the world believers once lived in with the world of their present existence and their respective patterns of living.”¹¹⁹ Believers indwelt by the Holy Spirit and adopted into the universal Christian family must act in a way pleasing or honorable to God. Speaking in a manner reflective of God’s kingdom and participating in fruitful

¹¹⁶ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 166.

¹¹⁷ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 473.

¹¹⁸ Hollis, “Become Full in the Spirit,” 38–39.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 39–40, 42.

actions are pleasing to God. This teaching is like Paul's writing in Romans 12:1, which states believers must no longer conform to the world's ways.¹²⁰ As a member of the universal Christian family, the individual believer is to reject the lies of the darkness. Instead, they should remember their status in Christ by acting honorably in the light of Christ by helping others mature in their relationship in Christ.¹²¹

5:15–21

To walk in the light takes wisdom and care. In 5:15–21, Paul explains that the wise live filled with the Holy Spirit. The foolish ignore or do not understand the will of the Lord and partake in excessive alcohol use that inhibits their ability to act in an honorable manner. As members of the universal Christian family, believers must show their union with the Spirit by providing outward expressions of worship and thanksgiving to God. The wisdom of the believer comes from submission to Jesus Christ.

Paul uses another contrast when he highlights the difference between being filled with wine and being filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul's discussion of overindulgence in wine may seem out of place within this specific section. However, with the context of the following passage on outward worship within the universal Christian family (Eph. 5:19–20), Paul is presumably contrasting proper Christian worship with the pagan culture in Ephesus, most likely the cult of Dionysus.¹²² Christians are not to partake in the folly of drunkenness.¹²³ The pure worship of God can have the appearance of the believers being intoxicated, like the accusation

¹²⁰ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 480.

¹²¹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 326–327.

¹²² Osborne, *Ephesians*, 180; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 342; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 357–58. The cult of Dionysus routinely partook in ritual drunkenness. Often, the gatherings would devolve into debauchery due to the inebriated state of the cult members.

¹²³ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 344.

against the disciples during Pentecost.¹²⁴ To lose control of oneself due to drunkenness is the act of a foolish person. The Christian instead relinquishes control to the Holy Spirit in submission to Jesus Christ to do the will of God.¹²⁵ Members of the universal Christian family are to avoid being in a compromised state from drunkenness. Instead, they are to gather and praise God by being filled with the Holy Spirit. As members of the universal Christian family, the believers ultimately must submit to one another under the direction and headship of Jesus Christ as the new creation universal Christian family.

Colossians 3:1–17

In Chapter 1, the authorship of Colossians and Ephesians was addressed; the traditional view on authorship is presupposed for this dissertation. Concurrent with the authorship debate is the connection that Colossians and Ephesians share. Whether the author of both letters was Paul or pseudonymous, there is an evident sharing of material between the two letters.¹²⁶ The purpose of the letter to the Colossians was to address false teaching that was misleading the predominantly Gentile converts of Colossae.¹²⁷ In response to the false teachings being heard by the Colossians, Paul explains that everything in life centers on Christ, not any earthly object or philosophy.¹²⁸ In verse 3:1, the discussion of being raised with Christ transitions into what is needed for purity and the importance of centering all actions and thoughts on Jesus Christ.

¹²⁴ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 230; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 344.

¹²⁵ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 500.

¹²⁶ Hultin, “Watch Your Mouth,” 200. The standard view is that Ephesians was written after Colossians. If the author of Ephesians was pseudonymous, the author was familiar with and heavily used Colossians when writing Ephesians. However, if Paul authored both Colossians and Ephesians, then Ephesians was written shortly after Colossians. In this view, Ephesians expands upon and changes some of the material found within Colossians.

¹²⁷ O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, xxxi.

¹²⁸ Douglas J. Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Chicago: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008), 172.

3:1–4

Paul instructs the Colossians to turn their focus to the things above instead of following false teachings and indulging in the sinful pleasures within the pagan society. The believer has died with Christ and will appear with Christ in glory since Christ has ascended into Heaven at the right hand of God.¹²⁹ To reject the false teachings at Colossae, the believer must seek the wisdom as one raised with Christ and a member of the universal Christian family under the headship of Jesus Christ.

By seeking what is above, Christians reflect their status in the resurrected Christ.¹³⁰ By doing this, the believer must think about the kingdom of God instead of the activities found within the surrounding pagan society.¹³¹ Since the believer has risen with Christ, as symbolized through baptism, the believer's focus must change accordingly. Intellectually and spiritually, the believer is to seek the virtues of the kingdom of God and reflect their union with Christ by not concerning themselves with the earthly decrees set forth by the pagan societies.¹³² The interests of Christ and the kingdom of God are also the believer's interests due to their union with Christ.¹³³ The exhortation by Paul to the Colossians bears similarity to Matthew 6:33, where the

¹²⁹ Murray J. Harris, *Colossians and Philemon* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2010), 110.

¹³⁰ G. K. Beale, Robert Yarbrough, and Joshua Jipp, *Colossians and Philemon*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019), 115. Since the believer has risen with Christ who ascended into Heaven, the believer likewise has been seated with Christ in Heaven. Therefore, the believer must know and understand their position in Christ and seek what is from above where they reside with Christ.

¹³¹ W. R. Nicholson, *Colossians: Oneness with Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1903), 219; Marianne Meye Thompson, *Colossians & Philemon* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2005), 68–69.

¹³² John Paul Heil, *Colossians: Encouragement to Walk in All Wisdom as Holy Ones in Christ* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2010), 137; O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 157; Paul E. Deterding, *Colossians* (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2003), 137; John Phillips, *Exploring Colossians & Philemon: An Expository Commentary*, The John Phillips Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2002), 162–63.

¹³³ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 93.

disciples are informed to seek the kingdom of God above everything else.¹³⁴ That means that all aspects of life need to be conducted out of submission to the lordship of Jesus Christ. No longer is the believer to partake in the actions that are not fitting of God's kingdom.¹³⁵ Paul addresses actions to avoid in the next set of verses, often referred to as the vice list.

3:5–11

After reminding the believers in Colossae that they belong to the kingdom of God in union with the risen Christ as members of the universal Christian family, Paul instructs the believers to put their past earthly way of life to death. The past actions committed by the believer, and all who currently partake in the actions, are subject to God's coming judgment and wrath (Col. 3:6). By putting to death their old ways, the believer transforms into the new self in God's image (Col. 3:10). The image of God encompasses people from all nations. It is not exclusive to one nationality, gender, or social status.

There are two lists of vices, found in verses 5 and 8. Each list contains five vices that incur the wrath of God.¹³⁶ The vice lists in Colossians parallel those in Ephesians, addressed above. Even though the lists in Colossians are condensed compared to the lists in Ephesians, Paul addresses each vice similarly. The first list consists of sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness. All these vices fall under the sin of idolatry. The negative actions listed by Paul are reflective of the pagan past shared by many of the believers in Colossae and render the person unclean.¹³⁷ The second set of vices includes anger, wrath, malice, slander, and

¹³⁴ Clinton E. Arnold, *The Colossian Syncretism: The Interface between Christianity and Folk Belief at Colossae* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2019). 305.

¹³⁵ David E. Garland, *Colossians, Philemon* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 1998), 146.

¹³⁶ Moo, *The Letters*, 179.

¹³⁷ Nicholson, *Colossians: Oneness with Christ*, 223–24.

obscene language. Paul teaches that Christians must carefully choose what they speak and keep in check the emotions that prompt unproductive and harmful speech.¹³⁸

In verse 3:5, the term “put to death” connects with the previous teaching that the believer has died with Christ. Since the believer has died with Christ, the old way of life should have died at the moment of conversion.¹³⁹ Once people have accepted Christ as Lord and Savior, they enter into a unique union with Christ. Because of the union with Christ, the believer must move away from sinful actions. Yet, the believer is not on their own to put to death the sinful actions of the past life. The union with Christ is also empowering, helping move the believer from the old life into the new life in Christ.¹⁴⁰

The first issue Paul addresses in the vice list is sexual immorality. Paul states the pagan rituals and actions associated with sexual intercourse are part of the old life.¹⁴¹ The consensus among scholars is that the sexual immorality Paul mentioned includes any sexual activity outside marriage.¹⁴² However, there are differing views on sexual impurity. While adhering to the view on adultery, Balabanski expands the definition of sexual impurity by acknowledging that not only is the action under scrutiny but the desire to commit the infraction. The desire leads to

¹³⁸ Moo, *The Letters*, 186–87.

¹³⁹ Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 117; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 99; Beale, Yarbrough, and Jipp, *Colossians and Philemon*, 215.

¹⁴⁰ Moo, *The Letters*, 180. The believer’s union with Christ leads them to receive empowerment from the Holy Spirit. By putting to death the old way of life, the believer is yielding to the guidance of the Spirit and appropriately responding to the call to follow Christ.

¹⁴¹ Heil, *Colossians*, 141–42. Heil mentions that the approach Paul takes on sexual immorality comes from Paul’s Jewish background. Paul attempts to get the new converts with pagan backgrounds to adhere to the Jewish standards for sexual interaction. While Christianity does have inarguably strong ties to Judaism, Paul was not necessarily attempting to Judaize the converts in Colossae. The main point Paul establishes was that any sexual conduct outside of the marriage of one man to one woman was adultery. Any form of adultery is unacceptable and will ultimately bring forth God’s judgment. By having union with Christ and adhering to the union of marriage to a spouse, the believer is keeping the temple of the Spirit clean and is seeking what is right within the kingdom of God.

¹⁴² Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*. 118; Moo, *The Letters*, 181; Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 149; O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 181–82.

exploitation unbecoming of the temple of the Holy Spirit. It is disruptive to the unity and structure of the universal Christian family under the headship of Jesus Christ.¹⁴³ Bruce takes a more literal approach to the Greek, stating that the prohibition against sexual impurity refers to engaging with harlots or prostitutes.¹⁴⁴ Within the context of the believer as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit, sexual immorality is best understood as any sexual act outside of marriage.

The next vice that Paul addresses is impurity. The term “impurity” can apply to any form of moral corruption. However, *akatharsia* is often connected to sins of a sexual nature.¹⁴⁵ The impurity is related to sexual immorality, which causes a strain on the marriage relationship between husband and wife.¹⁴⁶ Harris concludes that the connotation of impurity includes unlawful sexual relations that make a person unclean.¹⁴⁷ However, Paul was writing to mostly pagan converts, and it would be difficult for the new converts to grasp what was considered unclean or unlawful unless they were familiar with the Torah. The term “unlawful” existed in Roman law, which is different from the laws of Judaism. It is more likely that Paul was

¹⁴³ Balabanski, *Colossians: An Eco-Stoic Reading*, 137–38.

¹⁴⁴ Bruce, *The Epistles*. Bruce also states that a case can be made that *sexual impurity* refers to sexual irregularity in general. With this view, the term *sexual irregularity* is ambiguous at best. It was not considered irregular even by ancient Jewish standards for enslavers to be given enslaved people for sexual intercourse and procreation.

¹⁴⁵ Moo, *The Letters*, 181; Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 118. The impurity reveals the person’s character, signifying that the person lacks control over the desire for sexual passion. An inability to control one’s desires leads to the uncleanness of the new temple and a strained relationship with the Holy Spirit.

¹⁴⁶ Grant R. Osborne, *Colossians & Philemon: Verse by Verse* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016). 96–97.

¹⁴⁷ Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 118.

instructing the believers in Colossae that sexual interaction outside of marriage does make one unclean. The term “unlawful” was likely not intended or used by Paul within the situation.¹⁴⁸

Following impurity, Paul addresses the issue of passion or lust, which is closely connected to the vice of evil desire. It is not that sexual desire is sinful.¹⁴⁹ The qualifier of “evil” clarifies that the passion and desire are misdirected and result in adultery.¹⁵⁰ The desire is self-serving; the person craves more sexual attention.¹⁵¹ It is the emotional response of lust and evil desire that leads to the actions of sexual immorality and impurity.¹⁵² By “putting to death, “the selfish desire, the believer in avoiding the first mentioned vices.

Finally, in this first set of vices, Paul addresses the core of the previously named sins: the issue of covetousness and, ultimately, idolatry. The self-centered, selfish desire to acquire intimacy outside of marriage is a form of idolatry.¹⁵³ For the Colossians to participate in the sexual activities from their previous pagan life would mean they had elevated their desires above worshipping God.¹⁵⁴ Any form of idolatry is unacceptable for anyone adopted into the universal Christian family who holds the status of being the new temple dwelling of the Spirit. Idolatry ultimately leads to the person facing the wrath of God and being separated from the universal Christian family structured under the headship of Jesus Christ.

¹⁴⁸ Chapter 2 provided the background on the differences in lawful conduct within the households and the power held by the head of the house. What was acceptable under Roman law was not always acceptable under Jewish laws and regulations. Sexual relationships involving people not married or between two people of close relations were not considered unlawful by the Romans.

¹⁴⁹ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 148.

¹⁵⁰ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 100.

¹⁵¹ Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 118.

¹⁵² Osborne, *Colossians & Philemon*, 98.

¹⁵³ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 176; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 100; Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 148; Beale, Yarbrough, and Jipp, *Colossians and Philemon*, 215. The desire is overwhelming to the point that the believer essentially seeks to quench the passion and replaces their relationship with God with fulfilling their selfish desire.

¹⁵⁴ Moo, *The Letters*, 182.

In verses 8 and 9, the focus moves to everyday interpersonal encounters. The sins of anger, wrath, malice, obscene talk, slander, and lying are not becoming of the renewed “new person” who now conforms to the image of God. These vices directly impact others within the immediate and universal Christian families, as well as the structure of the family later provided in the *haustafeln*. Anger, wrath, and malice are emotional responses, while obscene talk and lying are the manifestations of emotional responses. Christians are to engage in speech that builds up others. Succumbing to anger and speaking rashly in a way that harms another does not conform to creation in the image of God.¹⁵⁵ The speech in question is not just a minor outburst. It is ongoing behavior that alters relationships.¹⁵⁶ Continuous use of foul language or uncontrolled angry outbursts hinder the ability to foster healthy relationships within the universal Christian family.¹⁵⁷

At the heart of the change in the believer is the believer’s process of conforming to the image of God as the new self. The new creation is not bound by human constructs of gender, nationality, or social status.¹⁵⁸ The new self is internally changed under the kingdom of God and not by the human social construct.¹⁵⁹ The believer is to conform to their new identity,¹⁶⁰ and this change can only happen under the guidance of the Holy Spirit due to the unique union the believer has with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.¹⁶¹ The change is facilitated by the Spirit and

¹⁵⁵ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 149; Moo, *The Letters*, 185–86.

¹⁵⁶ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 177–78.

¹⁵⁷ Heil, *Colossians*, 148; Balabanski, *Colossians: An Eco-Stoic Reading*, 140; Beale, Yarbrough, and Jipp, *Colossians and Philemon*, 217.

¹⁵⁸ Thornhill, “To the Jew First,” 283–84. The adoption of the Gentiles into the family of God is expanded upon in Ephesians. Thornhill explains Paul’s teaching that since the Gentile converts had heard the gospel and responded, they are now sealed into the promise by the Holy Spirit.

¹⁵⁹ O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 191.

¹⁶⁰ Deterding, *Colossians*, 151.

¹⁶¹ Thompson, *Colossians & Philemon*, 75–77.

occurs as the believer sets their the mind on the kingdom of God instead of the previous life. Along with the change in the individual is a change in the structure of the family unit, which becomes the new creation universal family in Jesus Christ.

3:12–17

Following the two sets of vices, Paul presents the proper actions reflective of the believer being in union with Christ. The believer should have a compassionate heart and display the qualities of kindness, humility, meekness, patience, and forgiveness. Just as the believer must “put off” the old ways, Paul teaches that the believers are to “put on” the ways of Jesus Christ and be the new self. The Colossians are to show their transformed state and status of being within the universal Christian family.¹⁶²

The term *compassionate heart* refers to a person’s innermost part. Rendered in the literal sense, the Greek translates as “bowels of mercy/compassion.” In the Second Temple period, the bowels were believed to be the originating place of emotions.¹⁶³ A compassionate heart is the opposite of the self-centered actions and emotions in the vice lists. It takes a compassionate heart to build unity within the community and the universal Christian family.¹⁶⁴

Paul also mentions kindness as one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). Kindness is also a reoccurring teaching of Jesus.¹⁶⁵ Christians must have a genuine concern for the well-being of

¹⁶² Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 130.

¹⁶³ Moo, *The Letters*, 194; Osborne, *Colossians & Philemon*, 106.

¹⁶⁴ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 152; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 105–6. Bruce states that the Colossians are being reminded of the mercy that God has provided. Because of God’s mercy, the believers in Colossae are to extend mercy to others within the community.

¹⁶⁵ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 105.

their neighbors as defined by Jesus (Luke 10:25-37). By showing kindness, the Christian demonstrates the goodness of God.¹⁶⁶

In an honor-driven society, such as found in the Second Temple period, humility and meekness would be a difficult lesson for the new converts. In a society where prestige was at a premium and boasting was expected to attain status, boasting would strain personal relationships, including the relationship pairs within the *haustafeln*.¹⁶⁷ However, humility and meekness are integral in the family of God (Mic. 6:8; Isa. 57:15; Matt. 11:29; Phil. 2:3).¹⁶⁸ To the Greeks and Romans, however, humility and meekness were signs of weakness. Ultimately, it was Jesus who modeled true humility, and Christians under the guidance of the Holy Spirit are to reflect humility from the example of Jesus.

The fifth virtue of Christian living is patience. Patience ties into the other virtues and is counter to anger and wrath. The believer exhibiting patience does not succumb to doing wrong in moments of anger.¹⁶⁹ By modeling the patience of God, the Christian actively helps build unity within the universal Christian family.¹⁷⁰ Practicing patience is a reoccurring theme throughout the New Testament (2 Cor. 6:6; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:2; Col. 1:11; 2 Tim. 3:10; 4:2; Heb. 6:12; Jas. 5:10).¹⁷¹ The attitude of patience would also be difficult in an era where status and honor could be gained through strength and conquest. Patience, like humility, was a weakness exploited within the Greco-Roman world of the Second Temple period.

¹⁶⁶ Moo, *The Letters*, 195; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 105.

¹⁶⁷ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 152.

¹⁶⁸ Osborne, *Colossians & Philemon*, 106; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 105.

¹⁶⁹ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 152.

¹⁷⁰ Osborne, *Colossians & Philemon*, 107.

¹⁷¹ Moo, *The Letters*, 195; Osborne, *Colossians & Philemon*, 107.

The previously mentioned virtues lead the believer to forgive others like Christ has forgiven them. An unforgiving person fails to imitate the forgiveness granted by God through Jesus Christ.¹⁷² Believers are encouraged to bear with one another, to forgive any grievances that arise between community members, just as Christ has forgiven the transgressions of the believer.¹⁷³ Forgiveness is key in strengthening the unity of the universal Christian family. Forgiveness occurs by submission to the headship of Jesus Christ within the structure of the universal Christian family.

The final virtue is love. Paul states that love binds everything together (Col. 3:14). Above all else, the believer is to do everything with an attitude of love. Love is the utmost expression of being a follower of Christ. Bruce aptly stated:

In Gal. 5:6, love is the active expression of justifying faith; in Gal. 5:22, it is the primary fruit of the Spirit; in 1 Cor. 13:13, it is the supreme Christian grace; in Rom. 13:9–10, all the commandments are summed up in one: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love is the fulfillment of the law of God because love does a neighbor nothing but good. In all these places, Paul’s ethic is directly dependent on the teaching of Jesus, according to whom the whole OT ethic hung on the twin commandments of love to God and love to one’s neighbor.¹⁷⁴

Love is required for a believer to keep the commandments of God. By loving God and their neighbor, the believer actively pursues the interests of the kingdom of God and builds unity within the universal Christian family. Love creates the perfect bond.¹⁷⁵ The virtue of love binds all the other virtues against the vices that cause impurity.¹⁷⁶ Love is the bind for the universal

¹⁷² Bruce, *The Epistles*, 106.

¹⁷³ Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 131; Moo, *The Letters*, 196; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 106; Nicholson, *Colossians*, 233–35. Forgiveness is not just professing forgiveness to the offender. The forgiveness required by the example of Christ involves the full power of the heart. A person forgives from their innermost being, releasing any notion of retribution or restitution.

¹⁷⁴ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 106.

¹⁷⁵ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 153.

¹⁷⁶ Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 133.

Christian family regardless of nationality, gender, or social standing.¹⁷⁷ Because of the believer's union with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit through the ultimate act of love from the sacrifice of Christ, the believer can, in turn, pour out the same love among their neighbors.

Paul informs the believers at Colossae that putting off the old ways, seeking Christ above all, and obeying God's Word allows Christ to dwell richly within them. The indwelling results in thankfulness to God and worship with praise in songs, hymns, and psalms. With the indwelling of the Spirit, the individual Christian and the universal Christian family are in the constant presence of Christ. Accordingly, Paul is instructing the believers to provide the constant heartfelt thanksgiving fitting of the universal Christian family.¹⁷⁸ Singing worship songs, hymns, and psalms and teaching are all activities associated with the temple. Paul instructs Christians that they are the temple since Christ dwells within them.¹⁷⁹ With the indwelling of the Spirit, thankfulness to God cannot be contained, and worship is spontaneous.¹⁸⁰ The spontaneous songs prompted by the Spirit aid in teaching wisdom to the community.¹⁸¹ Thankfulness ties into the final exhortation of the purity lists. Out of thankfulness, the believer is to do all actions and speech in the name of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. By avoiding vices, seeking the things above, and expressing gratitude to God, the believer keeps the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit pure and builds the unity of the universal Christian family.

¹⁷⁷ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 153.

¹⁷⁸ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 107–8.

¹⁷⁹ Beale, Yarbrough, and Jipp, *Colossians and Philemon*, 155–57.

¹⁸⁰ Osborne, *Colossians & Philemon*, 113.

¹⁸¹ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 181.

Concluding Thoughts

Paul's vice and purity lists were not a new construct, as these lists also appear within secular and Jewish writings in the Second Temple period. Paul's upbringing under Jewish law and training as a Pharisee influenced his presentation of the vice lists in Colossians and Ephesians. Yet, Paul's lists are different. While the lists of antiquity, including those from the Old Testament, such as Leviticus, instruct in worshipping at a physical temple building and the requirement to approaching the temple and deity while considered clean. In Colossians and Ephesians, Paul establishes that the believer is the temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit. While the laws in Leviticus required sacrifices for an individual to become clean, the lists in Colossians and Ephesians operate under the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Because of the sacrifice of Christ, Paul taught that the believer's innermost attitude must change to keep the temple pure and the universal Christian family unified under Christ. The following chapter examines the standards of purity and unity as applied to the immediate family unit, which Paul addresses within the *haustafeln*.

Chapter 5: The Christian Family Structure to Reflect Unity with the Kingdom of God:

Ephesians 5:22–6:9 and Colossians 3:18–4:1

When the individuals within the family unit are mutually submissive under the headship of Christ, the goal of living missionally to spread the gospel can be achieved. Paul's writing stood in contrast to the patriarchal writings of other authors both before and during Paul's time. Examining the extra-biblical household codes and other household codes found within Scripture helps establish how Paul intended the codes to be countercultural and reflective of the unity provided by the kingdom of God.

With Christ as the head and the New Covenant in place, the Christian family differs from the Greco-Roman household. The household codes in Ephesians and Colossians were countercultural in the historical context of Paul's time. Proper interpretation of the Greek *oikos* and Paul's use of the word is essential to understanding the household codes in the countercultural sense. The Christian household was at the center of the Christian missional movement. As a form of the new temple, the household played a critical role in spreading Christianity.¹ Because of the centrality of the household, Paul needed to provide an organized structure for the Christians in Ephesus and Colossae.

In Colossians and Ephesians, Paul breaks his teaching into distinct pairings of relationships essential to the proper functioning of the Christian household. The author examines each pairing, emphasizing how the pairings relate to the immediate family unit as a function of the pure new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

¹ Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 177.

Oikos in the Second Temple Period

The household played a prominent role within society during the Second Temple period. Properly functioning households were imperative to the framework for a stable nation.² The connection between the household and the state spanned nations in the ancient and Second Temple periods.³ It was not uncommon for leaders of nations and empires to position themselves as the “father” over their domain, thereby thrusting oikos into the political sphere.⁴ Emperors within the Roman Empire not only identified as a father over their subjects but also as the earthly representative of their father deity.⁵ The household was tightly entwined with all aspects of life within the Second Temple period. Forms of oikos can also translate as the “house of the Spirit” or as a temple.⁶ The social and political aspects of the *haustafeln* found in Colossians and Ephesians have been well documented. Likewise, the *haustafeln*’s elevation of Christ as not only the head of the household but the head of the cosmos has been thoroughly explored.⁷ This dissertation focuses on the structure of the immediate family as a form of the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Early in the Christian movement, house churches were the primary location for worship and instruction. Therefore, the success of the missional directive of the Great Commission

² Lau, *The Politics of Peace*, 128. The structure within the household was naturally modeled after the state’s hierarchical structure.

³ Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*, 173.

⁴ Lau, *The Politics of Peace*, 132; Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*, 174–75.

⁵ Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*, 175–77. Elliott details how Pliny the Younger celebrated and expressed gratitude by portraying Trajan as the representative of the “Father Jupiter.”

⁶ *Ibid.*, 186–87.

⁷ Collins, “Rhetoric, Household and Cosmos,” 89–92. Collins states that the household was the natural basic social unit not only of the nation but the entire cosmos. It is with the *haustafeln* in Colossians that the position of Christ as head of the cosmos can be proven.

centered on properly structured households.⁸ The use of houses as sacred spaces or temples was not a new invention by the early Christians. Houses were set aside for the worship of different deities around the ancient Near East, with the furniture and artwork inside considered sacred.⁹ Christian house churches differ in that it is not the house or furniture that contains the Spirit. The family members within the household have received the indwelling of the Spirit. Paul constructed the *haustafeln* in conjunction with the purity lists of the previous section to promote unity and solidarity by expressing the interdependence of the members within the household and their reliance on the headship of Jesus Christ.¹⁰

Portraying order was critical in missionally reaching non-Christians within the Roman Empire.¹¹ To have structure and order inevitably requires a hierarchal formula. Paul intentionally uses a combination of metaphors in Ephesians 2:19–22 to illustrate that the universal Christian family should be considered within the household of God.¹² Within the context of Ephesians and Colossians, the *haustafeln* should be interpreted under the same illustration that Paul had established for the universal Christian family. Since every household member contains the Spirit as the new temple dwelling, the household functions as a form of the new temple. The vice lists in the previous sections reveal how the temple is to stay pure. Directly after emphasizing purity

⁸ Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 175–77; Balabanski, *Colossians: An Eco-Stoic Reading*, 148–49. The Christian house churches were often described as new temples or the dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

⁹ Georgia Maull, “Stream, Stone, Oikos, Polis: Sacred Space and Ancient Mystery Cult Sanctuaries,” *Currents in Theology and Mission* 39, no. 2 (April 2012): 151–55.

¹⁰ Mitchell Alexander Esswein, “The Οἶκος of the Lord and the Church at Corinth: Understanding Οἰκονόμος and Οικονομία in Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians,” *Biblische Notizen* 172 (2017): 88.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 90–91. Esswein explains that from the time Augustus established himself as the *paterfamilias* of the empire, the citizens within the empire were familiar with the structure of a deity-type figure that was physically absent from the household, being considered the ultimate head of that household, with the husband/father being the representative head of the household. It was believed that the gods were the paradigm of order. Therefore, the household needed to follow the divine example.

¹² Korinna Zamfir, “Is the Ekklēsia a Household (of God)? Reassessing the Notion of Οἶκος Θεοῦ in 1 Tim 3.15,” *New Testament Studies* 60, no. 4 (October 2014): 511–28. Zamfir establishes the Greek as “συμπολίται (τῶν ἁγίων) and οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, fellow citizens (of the holy ones) and members of the household of God.”

through the vice lists, Paul provides instruction on how the Christian family should be structured as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit to maintain an order that facilitates a missional outreach into the surrounding community.

Husbands and Wives

The first relationship addressed by Paul in both Colossians and Ephesians is the marriage relationship of the husband and wife. Ephesians contains a more detailed description of the husband's and wife's required behavior within the marriage relationship. Paul discusses the relationship between the husband and wife not from a worldly viewpoint but from an ecclesiastical viewpoint in light of the church-to-Christ relationship.¹³ In Ephesians and Colossians, Paul seemingly conforms to the standard household codes prevalent throughout the ancient and Second Temple periods. Ephesians 5:22–23 and Colossians 3:18 place the husband at the head of the earthly household and call for the wife to submit to the husband. Yet, clarity on submission comes in the expanded version of the pairing found in Ephesians.¹⁴ The submission issue is a focal point of scholarship on the *haustafeln*.¹⁵ More recently, some scholars have suggested that the *haustafeln* presented in Ephesians begins in Ephesians 5:21 and not in verse 22, as traditionally believed. Bruce, Roberts et al., Arnold, Schüssler-Fiorenza et al., Thielman et

¹³ James P. Hering, "The Colossian and Ephesian *Haustafeln* in Theological Context - a Study of Their Origins, Relationship and Message" (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 2003), 137, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

¹⁴ Ibid., 136. The premise is that Paul wrote Colossians before Ephesians. In Ephesians, Paul expanded on issues that he may not have made clear in the letter to the Colossians, such as the marriage relationship and the requirements of the husband and wife in the context of the proper structure under the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹⁵ Brian S. Rosher, ed., in *Understanding Paul's Ethics: Twentieth-Century Approaches* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 177–79. Within the last century, the rise of the feminist movement has caused passages like the *haustafeln* to come under intense scrutiny. Some studies dismiss the *haustafeln* as not written by Paul. Instead, the verses were added later. The focus has been to downplay the hierarchal structure by positioning the verses outside biblical authority. While it is structurally possible that the *haustafeln* could be removed from Ephesians and Colossians without damaging the theological message presented by the entirety of the letters, this view fails to account for the seamless flow with the *haustafeln* in place. It is more plausible that the *haustafeln* were authentic Pauline writings and hold theological significance within the context of the letters.

al., and Barth et al. adeptly explain how Ephesians 5:21 is the bridge to, and part of, the *haustafeln*.¹⁶ With Ephesians 5:21 as the connection point, the passage on the purity standards of the new temple transitions smoothly into the verses on the structure of the new temple portrayed by the immediate family. Paul transitions from a discussion of the universal family to the individual household. Each member has a specific position that reflects the functional temple as the dwelling of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:21 explains that submission is mutual within all relationships, not that the wife must explicitly submit to the husband.¹⁷ With the need for mutual submission under Christ established, this dissertation proceeds by addressing the hierarchal portions of the *haustafeln*.

Ephesians 5:21–33

Paul opens the *haustafeln* in Ephesians with the husband-wife relationship. The call is for the wife to respectfully submit to the husband's headship. The husband is to love his wife in a way that elevates her in an honorable and pure way to present her as flawless and holy. The husband and the wife are to model their behavior after the example of Jesus Christ, submitting to the lordship of Jesus and each other to bring honor and glory to Jesus Christ. Along with the model of Christ, Paul invokes the original pre-fall design of the marriage relationship in Ephesians 5:31.

Paul begins to address the household in Ephesians 5:21 by the teaching that all Christians are to live in submission to each other out of reverence for the Lord Jesus Christ. Through mutual submission through the facilitation of the Holy Spirit, the members of the universal

¹⁶ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 231; Roberts and McKnight, *Ephesians*, 194; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 358; Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*, 89; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 365; Barth et al., *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 102.

¹⁷ Craig S. Keener, "Mutual Submission Frames the Household Codes," *Priscilla Papers* 35, no. 3 (2021): 10–14. The mutual submission goes beyond just the husband-wife relationship. It permeates the entirety of the *haustafeln*. Mutual submission ultimately returns the focus to the Lord Jesus Christ, where it belongs.

family strengthen their unity with each other.¹⁸ Since the call for mutual submission applies to all Christians, it affects how the marriage relationship should be approached as part of the new temple dwelling of the Spirit.¹⁹ Christians voluntarily place themselves under an authoritative figure. Both spouses must focus on the needs of others by submitting to the absolute authority of Jesus Christ as the ultimate head of the household.²⁰ Instead of wielding authority over another, the Christian is to serve others.²¹ The marriage relationship is not an exception to this teaching.

After the call for mutual submission, Paul discusses the marriage relationship and the requirements of the wife first, followed by the husband's duty. The wife must submit to the husband's authority just as the universal family submits to the authority of Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:22–24). However, the instruction to the husband does not use the word for *submit*. Instead, the husband must love his wife in the example of Christ loving the universal Christian family. The call for the wife to submit causes a stumbling block among academics and laypersons. For some, even though there is a call for mutual submission for all Christians, the wife is expected to submit to the husband's authority unilaterally in a way that reflects the ancient household codes such as the ones written by Aristotle.²² A second view applies the teaching on mutual submission from Ephesians 5:21 to the need for the wife to submit to the husband. This view does not deny the hierarchical structure but attempts an explanation of the structure. The wife must submit to the husband since the husband has the authority to be the head of earthly household relationships, including marriage. All aspects of life on Earth need structuring; a hierarchy is required to

¹⁸ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 365.

¹⁹ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 316–17.

²⁰ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 185–86.

²¹ Mark J. Edwards, *Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 233.

²² Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 516; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 183; Lau, *The Politics of Peace*, 139; Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 141; Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*. 94–103.

facilitate order. While the structure of the *haustafeln* resembles the standard ancient household codes, Christianity differs from the ancient societal household codes. The wife's submission to the husband is still necessary, but this submission also differs from what is required in the secular codes. The *haustafeln* provides the safeguard for the submission of the wife by limiting the scope of authority the husband can wield.²³ In essence, Paul was establishing a chain of command with Christ at the head, the husband as the appointed head of the immediate family, and then the wife directly subjected to her husband.²⁴

There is no doubt a hierarchical structure is present in the *haustafeln* within Ephesians. Within the context of Ephesians and the body of believers being the dwelling of the Spirit, it is more plausible that the second view is what Paul intended to convey. However, the hierarchical system reflects the temple's structure as the dwelling place of the Spirit, with each member serving in their specific role. The understanding that mutual submission facilitates proper and pure worship of God informs the continued discussion of the *haustafeln* relationships below.

After addressing the wife's role in the marriage, Paul focuses on the husband's duty. Paul's address to the husband is longer than the address to the wife.²⁵ The husband must love his wife by using the perfect example of how Jesus loves the church. Just as Christ leads the church into purity and holiness, so must the husband love the wife to present her before God as pure and holy (Eph. 5:25–29). Paul explains previously within the vice lists how to maintain purity, and

²³ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 368; Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 318; Osborne, *Ephesians*, 193; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 350; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 233; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 379. The submission of the wife is reliant on the love of the husband. The husband must love his wife in a way that elevates her and brings her into a more vital union with God. If either the husband or the wife fails to submit to Christ properly, the hierarchical structure breaks down, causing a strain in the marriage union.

²⁴ Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 532. Of note is that the Greek states that the wife is to submit or be subject to her "own" husband. Paul's use of this specific wording is important, as it indicates that women are not subjected to all men nor are to even submit to all men. The wife is to submit to her husband alone, a structure vastly different from the model of the secular household codes.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 539.

the husband must model the proper pure actions. Unlike the secular household codes, the *haustafeln* temper the husband's authority as the head of the household by commanding a sacrificial love. Loving sacrificially is incompatible with wielding the power of authority to dominate others within the household, specifically one's wife.²⁶ While the husband retains the position of authority, this authority differs from the societal notion of authority and dominance.

Just as the command for the wife to submit to her husband is all-encompassing, so is the instruction for the husband to love the wife.²⁷ The importance of love in the marriage relationship is evident by the number of words Paul uses in the analogy of Christ loving the Church.²⁸ In an era of arranged marriages, love was often absent and optional.²⁹ Even in the Jewish writings of the Second Temple period, husbands were rarely instructed to love their wives.³⁰ In teaching the wife to be submissive, it seems as if Paul was adhering to the societal norms of the period. Still, with the sheer length of the exhortation on how the husband is to convey love, Paul has put forth a countercultural teaching that was a reversal of the secular pattern of the patristic culture of the Second Temple period.³¹ Instead of wielding their authoritative power over the wife, the husband is to focus his energy and will on acting in ways that express love.³² To facilitate the wife's proper submission that honors the Lord, the husband

²⁶ Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*, 104.

²⁷ Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 381.

²⁸ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 525.

²⁹ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 329.

³⁰ Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 184.

³¹ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 196.

³² Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 374; Osborne, *Ephesians*, 196; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 184; Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 329. Instead of focusing on his needs and wants, the husband is called to use his willpower to engage in loving actions that fulfill his wife's needs. While the husband is not directly called to submit to the wife in the same language that was used to instruct the wife to submit to the husband, the love that is required would make the husband mutually submissive to the wife to adequately fulfill the requirement to love his wife in a way that glorifies Christ.

is not to forcibly demand that the wife submit to his authority.³³ Paul uses the example of Christ emptying himself and laying down his life because of his love for the church. The husband is to reflect Christ's love, which requires the husband to deliberately sacrifice the normal societal position of head of the household to love his wife, which can only be accomplished through a mutual submission.³⁴ The husband is to change his disposition to be in line with the will of God by providing the love that honors the immediate family and the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Paul ends the instruction on the husband-wife relationship by citing Genesis 2:24 to emphasize that the husband and wife become deeply connected to the point that they shall be considered a single flesh (Eph. 5:29–33). All believers, including the pairings described later in the *haustafeln*, are bound together with Christ as the new creation universal Christian family. Because of this connection, the husband loves the wife as he loves himself. Likewise, when the wife properly respects her husband, she is also respecting herself.

Just as there is a solid and essential bond between the husband and the wife, so is that bond between Christ and the members of the church, which are referenced as the body of Christ and portrayed as the bride of Christ.³⁵ Paul explains the mystery of Genesis 2:24, enlightening the recipients of the letter to the Ephesians that with the bonding of the husband with the wife is now understood through Christ and the church as one body.³⁶ After the fall, humanity could no longer understand the true meaning of marriage as God had designed it. Jesus Christ has revealed

³³ Roark, "Interpreting Ephesians 4-6." 40.

³⁴ Levine, *Feminist Companion to Paul*, 48.

³⁵ Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 143

³⁶ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 238.

the mystery.³⁷ By his sacrificial love, Jesus Christ sanctified his bride, the church, which now has a unique union with Christ.³⁸ Just as Eve owed her existence to Adam, all Christians owe their existence to Jesus Christ. By being mutually submissive to each other, the husband and wife partake in the originally designed marriage union that glorifies God. By conforming to the original design for marriage, the husband and wife are living according to wisdom, much like the previous vice list instruction on proper behavior as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit.³⁹ The focus of both the husband and the wife is to follow the example of Christ, who is head of the church and the household.

Colossians 3:18–19

Like Ephesians, Colossians begins the *haustafeln* with the husband-and-wife pairing. However, Paul's teaching in Colossians is not as in depth as what he had provided in Ephesians. Unlike Ephesians, the *haustafeln* of Colossians appears to begin abruptly after the purity teaching.⁴⁰ The connection point found in Ephesians 5:21 is absent in Colossians. The primary instruction is the same in both Ephesians and Colossians. Wives must submit to their husbands, and the husbands must love their wives (Col. 3:18–19).

In the opening of the *haustafeln* in Colossians, Paul writes that the wife is to submit to the husband (Col. 3:18). Within the context of the Second Temple period society, this command is not out of place and would be widely regarded as standard and ethical teaching.⁴¹ Bruce argues

³⁷ Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 190.

³⁸ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 379–80. Lincoln explains further that Christ left the Father and then his mother Mary at the cross so that he would be eternally bonded with his church. Lincoln concludes that Paul's intention and focus were solely on the union that believers have with Christ.

³⁹ Ben Witherington, *The Indelible Image: The Theological and Ethical Thought World of the New Testament: The Collective Witness*, vol. 2 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 363.

⁴⁰ Moo, *The Letters*, 208.

⁴¹ Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 233.

that the *haustafeln* in Colossians needs to be understood with the context that at the time of Paul's letter, the early church had not been a long-established organization. In contrast, the culture had firmly established the structure of the immediate family unit. While the church had the freedom to declare that all people within the church, regardless of their social status, were equals, to declare that all were equal within the immediate family would have been destabilizing to society. For this reason, Paul left the hierarchal structure of the immediate family intact, except for adding "as is fitting to the Lord."⁴² While Paul taught that believers of Jesus Christ had become a new creation, the existing social relationships are not erased but need to be transformed as part of the new creation.⁴³ The wife must submit to the husband's authority in a way that glorifies Christ.

The Greek word that translates into "submit" is ὑποτάσσω (*hypotasso*). *Hypotasso* can be interpreted as being put into subjection, to obey, or to submit oneself reflexively.⁴⁴ The use of *hypotasso* is not common outside of the Greek New Testament, and within the New Testament, it is translated as submitting to God the majority of the time.⁴⁵ Within the context of Colossians and the broader usage within the New Testament, the wife is instructed to submit to the husband voluntarily, by her willing choice, and not because her husband has enforced or demanded the submission.⁴⁶ Paul's addition of "as is fitting to the Lord" reinforces the focus on the submission to Christ and the kingdom of God and not on the husband as the head of the household since the

⁴² Bruce, *The Epistles*, 110.

⁴³ Moo, *The Letters*, 208.

⁴⁴ Muhammad Wolfgang G. A. Schmidt, *A Greek-English Reference Manual to the Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament* (Hamburg, Germany: Diplomica Verlag, 2017), 551.

⁴⁵ Moo, *The Letters*, 209; Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 177; Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 144–45.

⁴⁶ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 177.

human male head of household is fallible.⁴⁷ Paul reinforces this point by stating that only Christ is the Savior, not the husband.

After addressing the wife, Paul instructs the husband to love his wife and not be harsh toward her (Col. 3:19). The key to this instruction is in the word used for “love,” ἀγαπᾶτε. The use of ἀγαπᾶτε denotes that the love required of the husband is a deep, genuine affection for the wife and not a sexual attraction or a simple friendship love.⁴⁸ With secular writings concerning the duty of the husband, ἀγαπᾶτε is rarely if ever used.⁴⁹ The same term for love is also found in Colossians and Ephesians when Paul instructed Christians to put on love as part of being the new creation or new man.⁵⁰ The husband is to care for his wife genuinely, seek to provide unconditionally for her well-being, and ensure that she is a pure new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit. The love required is a direct recollection of the teaching on purity from the previous section. The husband is to love like Christ.

Along with providing a deep and sacrificial love, the husband is to be in control of his emotions and not express anger or bitterness toward his wife.⁵¹ As a member of the universal family of God, the husband is not free to do what he wishes to his wife.⁵² He must show forgiveness, gentleness, humility, and kindness so that he fosters his wife’s spiritual growth.⁵³ Even when the husband may feel angry that his wife is not acting in proper submission, the

⁴⁷ Abbott, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 166.

⁴⁸ O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 223.

⁴⁹ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 191.

⁵⁰ O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 223.

⁵¹ Lohse, “Rules for the Household,” 157–58.

⁵² Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 191; O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*. 223–24. The change must be complete and thorough. The husband should not act in a non-loving manner toward his wife in either thought or physical action.

⁵³ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 111–12.

husband is to love and forgive like Christ to reconcile the wife back into living the pure Christian life.⁵⁴ The husband's goal is not to be overbearing, demanding, or demeaning to his wife. Being bound to love sacrificially restricts the overall authority of the husband.⁵⁵ He is to help guide her into pure living as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit. Only through the sacrificial love modeled by Christ and mutual submission with the wife that centers on Christ can the husband accomplish the goal of walking with his wife in a way that reflects the kingdom of God.

Parents and Children

The next pairing that Paul addressed was the parent-child relationship. Children must obey their parents, while the father must not provoke or discourage his children. During the Second Temple period the father had ultimate authority over the children, even deciding if a child should live or die.⁵⁶ Paul redirected the father's priorities by realigning the parent-child relationship to reflect the Christian's status as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit. In a stark departure from the other household codes of the ancient and Second Temple periods, Paul addresses children as moral entities and not as strictly the property of the *paterfamilias*.⁵⁷ While Paul's society considered children of only a slightly higher status than enslaved people, Paul acknowledges their membership in the universal Christian family and, therefore, treats them as fellow recipients of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁸ Since parents and children are new temple dwellings of the Holy Spirit, parents and children have obligations for the purity of the new temple.

⁵⁴ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 178–79.

⁵⁵ Gordon Rolf Gottfried Steinke, "Marriage: God's Design...destroyed...restored..." (DMin. diss., Anderson University, 2009), 192, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

⁵⁶ See Chapter 2 on the ultimate authority of the *paterfamilias*.

⁵⁷ Moo, *The Letters*, 212.

⁵⁸ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 178.

Ephesians 6:1–4

Similar to how Paul addresses with the husband-wife relationship, Paul directly addresses the children before the parents. Children are to obey their parents, a fact that Paul emphasizes by citing the fifth commandment in Deuteronomy 5:16. Obedience is the right action and attitude. It produces a reward as promised by God (Eph. 6:1–3).

The call for children to be obedient was considered natural law, and obedience was a common practice for secular societies and the early Christian movement.⁵⁹ Children are to be obedient to honor their parents, which brings honor to the family.⁶⁰ Whereas Paul used τὰ τέκνα for children, it is apparent within the immediate context that the children being addressed are of an age where formal instruction has started, and they are expected to participate in the household worship of God.⁶¹ The children would be old enough to understand what was being read from the letter. Therefore, they were old enough to express their free will. While this usage does not rule out adult children, the intended audience was probably young children, excluding infants, through their teenage years.⁶² At the learning age, children needed to show obedience and honor as directed by the commandments given to Moses on Sinai.⁶³ By honoring and obeying their parents, children were promised prosperity and long life. Paul uses Deuteronomy 5:16 specifically to reinforce that obedience is a requirement that God would reward, a feature not found within secular household codes.⁶⁴ The call for obedience applies not only to visible,

⁵⁹ James Montgomery Boice, *Ephesians: An Expositional Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1997), 212.

⁶⁰ Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*, 104.

⁶¹ Abbott, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 176; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 195; Osborne, *Ephesians*, 209; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 403.

⁶² Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 548.

⁶³ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 406.

⁶⁴ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 240.

outward actions. Children are to have an attitude of obedience centered on the Lord Jesus Christ.⁶⁵ In the early Christian house churches, obedient children would allow uninterrupted worship and gospel teaching. Likewise, by being obedient, children would act in an honorable way that would bring legitimacy to the gospel movement. The honorable family would attract their neighbors' attention, facilitating the gospel message's spread.

Paul then focuses on the father's duty in the parent-child relationship. Fathers are not to provoke their children. Instead, the father is to focus on raising a disciplined and wise child in the Lord (Eph. 6:4) that functions properly as a pure dwelling of the Holy Spirit. In the Second Temple period, the father's authority was absolute, and it was not unusual for the father to abuse that power, leading to resentment and anger in the child.⁶⁶ The father's responsibility was to ensure the children received an education and discipline.⁶⁷ While there is some discussion on whether Paul is explicitly addressing fathers or if the passage should be interpreted as applying to both parents,⁶⁸ the majority consensus renders the passage as directly addressing the father's duties.⁶⁹ With the context of the previous relationship pairing of the husband and wife, the higher plausibility is that Paul specifically addresses the father. Since the husband is the head of the earthly household (Eph. 5:22), Paul places the responsibility of the proper upbringing of the children on the father. The father is to raise his children to honor God. The children are not only to receive an education but also to be taught how to worship, avoid impure actions, and gain

⁶⁵ Best, *Ephesians*, 564.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 568.

⁶⁷ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 555.

⁶⁸ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 212; Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*, 104. Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney state that both men and women who belong to Christ would be counted among the wise. Therefore, the mother and father would both be qualified to teach the children.

⁶⁹ Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 198; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 406; Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 336; Best, *Ephesians*, 568; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 555; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 409; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 401; Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 145.

knowledge of the gospel message within the immediate household church.⁷⁰ To properly instruct his children, the father needed to be faithful to Christ and be a pure dwelling of the Holy Spirit.⁷¹ Just as the husband is to guide his wife into spiritual purity, the parents,⁷² under the father's leadership, instruct the children on the purity of the dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 3:20–21

For the parent-child relationship, Paul first addresses the children. Children are to obey their parents in all aspects of everyday life. The teaching that children need to obey is not a new construct, having been widely produced throughout ancient and Second Temple writings. The Torah in Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16 contains explicit teaching on children needing to honor and obey their parents, which Paul would have studied during his time as a Pharisee.

Paul does not differentiate between male and female children, putting both sons and daughters as equals. The term τὰ τέκνα refers to all children regardless of gender or age.⁷³ The text of Colossians does not have a significant contextual point, such as in Ephesians' address to the father to distinguish between young and adult children. Witherington stated, "Children are directly addressed, which suggests that they will be present in the worship service to hear the presentation of this discourse."⁷⁴ With the prevalence of house churches during the early Christian movement, there would be a high probability that adult children would be at their

⁷⁰ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 408.

⁷¹ Benjamin Sear, "The Role of Fathers in the Purposes of God: An Investigation and Application of the Instructions in Ephesians 6:1-4," *Churchman* 131, no. 1 (2017): 49–68.

⁷² While the husband/father has been placed as the earthly head of the household to provide order and guide the immediate family in worship of the Lord, nothing prevents women/mothers from providing worship instruction and gospel teaching. While the Greek Paul used should be rendered as "father," Paul was highlighting the position of responsibility for ensuring the family was receiving proper care and education to act as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

⁷³ Moo, *The Letters*, 212; Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 147; O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 224.

⁷⁴ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 192.

parents' house when their parents were worshipping and hearing the gospel. Since the Greek Paul used does not make it clear whether the children addressed are minors, even adult children are to obey their parents, specifically in matters of worship and Christian instruction, as is pleasing to the Lord.⁷⁵ Children are to obey their parents in matters concerning worship to keep the order and structure of the new temple intact.

Paul then addresses the father in Colossians 3:21. The father is not to provoke his children so that the children do not become discouraged. The Greek οἱ πατέρες can signify both parents, but with the context of the *haustafeln* style and cultural context most likely should be interpreted strictly as “father.”⁷⁶ Once again, Paul is telling the husband/father, the head of the immediate household, that their authority is limited so that the spiritual well-being of the other household members can flourish.⁷⁷ The father must not act in a way that would discourage his children from following God.⁷⁸ While the father should firmly guide his children, guidance needs to be given in a way that does not break the child's spirit, such as would lead them to feel that there is no way to please authority figures or feel unworthy as a person.⁷⁹ For the household, and the house church, to successfully function as part of the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit, children need to listen to and obey their parents and not be a distraction. Likewise, fathers are to guide their children in a way that will not discourage them from living a life pleasing to the Lord.

⁷⁵ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 111.

⁷⁶ Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 148.

⁷⁷ Moo, *The Letters*, 213.

⁷⁸ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 192.

⁷⁹ O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 225–26.

Enslavers and Enslaved People

The third and final pairing was that of the enslaver and the enslaved. Within the *haustafeln* in Colossians, the enslaver-to-enslaved pairing contains most of the lines, with the duty of the enslaved person comprising the bulk of the message. The enslaved person was at the bottom rung of society and had few legal protections. Masters were generally free to do as they wished with their enslaved people.⁸⁰ During the Second Temple period, all correspondence concerning an enslaved person would only be addressed to the enslaver.⁸¹ The enslaved, while considered property, were also part of the immediate household.⁸² For Paul to address the enslaved people of Colossae and Ephesus directly in the letters was uncommon and would be seen as putting enslaved people at a status equal with a freed person or even an enslaver.

There are varying ways scholars view how Paul addressed enslaved people within the *haustafeln* in Colossians and Ephesians. According to scholars such as Schüssler-Fiorenza, due to writings from Paul such as Galatians 3:28, enslaved people were expecting their Christian enslavers to release them from servitude.⁸³ O'Brien concludes that Paul is not taking any position on the issue of slavery. Paul was merely addressing other Christian readers who happened to be enslaved.⁸⁴ Garland contends that Paul was subtly being subversive since slavery is incompatible with Christianity.⁸⁵ Lincoln and Bruce tie the address to enslaved people to the

⁸⁰ See Chapter 2.

⁸¹ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 193.

⁸² Osborne, *Colossians & Philemon*, 121.

⁸³ Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 214–18. Because they expected to be released, enslaved people may have become disobedient and problematic. The Roman Empire would have seen the writings like Gal. 3:28 as destabilizing and sufficient cause for elimination of the Christian movement. Schüssler-Fiorenza, concludes that the reason Paul (or as she believes, the Deutero-Pauline author) wrote the *haustafeln* was to create the appearance that Christians were conforming to society. However, Paul worked to bring freedom to all people through the gospel.

⁸⁴ O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 226–27.

⁸⁵ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 180.

letter to Philemon and the enslaved person, Onesimus. The letter to Philemon is a companion letter to the *haustafeln* so that both enslaved people and enslavers understand that they need to transform their relationship status to reflect the kingdom of God.⁸⁶ The positions of Schüssler-Fiorenza and O'Brien are on the extreme ends of the spectrums and not highly likely to reflect the intention of Paul. The more plausible explanation is that Paul did understand that slavery was incompatible with the Christian movement. Still, instead of directly challenging the institution, Paul explains how to transform the relationship in a way that honors God and reflects the structure of the pure and functional new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 6:5–9

The final household relationship pair is the enslaver-servant relationship. The address to the enslavers and enslaved people is shorter than is found in Colossians, comprising two long sentences.⁸⁷ Paul first addresses the enslaved Christians of Ephesus and then the enslavers, consistent with the formula used throughout the *haustafeln*.

As in the previous pairing, the socially inferior position is addressed first.⁸⁸ Paul instructs the enslaved Christian to obey their earthly enslaver in a genuine manner, consistent with how they would serve the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 6:5–8). The enslaved Christian is reminded that it is Christ whom they ultimately serve and not man. Typically, outside instruction intended for enslaved people was addressed directly to the enslaver, not the enslaved persons.⁸⁹ Because Paul addresses the enslaved people directly, he treats them as agents with the ability to make moral

⁸⁶ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 419; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 112.

⁸⁷ Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*. Since Ephesians was written shortly after Colossians, the author of Ephesians condensed what had already been written to the Christians in Colossae. The belief is that the letter to the Colossians was already in circulation. Therefore, Christians in Asia Minor would have been familiar with its contents.

⁸⁸ Best, *Ephesians*, 572.

⁸⁹ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 561.

decisions and responsible for their actions and emotions. The enslaved were valuable members of the Christian community.⁹⁰ To treat an enslaved person as a valued member of the family would be unheard of in secular society. However, Paul has consistently taught that all Christians are the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit regardless of gender or social status.

Like the children addressed in the previous pairing, the enslaved Christians are to obey their socially superior counterparts.⁹¹ They are to obey with fear, trembling, and a sincere heart, just as if they were directly serving Jesus Christ. Lincoln concludes that Paul instructed the enslaved people not to view themselves as earthly enslaved people but metaphorically as people enslaved to Jesus Christ.⁹² Bruce believes that Paul was directing the enslaved Christians that it is in Christ that they should fear and show reverence, not to the earthly enslaver. Correctly fearing Christ will produce obedience in serving the earthly enslaver.⁹³ Merkle takes a different position. The enslaved Christian is to serve the earthly enslaver, the object of fear and trembling. The enslaved Christian indirectly serves God by this obedience to the earthly enslaver through fear and trembling.⁹⁴ Hoehner connects the fear and trembling to Ephesians 5:21 and mutual submission by believers because of the union the believers have with Jesus Christ through the power of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.⁹⁵ With the context of temple purity and structure, the position of Hoehner is highly likely to be correct. While enslaved Christians serve within the household, they are subject to their earthly enslaver. Yet, it is in conjunction with the earthly

⁹⁰ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 413.

⁹¹ Osborne, *Colossians & Philemon*, 215; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 201; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 405. Whereas the wife's submission to the husband is voluntary, the enslaved person's submission, like the children's, is required and unconditional.

⁹² Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 420.

⁹³ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 241.

⁹⁴ Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 202.

⁹⁵ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 561.

enslaver through mutual submission because of being the dwelling of the Holy Spirit that the enslaved Christian is serving the Lord Jesus Christ to advance the gospel and the kingdom of God.

Enslaved Christians should not work as people pleasers by working to be seen. Instead, the work needs to come from the heart as a service to the Lord Jesus Christ and not to man. The goal of the service is not to please the enslaver by performing visible deeds. The work must be done thoroughly and carefully even when the enslaved Christian is not under direct supervision.⁹⁶ The enslaved Christian should not perform work to garner the attention and favor of the earthly enslaver.⁹⁷ The work needs to be viewed as service rendered to the Lord Jesus Christ and not the earthly enslaver. Working in this way would result in an attitude change. The enslaved Christian would complete the required work and more.⁹⁸ By performing the service wholeheartedly, the enslaved Christian would be honoring the earthly enslaver, and ultimately, Jesus Christ.⁹⁹ Exemplary service to the earthly enslaver reflects serving Jesus Christ. The work is conducted through the Spirit for the glory of Christ and not for personal accolades.

Following the teaching on the need for a proper attitude toward service, Paul reminds the enslaved Christians that by doing good works, the person, whether enslaved or free, will receive the same back from the Lord. Serving purely and properly results in receiving the blessing bestowed by God.¹⁰⁰ The goodness discussed within this context is a willing and faithful service

⁹⁶ Best, *Ephesians*, 577; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 563.

⁹⁷ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 414; Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 340; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 421; Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 203.

⁹⁸ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 242.

⁹⁹ Osborne, *Ephesians*, 217.

¹⁰⁰ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 416–17.

to the enslaved person's earthly enslaver.¹⁰¹ The inner change in attitude toward service comes from the outpouring and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It assures the reward of the inheritance of adoption into the universal Christian family.¹⁰² Paul presents the opposite situation in Colossians. Wrongdoing would receive a just punishment. In Ephesians, the good work is highlighted, and the appropriate reward is promised.¹⁰³ Within the universal Christian family, each member is rewarded regardless of their earthly social status. Enslaved people and enslavers are both judged by their faithful service to God.

The final group addressed in the *haustafeln* is the enslaver. Enslavers must "do the same to them" (Eph. 6:9) and stop threatening their enslaved people because, as Christians, they know that they have a Master in Heaven who judges not based on earthly social status.

In the context and structure of the *haustafeln* and the previous purity instructions, the term *enslaver* most likely denotes the male head of the household. Still, women could also be enslavers over enslaved people.¹⁰⁴ In either case, the enslaver is to treat the enslaved person as a fellow Christian. The enslaver is to see to the needs of the enslaved person, in essence serving the enslaved person as the enslaved person serves the enslaver.¹⁰⁵ This type of teaching would have been unheard of and highly offensive in the Second Temple period.¹⁰⁶ Granting an enslaved person any sense of equality was countercultural and would be considered dangerous.¹⁰⁷ The

¹⁰¹ Best, *Ephesians*, 579.

¹⁰² Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 408.

¹⁰³ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 242.

¹⁰⁴ As early as Genesis, there is evidence that women were capable of being enslavers over servants, as seen in the example of Sarah giving her husband Abraham her servant Hagar so that Abraham could produce an heir (Gen. 16:1–6).

¹⁰⁵ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 242; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 409.

¹⁰⁶ Merkle, *Exegetical Guide*, 205; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 423.

¹⁰⁷ Best, *Ephesians*, 580.

Christian enslaved person and enslaver are bonded in their union with Jesus Christ as members of the universal Christian family. Because of this bond, the enslaver is to treat the enslaved person as an equal within the universal Christian family.

Properly treating the enslaved person meant that the enslaver must refrain from abusing the enslaved person. Enslavers commonly used threatening language and physical abuse to bring the enslaved person to submission forcibly. Threats of beatings or selling to another enslaver were not out of the ordinary. Female enslaved people faced sexual harassment or sexual abuse.¹⁰⁸ Paul demands that all forms of threatening posture by the enslaver immediately cease.¹⁰⁹ In essence, Paul cuts the chains of the enslaved by instructing enslavers to treat them as equals.¹¹⁰ Paul is transforming the enslaver-enslaved relationship in a way that would end hostility and build Christian unity and community.¹¹¹ The enslaver and the enslaved person have the same Lord; failure to treat another member of the universal Christian family properly will be judged accordingly by God¹¹² since God does not show preferential treatment based on earthly social constructs.¹¹³ Enslaved people and enslavers are accepted into the universal Christian family through their faith in Jesus Christ.¹¹⁴ The enslaver is to abandon the position of authority and see to the enslaved Christian's needs and help guide the enslaved person into a spiritually mature lifestyle. Within the house church setting, this mutual submission would strengthen the unity, which would help to facilitate the spreading of the gospel.

¹⁰⁸ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 567.

¹⁰⁹ Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 410.

¹¹⁰ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 417.

¹¹¹ Campbell, "Unity and Diversity in the Church." 24.

¹¹² Bruce, *The Epistles*, 242.

¹¹³ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 417.

¹¹⁴ Thornhill, "To the Jew First," 286.

Colossians 3:22–4:1

The longest section of the Colossian *haustafeln* is Paul's address to the enslaved Christians. Paul uses four sentences when addressing enslaved people and only one sentence addressing enslavers. Parallel to teaching children obedience to their parents, Paul directs enslaved people to obey their earthly enslavers, but he attaches special encouragements that are not present in the section teaching obedience to children.¹¹⁵ Obedience to the earthly enslaver reflects obedience to the Lord, with the reward being an inheritance into the kingdom of God (Col. 3:22–25). However, Bruce notes that even though Paul's address to the enslaved person was unique and empowering, it still encouraged obedience to enslavers, a point the enslaver would look upon more favorably than the enslaved person.¹¹⁶ While Paul was elevating the status of enslaved people among Christians, he was also reminding the enslaved person that they were in an inferior position within society.

The call to obedience is more profound than just a directive to complete the tasks assigned by the enslaver to attract attention.¹¹⁷ Paul is instructing the enslaved that they are to have a change of attitude, that all work must be done to the best of their ability and with a pure heart.¹¹⁸ Paul is generalizing when addressing the enslaved people, insinuating that enslaved people tend to be lazy when not under supervision.¹¹⁹ The enslaved person is to continue to work hard, even when the earthly enslaver is not watching, since the Lord Jesus Christ is always

¹¹⁵ O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 226.

¹¹⁶ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 112.

¹¹⁷ O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 227.

¹¹⁸ Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 193–94. Witherington asserts that there was an issue with the enslaved persons acting lazily when not under the direct supervision of the enslaver. When they did work, it was to avoid drawing negative attention to themselves or to gain a reward from the enslaver.

¹¹⁹ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 113.

watching.¹²⁰ Along with working diligently at all times, the enslaved person must act honestly and not give into adverse actions against the enslaver.¹²¹ Doing wrong to the earthly enslaver would result in consequences on Earth and to their status as members of the universal Christian family.¹²² Yet, the enslaved persons being addressed by Paul are also reassured that all wrongdoing, including wrongdoing by the enslavers, will not go unpunished since all will be judged regardless of social status.

At the center of this teaching is that the enslaved Christian ultimately belongs to Christ. Therefore, their work for the earthly enslaver must reflect their Christian status.¹²³ While enslaved Christians serve the earthly enslaver, they ultimately serve Jesus Christ.¹²⁴ The motive is not an earthly reward but the status and inheritance of being in the universal Christian family.

After the verses addressing the enslaved Christians, Paul briefly yet profoundly addresses the enslavers. Enslavers are to treat their enslaved people justly since all have the same Master in Heaven (Col. 4:1). Colossians 4:1 is tied directly into 3:25, which states all wrongdoing and unjust actions are judged without partiality. The owner of the enslaved Christian serves the same Lord Jesus Christ as the enslaved person.

Of note is the Greek word that Paul used to explain how Christian enslavers are to treat enslaved people, τὸ δίκαιον. Many scholars interpret τὸ δίκαιον to mean that enslavers are to

¹²⁰ Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 148.

¹²¹ Garland, *Colossians, Philemon*, 179–80. Garland points out that the general opinion of enslaved people during the Second Temple period was that they were incapable of moral thoughts or actions. Enslaved people were at the core villains and needed to be handled as such. Therefore, the enslaved person could not be responsible for making their own decisions.

¹²² Moo, *The Letters*, 215–16.

¹²³ O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 227; Moo, *The Letters*, 216; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 113.

¹²⁴ Annette Merz, "Believers as 'Slaves of Christ' and 'Freed Persons of the Lord': Slavery and Freedom as Ambiguous Soteriological Metaphors in 1 Cor 7:22 and Col 3:22-4:1," *NTT* 72, no. 2 (2018): 95–110.

treat enslaved people in a just and fair manner.¹²⁵ However, τὸ δίκαιον can also mean “equality” or “equitable.”¹²⁶ In his article “Grant Slaves Equality,” Vasser puts forth a solid argument as to why τὸ δίκαιον should be rendered as “equality” instead of “fairly.” Vasser concludes that the correct translation should be “just and equality.”¹²⁷ Within the context of Paul’s other writings and writings attributed to Aristotle that concern enslaved people not granted equality (the same δίκαιον used by Paul),¹²⁸ Vasser’s position is highly plausible. Paul reminds the enslavers that in the eyes of the Lord, all members of the universal Christian family have equal status. Yet, Paul also reaffirms that the immediate family has a hierarchical structure under which enslaved Christians still needed to obey and work diligently for both the earthly enslaver and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Concluding Thoughts

As discussed above, the *haustafeln* provided by Paul in Ephesians and Colossians were not a new construct. The ancient and Second Temple periods had numerous writings concerning household management since the essential functions and structure of the household were viewed as the foundation of society and the nation.¹²⁹ Like the surrounding societies, Christian communities considered the immediate family unit as the primary building block of the greater community.¹³⁰ While much of the structure and flow resemble the those of the household instructions found within the Second Temple period, Paul presented the *haustafeln* uniquely, in a

¹²⁵ O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 232; Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 153; Moo, *The Letters*, 220; Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 233; Osborne, *Colossians & Philemon*, 127.

¹²⁶ Schmidt, *A Greek-English Reference Manual*, 143.

¹²⁷ Murray Vasser, “Grant Slaves Equality: Re-Examining the Translation of Colossians 4:1,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 68, no. 1 (2017): 59–71.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 358; O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 215–16.

¹³⁰ Bruce, *The Epistles*, 109–10.

way that reflects all people as made in the image of God and as members of the universal Christian family.

Where the secular codes reinforce the patriarchal hierarchy under which the male head of household holds and maintains the ultimate authority over the household, the *haustafeln* in Ephesians and Colossians significantly limit the authority that the male head of the household can wield. The context provided in the previous sections concerning purity and being filled with the Spirit instructs the person in the socially superior position to practice self-denial to meet the needs of the other family members.¹³¹ Since Christians are the new temple dwelling of the Spirit, all relationships, including those within the immediate family, need to be transformed to reflect the Spirit.¹³² While Paul's version of the ethical household codes still contains a hierarchal structure, he presents the codes in a way that challenges the societal norms of the Second Temple period.

By instructing the male head of the house to temper his authority, Paul elevates the status of women, children, and enslaved people to bring the household relationships closer to the intended family structure. While the new creation as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit better reflects God's image, the immediate family members are still part of the world after the fall of humankind and the onset of sin. All members of the relationship pairs must actively pursue the will of God by engaging in mutual submission.

As a function of the new temple and to facilitate the spread of the gospel, all members of the immediate family must submit to the authority of Christ as the head of the household and the chief priest. Likewise, family members must internalize the previous vice and purity action lists

¹³¹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 358.

¹³² Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 510.

to maintain the purity of the family. Each house church/immediate family is, in essence, a temple for worshipping God. Christ grants the husband the position of head of the immediate family, but the husband cannot and does not replace Christ as the ultimate authority. Instead, the husband must follow the example of Christ and empty himself of the power to forcibly demand that all within the household submit to him unconditionally. The husband is responsible for loving his wife and guiding to her spiritual well-being by strengthening her relationship with Christ. Parents then are to raise their children in the wisdom of the Lord. Parents encourage and discipline children to be productive members of the universal Christian family. Likewise, during the Second Temple period, enslaved servitude was to be conducted in a way that glorified God and was not for personal accolades. Enslavers were to treat their enslaved people as equals because of the believers' union with each other and Christ. When all parties work in unison as directed by Paul, the household becomes a reflection of the temple for worshipping God. Christ is over all, with the husband responsible for managing the household to maintain its purity. Husbands and wives are to work in unison, raising and educating their children in a manner that honors God. An adequately structured household had considerable strength in unity that would facilitate the spread of the gospel. Early Christianity relied on these house churches/new temples to preach the gospel and spread Christianity worldwide.

Chapter 6: Implications and Possible Areas of Further Study

Summary of Research

In the previous chapters, this dissertation argued that the vice/purity lists of Ephesians 4:17–5:21 and Colossians 3:1–17 and the *haustafeln* in Ephesians 5:22–6:9 and Colossians 3:18–4:1 should be viewed as a singular unit. The unit teaches how to maintain the purity and structure of the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit.¹ In Ephesians 4:17–5:21 and Colossians 3:1–17, Paul focuses on the universal Christian family and the necessity of keeping the new temple pure for proper worship. Paul then connects the vice/purity lists to the *haustafeln* by the unique position of “be filled with the Spirit” (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18) and “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph. 5:21).² The connection continues Paul’s instruction concerning the Christian’s status as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit through the unique union the Christian has with Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and each other. Where the vice/purity lists focus on the universal Christian family through individual actions, the *haustafeln* provides the structure to strengthen the unity of the universal Christian family by providing an organized immediate family that functions within the framework of the early house churches. Therefore, the immediate family is a form of the new temple when properly structured and pure.

Since the individual Christian has a unique union with the Father, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and each other, the Christian is part of a universal family that is the adopted family of God under the headship of Christ. The Christian’s adoption into the family of God is sealed with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that began at Pentecost and is given to all disciples, past, present,

¹ See Chapter 2 for the Second Temple background of Paul and the importance of the immediate family unit in ancient society. Since the immediate family unit was the center of most of the functions of society and since each individual was concerned with the honor and status of the family, keeping the family unit pure and honorable was on the forefront of individual’s mind.

² Bruce, *The Epistles*, 231; Roberts and McKnight, 194; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 358; Schüssler-Fiorenza, Reid, and Maloney, *Ephesians*, 89; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, 365; Barth et al., *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 102.

and future.³ With the outpouring of the Spirit, the Christian receives a unique vertical and horizontal relationship that binds the universal Christian family together.⁴ Because of this bond, actions and emotions need to be aligned with the will of God for the family to be the pure new temple dwelling of the Spirit that produces genuine worship that engages in the Great Commission.

Chapter 4 of this dissertation established what actions Paul taught, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, were not fitting for the pure new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit. God had required purity of the Israelites, whom He designated as His people, with the laws found in Leviticus, which parallel the lists found in Colossians and Ephesians. As the new temple of the Holy Spirit and adopted members into the universal family of God, Christians must remove the sinful ways of the old life and enter into God's pure and holy kingdom. With the expansion of the household of God into the universal Christian family, Paul needed to inform the new Gentile Christians in Ephesus and Colossae how to be holy and live in a way that honors God and the other members of the universal Christian family. While Paul believed the law to have been fulfilled by Jesus Christ, he also understood that purity and holiness identified a person as belonging to the universal Christian family.⁵ These action and attitude changes can only occur with the help of the indwelling Holy Spirit.⁶ Failure to submit to Christ means that the person still is living in the way of the Gentiles and is separated from the universal family of God.

³ Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 110; Polhill, *Acts*, 83; Keener, *Introduction and 1:1-2:47*, 794–95; Krodel, *Acts*, 72. While the initial number of disciples who received the outpouring of the Spirit is debated, it is agreed that the outpouring is a continuous event available to all who believe in Jesus Christ. The receiving of the Spirit constitutes the transfer of the new temple from Christ to his disciples.

⁴ Gifford, "Union with Christ," 41–43.

⁵ Rosher, "Understanding Paul's Ethics," 294–95.

⁶ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 269.

Aligning personal actions and inner attitudes to the will of God strengthens the unity of the universal Christian family.

The motif of submission permeates the *haustafeln* within Colossians and Ephesians. The *haustafeln* is best read as an integrated part of the letters to the Colossians and the Ephesians instead of as an added unit that breaks the flow of the letters. The transition from the purity lists to the *haustafeln* includes instruction to be “filled with the Spirit” and “submit to one another out of reverence to Christ.”⁷ While Paul frames relationship pairings in a hierarchal structure, it is not the structure that should bear the brunt of scholarly focus. All aspects of life on Earth must have structure, and hierarchy is required to facilitate order. Portraying order was critical in missionally reaching non-Christians within the Roman Empire.⁸ While the structure in the *haustafeln* resembled the standard ancient household codes, Christianity differs from broader society.

Within the household, the wife, the children, and the enslaved people submit to the leadership of the husband/father/enslaver. Christ grants the husband/father/enslaver authority, but not the ultimate authority granted by secular society. The *haustafeln* provides safeguards for the proper submission of the immediate family members by limiting the scope of authority the husband/father/enslaver can wield.⁹ As the appointed head of the earthly household, the husband/father/enslaver is responsible for leading and nurturing all immediate family members’ physical and spiritual well-being. Since each member of the immediate family is also part of the universal Christian family regardless of age, gender, race, and social status, the

⁷ Keener, “Mutual Submission.” 10–12.

⁸ Esswein, “The Οἶκος of the Lord,” 90–91.

⁹ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 368; Witherington, *Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 318; Osborne, *Ephesians*, 193; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 350; Bruce, *The Epistles*, 233; Thielman, Yarbrough, and Stein, *Ephesians*, 379.

father/husband/enslaver is bound by the union with the Spirit to each immediate household member. He must lead his family using the purity teachings in Colossians and Ephesians to strengthen the unity of the immediate family and the universal Christian family. Within the context of Ephesians and Colossians, one should interpret the *haustafeln* using the same illustration that Paul established for the universal Christian family. Just as all members of the household are the temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit, all household members contain the Spirit. Therefore, the household functions as a form of the new temple.

Since the households of early Christianity were also house churches, the unity of the family was necessary to facilitate the spread of the gospel. House churches were the primary location for worship and instruction. Therefore, the success of the missional directive of the Great Commission relied on properly structured households.¹⁰ To have a successful missional outreach to the surrounding community, all members of the household must be interdependent.¹¹ The immediate family's household functioned as the space for worship and preaching the gospel.

A pandemic engulfed the world while this dissertation was being constructed. Governmental authorities established ordinances that prevented gatherings in public spaces. Included within these ordinances was the limitation of or forbidding of corporate church gatherings. Worship and gospel instruction was once again occurring within the community's households. While corporate worship has resumed, the lessons from Colossians and Ephesians concerning the new temple status of the universal Christian family, the immediate family, and the individual Christian are a reminder of the proper structuring and functioning of the

¹⁰ Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 175–77; Balabanski, *Colossians: An Eco-Stoic Reading*, 148–49. The Christian house churches were often described as new temples or the dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

¹¹ Esswein, “The Οἶκος of the Lord,” 88.

immediate family to fulfill the Great Commission. Understanding how the household as a form of the new temple is critical in establishing house churches worldwide.

Implications of Research

With Paul's understanding of Christ's ascension and the transfer of the new temple to Christians through the Holy Spirit, it is evident he intended the *haustafeln* of Ephesians 5–6:9 and Col. 3–4:1 not to just focus on the immediate family unit but to reflect the universal Christian family. The universal Christian family is the actual family structure under the kingdom of God where Christ is at the head of all Christians and provides instructions for proper worship and purity required for the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit. When the immediate family is structured in an orderly way, the household functions as the house church that participates in the Great Commission. Since the household is a function of the new temple, the purity lists of Ephesians 4:17–5:21 and Colossians 3:1–17 are imperative for the purity of the immediate family unit. Properly functioning immediate families under the headship of Jesus Christ inevitably strengthen the universal Christian family that all Christians are bound to due to the unique union of the individual to the Father, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and each other.

Chapter 1 provided the pertinent scholarly research conducted by scholars concerning Colossians and Ephesians, early house churches, the temple, the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the broad historical background of the Second Temple period. This chapter covered the importance of the immediate family unit during the ancient and Second Temple periods. The family unit was crucial for the stability of the nation. The family unit was concerned with all individuals acting in an honorable way to maintain stability. The honor of each family member and could affect the overall status of the family within society.

With the historical background of the Second Temple period and the importance of the immediate family, their honor, and early Christian house churches established, Chapter 2 focused on the transfer of the temple from Jerusalem to Jesus and then to the believer after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit was for all baptized individuals who accepted the gospel. Included in this chapter was the account of the entire household of Cornelius. The gift of the Holy Spirit was for people of all ages, genders, nationalities, and earthly social statuses. The outpouring of the Spirit connected the believer to the Father, Christ, the Spirit, and each other in a unique union. Since the Holy Spirit now resides in the believers and not the physical temple structures built by men, it was imperative for Paul, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to establish a written set of directives on how to keep the new temple pure for the proper worship of God.

Paul's written instructions for purity are in Ephesians 4:17–5:21 and Colossians 3:1–17. Chapter 4 provided an in-depth exegesis of Colossians' and Ephesians' vice/purity lists. Paul relied on his Jewish educational background and presented the vice/purity lists like what can be found in the Torah. Paul provided examples from Leviticus. Since all who follow Christ are now in the universal Christian family, rules similar to those of God's chosen people, the Israelites, need to be adhered to be set apart as holy ones of God. While the laws in Leviticus required sacrifices for one to become clean, the lists in Colossians and Ephesians operate under the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Because of the sacrifice of Christ, Paul taught that the believer's innermost attitude must change to keep the temple pure and the universal Christian family unified under Christ.

Chapter 5 covered the *haustafeln* in Ephesians 5:22–6:9 and Colossians 3:18–4:1. Since early Christianity relied on house churches to serve as centers of worship and gospel teaching,

the households needed to be structured in a way that would facilitate the spread of the gospel to the household's secular neighbors to fulfill the Great Commission. While the structure described in the *haustafeln* resembles the patriarchal hierarchy of the ancient and Second Temple periods, Paul provided a deeper and countercultural variation. By instructing the male head of the house to temper his authority, Paul elevated the status of women, children, and enslaved people to bring the household relationships closer to reflecting the intended created family. While the new creation as the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit better reflects God's image, the immediate family members are still part of the world after the fall of humankind and the onset of sin. All members of the household must actively pursue the will of God by engaging in mutual submission. With all members of the immediate family submitting to Christ, the head of the household and chief priest, the family must internalize the previously presented vice and purity action lists to maintain the purity of the family. Each house church/immediate family is, in essence, a temple for worshipping God. Christ granted the husband authority as the head of the immediate family, but he cannot and does not replace Christ as the ultimate authority. Instead, the husband must follow the example of Christ and empty himself of the power to forcibly demand that all within the household submit to him unconditionally. The immediate family unit needs spiritual integrity to function as the new temple, reflected in the household operating as the house church spreading the gospel throughout society.

Just as early Christianity relied on these house churches/new temples to preach the gospel and spread Christianity worldwide, properly structured households under the headship of Jesus Christ are to still function as part of the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit. As the new temple dwelling of the Holy Spirit, the immediate family engages in the spreading of the gospel

within their community to fulfill the Great Commission and brings honor to the unified, universal Christian family.

Possible Areas for Further Study

These results can take one's mind in many directions. However, two particular areas seem to emerge as the next areas for research. The first is other household instructions in the New Testament, and the second is the hierarchical temple structure in the Second Temple period. These *haustafeln* and community writings could be compared and contrasted with the household codes and family information covered in this dissertation.

This dissertation focused on the *haustafeln* of Colossians and Ephesians, only briefly mentioning the other instances of the *haustafeln* in the New Testament. Researching the other instances of the *haustafeln* in connection with the Second Temple period house churches could help illuminate the speed and effectiveness of the spread of early Christianity. Often, the scholarly focus on the other instances of the *haustafeln* is centered on the hierarchy, more specifically on how all within the household must be submissive to the male head of house regardless of his religious affiliation or how he wields his humanly appointed power toward the others within the household. 1 Peter would be an interesting research opportunity, for often, the *haustafeln* portrays the wife as a Christian attempting to bring her unbelieving husband to Christ through submissive service. An instance such as this one would hinder the house church since it is unlikely that an unbelieving male head of the house would host a house church to worship a deity that is not his god of choice.

Another potential research area is the hierarchical structure of the *haustafeln* compared to the Second Temple period Jewish and pagan temples. Temples required personnel to function and facilitate the worship of the preferred deity of the city or nation. Since the Christian family is

a function of the new temple, each member's role may correlate with the assigned positions of temple workers. Comparing each position within each temple to each role within the individual family unit can enhance studies on the grounding of individuals' everyday lives in their religious activities. From this point, one could extrapolate to society as a whole to illuminate the intricacies of how all aspects of ancient life intertwine, with little separation between private and public life.

It is fitting to consider further studies because this dissertation began as a research idea. If the Biblical concept of the temple is defined by the presence, or indwelling, of God, then the temple is more than just the individual believer. Interpreters should exposit epistles with this nuance. The initial thought on research led to the question of what new insights are to be gleaned from this temple motif. The findings show that the individual family unit, because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, is a form of the new temple, as is evident in the house churches of early Christianity. While this dissertation delivered on the proposal put forth, applications can continue to be made, shaping conversations and congregations.

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