

# BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

## “A New Paradigm For The New Life”

Colossians 3:18-4:1  
2004

### Introduction

In the late 70s a new term was coined in the business community called “Paradigm Shift” It refers to a new model or new approach. It means doing things with a new perspective, a new outlook, starting from scratch with no restrictions.

That’s in essence what Paul is calling us to as believers – a whole New Paradigm. As believers, we are no longer sinners, but saints. No longer slaves to sin, but slaves to righteousness. No longer citizens of this earthly kingdom, but citizens of God’s heavenly kingdom. That’s what he is getting at in verses like ...

2 Cor 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”

Rom 12:1 “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

The teachings of the Bible are intensely practical. And the book of Colossians is no exception. Paul’s doctrine and theology always leads to practical transformation – a spiritual Paradigm Shift that results in life-changing perspective and behavior.

### I The Believer’s New Attitude Toward Relationships

A. Wives, **submit** to your husbands [Verse 18]

**Submit** = Hupotasso = (hupo, "under," tasso, "to arrange") (present tense)

A Greek military term meaning "to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader". In non-military use, it was "a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden".

Biblical submission is based on our reverence for Jesus Christ, and is an act of love and surrender to God's chain of command.

Eph 5:22-24 “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.”

Unfortunately, for most women, the word submission generates thoughts of being a door mat, being under a man’s thumb, being barefoot and pregnant.

But biblical submission is far different than what a woman’s fears might suggest:

1. It isn't a concept just for women - Eph 5:21

It is a mandate for all believers

2. It isn't another word for slavery - Prov 31:10-31

The wife is actually freed to become all that God has designed her to be.

3. It doesn't make the wife speechless

Prov 31:26 "She speaks with wisdom and faithful instruction is on her tongue."

4. It doesn't make the wife a wallflower - Prov 31

She is industrious and successful in profiting her household

5. It doesn't mean the wife is inferior - Gal 3:28

To the contrary, the New Testament emphasizes the dignity of women, and it is an indisputable fact that the example and teaching of Christ has lifted women in one country and society after another to a position that they did not occupy before. Whereas in many great religions, not least in Judaism and Islam, women have a far lower place than men, the New Testament emphasizes their spiritual equality.

1. As is fitting in the Lord

**Fitting** = Aneko = "Proper"

It's important to note that this submission is not absolute. If a husband asks a wife to do something that is contrary to God's Word the wife has every right ... and even an obligation ... to obey God rather than her husband.

Acts 5:29 "Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!"

### **The irony of submission:**

If you, as a wife, are determined to take on the role of:

1. Protecting yourself
2. Controlling the environment of your home
3. Cajoling, nagging, humiliating your husband into proper behavior

Then God will step aside and let you bring all your limited and meager resources to the table. Your husband will be answerable to you. And you will find yourself frustrated, defeated, and exhausted.

On the other hand, if you will yield to your husband's leadership (as to the Lord), God will bring His unlimited and powerful resources to the table. And your husband will be directly answerable to Him.

**Definition of submission in marriage:** "The wife ducking out of the way so that God can hit the husband." K. Hutcherson

- B. Husbands, **love** your wives [Verse 19]

**Love** = Agapao (present imperative tense)

Men, we are mandated by God to honor, value, respect, guard, protect, and show

delight in the wife God has chosen for us.

Eph 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ...”

1. And do not be harsh with them

**Harsh** = Pikraino = “To be bitter, sharp, cutting”

1 Peter 3:7 “Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.”

Husbands are not to be caustic, harsh or sarcastic toward their wives. That kind of attitude will cut your wife to the heart and do untold damage to her, your relationship with her, and your capacity as a couple to reflect the nature of Christ and the church.

Eph 4:29 “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

C. Children, **obey** your parents in everything [Verse 20]

**Obey** = Hupakouo = “To listen attentively with the intent to obey”

Who qualifies as a “child”?

1. Anyone who is under the age of 18
2. Anyone who is still living at home.

What does an obedient child look like?

1. They obey their parents in everything

Eph 6:1 “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.”

Prov 6:20-23 “Young man, obey your father and your mother. Take to heart all of their advice; keep in mind everything they tell you. Every day and all night long their counsel will lead you and save you from harm; when you wake up in the morning, let their instructions guide you into the new day. For their advice is a beam of light directed into the dark corners of your mind to warn you of danger and to give you a good life.” [Living Bible]

2. They speak of and to their parents with respect

Eph 6:2-3 “Honor your father and mother”, which is the first commandment with a promise -- “that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

3. They are concerned with their parent’s reputation and feelings

Proverbs 10:1 “A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son grief to his mother.”

4. They make a point to express their gratitude often

1 Thess 5:18 "... give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

1. For this pleases the Lord

**Pleases** = Euairestos = "To be well pleasing or acceptable"

Eph 5:8-10 "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ... and find out what pleases the Lord."

Why is an obedient child pleasing to God?

1. It preserves peace in the home
2. It is a recognition of God's authority and chain of command
3. It is a silent but powerful form of evangelism

D. Fathers, do not **embitter** your children [Verse 21]

**Embitter** = Erethizo = "To irritate, exasperate, or provoke to anger"

Eph 6:4 "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

What kind of things embitter or exasperate a child?

1. Being ignored or neglected  
The words, "later", "not now", "maybe", or "I don't have time" make a child feel unimportant and worthless.  
Turn off the TV, put the paper down, shut down the computer.
2. Receiving constant criticism and little encouragement  
In our desire to help our children become godly adults, we can end up focusing all our attention on what they aren't doing right over what they are doing right. We don't notice the higher grades on the report card ... we spotlight the lower grades. We don't acknowledge what is done ... we harp on what is not done.
4. Being disciplined without love  
Disciplining your child too severely or in anger will embitter your child.
5. Observing parental hypocrisy  
Children become disillusioned and bitter when their parents live by a different standard than they require of their kids:  
"Don't lie": But then they overhear you lying to your boss about being sick.  
"Don't steal": But then they observe you stealing at the checkout counter.  
"Don't be mean": But then they see you out of control with your spouse.  
"Don't cuss": But they hear you swearing under your breath
6. Enduring broken promises  
We discourage our children when we make promises to them that we don't keep. We tell them we are going to go someplace, do something, stop somewhere, and they look forward to that time. When we don't show up or don't have time it can embitter our children.
7. Living with verbal or physical abuse  
Insults, name calling, and put downs are humiliating and embittering.

And I don't think there is anything more damaging to a child than to be hit by their parent in anger.

1. Or they will become discouraged

**Discouraged** = Athumeo = "To lose heart" (dis-couraged)

Heb 3:13 "But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness."

- E. Slaves, **obey** your earthly masters in everything [Verse 22a]

**Obe**y = Hupakouo = "To listen attentively with the intent to obey"

When you commit yourself to work for somebody you are, in a sense, offering yourself as a slave for the hours involved. Employers cannot control the rest of your life, but they do have a right to control your life during your working hours. So Paul's words have direct application for us.

Why are employees to obey?

1. To show that they can be trusted - Titus 2:10a
2. To be a blessing and benefit to Christian employers - 1 Tim 6:2
3. To prevent the name of Christ from being slandered - 1 Tim 6:1
4. To make the teaching of Christ attractive - Titus 2:10b

A Christian worker should be a living, breathing gospel tract!

5. To be commended by God - 1 Peter 2:18-19

1. Do it not only when their eye is on you [Verse 22b]

**Eye** = Ophthalmodouleia = "Eye-service"

**Humorous story:**

A retired man became interested in the construction of an addition to a shopping mall. Observing the activity regularly, he was especially impressed by the conscientious operator of a large piece of equipment. The day finally came when my friend had a chance to tell this man how much he'd enjoyed watching his scrupulous work. Looking astonished, the operator replied, "You're not the supervisor?"

2. Do it not only to win their favor

**Win their favor** = Anthropeareskos = "Being a man-pleaser"

Gal 1:10 "If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ."

3. But do it with: [Verse 22c]

- a. **Sincerity** of heart

**Sincerity** = "Singleness of heart"

Eph 6:5-6 "Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart."

b. **Reverence** for the Lord

*Reverence* = Phobeo = “To fear or to be in awe of”

**Illustration:** Nehemiah’s example

Neh 5:15-16 “But the earlier governors-those preceding me-placed a heavy burden on the people and took forty shekels of silver from them in addition to food and wine. Their assistants also lorded it over the people. But out of reverence for God I did not act like that.”

## II The Believer’s New Attitude Toward Work

A. Whatever you do, work at it with **all** your heart [Verse 23]

**Illustration:** King Hezekiah

2 Chron 31:20-21 “This is what Hezekiah did throughout Judah, doing what was good and right and faithful before the LORD his God. In everything that he undertook in the service of God's temple and in obedience to the law and the commands, he sought his God and worked wholeheartedly. And so he prospered.”

**Application:** How would your employer and fellow workers describe you?

1. Are you dependable?
2. Are you honest?
3. Are you loyal?
4. Are you good for company morale?
5. Do you strive for excellence in all you do?
6. Are you seeking the best interests of the company?

1. As working for the Lord

This is not just about our jobs, it is about our attitude toward all of life.

Col 3:17 “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

**Application:**

Everything we do is a statement and a reflection on our relationship with the Lord. It’s either drudgery or divine. It all depends on your perspective. Some of you may need a spiritual Paradigm Shift today.

2. Not as working for men since you know: [Verse 24a]

- a. You will receive an **inheritance** from the Lord as a reward

**Our motivation?** We are not working for an earthly paycheck . . . we are working for a heavenly paycheck.

Our faithfulness may not be noticed by others . . . but it is noticed by God.

There may seem to be no one who appreciates the little things we do.

But God appreciates our faithfulness. We may get no earthly benefit

for our extra effort. But God will reward the faithful with an inheritance that is beyond our imagination.

Eph 6:7-8 “Slaves, serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.”

b. It is the Lord Christ you are **serving** [Verse 24b]

**Serving** = Douleuo = “To be a slave to”

Don’t ever work, first and foremost, for your employer. Instead, work for God. Your employer may pay your salary, but it is the Lord for whom you are working. If you do that, both the quality and the quantity of your work will improve and the Lord will prosper you.

“It is not what a man does that determines whether his work is sacred or secular, it is why he does it.”

B. Anyone who does wrong [Verse 25]

**Does wrong** = Adikeo = “To be unjust, wicked or to actively do wrong”

1. Will be **repaid** for his wrong

2 Cor 5:10 “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”

2. There is **no** favoritism

**Favoritism** = Prosopolepsia = “To show partiality”

Rom 2:6-11 “God will give to each person according to what he has done.”

To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For God does not show favoritism.”

1 Peter 1:17 “Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.”

C. Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and **fair**: [Verse 4:1]

Deut 24:14-15 “Do not take advantage of a hired man ... otherwise he may cry to the LORD against you, and you will be guilty of sin.”

If you are a manager, or a business owner, it is your obligation before God to:

1. To provide your employees with a fair pay and benefit package
2. To create a work environment that is positive and encouraging
3. To keep the welfare of your employees and their families in mind

4. To treat your employees with love and respect
5. To do whatever you do as to the Lord

1. Because you know that you also have a Master in heaven

Eph 6:9 “And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.”

What does this mean?

1. It means you are working for the Lord and not for yourself.  
God calls the shots . . . not you. Your business is HIS business. You are charged to manage His interests appropriately.
2. It means you will be held accountable for how you manage your business and your employees.

### **Conclusion**

God's purpose for your life is to bring attention, honor and glory to His name through every relationship in your life – with your spouse, your children and your employer and employees.

The authentic Christian life demands a spiritual Paradigm Shift – from carnal thinking and living to spiritual thinking and living. From a temporal perspective to an eternal perspective. From a self-centered lifestyle to a God-glorifying lifestyle.

### **Unbeliever:**

1. Admit and repent of your sin - Ps 32:5
2. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins - John 3:16-19
3. Confess Him as your Savior and Lord - Romans 10:9-10  
- Be baptized in obedience to God's command - Acts 2:38

### **Believers:**

How is the Holy Spirit speaking to you today? You may need to make a Paradigm Shift in your thinking, in your behavior, in your leadership. Being aware of God's design is half the battle. The rest is simply crying out to Him and relying the on Holy Spirit to conform you to the likeness of the perfect example – Jesus Christ.