

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

Info: (651) 283-0568 Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc. www.dtmwebsite.org

Enlarging Our Vision For Ordering-Under

by Dan Trygg

“He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was-ongoingly ordering-Himself-under to them...” Luke 2:51

“Let every person be-being-ordering-under to the governing authorities.” Romans 13:1

“...they are not permitted to be speaking, rather let-them-be-being-ordered-under...” 1 Corinthians 14:34

“...they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints – you also order-under to such ones, and to everyone working-together and laboring with us.” 1 Corinthians 16:15,16

“...in order that they may healthily-advise the young women to love their husbands, love their children, to be sound-minded, pure, workers-at-home, kind, ordering-under to their own husbands, in order that the word of God might not be spoken-against.” Titus 2:3-5

“Slaves are to be-ordering-under to their masters in everything, and to be well-pleasing, not talking back or stealing, but demonstrating utter faithfulness, so that they may adorn the teaching of God our Savior in everything.” Titus 2:9

“Furthermore, we had natural fathers discipline us, and we respected them. Shouldn't we even more be-ordered-under to the Father of spirits and we will live?” Hebrews 12:9

“Therefore, y'all-be-ordered-under to God. But y'all-stand-against the Devil, and he will flee from y'all.” James 4:7

“You younger men, likewise, be-ordered-under to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” 1 Peter 5:5

As you can see, the word for “ordering under” is used in a wide array of contexts and circumstances. The Greek word occurs some 38 times in the NT. The basic root word is a compound from “to order or arrange” and the prefix “under”. *“Subordinate” is a fair equivalent. Some of these occurrences are passive, meaning that someone else is compelling them to be “subordinated”.* For example, God compels the demons to “be subject” or “be subordinated”, which is made evident by their obedience to a command by Jesus, or a disciple to “get out” (Lk. 10:17,20). They seem forced to comply. Also, the creation was “subordinated” to futility (Rom. 8:20), in that sin, corruption and death spread throughout the entire natural order. The creation did not choose this, ...it happened to it as a consequence of human sin. **Most of the incidents where this word occurs, however, do involve choice. In fact, that is the point. Voluntarily choosing to “arrange-oneself-under” in many of these situations goes directly against what most people would do, ...or what may be our natural tendency. In this way, “ordering under” is an attitude that stands out as “uncharacteristic”, ...and will often reveal the heart of Jesus, in opposition to the attitudes of the sinful flesh.**

The first example we have is from a 12-year-old boy. Luke gives us a glimpse into Jesus' awareness of who He was, ...*the Son of God* (2:41-51). When His family went to Jerusalem for one of the feasts, Jesus stayed behind. When his parents found Him, He was in the temple asking questions of the priests and elders. They were amazed at His understanding. When His parents told Him that they had been searching for Him, He seemed surprised that they did not realize that He would be at His Father's house. This seems to be when He realized His true identity. He knew He was “greater”. He understood things that they did not understand. Nevertheless, **He chose to return with them to Nazareth, and was being “ordering-(Himself)-under to them”, which means that He was humble, obedient and responsive to their leadership and oversight in His life** (cf. Phil. 2:5-8; Jn. 13:3-5). Jesus practiced and exemplified this “submission”.

The second example is a command given to us all. **“Let every soul order-himself-under to the authorities placed above”** (Rom. 13:1). This is restated in Titus 3:1-5, “Remind them to be-ordered-under to rulers and authorities, to be responsive (persuaded by, compliant with), to be ready for any good work, to defame (slander, speak-against) no one, to be unquarrelsome, yielding, demonstrating all meekness (humility, gentleness, teachableness) toward all people.” Why? **“Because we were once foolish ourselves, resistant, being-led- astray, being-slaves to various lusts and pleasures, spending our lives in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another... BUT God saved US...!” This change in character, ...as evidenced by our ability to be cool, calm and cooperative..., displays the reality of an authentic transformation of life**, and the life-changing power of coming to know God. The apostle Peter affirms this sentiment, saying that we are to be having our habitual conduct good and honorable before unbelievers, acting in such a way that they would have nothing evil to say of us. What is the first application of that idea? “Be subordinate to every human institution on account of the Lord, whether to a king as the supreme authority, or to governors as being sent by him to punish evildoers, and for the praise of the ones doing good. For it is God's will that by doing good you would silence the ignorance of foolish people” (1 Pet. 2:12-15). **Our uncharacteristic response should be noticeable and positive, ...and it is demonstrated by a willingness to not be defiant toward, but cooperative with, people in authority.**

A third example is simply to not be disruptive in meetings. In 1 Corinthians 14, some people were dominating the sharing time, not allowing others a turn (vss. 26-32). Others were talking in the background. Paul told them to “be ordered under”, by being silent while others shared, and to wait until after the meeting to talk (vss. 34,35).

A fourth usage says to “**arrange-ourselves-under**” those who have devoted themselves to serve the saints as co-workers and laborers in the ministry (1 Cor. 16:15-18). This amounts to acknowledging their service, showing them respect, and assisting them, as needed. This was not an arrangement of authority, but freely offered love.

A fifth circumstance was wives voluntarily choosing to “**arrange-themselves-under**” their husbands. We talked about this last week. We are all to be “**arranging-ourselves-under**” to one another in Christ. This was to correct the sinful desire to assert-oneself-over-others. This application to women is advised in Ephesians 5:22, Colossians 3:18, Titus 2:5, and 1 Peter 3:1-5. Note that **in every case, a word of balance is given to the husbands. They are to love their wives, and serve them as a “head”** (helping them come to completion - Eph. 5:23-25; cf. Col. 3:19), **be “healthy-minded concerning everything, ...showing themselves an example of good works”** (Tit. 2:6,7), and **“living with their wives according to knowledge as with a more delicate vessel, ...paying her honor as co-heirs (joint/equal heirs) of the grace of life”** (1 Pet. 3:7). The relationship of men and women should be positive for both parties, so that “the word of God would not be spoken against”, but, in fact, our opponents would have nothing negative to say about us (Tit. 2:5,8).

A sixth example has to do with slaves and domestic servants “**ordering-under**” to their masters in everything (Tit. 2:9; 1 Pet. 2:18). **Clearly, this is a matter of heart-attitude.** They are exhorted to serve in a well-pleasing manner, with no back-talk. There should be no stealing, but showing all good faith, in order that the teaching of God might be made attractive. Peter mentioned that **servants are to be “being ordered-under with all respect”**, both to those who are good and gentle, as well as to those who are harsh. **No matter our situation, we can act as free people, voluntarily choosing to serve Christ by serving those in authority over us.** There are other passages that simply tell slaves to “obey” their masters (Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22-25). Even in those passages, however, Paul talks about the attitude of the heart. They are to offer their service from the heart, ...not just to please men, but to please the Lord.

A seventh context is found in Hebrews 12:9. It is about yielding to the discipline/training of the Lord. In writing to these Jewish Christians, who were considering going back to Judaism, the author encouraged them to look to Jesus, who also had to endure hardship and suffering. He reminded them that they had not experienced the extreme treatment Jesus did. God was not punishing them, or giving them over to the enemy. **The Lord was disciplining them, ...training them as any father would train his children.** He then said, **“We all had earthly fathers, who disciplined us, and we respected them. Shall we not much more readily ‘order-ourselves-under’ the Father of spirits, and we will live?”** *Humbling ourselves, and deferring to the wisdom and care of God, even when it is difficult, is what “ordering-ourselves-under” means.*

In James 4:7, it is when we have become “**ordered-under to God**” that we are exhorted to “**stand against the devil, and he will flee from you**”. Here, “arranging ourselves under God” seems to imply living in accordance with God’s will, and rightly yielding to His leading. Instead of standing in our own strength or authority (cf. Acts 19:13-17), we get ourselves into alignment with Him. Then, our authority and empowerment will be from Him.

A final example is that of young men toward elders. In 1 Peter 5, the apostle exhorts the young men to “be subject (ordered-under) to the elders.” **Good elders will take seriously their responsibility to give oversight to those in relation to them. Their leadership should be from a willing heart, according to God’s will. Their motives should be pure, not tainted by a love of money, or a desire for power. They should lead by being good examples.** Peter wrote, **“You younger men, be subject (‘ordered-under’) to the elders, and all of you toward one another clothe yourselves in lowly-mindedness,** because God orders-Himself-against the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Note that the “be subject” in the first part of the sentence is applied to “all of us toward one another” in the second part. **We are all to be “ordering-ourselves-under one another”**, as we saw in Ephesians 5:18.

The purpose for this study is to help us see that “**ordering-ourselves-under**” someone is a much broader concept than simply a “gender role” in marriage. No. We are *all* to be submitting to one another in the body of Christ. We have other everyday situations where we are called to choose to voluntarily humble ourselves to show respect, to honor someone, or serve them. **This is not some “duty” that is “forced” upon us. No. It is a free choice.** We are not “compelled” to do this. We are to freely choose to arrange ourselves under other people because we are disciples of Christ, and we are following His heart, His will and His example.

Choosing to defer to others, or prefer them above ourselves, does not imply that we are in any way “less than”, ...even if others around us may view us that way. We are turning the world system and its values upside down by freely choosing *not* to put ourselves first. In the kingdoms of this world, those who consider themselves to be powerful assert themselves over others, manipulate, use and control others. They are selfish, demanding, and seek their own way. They **take power from others.** In the kingdom of God, those who are great are those who have learned to **give power to others by putting them first, coming under them to offer support and encouragement, and revealing the heart and unselfish power of Jesus through service.** This goes against the natural mind; it is the mind of the Spirit.

In the world, **power is centralized.** In Jesus, it is **spread abroad.** It is spread abroad by **putting others first.** In faith, we choose to follow Jesus on a path that will reveal His heart in unexpected ways, ...by being a servant.