

JUNE 11 ,2017

Sunday Word

WORD FOR THE WORLD

Family Matters

PART 1 LEFTOVERS

Ephesians 5:21-33 - ²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³ 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. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— ³⁰ for we are members of his body. ³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” ³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.” (NIV)

Ephesians 6:1-4 - ¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— ³ “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” ⁴ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” (NIV)

Family members who do not submit to each other are NOT ONLY disobeying God, but they are giving their family leftovers. You see, leftovers are 2nd or 3rd best stuff. And God doesn't want us to give our family the 2nd best stuff. God wants His people to give their family their BEST stuff. So, this section of Ephesians is telling us how to give our family the best that we have. We are self-centered people. It is second nature for us to look out for ourselves, and our world tends to revolve around US...and OUR needs.

In this section of Ephesians, God is asking us to kick the habit, to get out, of the “I, Me, Mine” mindset. Notice, that not once in this entire set of verses does God EVER say how OTHER members in the family should treat us?

Not once does it say:

Husbands, your wives need to submit to you.
Wives, your husbands need to show love to you.
Parents, your children need to obey you.
Children, your father should not discipline you.

We all understand instinctively that that's the way things should be. But...that is not God's focus here. What God is essentially saying here is this: “It's not all about how others treat you, it's about how you treat others.” So God is speaking to all of us right now: Children, wives, husbands, fathers...this is what I expect from YOU. I don't want any explanations, justifications or excuses. Just do it! Give your family your best stuff. Don't give your family the leftovers of your affection or time.

Ephesians 6:1-3 - ¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— ³ “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”” (NIV)

To the young people and to those who still have parents, this is the reality: Obeying parents is given as your job description. Unfortunately, rebellion is easier for children to do. God is saying to the youth, CHOOSE to submit to your parents, not because you have to...but because you CHOSE to. He's asking young Christians to give their parents the best that they have not because the parent deserves it but because God asked them to. God understands how difficult this is for youth... and so He gives a promise. He says – Do this for ME “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth (Ephesians 6:3 NIV).” It's the only one of the 10 commandments with a promise, because it's that important to God.

The other side of that equation is For Dads. Ephesians 6:4 - “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord (NIV).” This is what God expects from Fathers. Dads are expected by God to be the disciplinarians in the family. They set the rules...and they are responsible for appropriate punishments. But...there are times fathers can be overly harsh and cruel to their children and cause them to be frustrated. That happens when fathers forget their proper role as a parent – to bring his child “up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” Sometimes that punishment may include spankings, but there are other times punishments can be quite creative

Dads, discipline your children out of LOVE and NOT out of ANGER. Good fathers give their kids the best that they could, not leftovers.

Let's go on to The wives. Ephesians 5:22 - “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord (NIV).” What exactly does this mean? First, it means she should treat her husband just like she would treat Jesus if He were there.

Paul expands on that in Ephesians 5:33b, “...the wife must respect her husband.” Honestly, this is difficult for women to do. Why? Unfortunately, Husbands are not always respectable and they are rarely, if ever, anything like Jesus.

Romans 3:23, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (NIV).” That means your husband has fallen short of what God has expected of him. If he's fallen short of God's expectations...what makes you think he'll measure up to yours? Part of a solid marriage is realizing that you married an imperfect man. It doesn't matter WHO you married...they would still have flaws. And God knows that. But He still commands you (as a wife), “Submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.” To all the wives here, “Are you giving your husband the best that you've got? Or you're just giving him your leftovers?”

According to Ephesians, the best gift a wife can give to her husband is RESPECT. In fact, according to research done at the University of Syracuse, the number 1 thing husbands desire is RESPECT. In response to the survey,

MOST MEN SAID HE FEELS RESPECTED WHEN:

"She makes me feel capable."
"She is proud of me!"
"She is willing to follow my lead."

The word “INCOMPATIBLE” is a word we picked up from the ancient American Indians? Yeah, it means “two people who are too lazy to work at fixing their marriage.” Nothing makes me more furious than the people who just give up on their marriage because they're “unhappy” and “incompatible.” God NEVER says anything about that. Wives: Your problem is not that you and your husband are incompatible. It's just that you don't understand each other. Men are different from women!

Wives, if you want to save your marriage, you need to do everything in your power to make your husband feel important. The problem with some wives right now is that they expect their husband to work and do household chores and they're just busy with Facebook, gambling, going out with friends, parlor, etc. Wives, give your husband the best you can by showing him respect through helping him take care of your children and the house and you'll fix that marriage.

If you want God to dwell inside of you in a powerful way, you need to submit to your family and give them your best and not leftovers. By submitting to your family, you make God comfortable living inside you. The more comfortable He is inside you, the more power you have in your life.

God is only at peace in the hearts and minds and homes of those who trust Him enough to refuse to give their family leftovers. Every family, every members deserves the best. We are only sincere in submitting to Christ when we are sincere in submitting to our family.