

# Concordia Theological Quarterly



Volume 77:3-4

July/October 2013

## *Table of Contents*

---

<b>The Value of Children according to the Gospels</b>	
Charles A. Gieschen .....	195
<b>Abortion, Incarnation, and the Place of Children in the Church: All One Cloth</b>	
David P. Scaer .....	213
<b>Lutheran Support for the Pro-Life Movement: A Case of Faith without Works?</b>	
Peter J. Scaer .....	229
<b>Marriage and So-Called Civil Unions in Light of Natural Law</b>	
Gifford A. Grobier .....	257
<b>Man Reconstructed: Humanity beyond Biology</b>	
Brent Waters.....	271
<b>The ELCA—<i>Quo Vadis?</i></b>	
Mark D. Menacher.....	287
<b>Suffering as a Mark of the Church in Martin Luther's Exegesis of 1 Peter</b>	
Kenneth J. Woo .....	307

**Research Notes** ..... 327

    Ephesians 5:21: “Submitting to One Another  
        out of Reverence for Christ”

**Theological Observer** ..... 335

*LSB* Service of Holy Matrimony:  
        The Right Rite for Our Times

    The Pro-Life Movement in the LCMS:  
        Some Reminiscences

    Can the Shoes of Richard John Neuhaus Be Filled?

    Postmodern Attitudes among Lutherans  
        about the Lord’s Supper

    Looking Ahead: Celebrating Martin Luther  
        and the Reformation in 2017

**Book Reviews** ..... 359

**Books Received** ..... 379

**Indices for Volume 77 (2013)** ..... 382

## Research Notes

**“... submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ  
[ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ]” (Ephesians 5:21)**

A popular way of understanding Ephesians 5:21 is to suppose that husbands should submit to their wives out of “self-sacrificial love and voluntary self-submission” and wives should “return the same.”<sup>1</sup> Tranquility between genders at this juncture would seem to require such reciprocal give-and-take, and a version of mutual submission is all but assumed in domestic relationships, of course, but also increasingly at school (in the socialization of our young), in the way the two sexes relate to one another in secular society (e.g., television, movies, NPR), and now, apparently, at church and among Christians. And yet, one may ask, does Ephesians 5:21 really support mutual submission as popularly understood? Perhaps not.

A major confusion stems from where translators and translation committees have chosen to place Ephesians 5:21 in the context of the overall letter. There is no finite verb in the verse, meaning that the participle ὑποτασσόμενοι (“submitting”) could be construed with what precedes (5:18–20),<sup>2</sup> with what follows (5:22–33),<sup>3</sup> or as a pivot between the two blocks.<sup>4</sup> I offer here no complete comparison. Nevertheless, the various possibilities demonstrate that many otherwise accurate translations vary drastically as to where what is essentially a participle clause should be placed. What to do?

Here I defer to a brother in office who has been working on Ephesians for a very long time. I have recently been in correspondence with Thomas M. Winger, President at Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catherines, Ontario, Canada, and forthcoming author of *Ephesians* in the Concordia Commentary series. He proposes that Ephesians 5:21 is indeed a pivot that goes both with what precedes and with what follows.<sup>5</sup> A good starting point, Winger suggests, is the imperative in 5:18: “be filled with the Spirit [πληροῦσθε

---

<sup>1</sup> So suggests Alan G. Padgett, *As Christ Submits to the Church: A Biblical Understanding of Leadership and Mutual Submission* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 41–42.

<sup>2</sup> cf. ASV, NAB, TNIV, HCSB, and ESV.

<sup>3</sup> cf. UBS<sup>4</sup> NA<sup>27</sup>, RSV, Jerusalem Living, AAT, NRSV, and CEB.

<sup>4</sup> cf. KJV (1611 edition), NEB, NIV, and REB.

<sup>5</sup> A first email was sent from Thomas Winger to Paul Grime on Friday August 16, 2013, then forwarded to me on the same day at 1:51 p.m. I received a second email giving me permission to use the contents of the first post on Wednesday September 11, 2013, 4:30 p.m. I would like to thank Dr. Winger for taking a look at an earlier version of this paper and offering constructive criticisms.

ἐν πνεύματι].” Then a number of participle clauses (including the one in 5:21) illumine the imperative in 5:18:

<sup>18</sup> Be filled [πληροῦσθε] in the Spirit,

<sup>19</sup> speaking [λαλοῦντες] to each other in psalms and hymns and songs of the Spirit,

singing and [ᾄδοντες καὶ]

psalming [ψάλλοντες] with your heart to the Lord,

<sup>20</sup> giving thanks [εὐχαριστοῦντες] always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to [our] God and Father,

<sup>5:21</sup> being subordinate [ὑποτασσόμενοι] to one another in the fear of Christ:

<sup>5:22</sup> Wives (αἱ γυναῖκες) . . .

<sup>6:1</sup> Children (τὰ τέκνα) . . .

<sup>6:5</sup> Slaves (οἱ δοῦλοι) . . .

<sup>6:9</sup> Masters (οἱ κύριοι) . . .<sup>6</sup>

Winger suggests, then, that taking one’s subordinate place in each earthly relationship is a fruit of the Spirit’s greater work and an act of worship in daily life. Now that the Christians are connected to the Spirit on account of their proximity to the Word at the Divine Service, 5:22–6:9 constitutes a major block that might be summarized as the way that Christians in their different offices relate in a God-pleasing manner to one another. Thus,

Be filled [πληροῦσθε] in the Spirit . . . (5:18)

(How is this done? Here is how):

Being subordinate [ὑποτασσόμενοι] to one another in the fear of Christ (5:21),

Wives to their own husbands as to *the Lord* . . . (5:22)

Children heed your parents in *the Lord* . . . (6:1)

Slaves heed your fleshly *lords* . . . (6:5)

Masters, realize that both the slaves’ *Lord*, and yours, is in heaven and there is no partiality with him (6:9).

The common referent in the latter relationships is *the Lord* (forms of ὁ κύριος occur in 5:22; 6:1, 5, 9) to whom the Christian’s respect, obedience, and servitude really are due, regardless of the subordinate party’s relative office. Hence, to take Ephesians 5:21 in isolation as somehow advocating mutual

---

<sup>6</sup> This and other translations of the Greek text are the author’s.

submission is quite a *misinterpretation* of the verse, as Winger maintains; rather “being subordinate” to one another in 5:21 is a kind of title<sup>7</sup> suggesting a pattern of headship and submission for several relationships operable among Christians who hear the Gospel and then relate to each other in the way here suggested:

Christ		husbands		fathers/ parents		lords/ masters	
↓ loves, sacrifices	↑ submits, fears	↓ love, sacrifice	↑ submit, fear	↓ discipline, instruct	↑ heed, honor	↓ treat well, don't threaten	↑ heed, fear
Church		wives		children		Slaves	

Thus far, I am grateful to Winger for sharing his thinking with me.<sup>8</sup> I would like now to provide some exegetical insights I developed independently while reviewing the book by Padgett referenced earlier.<sup>9</sup> I have three points to make, fleshing out the rather lean exegetical notes provided in Peter T. O'Brien's commentary on Ephesians.<sup>10</sup>

First, in the New Testament ὑποτάσσω (“to submit”) regularly describes the submission of someone in an ordered arrangement to another who is above the first—that is, in authority over that person. Here it is instructive to consider the examples that support this admittedly sweeping assertion: the submission of Jesus to his parents (Luke 2:51); of demons to the disciples (Luke 10:17, 20); of citizens to the governing authorities (Rom 13:1; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13); of all things in the universe to Christ (1 Cor 15:27 [citing Ps 8:7 LXX]; Eph 1:22); of angels, authorities, and powers to Christ (1 Pet 3:22); of Christ to God the

<sup>7</sup> Another scholar who views Ephesians 5:21 as a “title” for the following household code (5:22–6:9; cf. Col 3:18–4:1) is Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary 42 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 365.

<sup>8</sup> He reports that his draft on Ephesians 5:21–33 is nearly seventy pages in length.

<sup>9</sup> See my review of Padgett's *As Christ Submits to the Church* at Blogia, the Blog of Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology (<http://logia.org/blogia/?p=170>); accessed September 15, 2013.

<sup>10</sup> Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids and Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1999), 401–405.

Father (1 Cor 15:28); of church members to their leaders (1 Cor 16:15–16; 1 Pet 5:5); of the church to Christ (Eph 5:24); of slaves to their masters (Titus 2:9; 1 Pet 2:18); of Christians to God (Heb 12:9; James 4:7); and of wives to their husbands (Col 3:18; Titus 2:4–5; 1 Pet 3:5). In none of the passages wherein the verb ὑποτάσσω appears are the relationships ever reversed. Thus, Joseph and Mary are not subject to the boy Jesus; the disciples are not subject to demons, the governing authorities are not subject to the citizens, nor Christ to the universe nor the unseen powers, nor God the Father to Christ the Son, nor leaders to the church members, nor Christ to the church, nor masters to slaves, nor God to Christians, and (here is the pertinent relationship that all the others lead up to) not husbands to wives. Therefore, according to the textual evidence, ὑποτάσσω does not describe “symmetrical” relationships at all, but rather *ordered* relationships wherein some persons are “over” and others “under.”

Second, Padgett’s reciprocal interpretation of Ephesians 5:21 rests mainly upon that little pronoun ἀλλήλοις (“to one another”): “the term *one another* (*allēlois*) in Ephesians (4:2, 32) and in Paul’s letters in general indicates something that applies to each member of the church and not merely to a few.”<sup>11</sup> Closer examination reveals, however, that the pronoun ἀλλήλοις is not always reciprocal. Sometimes it is, to be sure, in which case the translation “everyone to everyone” is in order;<sup>12</sup> however, as is often the case with words that occur frequently in Scripture, context determines meaning and one size does not necessarily fit all. Thus, the reciprocal pronoun appears in an admittedly few New Testament passages where symmetrical relationships cannot be in view. One such passage is Revelation 6:4: “so that people should slay one another [ἵνα ἀλλήλους σφάξουσιν, ESV].” This need not mean, however, that the slayers killed each other reciprocally, as if locked in mortal combat, but simply that some in more advantageous position killed others who were in less advantageous position.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, “Bear one another’s burdens [ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε]” (Gal 6:2) does not have to mean that everyone should exchange burdens with everyone else, but that “*some* who are more able should help bear the burdens of *others* who are less able.”<sup>14</sup> There are more passages of this sort,<sup>15</sup> each requiring analysis and thus interpretation on a case-by-case basis. I would argue, then, that Ephesians 5:21 falls into the latter category—especially if, as has been shown, the submission is not reciprocal but follows an ordered pattern.

<sup>11</sup> Padgett, *As Christ Submits to the Church*, 41. He points to Romans 1:12; 15:5; and Galatians 5:13, 17, 26 in defense of his claim.

<sup>12</sup> Thus, in addition to the passages Padgett cites in the preceding footnote see John 13:34, 35; 15:12, 17; Eph 4:25, etc.

<sup>13</sup> Thus, O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 403.

<sup>14</sup> O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 403 (emphasis original).

<sup>15</sup> O’Brien lists 1 Cor 11:33; Luke 2:15; 21:1 (in error for 12:1); and 24:32; *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 403.

Third, the flow of Paul's argument as expressed in the Greek text does not permit the egalitarian interpretation. Ephesians 5:21 ("being subject to one another in the fear of Christ") introduces programmatically the notion of "submission" in the letter, and this concept is further unpacked in the household code of 5:22–6:9. The "general heading" (as Lincoln calls Ephesians 5:21)<sup>16</sup> is closely connected to what follows immediately in 5:22, where the relationship between wives and their husbands begins. There is no verb in the latter passage,<sup>17</sup> so readers of the Greek may naturally carry forward the idea of "submit" from the present middle participle ὑποτασσόμενοι (5:21) that begins the period. Indeed, variants consisting of a second or third person imperative—"ye women submit [ὑποτάσσεσθε] to your own husbands as to the Lord"<sup>18</sup> or "let the women submit [ὑποταστέσθωσαν] to their own husbands as to the Lord"<sup>19</sup>—have had long and ample attestation in the textual apparatus as the two preceding footnotes demonstrate. Such additions, however, produce a verbosity that violates "the succinct style of the author's admonitions"<sup>20</sup> and are unnecessary in any case. In Ephesians 5:24a, where the verb ὑποτάσσεται does indeed occur ("as the church submits [ὑποτάσσεται] to Christ"), Paul adds the clause, "so also the wives [submit] to their husbands in everything [οὕτως καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐν παντί]." Again, Paul does not have to add the verb "submit" in the second clause to clarify what he means. The adverbial phrase οὕτως καὶ ("so also in the same way") in 5:24b indicates that, in the succinct style of the author, the ὑποτάσσεται of the church submitting to Christ is supposed to be applied to the wives submitting to their husbands—"in everything [ἐν παντί]" Paul adds.

The issue here is not so much substance as style. Paul, as is the case with all other writers of Greek and Latin, never adds a superfluous word (here the appropriate form of the verb ὑποτάσσω) to clarify his thinking—even though,

<sup>16</sup> O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 365.

<sup>17</sup> Literally, "the wives to their own husbands as to the Lord [αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ] . . ." (Eph 5:22, my own hyper-literal translation of the Greek text as it stands).

<sup>18</sup> γυναῖκες ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς . . . D F G it<sup>d</sup>, g txt. Later variants, keeping the second person plural imperative ὑποτάσσεσθε ("submit ye!"), transpose the verb so that it occurs later in the sentence, thus γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτάσσεσθε ὡς . . . 075 0150 424\* 1852 1912 2200 Byz [K L] *Lect it<sup>f</sup> syr<sup>h</sup> geo slav* Chrysostom (emphasis added).

<sup>19</sup> γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποταστέσθωσαν ὡς . . . κ A I P (Ψ ὑποταστέσθωσαν after γυναῖκες) 6 33 81 104 256 263 365 424<sup>c</sup> 436 459 1175 1241 1319 1573 1739 1881 1962 2127 2464 l 596 l 895 l 1178 it<sup>ar, b</sup>, g v. r., mon, o vg syr<sup>pal</sup> (cop<sup>sa</sup>, bo) arm eth Origen<sup>gr</sup> lem, lat Basil Theodore<sup>lat</sup> lem; Victorinus-Rome Ambrosiaster Ambrose Jerome<sup>lem</sup> Pelagius Augustine.

<sup>20</sup> Bruce H. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/German Bible Society, 1994), 541.

to be sure, many writers of *English* do in order to clarify a point. Paul, however, cannot be beholden to *English* style: he thinks and writes in *Greek*, an accommodation to which any acceptable interpretation of the passage must pay heed. An unworthy argument (that Padgett does not actually make) would be that because the verb ὑποτάσσω is not actually paired with “women” in Ephesians 5:21, 22, and 24b Paul could not be thinking of wives submitting to their husbands in the overall passage. But that he does have such submission in mind is clear enough from context, as has been amply shown here, *and* he makes the point about wives submitting to their husbands explicitly in the following passages:

Wives, submit to your husbands [ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἀνδράσιν], as is fitting in the Lord (Col 3:18 ESV);

... to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands [ὑποτασσόμενας τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν], so that the word of God may not be reviled (Titus 2:5 ESV).

That this was not so much a Pauline teaching as an early Christian one is suggested by the presence of recognizably the same admonition outside the Pauline corpus:

For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands [ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν], as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening (1 Pet 3:5–6 ESV).

Preceding arguments should scupper the possibility that Paul was establishing any type of mutual submission in Ephesians 5:21. Instead, it is as though Paul were saying in the household code of which Ephesians 5:21 marks the beginning, “Submit to one another, and what I mean is, wives submit to your husbands, children to your parents, and slaves to your masters.”<sup>21</sup> Another worthy interpreter has written, “Let each of you subordinate himself or herself to the one he or she should be subordinate to.”<sup>22</sup>

I hasten to add that the subordination of the wife to her husband in the marital relationship does not entail an inherent inferiority to him. It is simply the case that order in marriage implies asymmetry: the one in authority (husband) is set over the one under his authority (wife). Hence, this biblically-revealed asymmetry should be reflected in the vows taken at marriage so that all involved understand that there is a distinction of roles in marriage: husbands love, nourish, and cherish their wives as Christ does the church (Eph 5:25, 28, 33), whereas wives submit to their husbands and respect them as the

<sup>21</sup> O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 403.

<sup>22</sup> S. B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1980), 76.



church submits to Christ (Eph 5:24, 33).<sup>23</sup> This divine order is completely overturned in homosexual “marriage” and in churches that equate the gospel with egalitarianism and fairness. Christianity’s gospel, however, is not “fair” in the usual understanding of that term (e.g., Matt 20:1–16), nor should Christian spouses attempt merely to be “fair” to each other in the sense of not treading on the other’s toes. Such “space” between spouses seems at best to be a dim shadow of that blessed communion between a husband and wife that God intends in holy matrimony. God surely created the husband to be a godly *man* to his wife, and the wife to be a godly *woman* to her husband—his “helpmeet,” if one may employ the terminology of an earlier age. Nor have I had space here to sketch out more thoroughly the distinctive role of the husband as the “Christ-like” figure in the marital relationship. The divine initiative in the role of salvation—from God to man—is reflected in the quite masculine roles of seeking out a prospective mate from the feminine half of the human race, of wooing her by various and sundry means, of committing to her and to her alone, then of “nourishing and cherishing” (ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει, Eph 5:29) the wife, even if—or perhaps I should say, *especially if*—she does not at first willingly or joyfully comply. But the husbandly role, which most definitely reflects the divine initiative (cf. Is 40:2; 62:5; Hos 2:14, 19–20) and willing self-sacrifice of Christ (cf. Jn 10:11, 18; 15:13) endures even the wife’s scornful unwillingness if only to win her to himself so that, as he ardently hopes, she *will* come to return his love and respect him in the end. Such dynamics at least were expressed by St. John Chrysostom in a splendid homily intended for petulant wives and their grasping husbands in the late fourth century.<sup>24</sup>

Toward the end of his treatment of wives and husbands, Paul resorts to citing Holy Scripture nearly verbatim (Eph 5:31). Not just any Scripture, however, but the same words that described Adam and Eve at creation (Gen 2:24) and Jesus’ repetition of the same while under the baleful gaze of some contemptuous Pharisees (Matt 19:5; Mark 10:7): “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh [καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν]” (Eph 5:31 ESV). Of course, this passage is cited in all the Lutheran agendas on marriage, as well it should be.

A part of the passage that really got me to thinking, however, is the final clause: “and the two shall become one flesh,” followed immediately by Paul’s “this mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church” (Eph 5:32 ESV). In his e-mail, Winger states that his thinking on

---

<sup>23</sup> See “LSB Service of Holy Matrimony: The Right Rite for Our Times” in the *Theological Observer* of this issue (335–336).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. “Homily 20: On Ephesians 5:22–33,” in *St. John Chrysostom: On Marriage & Family Life*, Popular Patristic Series, trans. Catherine P. Roth and David Anderson (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press), 43–64. The Greek text is available in John Chrysostom, *Homiliae in Epistolam ad Ephesios* 20 (PG 62: 135–150).

Ephesians 5 and holy marriage relied heavily upon John Kleinig's article, "The Subordination of the Exalted Son to the Father."<sup>25</sup> I tracked the article down and read it carefully. Kleinig makes scant reference to marriage itself in the piece, but I agree with Winger that inter-Trinitarian relationships between especially God the Father and Christ the Son suggest also how matters stand between a man and woman in Christ in holy marriage. For example, Kleinig writes that the three persons of the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—work together in all aspects of humanity's salvation, yet they "like a man and a woman in the conception of a child" operate differently according to their position and relation to each other as separate persons in the Trinity.<sup>26</sup> Kleinig peppers his piece with such terms as "the order of relations" and "the Trinitarian dynamic." Christ is equal to the Father as touching his Godhead, yet inferior to the Father as touching his manhood (Athanasian Creed; cf. 1 Cor 3:23; 11:3; 15:28). Such statements do not imply an inferiority of *essence*, but rather differences in *office* in the relationship between the Father and the Son. The persons are not simply *the same* but carry on diverse tasks harmoniously together within the one Godhead. So might not these Trinitarian relationships be suggestive of marriage also wherein the husband and the wife carry on differing, yet at the same time, complementary roles in the one marital relationship? Doctrinal purists might scoff at the possibility because human marriage, to be sure, is marred by sin. And yet, there may be some instructive parallels nevertheless. God did, after all, create man—both male and female—in his image (Gen 1:27). So perhaps the connection between the Holy Trinity and human marriage is not so far-fetched as some may think.

I shall have to leave it there. Winger's commentary is about to be unleashed upon a world that is profoundly confused about marriage and sexuality, and the deleterious effects of this confusion are increasingly felt among us. I submit that the challenge, however, provides great opportunity for the church and the on-going need for pastors and deaconesses to engage in good thinking on controverted matters, witness faithfully no matter what, and serve courageously—perhaps in the face of stout opposition (see Jesus vs. the Pharisees in Matt 19:5 above). The world may rage and foam, yet the Lord of the church has promised never to leave us nor forsake us (Matt 28:20). We cling to him.

John G. Nordling

---

<sup>25</sup> John Kleinig, "The Subordination of the Exalted Son to the Father," *Lutheran Theological Review* 18 (2005–2006): 41–52.

<sup>26</sup> Kleinig, "The Subordination of the Exalted Son to the Father," 44.