

The Intrinsic Probability of τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασθέντων in Eph. 5.22

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Abstract

This study revisits a contested textual variant concerning the presence, placement, and person of an imperative directed at wives in Eph. 5.22. Most previous treatments of this variant have decided the matter (typically in favor of the reading without an imperative) on the basis of manuscript support and transcriptional arguments about how readers and copyists of the text would have changed it, but the *intrinsic probabilities* of what the author would have written based on his argument and style have generally been neglected. This study fills this gap by assessing the intrinsic probabilities of the variant readings in Eph. 5.22 using discourse and information structure, the pragmatics of the Greek imperative, and stylistic observations in Ephesians. As a result of this analysis, the reading with the highest intrinsic probability is shown to be τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασθέντων, which bolsters the recent case made by Gurry (2021) for the same reading.

Keywords

discourse features, Ephesians 5.22, information structure, intrinsic evidence, textual criticism

Introduction

‘Submitting to one another in fear of Christ’ (ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ χριστοῦ) is how the author of Ephesians¹ leads into the *Haustafel* or ‘household

1. Given the disputed status of Ephesians in the Pauline Epistles, I will restrict rhetorical and stylistic arguments to data within Ephesians. Likewise, given the complex nature of the relationship between Ephesians and Colossians (on which, see Best 1997), I will focus on

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code' at 5.21. Throughout this section, he offers injunctions on submission and authority with respect to three different domestic relationships—wives and husbands, children and parents, and slaves and masters—and expounds on how the example and lordship of Christ motivate the commanded behavior in each case. He first covers the domestic relationship of wives and husbands in 5.22–33, and he begins with the wives.

It is in Eph. 5.22 that we encounter an important and vexing textual problem. Some significant witnesses to the text have no imperative verb in this verse, while others have an explicit imperative commanding wives to 'be subject' to their own husbands. Of the witnesses that do have an imperative in the verse, some place the verb before 'their own husbands' (τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν), while others place it after. In addition, some of these witnesses have a second-person imperative (ὑποτάσσεσθε), while others have a third-person imperative (ὑποτασσέσθωσαν). A summary apparatus presenting this variation unit in its context appears in Table 1.²

Table 1. The textual variants of Eph. 5.22 in context. The text outside of the variant is that of the twenty-eighth edition of the Nestle-Aland critical text (NA²⁸), and the manuscript sigla are those used in NA²⁸. The [·] and ^{·1} marks are the NA²⁸ notation for a punctuation variant; they indicate that the period at the end of 5.20 can be moved to the end of 5.21

5.18 καὶ μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνω, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ἀσωτία, ἀλλὰ πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι,

19 λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς [ἐν] ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς, ᾄδοντες καὶ ψάλλοντες τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν τῷ κυρίῳ,

20 εὐχαριστοῦντες πάντοτε ὑπὲρ πάντων ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί.

21 Ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ^{·1},

arguments that are valid for any source-critical scenario involving these two epistles. With respect to both questions, it should suffice to say that regardless of the relationship Ephesians has with the rest of the Pauline corpus, its author exercises so much autonomy that source-critical considerations are less probative than considerations of suitability to the context.

2. For reasons of space and simplicity, the collation data in this table consists of a representative subset of the frequently cited witnesses in the twenty-eighth edition of the Nestle-Aland critical text (NA²⁸). A more exhaustive collation of the Greek manuscripts at this variation unit is available in the *Text und Textwert* volume for Ephesians (Aland 1991), and corrections to errata in this collation are offered in Gurry (2021: 568). For further reference, the International Greek New Testament Project has prepared over 150 manuscript transcriptions in Ephesians for the future *Editio Critica Maior* of the Pauline Epistles; the transcriptions are accessible at <https://itseeweb.cal.bham.ac.uk/epistulae/>.

<i>a</i> : 22 αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασέσθωσαν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,	Ⲙ A 33 175 1739 1881 lat vg sy ^{h mg} aeth got
<i>b</i> : 22 αἱ γυναῖκες ὑποτασέσθωσαν τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,	Ψ co
<i>c</i> : 22 αἱ γυναῖκες, τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτάσσεσθε ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,	Byz Lect sy ^{h txt}
<i>d</i> : 22 αἱ γυναῖκες, ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,	D* ¹ F G sy ^p
<i>e</i> : 22 αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασσόμεναι ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,	1851
<i>f</i> : 22 αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,	Ⲫ ⁴⁶ B

23 ὅτι ἀνὴρ ἔστιν κεφαλὴ τῆς γυναίκος ὡς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλὴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος·

All of these variant readings broadly convey the idea that wives are to follow the more general injunction of submission with respect ‘to their own husbands’, but as we will see, these textual differences affect the shape and emphasis of the discourse.

Most recent editions and commentators have adopted the reading that lacks an imperative on the grounds that the various longer readings represent independent attempts by different scribes to supply a clarifying verb from the context.³ While a handful of editions and commentators over the last two centuries have adopted or defended one longer reading or another,⁴ the transcriptional argument in favor of the shorter reading has historically prevailed by virtue of its simplicity and the lack of a compelling transcriptional argument in the opposite direction. As a result, it has been rehearsed or assumed in subsequent monographs and dedicated studies on the *Haustafel* in Ephesians.⁵ Many of these studies concern themselves with another problem in the discourse that arises from the adoption

3. A survey of the historical support for different readings is given in Gurry (2021: 561–68). The following prominent editions print the shorter reading in their main text: Tischendorf (1869–1872); Westcott and Hort (1881); Holmes (2010); Aland et al. (2012). Commentators after 1970 who prefer the shorter reading for the transcriptional reason just described include Barth (1974: 610); Lincoln (1990: 350 n. a); Schnackenburg (1991: 245 n. 11); Metzger (1994: 541); Best (1998: 531); MacDonald (2000: 490); Muddiman (2001: 256); and Merkle (2016: 182).
4. Lachmann, Tregelles, and the recent Tyndale House edition print τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασέσθωσαν (Lachmann 1831; Tregelles 1857–1879; Jongkind et al. 2017); the Robinson-Pierpont edition prints τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτάσσεσθε with the popular text of the Byzantine tradition (Robinson and Pierpont 2018). Hoehner likewise favors τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτάσσεσθε on the basis of its fit in the context, but he grants that it could be easily explained as a clarifying expansion of the shorter reading (Hoehner 2002: 730 n. 2). Weiss, an earlier commentator, notably adopts the reading τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασέσθωσαν while forcefully rejecting the shorter reading (Weiss 1896: 101–2).
5. E.g., Sampley (1971), Dawes (1998), and Hering (2007). Shorter studies that will be relevant to our discussion here include Tanzer (1994), Seim (1995), and Merkle (2017). All of these works take the originality of the shorter reading in Eph. 5.22 as a given.

of the shorter reading: if Eph. 5.22 lacks its own verb, then it is no longer clear whether or not 5.21 and 22 are part of the same sentence or which one begins the *Haustafel*.⁶ The difficulty of the text with the shorter reading has also prompted conjectures that the *Haustafel* is an early interpolation to the text of Ephesians.⁷ Given the amount of research conducted on the assumption of the shorter reading's originality, it would be easy to think that the textual question in Eph. 5.22 has long been settled in favor of the shorter reading.

Recently, however, in an article revisiting this textual variant, Peter J. Gurry has shown that the case is far from closed (Gurry 2021). In terms of external evidence, he demonstrates that the support for the shorter reading, though early, is also sparse, while the reading *τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασσέσθωσαν* enjoys an early and broad attestation among manuscripts, versions, and patristic quotations.⁸ In terms of transcriptional evidence, he shows that the reading *τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασσέσθωσαν* could have given rise to the shorter reading by a skip of the eye from *-σιν* to *-σαν*,⁹ and he argues that this longer reading is transcriptionally unlikely to arise from the shorter given the rarity of third-person imperative compared to the second-person imperative.¹⁰ In these respects, he has turned

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6. Dawes treats this as the initial problem to be resolved in his study on the *Haustafel* (Dawes 1998: 18–21). It is the subject of Merkle's article (Merkle 2017), and it provides the occasion for Gurry's text-critical study of the variant in question (Gurry 2021: 560–68).
 7. The hypothesis of Eph. 5.21–6.9 as an interpolation was first proposed in Munro (1972). An independent formulation later appeared in Tanzer (1994: 347 n. 67). In either formulation, the interpolation would have to have been made prior to Marcion's compilation of New Testament texts, since Tertullian alleges that Marcion changed—and therefore had—passages in this part of the epistle (Marc. 5.18.8–11 [Evans 1972: 626–28]). For arguments against a conjectured interpolation, see Best (1998: 522–23). Muddiman's theory that our Epistle to the Ephesians is a post-Pauline expansion of a Pauline letter to Laodicea (for details, see Muddiman 2001: 2–54) is different because it is source-critical rather than text-critical. In practical terms, if we accept his theory, then the text of the expanded letter containing the *Haustafel* and other added material simply becomes the new object of our text-critical inquiry.
 8. So Gurry (2021: 568–72). The only two extant manuscripts supporting the shorter reading are \mathfrak{P}^{46} and B, and it has long been understood that these two witnesses 'belong to one and the same ancient and narrow branch of the tradition' (Zuntz 2007 [1953]: 62, followed by Carlson 2015: 245–46).
 9. As Gurry (2021: 576–78) points out, the two manuscript witnesses to the shorter reading, \mathfrak{P}^{46} and B, have a demonstrable tendency to omit material by haplography. For \mathfrak{P}^{46} , and for early New Testament papyri in general, this tendency has been established by Royse (2008: 199–358, 703–36). For B, the same tendency has been known since Hort (Westcott and Hort 1882: 233–34), and it has been recently confirmed in B's text of Matthew by Paulson (2018: 58). Given the close relationship of the two manuscripts, their common ancestor may have had the same tendency (Carlson 2015: 112).
 10. Gurry argues that the use of second-person imperatives for every other group addressed in the *Haustafel* would suggest *ὑποτάσσεσθε* and not *ὑποτασσέσθωσαν* to harmonizing scribes, and he demonstrates that a harmonization to the minority reading *ὑποτασσέσθωσαν* in 1 Cor. 14.34 is unlikely due to its remoteness (Gurry 2021: 572–73, 576). More recently,

the traditional arguments for the shorter reading on their head and rebalanced evidence that was thought to tilt in favor of the shorter reading.

But although he neutralizes the case against the longer readings on external and transcriptional grounds, Gurry dedicates almost no discussion to intrinsic probabilities. Intrinsic probabilities concern the suitability of a variant reading to the author's argument and style; to quote F. J. A. Hort's definition, they are the object of our inquiry when 'we ask what an author is likely to have written' (Westcott and Hort 1882: 20). While Gurry argues extensively that *τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασσέσθωσαν* can transcriptionally account for the other variant readings at least as well as the shorter reading can, he spends comparatively little time addressing the question of why this reading fits the author's content and usage better than any of the other readings. His treatment of the intrinsic evidence is limited to a single paragraph just before the conclusion of his discussion of the variant, and it is mostly concerned with the person of the imperative in 5.22 rather than the questions of its presence or position.¹¹ The external and transcriptional arguments given by Gurry do not clearly favor *τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασσέσθωσαν* over *τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν*, so a fuller treatment of this variant on intrinsic grounds is needed.

The relative neglect of intrinsic evidence is not new, and it is not unique to Eph. 5.22. This can be explained in large part by the fact that, for better and for worse, the textual history that Hort and his coeditor B. F. Westcott proposed in their critical text of the New Testament cast a long shadow over later work in the field. The traditional 'Lachmannian' or genealogical approach to textual criticism that preceded Westcott and Hort (and has continued to be used in the textual

Richard G. Fellows has objected that the addition of *ὑποτασσέσθωσαν* by emendators does in fact find a transcriptional precedent in Clement of Alexandria, who quotes Eph. 5.22 without a verb when his quotation begins at 5.21 and extends through 5.25 (*Strom.* 4.8.64.1 [SC 463:162]) but reads *τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασσέσθωσαν* in a separate quotation that begins at 5.22 (*Paed.* 3.12.94.5 [SC 158:178]); this point is also noted by Robinson (1909: 301). Fellows argues that Clement 'added the third person imperative, *υποτασσεσθωσαν*, presumably because he imagined Paul instructing women via a male audience, rather than addressing the women directly' (Fellows 2022: 261 n. 29). But even if Fellows is correct (and given the early and widespread attestation for *τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασσέσθωσαν*, it remains a possibility that Clement supplied the verb from a variant text known to him), Gurry's explanation of how the shorter reading could arise from *τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασσέσθωσαν* by haplography still stands. More to the point of this paper, Fellows's argument speaks to transcriptional probabilities, not intrinsic ones. As I will argue shortly, an indirect address like the one Fellows attributes to Clement's imagination is, in fact, suitable to the author's argument in the wives-and-husbands section of the *Haustafel*.

11. See Gurry (2021: 578). Of the three points he makes on intrinsic evidence, two—concerning the use of third-person imperatives with *ἴδιος* and in discourse transitions from general to specific audiences—are cited with approval in later sections of this paper, and the other—proposing an *inclusio* based on third-person imperatives—is dismissed as unlikely.

criticism of other works) begins with the identification of passages where the authorial reading is intrinsically clear and the use of a subset of these passages to construct a putative stemma or family tree that relates the surviving witnesses by way of hypothesized ancestors. With such a model in hand, the external evidence can be weighed and used to quantify which variant reading is most likely to be original in cases where the internal evidence is less decisive (for details, see Trovato 2014: 52–67). While the predominance of mixture in the tradition of the New Testament prevented Westcott and Hort from applying this approach rigorously (Colwell 1969), they still employed intrinsic and transcriptional evidence to establish levels of fidelity or error characteristic of different groups of witnesses. Things would change after the publication of their New Testament. Textual critics after Westcott and Hort have identified shortcomings in the pair’s judgments (Epp 1993: 161–63; Aland and Aland 1995: 14; Metzger and Ehrman 2005: 312), but this has not stopped them from tacitly assuming Westcott and Hort’s estimations of witnesses as a proxy for a history of the text in their weighing of external evidence. Consequently, in their judgments between variant readings, they have regarded the testimony of the ‘best’ witnesses—a classification based on the questionable premises of Westcott and Hort’s theory¹²—as equally or more important than the intrinsic and transcriptional probabilities of the readings themselves, with intrinsic probabilities often taking a back seat to transcriptional probabilities.¹³ In practice, the role of intrinsic evidence is downplayed until textual critics encounter instances like Eph. 5.22, where the usual counsels of external and transcriptional evidence are too divided to offer a way forward.

Yet New Testament textual criticism is not homogenous, and some textual critics have demonstrated that intrinsic evidence has much to offer if it is not treated as a last resort. The power of taking intrinsic evidence seriously is perhaps most famously exemplified in an exceptional twentieth-century contribution to the field: Günther Zuntz’s series of lectures on the texts of 1 Corinthians

12. One cannot even maintain that the ‘Neutral’ witnesses favored by Westcott and Hort are the best simply because they are the oldest or most widespread, because Hort himself acknowledges that the earliest and most widespread patristic evidence attests to the ‘Western’ readings that he and Westcott go on to reject on internal grounds (Westcott and Hort 1882: 120; for further discussion of this discrepancy, see Epp 1993: 161–62).

13. Two of the leading textbooks on New Testament textual criticism are representative of this trend. The prominence of external evidence can be seen in the Alands’ successive assertions that internal evidence—which includes both intrinsic and transcriptional evidence—must be evaluated along with external evidence, must be evaluated after external evidence, and cannot overrule external evidence (Aland and Aland 1995: 280, Rules 2–4). Discussing the roles of intrinsic and transcriptional evidence, Metzger and Ehrman write, ‘When, as sometimes happens, Intrinsic and Transcriptional Probabilities are in conflict, it is usually safer to make judgments on the basis of what Hort called the “observed proclivities of average copyists” than on what one imagines the original author must have written’ (Metzger and Ehrman 2005: 176).

and Hebrews (Zuntz 2007 [1953]). By way of thorough coverage of textual variants and a special attention to the rhythm and rhetoric of the text, Zuntz offers fresh evaluations of witnesses and groups of witnesses and, with them, refinements to Westcott and Hort's theory of the text. A more recent study that reflects a similar regard for these types of intrinsic evidence is Stephen C. Carlson's dissertation on the tradition of Galatians (Carlson 2015), which also shows that, with the appropriate adaptations, the stemmatic approach refused by Westcott and Hort can become the cornerstone of a robust reconstruction of textual history. It should not be any wonder that intrinsic probability is a compelling form of evidence in its own right; it directly concerns the original text that so many textual critics aim to recover, after all. But in New Testament textual criticism, studies like these that recognize and take advantage of this point are more the exception than the rule.

In general, the hesitancy in New Testament textual criticism to use intrinsic evidence has contributed to a collective atrophy of certain philological muscles. One symptom of this tendency is that intrinsic probabilities are less understood than, and sometimes mistaken for, their transcriptional counterparts. The classic canon stating that 'the harder reading is to be preferred'¹⁴ is commonly understood correctly when it is applied with transcriptional probabilities: scribes and readers would gravitate toward readings that were easier to them in terms of explicitness and immediate clarity, and the result, as Hort puts it, often combines 'the appearance of improvement with the absence of its reality' (Westcott and Hort 1882:27). But blindly declaring the harshest reading the most intrinsically likely on this principle would be a fundamental error because the operating assumption of intrinsic probabilities is that authors have a good sense of what they want to communicate and how they want to communicate it; the suggestion that an author would choose a harder reading simply because it is harder is antithetical to the goals of most authors. We are reminded of this point whenever we encounter a 'harder reading' that seems 'too hard' even for the author, but it remains true even in less extreme cases. In all cases, the distinction that informs the canon of the harder reading is probably more useful than the canon itself: authors and scribes both tend toward readings that make sense to them, but they sometimes do so in ways that are exegetically distinguishable.¹⁵ This distinction will play a crucial role in this study's assessment of intrinsic probabilities.

To be sure, real authors are more complicated than the authorial model that underlies intrinsic probabilities. Hort himself cautions that 'authors are not

14. On the 'canons of criticism' generally, including their origin and development, see Epp (1993).

15. The distinction is explained well by Carlson: 'both authors and scribes attempt to produce a text that makes good sense, but the principle of the harder reading (*lectio difficilior potior*) assumes that authors and scribes make textual sense in different ways' and concludes that 'The value of internal evidence is thus sensitive to the assumption that, textually, authors behave differently from scribes' (Carlson 2015: 14–15).

always grammatical, or clear, or consistent, or felicitous' (Westcott and Hort 1882:21). But this does not mean that intrinsic evidence has no bearing on the reconstruction of textual history. On the contrary, the assumptions and models underlying intrinsic evidence are precisely those that make textual criticism possible in the first place. We assume that authors communicated effectively and consistently more often than they did not because if we assumed the opposite, then any variant reading would have an arbitrary claim to authority. We deal in the currency of what authors were *likely* to do rather than what they *did* do because, in the vast majority of cases, we do not have access to their autographic text.¹⁶ Ultimately, the value of intrinsic probability is that it is a probability. While authorial errors or inconsistencies always remain possible and may be justified *a posteriori* from other types of evidence, considerations of the author's argument and style constitute *a priori* evidence that can helpfully inform textual judgments.

The assessment of intrinsic probabilities can be conducted rigorously and consistently using proven resources from other fields of philology. Because effective communication is governed by linguistic factors, resources from linguistic studies can shed more light on the intrinsic merits of competing readings. The study of information structure, which aims to establish principles governing the flow of discourse, the order of constituents, the placement of clitics, and other related matters, will be relevant for our purposes in this study.¹⁷ Studies on the Greek imperative—and specifically, which factors warrant a choice of the third-person imperative over the second-person imperative—will also be relevant.¹⁸ Despite the contentions of reasoned eclecticism, compelling judgments on intrinsic evidence have already been made based on a knowledge of Greek language and style,¹⁹ and I suspect that many more are waiting to be made.

16. These points are discussed in more detail in Carlson (2015: 14–18).

17. A seminal work in the field is Weil (1887); a more technical formulation can be found in Chafe (1970). Information structure studies have flourished since Chafe's pioneering work, with significant application and development relevant to classical and Koine Greek in the last three decades (see, e.g., Dik 1995; Levinsohn 2000; Matic' 2003; Runge 2010; Kirk 2012; and Goldstein 2016).

18. A recent treatment of this subject is Fantin 2010 (265–89). His coverage of this subject synthesizes and refines the results of Moyer (1987), who surveys the use of imperatives in the New Testament, and Glaze (1979), who offers an extensive investigation of the third-person imperative in the Septuagint.

19. Zuntz, who wrote before the formalization of information structure, was nevertheless attuned to the rhythms of the Greek language and how they affected an author's emphases and arguments, and he did not hesitate to use his knowledge to assess variants in 1 Corinthians and Hebrews (see, e.g., Zuntz 2007 [1953]: 45, 68, 198–99, 208, 285–86). The more recent study by Carlson (2015) makes frequent use of information structure and other developments in Greek linguistics.

To this end, in the analysis that follows, I will examine how factors of the author's argument and style bear on intrinsic probabilities, specifically in Eph. 5.22, paying particular attention to the information structure of the *Haustafel* implied by the variant readings. The majority of this study will be occupied by my analysis of the intrinsic evidence, which will cover the three distinct dimensions of variation in this verse in detail. Following this, I will sum up the results of this analysis and demonstrate that τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασέσθωσαν is the reading most likely to be original to the author of the *Haustafel*.

Analysis

In the subsections that follow, I will structure my discussion of the variant readings according to the three fundamental points of variation identified in this variant: the presence or absence of an explicit imperative in 5.22; the imperative's placement before or after τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν, if it is present; and the person of the imperative, if it is present.

Presence of the Imperative

The suitability of an explicit imperative to the author's argument is intertwined with the question of whether the participial phrase in Eph. 5.21 belongs with what precedes it or with what follows it. Specifically, if 5.22 contains an imperative, then it can represent the start of a new sentence (with 5.21 closing the previous sentence), but if it does not, then it must be part of the same sentence as 5.21 so that the verbal sense of the ὑποτασσόμενοι of 5.21 can carry over to it.²⁰

20. See Abbott (1897: 164); Robinson (1909: 204); Schnackenburg (1991: 231); Best (1998: 516); and Gurry (2021: 561–62). As Merkle notes, 'verse 22 lacks its own verb, being dependent on the participle (ὑποτασσόμενοι) in verse 21. . . . Therefore, to break the text after verse 21 leaves verse 22 without a verb' (Merkle 2017: 183).

This understanding of the connection between the two verses finds a historical precedent in Clement of Alexandria, who reads τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν when his quotation begins at 5.21 and extends through 5.25 (*Strom.* 4.8.64.1 [SC 463:162]) but reads τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασέσθωσαν when his quotation begins at 5.22 (*Paed.* 3.12.94.5 [SC 158:178]); for further discussion, see footnote 10. The Codex Vaticanus (B) initially seems to be an exception, in that it has the shorter reading in 5.22 but also features a paragraph break before 5.22. Indeed, the paragraph break in this case is marked by a wide space before the start of 5.22, so it was clearly added *in scribendo* by the same hand responsible for the text (on this point generally, and for further discussion of this and other paratextual matters, see Grenz 2021 and Hill 2022). But there is reason to believe that the paragraphing was incorporated independently of the text: \mathfrak{P}^{46} , whose text has a general affinity to that of B throughout Ephesians and shares the shorter reading with it here, lacks paragraph marks here and elsewhere.

In most printed editions, one of 5.21 and 22 is regarded as the start of a new sentence (Gurry 2021: 563–64, Table 1). If both 5.21 and 22 are read as continuing the sentence

Lingering uncertainty about whether or not 5.21 and 5.22 are part of the same sentence can be seen in how NA²⁸ prints rare editorial alternatives for punctuation at the end of 5.20 and 21.

But most modern commentators assume the priority of the shorter reading and proceed from there—a move that does not give full consideration to underlying variant readings and their intrinsic probabilities.²¹ Since we are revisiting the question of the variant readings from the perspective of intrinsic probabilities, we must work in the opposite direction and start by considering the feasibility of a sentence beginning at 5.21. If such a division of the text is not feasible, then the shorter reading in 5.22 is intrinsically improbable.

Syntactically, 5.21 fits naturally with the material that precedes it. Commentators have generally agreed that it belongs grammatically to the sequence of participles in 5.19–20 (λαλοῦντες, ἄδοντες, ψάλλοντες, and εὐχαριστοῦντες) that elaborate on the command πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι in 5.18.²² Likewise, if a new sentence begins with 5.22, then the asyndeton at the start of the new sentence would effectively mark the transition into the *Haustafel* as a

starting at 5.18—which is evidently the scenario assumed by reading *e* in Table 1, which supplies the participle ὑποτασσόμενοι in 5.22 and continues the preceding sequence—then the explanatory material that follows 5.22 must be regarded as a digression that breaks permanently from the preceding thought. As I will explain shortly, such a digression is stylistically uncharacteristic of the author.

21. See, for instance, Abbott (1897: 164); Best (1998: 516); Robinson (1909: 204); Schnackenburg (1991: 231); Dawes (1998: 19); and Hering (2007: 130–31). Despite its marking of punctuation variants in 5.20 and 21, NA²⁸ unequivocally prints the shorter reading in 5.22. Merkle’s study on the placement of a break in 5.21 and 22 is also instructive: he assumes the lack of a verb in 5.22 near the start of his study, and he only brings up the textual variants later to argue that readers historically envisioned a break between the verses, before he remarks, ‘The point here is not to argue for or against the verb’s inclusion (though the original probably lacked the verb)’ (Merkle 2017: 183, 190–91).
22. See Meyer (1880: 288); Ellicott (1884: 130); Sampley (1971: 10); Tanzer (1994: 333); Seim (1995: 175); Best (1998: 515); Dawes (1998: 19); Hoehner (2002: 716); Cohick (2020: 548); and Gurry (2021: 522).

Some commentators have objected on the grounds of the passage’s structure that the end of Eph. 5.20 is a doxological close to the sequence of exhortations, which precludes the addition of 5.21 to the sequence (Hodge 1856: 309; Schnackenburg 1991: 231; Muddiman 2001: 256). While he makes no reference to doxological content, Dawes appears to have a similar idea in mind when he writes, ‘the wording of v 20 suggests that it marks the conclusion of the previous section, leaving v 21 an “orphan” unless it is associated with what follows’ (Dawes 1998: 20). In response to these arguments, the phrases ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ and τῷ θεῷ και πατρὶ are independent adverbial clauses modifying different aspects of εὐχαριστοῦντες and do not represent a single doxological address. Moreover, long appellations of this sort are commonplace in Ephesians and are not uniquely associated with conclusions; ὁ θεὸς και πατήρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ (1.3) occurs at the beginning of a section, and ὁ θεὸς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, ὁ πατήρ τῆς δόξης (1.17) occurs in the middle of a discourse segment.

new section in the discourse.²³ Finally, a sentence break between 5.21 and 22 would also allow for the connection between the two sections to be further marked by different forms of *ὑποτάσσω* as a catchword.²⁴ Syntactically, grouping 5.21 with what precedes it facilitates the transition that the author is signaling with this verse.

This grouping is less obvious when we compare the content of 5.21 with what precedes it, but on balance, it remains plausible. While some commentators have argued that the idea of submission in 5.21 is difficult to place under the rubric of being ‘filled with the spirit’ to which the other participles belong (see, e.g., Hodge 1856: 309; Ellicott 1884: 131; and Abbott 1897: 164), others have responded that submission of Christians to one another can easily be understood as part of a spirit-filled lifestyle.²⁵ The objection that the content of 5.21 does not cohere with the content that precedes may also be tempered by the objection made by other commentators that a reference to ‘submitting to one another’ is not consistent with the hierarchies presented in the verses that follow, either.²⁶

23. See Levinsohn (2000: 276). Runge more specifically notes that asyndeton is also used ‘in contexts of close connection, such as moving from *generic* to *specific*’ (Runge 2010: 23), which is apt for the transition from Eph. 5.15–21 to 5.22–6.9. These points are also made by Merkle (2017: 190).

24. This possibility is suggested by Merkle (2017: 186–87), who cites the general principle from Guthrie (1994: 96); both refer to a catchword as a ‘hook word’. As Merkle notes, the concept is similar to the discourse feature of ‘tail-head linkage’, which Runge describes as ‘the process of stating an action from the previous clause (the tail) at the beginning of the following clause (the head) in order to more closely link it to the preceding clause’ (Runge 2010: 163). Levinsohn classifies tail-head linkage as a boundary feature under the broader category of back-references, though he argues that the marking of a break in the discourse is mainly achieved by the head clause serving as a point of departure from the previous material (Levinsohn 2000: 281).

Of course, it must be noted that Merkle falls short of demonstrating that these principles are explicitly at work in Eph. 5.21 and 22 because he assumes the shorter reading in 5.22: as he says himself, ‘*ὑποτάσσω* is not repeated in Ephesians 5:22 but is merely implied’.

But the presence of a tail-head linkage is clear if a verb corresponding to *ὑποτασσόμενοι* is read in 5.22.

25. See, e.g., Salmond (1897: 365) and MacDonald (2000: 490). Seim presses this point: ‘Mutual submission is a sign of the Spirit, and everything which is said in the letter about submission cannot but be seen in light of this’ (Seim 1995: 175).

26. On this point generally, see Tanzer (1994). Merkle notes the same discrepancy, but he points out that it may be unwarranted to press such a strict understanding of *ἀλλήλοις*: ‘The pron. *ἀλλήλων* [sic] is not always fully reciprocal (cf. Luke 2:15; 12:1; 24:32; 1 Cor 11:33; Gal 6:2; Rev 6:4)’ (Merkle 2016: 177). Still, the inclusion of *ἀλλήλοις* in 5.21 seems to serve the express purpose of connecting 5.21 to what precedes it rather than what follows it. In particular, it fits well in the communal context of the commands in 5.18–20 (note especially *λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς* in 5.19), and although Munro attributes this portion of Ephesians to someone other than the author, her suggestion that the participle is used with *ἀλλήλοις* ‘to forge a syntactical and stylistic link with the rest of the epistle’ (Munro 1972: 443) would also make sense if the author of Ephesians wrote the *Haustafel*.

The tenuous relationship 5.21 has with both of the sections that surround it may be explained by the observation that it is a ‘hinge verse’ bridging the two sections (Eadie 1861: 416; Sampley 1971: 10; Barth 1974: 608; Tanzer 1994: 333–34; Seim 1995: 175; Dawes 1998: 19; MacDonald 2000: 489; Hering 2007: 130 n. 65; Merkle 2016: 177). In light of this, the minor discrepancies observed by commentators may be explained by the possibility that the verse is more functional than informational.²⁷

If, on the other hand, we join 5.21 to 22, then we encounter a more serious set of syntactic problems. The most immediate issue is the lack of concord between the masculine participle *ὑποτασσόμενοι* and the feminine subject *αἱ γυναῖκες*—the nearest nominative phrase in the sentence that could correspond to the participle. Two explanations for this discrepancy are available: either 5.21 is a general heading for the *Haustafel*,²⁸ or it is interrupted by anacoluthon before 5.22. We will address these possibilities separately.

As for 5.21 serving as a heading, it is unlikely on its face, and it creates more syntactic problems in 5.22 than it solves. First, the use of a phrase as a standalone heading would be both unprecedented²⁹ and unfitting,³⁰ even if an imperative is present in 5.22. Second, if 5.21 is understood as a heading to the content that follows, it would be detached from the text, and a related verb in 5.22 particularizing the general principle of the heading to wives would be necessary (Meyer 1880: 289; Salmond 1897: 365). So even if 5.21 is regarded as a heading, it is incompatible with the shorter reading.

If, on the other hand, anacoluthon occurs between 5.21 and 22, then we must consider why this would happen. Smyth notes two general causes for anacoluthon: (1) ‘the choice of some form of expression more convenient or more

27. If this is the case, then we might forgive the author of Ephesians for doing an imperfect job of making a smooth and efficient transition between two rather distinct sets of instructions.

28. So Meyer (1880: 289); Schlier (1958: 250); Sampley (1971: 116–17); Munro (1972: 443); and Schnackenburg (1991: 242). The line of argument goes back to Jerome, who explains that ‘the verb is understood so that it expresses ἀπὸ κοινοῦ (in common) the idea, “and wives subjected to their husbands . . . as to the Lord”’ [*ut ἀπὸ κοινοῦ resonet subiectae, et mulieres viris suis sicut Domino*]; yet even he seems to betray some perplexity at the construction when he admits that ‘this is better understood in Greek than in Latin’ [*hoc magis in Graeco intelligitur, quam in Latino*] (*Comm. Eph.* 3.5.22–23 [PL 26:530]; translation by Heine 2002: 654).

29. Stylistically, a heading consisting of a participial phrase disconnected from the rest of the text is a construction otherwise foreign to the author of Ephesians. Every other time he enters a new section of injunctions, he does so with an explicit imperative (cf. 4.25; 5.1, 15, 25; 6.1, 4, 5, 9, 10).

30. Tanzer, who considers 5.21 to belong exclusively with what precedes it, remarks that ‘Many have suggested that 5:21 was originally written as a superscription to the household code, but its at best awkward fit argues against this’ (Tanzer 1994: 334). Seim clarifies that ‘V. 21 functions not as much as a heading as a transition and a sounding board for the household code’ (Seim 1995: 175).

effective than that for which the sentence was grammatically planned' or 'the insertion of a brief expression of an additional thought not foreseen at the start', and (2) 'the intrusion of some explanation requiring a parenthesis of such an extent that the connection is obscured or the continuation of the original structure made difficult', in which case the initial thought is typically repeated or resumed (Smyth 1920: §3005). We will consider option (2) first, then option (1).

If the anacoluthon marks a digression starting at 5.22, then there is no resumption from the resulting digression, which is stylistically abnormal for the author. While it is clear that the author of Ephesians digresses frequently, it is worth noting that outside of this possible instance, the author takes care in returning from his digressions to the main thread of his thought, typically marking his resumptions using a key phrase reminiscent of the interrupted discourse.³¹ So if the *Haustafel* constitutes a digression, then it is unlike any other in Ephesians. The only catchphrases that would signal a resumption of 5.21 occur in 5.33, which is only partway through the *Haustafel*.³² After 6.9, the author simply moves on to exhortations related to the armor of God. Thus, if a digression is at play here, then what we have between 5.21 and 22 is, to quote Weiss, 'a completely obscure anacoluthon'.³³

31. Throughout 1.3–13, the author repeatedly digresses from the thematic phrase ἐν χριστῷ and returns to it with ἐν ᾧ in 1.7, 11, and 13 (twice). A smaller digression occurs in 2.1–5, where the author proceeds from καὶ ἡμᾶς ὄντας νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν into a digression on the depth of human sin and the wealth of God's mercy and love before ultimately amending his original thought to καὶ ὄντας ἡμᾶς νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν (according to most witnesses and editions) and supplying the long-awaited verb συνεζωοποίησεν. A longer digression occurs in 3.1–14, where the author begins with τούτου χάριν, jumps into a digression on his ministry to the gentiles following the phrase ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν τῶν ἐθνῶν in 3.1, and ultimately returns to his interrupted thought in 3.14 with τούτου χάριν before supplying the verb κάμπτω missing from 3.1. It is worth noting that the same observations also speak against the possibility that the anacoluthon is simply an artifact of composition by dictation, for even if the author's tendency to digress is the result of his oral composition of the epistle, it is evident that either he or his secretary was diligent in resuming initial thoughts interrupted by this process.

32. *Inclusio* structures, which have been proposed for alternative segmentations into 5.21–33 and 5.22–33 based on phrases centered around 'fear' (Schnackenburg 1991: 242–43; Lincoln 1990: 352; Dawes 1998: 20) and the use of third-person imperatives (Gurry 2021: 578), respectively, run into the same problem: the proposed *inclusio* contains only part of the *Haustafel*. Best makes this argument against an *inclusio* in 5.21–33 (Best 1998: 516, followed by Hering 2007: 133 n. 75). Merkle, who grants the possibility of an *inclusio* in 5.21–33, nevertheless contends that 'such a literary feature is secondary, not being as determinative of the structure as the syntax of the sentence' (Merkle 2017: 189). These points apply equally to a 5.22–33 *inclusio*. Besides, the presence of φόβου in 6.4 also argues against an *inclusio* hypothesis. The repeated appearance of the term 'fear' suggests that it is probably not a bookend term for an *inclusio* spanning 5.21–33. It is more likely that the 'fear of Christ' in 5.21 is simply a thematic statement that is developed in the explanations for the injunctions within the *Haustafel* (though sometimes these explanations do not use the word 'fear' explicitly).

33. 'ein völlig unerklärliches Anakoluth' (Weiss 1896: 101).

The other explanation for the anacoluthon is Smyth's explanation (1), which leaves us with the perplexing impression that the author of Ephesians intended to encourage his readers toward mutual submission but then changed his mind and proceeded to lay out a more hierarchical set of rules, either as a correction or a caveat.³⁴ In sum, if 5.21 is part of the same sentence as the verses that follow it, then this would attribute to the author a construction he never uses elsewhere, a carelessness with digressions that is unusual for him, or a conspicuous change of mind. The various hindrances to the author's argument that arise from grouping 5.21 with what follows it rather than what precedes it suggest that the shorter reading is too harsh to be preferred on intrinsic grounds.

General stylistic considerations also militate against the shorter reading. While some commentators have claimed that the shorter reading fits the 'succinct style' of Pauline admonitions (Abbott 1897: 165, followed by Metzger 1994: 541, and Hering 2007: 131 n. 66), Gurry points out that all other admonitions in the *Haustafel* explicitly include their imperative verbs, and more generally, that succinctness is not at all characteristic of the style of the author of Ephesians (Gurry 2021: 575). Factors related to the author's style and argument, therefore, favor the inclusion of an explicit imperative.

Position of the Imperative

The difference effected by whether the imperative is placed before or after τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν is one of broad versus narrow focus. To put it briefly, focus is the most important part of the sentence: it corresponds to new or salient information that an author or speaker communicates to readers or listeners about the topic of the sentence, which typically corresponds to known, established information (Chafe 1970: 211–12; Dik 1995: 25; Levinsohn 2000: 7; Runge 2010: 189). In classical and Koine Greek, if a constituent that would normally follow the predicate is fronted immediately before it, then it is marked for 'narrow focus' or is said to be in 'focus position' (Dik 1995: 11–12; Levinsohn 2000: 37–38; Matic 2003: 588, Rule i; Runge 2010: 190); otherwise, the predicate itself has 'broad focus'.³⁵ Thus, the question of where the imperative was more likely placed is a

34. Munro, who sees the entire *Haustafel* as a later interpolation to the epistle, assumes the shorter reading in 5.22 and views the difficult transition from 5.21 and 22 as the result of the interpolator's clumsy attempt to stitch the new section into the letter using 5.21 (Munro 1972: 443). Tanzer proposes a similar conjecture of interpolation that differs from and refines Munro's in a few ways, the most significant of which for our purposes is the assertion that the interpolation begins at 5.22 instead of 21 (Tanzer 1994: 340, esp. 340 n. 76). Regardless of whether 5.21 or 22 was the start of the interpolation, it seems odd that an interpolator (or, in the case of Muddiman's theory, a redactor expanding an old text into a new one) would begin the addition or join it to the original material with something as conspicuous as an anacoluthon.

35. The principle of broad and narrow focus is developed in Matic (2003: 582–88). Its development and importance are reviewed in Goldstein (2016: 35–42).

question of whether the author is making a point about the wives' submission to their own husbands in particular or about their submission more broadly.

While broad focus is typically appropriate for imperative verbs (as can be seen in how most of the imperatives before and after 5.22 precede their constituents), the information structure of 5.22 and its surrounding verses favors a narrow focus in this case. The idea of submission was already introduced through *ὑποτασσόμενοι* in 5.21, so it is a known and familiar part of the discourse. Because an imperative conveying the same idea corresponds to presupposed information, it is nonvital and unlikely to be put in a prominent place in the sentence (Dik 1995: 98). The object of the imperative, however, is both new and pertinent to the author's argument: it is 'to their own husbands' (note the emphatic *ἰδίους*), and not just 'to the lord', that wives should direct their submission. That *τοῖς ἰδίους ἀνδράσιν* is not presupposed information is made clear when the author proceeds to explain in 5.23 why the husband's relationship with the wife justifies this expectation.³⁶ To make this clear, the author would place *τοῖς ἰδίους ἀνδράσιν* in the focus position between the topic *αἱ γυναῖκες* and the verb. Thus, on the grounds of information structure, the author was more likely to have placed the verb after *τοῖς ἰδίους ἀνδράσιν* than before it.

Person of the Imperative

While both the second-person *ὑποτάσσεσθε* and the third-person *ὑποτασσέσθωσαν* find support in different contextual factors, more immediate factors favor *ὑποτασσέσθωσαν*. In particular, the language used for the object of the imperative, *τοῖς ἰδίους ἀνδράσιν*, fits a third-person imperative better than a second-person imperative (Gurry 2021: 578). More common phrases like *τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ὑμῶν* and *τοῖς ἑαυτοῖς ἀνδράσιν* would be readily available for a second-person imperative.³⁷ As to the question of why the author would choose the third-person imperative in the first place, we have potential explanations in two use cases of the third-person imperative as categorized by Joseph D. Fantin: commanding a second person indirectly, and commanding a third person indirectly through a

36. For the wives in the congregation, submission to the Lord (*τῷ κυρίῳ*) was a given, but submission to their husbands may have been an uncertain matter, especially if their husbands were not Christians. Contemporaneous evidence for this situation can be found in 1 Cor. 7.12–16 and 1 Pet. 3.1–2. See also Seim (1995: 171–72).

37. A TLG textual search (Thesaurus Linguae Graecae© Digital Library, ed. Maria C. Pantelia, University of California, Irvine, <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu> [accessed 22 February 2023]) returned 8429 hits for second-person plural imperatives within five words of *ὑμῶν*, 695 hits for second-person plural imperatives within five words of *ἑαυτῶν*, and 474 hits for second-person plural imperatives within five words of any form of *ἴδιος*.

second person who is actually being addressed.³⁸ According to the first use case, where the author is commanding wives indirectly, the third-person imperative would serve the author well because it allows him to redirect his commands from the congregation in general to a more specific audience of the *Haustafel* while still keeping the wider audience in mind for the moral justifications of these commands.³⁹ Assuming this is correct, only the wives would be addressed with a third-person imperative because the shift in audience from general to specific would only have to be marked once. For the remaining groups addressed in the *Haustafel*, a vocative before the second-person imperative would be sufficient to mark the change in audience, and for the return to the general audience in 6.10, the resumptive phrase τοῦ λοιποῦ (or τὸ λοιπόν, as in other witnesses), possibly accompanied by a general vocative like ἀδελφοί or ἀδελφοί μου, would effectively mark the change back. Alternatively, the wives might be exclusively addressed this way if the second use case of the third-person imperative—in this case, an indirect command to wives intermediated by their husbands—is in view. This usage would serve the author well if, as some commentators have argued, he is speaking primarily to husbands and relegating wives to a passive or peripheral role in their shared section of the *Haustafel*.⁴⁰ It may seem conspicuous that a similar paradigm is not used for the children-parents and slaves-masters sections of the *Haustafel*, but the relative amount of attention that the author of Ephesians

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38. These two uses cases of the third-person imperative make up two of the ‘two, possibly three, ways’ that third-person imperatives are used in the New Testament according to Fantin, the third debatable category being ‘a general statement without any intended referent’ (Fantin 2010: 269).
39. According to Fantin, ‘The use of the third person may place an emphasis or focus upon its referent (i.e., the subject) . . . third person imperatives which may seem to be aimed at third persons are actually second person directed because the recipients are all the intended hearers even though some directives will only apply to a minority of the congregation’ (Fantin 2010: 275). Gurry offers a similar suggestion: ‘the third-person imperative keeps the rest of the congregation in the periphery while shifting the focus to wives in particular’ (Gurry 2021: 578).
40. In his category of third-person imperatives used to indicate ‘responsibility with regard to a third party’, Moyer states that ‘the sense may be paraphrased by some such expression as “You require that he do something” or “You see to it that he does something”. While the actual doing may be by the third party, the one addressed is being asked to be responsible for its doing’ (Moyer 1987: 48). Fantin elaborates on the possible occasions for such a usage as follows: ‘In some cases, the only way to reach the third party may be through the recipient. It also may be part of chain of command in which it is appropriate to address an inferior of another through his superior’ (Fantin 2010: 276 n. 180). The broad observations that the wife in the *Haustafel* has a ‘posture of passivity’ compared to the husband (Sampley 1971: 112–13) and that ‘While the wife’s role is “reactive”, the husband’s role in these verses is clearly “pro-active”’ (Tanzer 1994: 338) speak to this possibility. Seim argues likewise, pointing out that even the instruction to wives is ‘motivated by a statement not about the wife, but about the husband being the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church’ (Seim 1995: 178). If the author’s concern in Eph. 5.22–33 is primarily on the husbands, as these readings understand it to be, then his use of ἰδίως to place them in focus conveys this concern well.

devotes to the wives-husbands section and the fact that he uses this section as a means to convey something new about the relationship between Christ and the church suggest that he views the marriage relationship as especially significant.⁴¹ Indeed, his understanding of husband and wife as ‘one flesh’ in 5.28–33 (against the backdrop of Gen. 2.24) may be his justification for addressing both parties with primary reference to the husbands.⁴²

If the second-person imperative is read, then wives are situated as the author’s primary addressees in the usual way. This usage fits the pattern of second-person imperatives both before and throughout the *Haustafel*.⁴³ Additionally, if the second-person imperative is read, then αἱ γυναῖκες must be read as a vocative rather than a nominative, and the presence of the vocative here, paired with its function as a point of departure shifting from a general set of addressees to a specific one, would even more clearly mark 5.22 as the start of a new section (on this principle generally, see Levinsohn 2000: 276, 278). The primary contribution of ὑποτάσσεσθε to the author’s argument is that it more obviously marks the *Haustafel* as a new section of the discourse.

Ultimately, the third-person imperative ὑποτασθέντων introduces and communicates the unique concerns of this part of the *Haustafel* better than the second-person imperative ὑποτάσσεσθε does. In terms of its immediate context, a third-person imperative fits syntactically with ἰδίοις better than a second-person imperative would. As a marker of the shift in addressees from 5.21 to 22, a third-person imperative is more emphatic than the usual second-person imperative would be. Finally, the third-person imperative better sets up the author’s argument about the nature of the relationship between wives and husbands. On these grounds, it is intrinsically more suitable.

Conclusion

To sum up, syntactic factors favor the inclusion of an imperative, factors of information structure favor the placement of the imperative after τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν, and pragmatic factors favor a third-person imperative over a second-person

41. In terms of transcriptional evidence, meanwhile, a comparison of the present passage with these other sections could easily have led a scribe or reader to change the third-person imperative to a second-person imperative, thus harmonizing the syntax of this injunction to that of the others (Gurry 2021: 579).

42. As Sampley concludes, ‘Gen. 2:24 informs the development of the first section of the *Haustafel* beginning from the opening admonition of submission to the wives. It is accordingly not inserted as an afterthought, and it does not function as an intrusion or digression’ (Sampley 1971: 102).

43. So Hoehner (2002: 730 n. 2). These include γίνεσθε in 5.1, 7, 17; περιπατεῖτε in 5.2, 7, 8; συγκοινωνεῖτε in 5.11; βλέπετε in 5.15; μεθύσκεσθε and πληροῦσθε in 5.18; ἀγαπάτε in 5.25; ὑπακούετε in 6.1, 5; παροργίζετε and ἐκτρέφετε in 6.4; and ποιεῖτε in 6.9.

imperative. It follows that the reading τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασέσθωσαν is the most satisfactory candidate for the authorial reading in Eph. 5.22.

This reading's intrinsic suitability to its context is illuminated by comparison to its parallel in Colossians. According to the NA²⁸ critical text, Col. 3.18 reads αἱ γυναῖκες ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ὡς ἀνήκεν ἐν κυρίῳ, so in terms of the textual issues discussed for Eph. 5.22, it has an explicit imperative, that imperative is placed before its argument τοῖς ἀνδράσιν, and that imperative is in the second person. However, it is evident that the argument in Colossians is developed differently from the one in Ephesians because the passage in Colossians lacks specific contextual features that warrant different readings in Ephesians. Colossians lacks a hinge verse before the start of its *Haustafel* with a participial phrase for submission, so an explicit imperative in Col. 3.18 is more obviously necessary to that verse's syntactic viability. The reasons for this verse's use of a second-person imperative and broad-focus word order are also clear: since the address to wives in Colossians is not followed by additional exposition on the relationship between husbands and wives, the emphasis of ἰδίοις is not needed in Col. 3.18, and accordingly, the third-person imperative and narrow-focus word order are not needed. Thus, regardless of one's source-critical view of the relationship between Ephesians and Colossians, it is evident that the respective introductions to their *Haustafeln*, like their *Haustafeln* generally, were crafted differently, and the author of Ephesians was more likely to use the wording that most effectively communicated his own argument.

This study's findings in favor of τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὑποτασέσθωσαν dovetail with Gurry's case for the same reading on external and transcriptional grounds. More specifically, this study has added a dedicated analysis of intrinsic probabilities to his and others' assessments of the external and transcriptional evidence, and it has refined or reconsidered the more incidental points that he and others have made on the intrinsic evidence. With this last piece of evidence accounted for, we now have a reasonably complete picture of the textual evidence in Eph. 5.22.

More generally, this study demonstrates that with a close and careful reading of the author's argument in a passage, one can fruitfully assess intrinsic probabilities at a textual variant. While studies like this one are almost always preceded by others based on external and transcriptional evidence, the results they achieve on intrinsic grounds should demonstrate that intrinsic evidence need not and should not be a last resort for the textual critic. In a field concerned primarily with what the author wrote, intrinsic probabilities are eminently suitable for the job, and they deserve a place of prominence in the textual critic's toolbox.

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