



“The Risen Family”

Colossians 3:18-21

May 29, 2022

We are going to continue in Colossians Chapter 3 this morning. It is a wonderful chapter on the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as it applies to the Christian life now. We know that there is a great physical resurrection that is to come. At the end of time, Christ is going to come back and those who trust in Him are going to be raised up just like Him in resurrection bodies that will last forever and that will be a part of His glorious Kingdom. We will be raised up in Him. That is coming in the future, but spiritual resurrection happens here and now.

Through faith in Christ by the working of God’s grace we are raised up to new life in Christ and here is the point about it that I think the Scripture wants to get across to us here this morning. The life that is raised up in Christ is a life that is also brought low in humble service to others. The risen life is a humble life and this humility wields the power of the Kingdom of God for good.

We are to be humble-hearted followers in the pattern of Jesus Christ. Christ is the Everlasting King. He is the Everlasting Divine Son of God who added humanity to His deity and Christ the King of all came into the world, declaring, “The Son of Man did not come into the world to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.” Likewise, He calls each of His followers to follow in that path of humble service, benefiting the lives of the others around them.

This morning I want for us to see from Scripture how this humility is at the heart of the Christian home. The power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ does in fact touch the domestic affairs of life. It enters into your home. What we find in this great chapter of Colossians Chapter 3 is that the family risen together in the life of the Lord, is also a humble family.

The risen family is a humble family as they are filled with the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ. He will empower them toward this humility, each in a specific way. It is specific to each person in the family—wives, husbands, children, father—and we see this laid out in the text before us.

Let’s see how Paul brought this to the church in Colossae and how the Spirit of God continues to bring these truths to the church in Southern California. Look again at how this chapter opens up in Colossians Chapter 3 and Verse 1:

¹If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

The implication is that the Christians in Colossae and California, those trusting in Christ, are raised up with Him, joined to His life, united with Him for eternity. And all throughout this chapter, we see the outworking of that in the various spheres of our existence here on this earth.

So we move toward the end of the chapter and we read what it says starting in Verse 17:

¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

¹⁸Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. ²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything for this pleases the Lord. ²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

Amen and may God bless the reading of His Word.

In these four verses we have the will of God directed to the family raised in Jesus Christ. What we see here is that this portion of Scripture does not just hit close to home. This passage of Scripture enters into the home and it gets all up in your business.

It brings the will of the Lord to you, shaping Christ-likeness as we relate to the other people in our families if in fact, we are in a home where there is a husband and wife and children. It does not just want to enter into our homes, but the Word of God intends to enter into our very hearts, shaping us and forming us and transforming our lives to make us look more and more like Jesus.

If you were here last week, you will recall that we had a pretty detailed look at the instruction that was given to wives and to husbands. We are not going to go into the same amount of detail this week as we did last, but just pointing out the ways in which humility is at the heart of each of the roles that is given to the wives and husbands.

Then we will spend more time this morning talking about children, talking to children, but specifically to fathers as directed in the text. Isn't it wonderful that this is the text for us here on Family Sunday when all the kids are here? What a kind providence from God.

First, let's recall quickly how humility is at the heart of what God is calling wives and husbands to. There is mutual humility here. What does humility look like for the wife in the Lord Jesus Christ? It looks like this:

1. Humility for the Wife: Voluntary Submission (3:18)

Humility for wives is voluntary submission to the leadership role that God is calling the husband to.

¹⁸Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

As we talked about last week, this has nothing to do with the superiority or inferiority of either in the marital union. It does not have to do with greater intellect or talent or skill, one in relation to the other. This has to do with order and harmony in the home.

What we see in this text is that the Lord has given the husband a leadership role and wives are called to order themselves in relation to the husband's leadership in which is otherwise an equal

yoke in marriage. But both of them together walking as a unit, walking as husband and wife, and brother and sister in the Lord, but understanding that there is a sense in which the husband is called by God and accountable to Him to continue keeping the union going in a way that is pleasing to the Lord.

So a husband and wife who are walking together, pursuing the Lord, and the husband thinks they should go this way and the wife thinks they should go another way. The husband and wife work on things together, but the understanding is, sister in the Lord, that in, the same way after that after Adam and Eve sinned, the Lord came into the garden and called the name Adam, even though Eve took the bite first, but there is an accountability that the husband has before the Lord and the wife is called to yield to that and to support him and to be on board with him in the decisions that he might be making.

This requires humility and this requires the work of the Holy Spirit to bring that humility, and there is a heart of love in the wife to want to help her husband as they continue on in this equal yoke together. That is what is at the heart of this and we see this laid out for us very plainly here in this text.

We pointed out last week that the grammar of this verse indicates that this submission is not something that is going to be brought to bear upon the wife from the outside. Rather it is something that she will be voluntarily doing by the work of the Holy Spirit within her; not by the demands of a demanding husband.

This is the work of God in her and then we see the work of the Spirit in the heart of the husband.

2. Humility for the Husband: Sacrificial Love (3:19)

A husband is to love his wife and the ancient Greek word here that is translated love is agape. It is this decisive, servant-hearted love. It is a love that is focused on the well-being of the other, even to the point of self-denial.

In one commentary that I have been reading on Colossians, the author expressed it in a way that I thought was beautiful. Agape love “involves his unceasing care and loving service for her entire well-being...It is a love that is sacrificial, that disregards itself, which is defined by Christ’s action, who gave Himself up that His bride, the church, might be radiant.”

So there is this self-sacrifice in the heart of the husband that is being filled with power of the Holy Spirit. So when brought together, you have this mutual humility amongst the husband and the wife following after the Lord Jesus Christ.

Understand husbands that Scripture does in fact say that the husband is the head of the home. Scripture states that without equivocation. You are called to a leadership role and that leadership role is to be after the image of Christ, reducing self for the benefit of those loved.

A husband needs to understand that: yes, he is a head. This head is equipped with two ears. What do ears do? They listen. They listen carefully. Husbands, the Lord is going to be

providing wisdom through your wife that you need to be listening to. The head is equipped with two eyes. Husbands, you need to be looking to your wives and seeing what their needs and longings are in this desire to bless them and to serve them in Jesus' Name.

So listen, this calling to headship for husbands does not perch him in such a privileged position where he gets to get his way all the time. Instead, what we are talking about here is that he is going to have eyes to see and he is going to say, "I'm going to let her have her way because Christ was the One who came giving Himself up.

So often, husbands, we are going to give up our desires for the sake and the blessing of our wives and those in our family. When a wife sees her husband practicing agape, giving up his preferences in favor of hers, it is going to give her confidence to be submissive to him, because she is going to know that he is not doing this out of his own self-interests and his ego. Rather, he is here to serve Jesus in the midst of the decisions that need to be made.

There is humility firing away in both roles. This is why we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit to be living this out in our homes. There is this humility that we are called to as we see what is here in the pages of Scripture for husbands and wives.

Now we continue and see that this passage also talks to children and their parents. Are you with me, kids? I see you out there. The Word of the Lord is talking to you here. What does humility look like for children in the Lord? Actually children everywhere, but this is especially speaking to Christian households.

3. Instruction for the Children: Extensive Obedience (3:20)

Look at what it says in Verse 20:

²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything for this pleases the Lord

The first thing that we should point out is that Paul was addressing children in the church directly. They were being addressed as responsible persons within the congregation of believers. This is consistent with something that I have heard Pastor Chris and other DOXA leaders say—they are not the church of the future. They are the church right now. Believing young people.

So this is talking about young people still under the provision of their parents, living in their homes, having their needs cared for by provision. This is who is being spoken to, and the Word of the Lord is telling them to obey their parents in everything. That is pretty extensive I would say.

Let's understand that this is speaking to children under parental provision. This is not so much speaking to the forty-year-old man and the seventy-year-old father, a forty-year-old man now the head of his household. That is not so much what is in view here. We are talking about the ten-year-old child with the forty-year-old parents; the fifteen-year-old child with the fifty-year-old parents.

Once a person grows into adulthood, the command of the Lord is less to obey your parents in everything, because you have grown into maturity. Now the command that continues upon adult children is to honor your father and your mother. Regard them and care for them and still be respectful to them, even though the relationship changes through the years.

But this verse is speaking to children. That is where I draw the line. Even if you are twenty-five-years old, if you are living under your parents roof and if you are depending on what they are providing—their home, their rules. That is my take and humble application here.

If you are in their home and they don't want the sound of that television show, guess what? It is not going to be heard under their roof, in their home. And if you want to do something else, go get your home apartment. This applies as far you depend on your parents for provision. Especially children and minors, it is very clear for you. You are to obey your parents in the Lord. In everything.

Understand that Paul had Christian families in view here. He was speaking to believing husbands, wives, parents, and children in Colossians Chapter 3, so he envisioned this situation where the directives of the parents are going to be consistent and in harmony with the will of the Lord. If there is a child whose parents says, "You are no long allowed to pray or read the Bible," that child is to obey God and not a human being. They are to continue reading the Bible and praying.

That is the context of what we are talking about here. Children, those being provided for by your parents, living in their homes, obey your parents in the Lord. This week I learned that the word for obey, it has the nuance of hearing. So it is going to require taking off those ear buds when your parents are talking to you and listening with a heart to carry out what is being instructed.

That means at bedtime, when it is time to turn off the computer and brush your teeth and go to bed, children, you obey your parents. Not fifteen minutes later. Not thirty minutes later. You obey your parents. When they distribute chores or establish limits on the use of your phone, you obey your parents. It is here in the text.

This requires humility that is going to be empowered by the Spirit of God because with the seed of Adam in us, this is not easy. Children, I will stand here and acknowledge right now: this will not be easy because you have something in you, even as a believer, that you don't want others telling you what to do. You want to make your own rules. And guess what? Later on in life you are still going to be dealing with that.

I remember an incident with my oldest son when he was about five-years-old. I share this with you tenderly, and with his permission. It was getting toward the end of the afternoon and he had been playing in his room all day. The room was messy and I told him that it was time to tidy up and to please pick up his toys.

Then I came back about fifteen minutes later and nothing had changed. I said, "Son, do you remember what you were asked to do? Please do what you were told. It is time to tidy up your room." Then I came back again in fifteen minutes later and the room was still the same. Then I

said, “Son, clean up your room now.” Then he looked up at me and he said, “Dad, how about you let me do what I want to do and I will let you do what you want to do.”

And if I am being honest with you, I had to turn around and walk into the other room, subduing my desire to blurt out laughing. Here is the thing: I totally sympathized with him. I get it. I can relate. He didn’t want me telling him what to do in that moment any more than I want somebody coming up and telling me what to do. I get it!

This is not easy, yet this is the will of the Lord. And it can only be empowered by the Spirit of God. It is going to be empowered from the way that God intends. That is what humility in the Lord is. It desires to love. It is the will of the Lord.

²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything for this pleases the Lord

In several portions in the Bible, this instruction is given to children and it is good. The Bible gives you incentive for carrying this out. I was thinking about this portion of Scripture and I was also thinking about what is written in the sister companion epistle to Colossians, the book of Ephesians, which Paul wrote at the same time. There is a lot of overlapping content. If you take a close look at the two books, they went out with the same mailman, Tychicus.

We see a lot of overlapping in our text this morning in Colossians in Ephesians. Ephesians Chapter 6 and Verses 1 through 4

¹Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

It is just right. They are providing for you. Your life came through them by the work of God. They have been nurturing. They have been caring, so it is just right. The Paul also said:

**²“Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise),
³that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” ⁴Fathers, do not provide your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.**

Then Paul quoted a proverbial statement, a promise that is carried out every single time. It is the pattern. When a person lives and is trained in being obedient to their parents earlier in life, it is generally going to turn out well for children as life goes on.

This world is filled with authority structures that we need to be responsive to. Children, some day you are going to have a boss and the boss is going to tell what to do. It is not going to be any easier than when your parent tells you what to do. And if you don’t do what your boss tells you to do, you are going to get fired. There are police officers and you may get pulled over. If you don’t do what the officer tells you to do, you might get arrested or incarcerated.

There are even church authorities. There is something called excommunication, and it is used when there is somebody who will not align themselves with what God is clearly making known

through the collective leadership of the church. So early in life, it is important that we learn to be responsive to the authorities that God establishes, and home is the training ground for this.

But the best reason for obedience is in Verse 20 of Colossians Chapter 3:

²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything for this pleases the Lord

It pleases the Lord when you obey your parents. How amazing that Jesus is aware of what happens in our households. When we are obedient to parents, children, it is pleasing in the sight of Christ.

It is consistent with what we see happening even in the Trinity. The first Person of the Trinity has revealed Himself. He is the Father. The second Person of the Trinity is revealed as the Son. The third Person of the Trinity is revealed as the Spirit.

Especially when you read through the Gospel of John, you see that Jesus was conscious of and desirous to render obedience to what the Father was directing Him to do and say. So being obedient to parents is Christ-like, it pleases the Lord, and it takes a work of the Holy Spirit to do it in the power that the Lord intends.

Let's be praying for our young ones that they will understand that any resistance to an instruction from a parent that is not sinful and is in keeping with God's Word is sinful, and to know that the Spirit of God can forgive sin and transform desires and help us to grow.

This is part of resurrected living. It takes a death, burial, and resurrection to be raised up in this kind of living. So it takes a gracious work of God and we must pray, "Lord, fill me with this kind of life and desire. Make me new."

Now we come to the instruction given to the fathers.

4. Humility for the Fathers: Gracious Restraint (3:21)

This is laid out for us in Verse 21:

²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

Someone might think, "Is that it? That is the path of humility for the father? Don't push your kids to hard, where is the humility in that?"

Paul recognized something here and brought it to the forefront. In many parenting problems, it is easy for the parent to blame the child for what is breaking down. However, Paul wisely reminded us that often poor behavior in children comes as the result of how they are being treated by their parents.

Fathers, especially will have the tendency to aggravate their children by being overbearing or by being critical or issuing instructions just for the sake of issuing instructions that are not given in

love. Mothers are capable of this too but here in text, fathers are being addressed, which may indicate a propensity on the part of the men to do this.

This is very bold instruction from Paul in the context of Roman society, where the families were governed by the principle of *Patria Potestas*—the power of the fathers. The fathers in that society basically had sovereignty, even for capital punishment.

And here Paul said, “Oh no, fathers, you are responsible before God in how you treat your children, and you are not to be overbearing upon them.” So Paul was saying, “Fathers, realize the effect you have on your kids. You are not to impose your will upon them in a way that provokes or discourages. The major translations have it “do not embitter them or exasperate them, lest they become discouraged or lose hear.”

You can provoke this in children by being too harsh, either verbally or physically. You can grieve them by being too demanding; having expectations that are too high. It may be that you are too controlling, not allowing them the freedom that they are going to need to practice making decisions that are going to help them to learn wisdom as they proceed and mature in life. It might be that you have a sarcastic tone; that you speak to them in a condescending way.

They were living in a context in Paul’s day that all of this was allowed. They could do whatever they wanted and Paul was saying to the fathers, “No, you are responsible to interact with your children in a gracious way.” So whenever those impulses are rising up in you, they are to be restrained in the power of the Spirit and you are to instruct and discipline your children with grace instead.

One of the reasons Paul wrote the book of Colossians was because there was a legalism infecting the streets of Colossae and he was afraid it was going to enter into the church. He was concerned about that, so Paul gave all this teaching to counter what was happening.

But what occurred to me is that this practice of legalism, it is so easy to fall into as parents by just laying down law. Barking out orders. Pointing out what is wrong. Asserting rules. It is easy! And it happens a lot.

When this is going on, some children will respond with anger; being rebellious and in an open and hostile way. Other children will just become sullen and timid and defeated. So here we have humility in the heart of the Father that is directed to the dads. When these surges come up within you, it is a time to step back and pray, “Lord, I need for You to practice humility in my life and I need You to restrain any of these impulses so that I can be as Christ unto my children.”

Fathers, in the same way that the children have a pattern for obedience in the Son, so do fathers have a pattern of love in God the Father, who was attentive to the life of His Son. Was He not? Who repeatedly said, “This is my Son whom I love, with Him I am well pleased.”

When was the last time your children heard you say anything resembling that? When did they hear your attention to what is good in their lives. Yes, they do need your discipline. They do need your instruction, but what they don’t need is for you to only see where they are falling

short. Only see where they are being lazy. And that is all that you ever point out, and never point out how you see God at work in their lives.

What is interesting is that here in the text of Colossians Chapter 3, it addressed men twice in both those verses to indicate that they will have a tendency to use their strength in ways that God did not intend. It says, "Husbands, don't be harsh with your wives," and it says, "Fathers, don't provoke your children."

So there might be the tendency for us to rise up when we are frustrated and to release it upon the people that are dwelling in our homes with us. It happens. It happens in the homes that are gathered here. I know it is happening in your homes. One reason I know that is because it happens in my home.

Jeff, the legalist, can really come out within the walls of the house that I live in. I am sure my family members can tell you the sad, pathetic truth about how I will go around barking and expressing my frustration in verbal or nonverbal ways with those who are closet to me in ways that I would not do in other places.

Is it just me, or is it easier to just release things upon people in your very home and you don't do that out there? I do that! And I need to be forgiven by God as I do, because it is not representing Christ. Fathers, don't exasperate your children. Don't provoke them.

As we think about this, brothers and men in the church, let me remind you of one of the most powerful forces for good in the Kingdom of God that is released from Heaven to earth. There is so much power in humility. There is not a perfect person in this room, although in Christ we are pursuing growth in the Messiah.

So you are going to have flare ups that are not consistent with the will and the character of God. When you do have flare ups, how your family needs an example in what humility looks like in the face of sin. So providing a picture of what humility looks like say, "The way I just talked to the people in this house, that did not represent Christ and I am sorry. Will you forgive me?" You want to talk about lightening from Heaven. It is somebody who has a contrite heart and spirit. There is power in humility.

Husbands and fathers are not the only ones. Sisters in Christ, I know that there are times when you are insulting and you are demanding and you get all up in his face and on his case. There is power in humility.

Children, there are times when you are rebellious against the good guidance and instruction of your parents. There is power in humility, saying, "This is not what the Lord calls me to. I confess it and I want to walk in the way that is in the power of the Spirit."

But who is called to be the head of the home? The husband. So who can expect to receive power from the Holy Spirit to manifest humility that is going to set the pattern in the home? The husband. This humility is so powerful and praise God that there is growth in the Lord; that as we are filled with the Holy Spirit, He can fill us with love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness,

gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. The Holy Spirit can and will produce these things in us.

Let me just finish with a last reminder that the risen life is a humble life. The risen family is a humble family. What is the name of our church? Bethel Grace Baptist Church and it means house of God's grace. That is the vision for our church; that we are not those who hide our failures and our shortcomings, but rather we bring them into the light, empowered by grace that we might also receive God's grace and give God's grace for the shortcomings of others.

This is to be a house of grace and in all of the satellite locations of family worship—houses of God's grace. There is very wonderful power that is released when we walk in humility. Let's pray that the Lord will empower this in us and help us to walk in the pattern of Jesus Christ.

Let's pray.