

That Which He Desires Most But Stops Short of Demanding / Colossians 3:18-4:1

And the Lord spoke from the mountain, saying: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery....You shall have no other gods before me....You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or the waters below....You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his nameYou shall remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy....You shall honor your father and mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house, or wife, or servant, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. When the people saw the thunder, lightning, and the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear and stayed at a distance.

Every Wednesday evening, the conversation between the *Top Sirloin of the West Household* and his *Prime Rib* usually starts the same way it has for the last 18 years. "Hey sugar pie, honey bun, I can't help myself because you're my prime rib. When you have a chance, I need your input on my sermon outline." Well, church, I want to tell you today that *The Prime Rib* knew *The Top Sirloin* was below medium rare when Wednesday passed without soliciting her input. So the *Prime Rib* took the initiative: "what are you preaching on this week?" To which the *Top Sirloin* responded: "that's a great question, *Prime Rib*, I'm glad you asked. Hear the Word of the Lord, Oh Prime Rib of the West Household, in the *Top Sirloin* translation: "wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting to the Lord. The Word of God for the people of God. Amen." At that moment, I figured one of two scenarios were likely: (1) the verse could have stirred her spirit to forget about the ceiling fan cleaning she asked me to do; or (2) I was about to get three more projects added to my Honey-Do List. Neither happened. Instead, she responded with the best theological "rib" of all time: "Derrick, Paul wrote that verse to me, not to you to tell me. But he wrote the next one for you: husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them." // Has it ever occurred to you that there is one thing the God of the Bible wants from us more than anything but stops just short of demanding? Has it ever occurred to you that there was one thing the Father wanted from His Son more than anything but never demanded? You won't find the Father demanding this one thing of Jesus in one single verse of the New Testament. This one thing is just as fitting and proper for us to do as it was for Jesus. This one thing is the only road the Father he wants us to travel because it's the only road he desired Jesus travel. The one thing he desires but stops just short of demanding is completely voluntary but exceedingly challenging. It is that one thing he desires but doesn't demand that's called submission. God desires submission in every relationship of our lives. He desires it in our relationship to Him. He desires it in the Prime Rib's relationship with the Top Sirloin. He desires it in the Top Sirloin's relationship with the Prime Rib. He desires it for every child and for every parent. He desires it for every employee and every employer. He even desires it for every church and every pastor. It's the key to understand how we relate to our God and our neighbor. But here's the kicker: he wants it to be entirely voluntary from a heart that is pure and hands that are clean. // I want to suggest to you this morning that the best way to know you are being submissive to God as a lifestyle is to show you are being submissive to those you love and know best the way in the way God wants you to be. Are you harshly combative with others with your words or with your silence? If you are, those actions speak to your voluntary lack of submission to the Lord? Do you voluntarily submit to others in a way that's appropriate without having to be coerced? That says a lot about your degree of voluntary submissiveness to God. I want you to take your Bibles this morning and turn to Colossians 3:18. We will start there and end in Colossians 4:1. After which, I want to speak to you about this passage, and this one thing God desires but never demands, in a manner you've never thought about. In the end, this challenging issue, voluntary submission, will not only make better sense. But it will help you connect the Word of God, the Gospel, and what God wants for you to your life in a way that motivates you voluntarily with joy in your hearts.

¹⁸ *Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.* ¹⁹ *Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.* ²⁰ *Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.* ²¹ *Fathers,*^[c] *do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.*

²² *Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.* ²³ *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters,* ²⁴ *since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.* ²⁵ *Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism...* ^{4:1} *Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.*

That Which He Desires Most But Stops Just Short of Demanding:

1. Started at Creation (See for Verses Below).

- **The Pelaton Line of Treadmills/Bicycle:** (1) Slogan better is in us; (2) Treadmills/Bicycle with a 6500 inch LCD screen that has people say “you can do it. Not far to go now.” (3) Act now and you can get \$2395. (4) Why in the world would you get a treadmill/bicycle for 2395 when the one you already have has clothes, quilts and everything else under the sun piled on top of it.
- **Transition:** Like the Pelaton, voluntary submission was created to be a good thing. It centered applied to four domains
- **God (Gen 2:16-17)** – (1) Voluntary; (2) ¹⁶ *And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”*
- **Man and Wife (2:22-23)** – (1) Mutual Identity; (2) ²² *Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib^[h] he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ²³ The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.”*
- **Family (2:24)** – (1) Model for a Model; (2) ²⁴ *That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.*
- **Work (2:19-20)** – (1) Responsibility in proper domains; (2) *He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.*

2. Became permanently damaged by the Fall. (See for Verses Below)

- **Duct Tape Engineering:** (1) You might not have a degree in mechanical or aerospace engineering, but every single one of us has a PHD in Duct Tape Engineering; (2) What was originally created in WW2 for waterproofing ammunition cases has a variety engineering uses in your life right now; (3) Your laptop is separated into two pieces and you have a roll of duct tape near by, what are you going to do?; (4) You are in the middle of the Bermuda Triangle and something falls off of your Evinrude, what are you going to do? (5) Your car window breaks and you don’t have the money to fix your Pontiac Aztec, what are you going to do? (5) Something in your house is held up by duck tape right now.
- **Transition:** The fall of humanity has permanently altered voluntary submission to the point it’s unrecognizable and can’t even be fixed by astronaut grade duct tape.
- **God (3:23):** (1) Separation; (2) ²³ *So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.*
- **Man and Wife (3:15):** (1) Blame then enmity; (2) *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers;*
- **Family (4:9):** (1) Murder, not model. (2) ⁹ *Then the Lord said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” “I don’t know,” he replied. “Am I my brother’s keeper?”*
- **Work (3:17):** (1) Domains reversed; (2) Ground we were made from now our master; (3) “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.

3. Is now distorted in our Lives. (See for Verses Below)

- **Beauty and the Beach Radio:** (1) A month or two ago, I got a phone call from Cindy Goetz; host of the Beauty and the Beach radio to see if Darcie and I would be interested in doing an interview; (2) Ok, what’s it about? (3) I can’t tell you but it’ll be fun. (4) Found out when I got there I had the opportunity to put make up and Darcie and see how good I do. (4) She was terrified. (5) I tapped into my poor man’s Van Gogh, Picasso, and DaVinci powers. (6) Base became eye liner; (7) Eyeliner became base; (8) Lip stick became blush and (9) blush became lipstick; (10) When it was all said and done, it developed a phobia of dad’s paint brushes
- **Transition:** Submission has become distorted to the point in our lives that the beauty of it is unrecognizable. The fall didn’t just impact Adam and Eve. It also impacted us.
- **God (Col. 1:21):** (1) Hostile; (2) ²¹ *Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of^[g] your evil behavior.*
- **Husband and Wife (Job 2:9; David’s other wives)** (1) Enmity; Neglect; No longer identification (2) “Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!” (3) David’s other wives – Michal; Abigail; Ahinoam, Maacah, Haggith, Abital and Eglah

- **Family (2 Sam 12:10; David and Absalom)** – (1) Cain rage continues in David’s family because of a lack of creation model; (2) *Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.’*
 - **Work (Gen 29-31 [Laban’s Deceit]; Thess. 3:10 [The Thessalonian Problem])** – (1) The Taskmaster: Laban tricks Jacob to work for 20 yrs instead of 7; (2) The Taskbreaker: “the one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.”
4. Can only be restored by the Gospel (Col 3:18-4:1).
- **One of my Most Prized Possessions and Not Understanding Restoration** (1) I have a quarter sawn Oak Desk from the 1950s; (2) I bought it at Habitat for Humanity for about 200 dollars. It was awful looking too. Drawers were gone. Knobs off. 60 years of scratches over it; (3) We forget that restoration means that something had beauty at one time but it has slowly faded; (4) But sanding, glue, varnish has slowly but surely made the beauty come back from the desk that had been defaced.
 - **Transition:** Submission in the right way in our relationships is the evidence that the Gospel is beautiful. And only Christ can put submission back the way God intended it to be at creation.
 - **Husband and Wife:** (1) Wives submit and husband loves (agape) without daggers (2) Only the Gospel can restore that back to Eden
 - **Family:** (1) Children obey your parents and Father’s don’t embitter like David and Absalom; (2) Only the Gospel can restore that back to Eden.
 - **Work:** (1) ****Very Important:** American and Roman Slavery were very different; (2) Roman society was composed of social classes. People were born into them (Aristocracy; Laborer; Freedman, Slave) (3) Unlike most caste societies, you could move from one to the other. (4) Servants work to move out of your situation by currying favor; (5) Masters – provide what is right and fair; (6) Only the Gospel makes that possible.
 - **So Then, I Ask You:** On whom does God depend to show the Gospel to the world? How do we show the Gospel? Two words: Voluntary submission.