

Agape Baptist Church – October 22, 2017 || Family Matters - Colossians 3:18-21

- Colossians 3: **General** instructions on the external ramifications of internal redemption.
- Paul dedicates some time to **specific** direction on how we conduct ourselves in a **household**

Life-Truth: The home is the place you most quickly drop your guard, and therefore it is a primary context of faith formation.

- You are most like you when you in the context of your household.
- How you behave in the home, is the best indication of how you are progressing in the faith.
- Paul instructs Husbands, Wives, Children, and Parents. (*Servants and Masters later?*)

Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him” ... Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. Genesis 2

- The very first marriage ceremony conducted by God, **shows the pattern he designed**: 1 man and 1 woman in the closest of all human relationships (*they shall leave parents and become 1*)
 - You are **most responsible to the welfare of your spouse** (over parents and children)
- Paul quotes this passage **Genesis 2:24** in **Ephesians 5:31-32**, but adds this interpretation: **‘This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church’**
- A hidden mystery: From the beginning God modeled marriage after the relationship (*to one day be revealed*) between Jesus Christ and His church.
 - Compare **Genesis 2:24** and **Ephesians 5:31-32**
- Husband and wife lived out God’s design with no division, conflict, or shame.
- **There was no shame** between them. No guilt, No offense. No conflict. Important to realize this **to understand what causes conflict** in marriage today.
- God’s plan for redemption was ‘hidden’ in the marriage design.
 - 1) Gospel: God **purposed to send Christ** to save sinners before sin occurred
 - 2) There was a **specific design** to Marriage from the beginning, intended for all time.
- The fall resulted in a rebellious distortion of this design.

When the woman saw the tree was good for food...a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths...To the woman he said, “Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.**” Gen 3**

- God relates to man and woman the consequences of sin. **Naked without shame, no more.**
- He begins with Eve: **Your desire shall be contrary to your husband** (earlier ESV: **Your desire shall be for your husband**). A phrase used only 2 other times in the bible. The most clear is in **Genesis 4:7**, the Lord says to Cain **‘Sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it’**.

- Sin desires Cain, negatively. Sin wants to conquer Cain and He needs to raise up and strongly RULE over it – a term describing authoritative command, like a Monarch or Dictator. And that is the sense in Gen 3. Because of sin:
- The wife would now desire to conquer her husband.
 - To take his place of leadership
- The husband would now desire to harshly rule his wife.
 - To authoritatively, uncaringly command over her
 - EVERY marriage since this time, has dealt with this power struggle.
 - WE MUST KNOW that these desires come from SIN. Therefore...
- The New Testament instructions reaffirm God's plan for the order and distinct roles of Christian marriage.
 - NT instructions are not reflecting the cultural norms of the 1st century. They are a purposeful. A return to the original design.
 - **Further reading:** Ephesians 5:22-33 (Parallel passages)

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Colossians 3:18-19

- **S word:** Notice it doesn't say obey (a word Paul uses for children in a moment)
 - Submit and Obey are distinct but can overlap. If you submit to someone, at times obedience to them may be needed.
 - But the relationship of husband and wife is NOT one of Command and Obedience.
 - Submission is voluntary willingness to order yourself under someone's authority
- Wives are assigned active and joyful submission.
 - **Active:** Because submission is not...
 - Submission is *not* silent neutrality.
 - Women and Men are created equal. Women are gifted. Intelligent. And the marriage is designed as a oneness; partnership. But men are given headship.
 - Women are not marginalized by submission, any more than the disciples were marginalized by their submission to Christ.
 - **Joyful:** Because begrudging, bitter, hope they fail attitudes are not submission.
 - Joyful: Because God commands our good. In his designed roles we find our wellbeing.
 - *But put to death urges to assume control.*
 - *That desire will well up in you to be rebellious, resentful of your husband and his leadership. And when it does know that it is from sin.*
- Husbands are assigned loving and considerate leadership.
- Men – you are the head of your home, unquestioned. What kind of head are you?
- **Loving:** Agape; This would have NEVER been commanded in Jewish, Roman culture. No other written code from that time required husbands to love.
 - Because you are not a dictator. Your wife's submission does not mean you make all the decisions without her input.
- You are to listen, be considerate, find a way to say yes, and be gentle when you say no.
- In love, you will often submit to your wives desires or needs or requests.

- o Headship is *not* passive observation.
 - o You are not to be so considerate, that you never lead; or you allow something that you do not feel is best.
 - o *But put to death urges of unkind domination.*
 - *Headship is not sitting in the big chair, having sandwiches delivered*
 - *This desire will well up in you to be aggressive. Selfish, domineering – and that is from sin.*
- We're responsible to God, no matter a spouse's behavior. **Life-Truth:** Spiritual change comes only through Spiritual power. **Further reading:** James 1:20 and 1 Peter 3:1-2
 - o **James 1:20** – The anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God
 - o **1 Peter** – (Be in submission to your husband) even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives.

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. Colossians 3:20-21

- Children are addressed as responsible persons in the congregation. Again, counter cultural
- Children – could be young or old. If you are still under your parent's protection: Obey
- Children obey primarily as submission to God.
 - o Maturity is shown by respect amid frustration.
 - o Joyfully accept authority to prepare for the future
- Fathers (Parents) do not provoke (exasperate)
 - o Again, no other code in that day required this of dad's.
- Parental words, tones, and behaviors should be measured and suitable to our calling in Christ.
 - o Do not exasperate: Be considerate. Do not discipline your children in a way – or to the extent that they are broken, discouraged, and want to give up.
 - Godly sorrow > Worldly sorrow
 - o Our discipline should encourage our children that they are responsible, loved, and worthwhile.

Question for going deeper: Does our family routinely practice repentance over our rebellion to God's design? See **Acts 3:19-20**