**Colossians – Pre-eminence** – **wk 6 – Love and Marriage**

**A new church, with new Christians struggling & confused. Their pastor reached out to Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ. This is the response.**

**Today - the apostle Paul continues to get personal – family.**

**Today - the pre-eminence of Christ in the home.**

**Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Then he takes it home – literally) 18 Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.**

**That is all we are going to read – we are going to dive into this. We will pick up the next verses next week. They struggle with family roles and attitudes – next wk kids and parents.**

**Marriage - easy topic – right? Maybe your mind is all mixed up - get divorced, start over, leave, did I do the right thing?**

**This is a fragile issue – many marriages and homes are not in good shape & and the roles in the home are upside down.**

**\*\*\* Today might get uncomfortable and lead to family talks.**

**I met Nikol’s Dad to ask if I could have his blessing to marry. Afterward, I thought this is scary - God, I need your help.**

**On Marriage - The Bible is both Romantic and Realistic**

**Song of Solomon – Gen – romantic stories of love, devotion, and commitment.**

**1 Corinthians 7:28b Those who marry will face many troubles in this life… (That is not usually on a plaque – hanging over the bed)**

**Paul and the other apostles were aware of great approaching persecution and trials - they referred to them often.**

**1 Cor 7:1-16 Read it, covers intimacy, separation, and unsaved spouse**

**After that, he addresses single people.**

**FOR THE SINGLES:**

**1 Corinthians 7:25 Now concerning the betrothed, I have no command from the Lord, but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. 26 I think that in view of the present distress, it is good for a person to remain as he is.**

**This is not a call to pursue singleness. They are to wait for marriage - in his opinion now is not a good time due to current and coming persecution.**

**He goes on to say to stay married and if you’re single and you marry, that’s fine too.**

**32 I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. 33 But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, 34 and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband. 35 I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.**

**\*\* FOR THEM - In light of our trials and persecution stay single.**

**Thinking of marriage – now might not be the right time.**

**\*\* FOR US - Maximize your singleness.**

**Things that as a single person you can only do now.**

**Use of time, money, and serving the Lord without worry.**

**REALITY CHECK: Marriage will have its challenges**

**Marriage can be challenging - from controlling the thermostat - to driving – cleaning – eating – entertainment – purchases – raising kids - intimacy – to handling money - it's a challenge.**

**In Colossians Paul briefly addresses marriage – Col 3:18 Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 9 Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.**

**Often misunderstood & abused - let’s take a look at the men 1st This is for husbands, men who plan on being a husband - women who have husbands - or want a husband.**

**FOR HUSBANDS:**

**Col 3:18 Wives, submit to your husbands…**

1. **You are called to be a humble sacrificial servant leader…**

**Husbands God has called you to humbly lead the home.**

**This is not about making all the decisions – that is a dictator. Nor is it being the boss – this is not a business affiliation.**

**What happens if we don’t lead? Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. (note to self - Never let her choose where to eat – the balance of the universe hangs on it…)**

**Where was Adam? Where was the leader he was called to be?**

**When we choose not to lead – we bring chaos to our family.**

**Genesis 3 was an argument that should have happened.**

**Written in Ephesus 100 miles east of Colossae – passed around – they would have been read the letter to Ephesus about husbands leading.**

**Starting w/ Eph 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.**

* **Men and women are mutually equal (Gen 1:27, Gal 3:28-2)**

**This is not male patriarchy. Equal - with different roles.**

**3-legged race with no leader – Canoeing / paddle boat with my wife Only one can steer – one leads, the other submits to the pilot**

**In matters of marriage – God has already chosen who will lead.**

**Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church (we are to lead like Christ leads and loves the church) and gave himself up for her (died for the church) 26 to make her holy (sanctified the church), cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, (gave the church the word of God) 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, (honored the church as a gift to himself) without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.**

**Jesus gave his life for us - served us - never gave up on us - committed to seeing us grow - to see us shine radiantly.**

**28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. (as you care for yourself - love and care for your wife) 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.**

* **Sacrifice means it gives more than it gets – that is leadership**
* **Leading does the jobs she does not like - mice/crickets in house**
* **Leading means putting her needs over yours - not keeping score**
* **Leading means spiritually guiding the home – bible, prayer, church**
* **Leading means your system of life is sacrificed – getting groceries – throwing out plates – using a cutting board – getting toilet paper.**

1. **Your wife needs you to pursue her**

**Col 3:19 Husbands love your wives…**

**Key Word: Initiate – flowers/cards / kind words (Nikol has told me my effort to pursue and initiate makes her feel valuable)**

**Pursue means: To know her - desire her - Things she needs from u**

**Let’s face it men – we are not so great with this…**

**Proverbs 30:21 "Under three things the earth trembles, under four it cannot bear up: 22 a servant who becomes king, (ill-prepared responsibility) a fool who is full of food, (regretful indulgence) an unloved woman who is married, (her loneliness is unbearable) and a maidservant who displaces her mistress. (can't live up to the expectations).**

1. **You are called to lead with gentleness in your marriage.**

**Col 3:19 Husbands, …do not be harsh with them.**

**In Greek = don’t be a jerk. Lit – don’t make her bitter.**

**Expressed in: Gentle in words – gentle actions – good listener – follows through.**

**Single or dating: Is that person gentle/sacrificial or self-seeking? Do they lead spiritually? Are you dragging them to church?**

**How do you know if you have the right one person?**

**Run towards your one (God) with all your heart – then look to the side, if there is anybody cute of the opposite sex running towards God at the same speed - If you like them, and they’re fun – then grab their hands, and pray this… Psalm 34:3 Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt his name together.**

**Paul compares the leadership of the husband to Christ's leadership of the church – this is not about our needs or getting along – this is about sacrifice and giving our life for our bride…**

**FOR WIVES:**

**Col 3:18 Wives, submit (hypo-tasso) to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.**

**Let’s go back to Eph for more - Eph 5:22 Wives, submit (hypo-tasso) 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.**

**Misunderstood. Some resist not knowing its meaning**

1. **Submit does not mean women are inferior**
2. **Submit does not mean men have control**
3. **Submit does not mean obedience to men**
4. **Submit does not mean you don’t have a voice**

**What does submit mean? hypo-tasso = to voluntarily place yourself under – to let him lead - to follow his leadership.**

1. **You are called to let him lead.**

**This is equal respect with different roles.**

**This “to your husbands” - not all men.**

**Let me clarify - Women are dynamic leaders!! In business, science, education, medicine, justice, social work, politics, ministry - AND in the home. Sometimes even better than men. But in marriage, you are called to help him take the lead.**

**Behind every great man, is a dynamic woman.**

**My wife is a dynamic leader in our home – a counselor, teacher, helper corrector, decision-maker… and she lets me lead.**

1. **Your husband needs you to help and encourage him**

**Genesis 2:18 – Adam needed help God gave him an - ezer = a helper**

**Your husband leading does not mean he’s in charge… so you don’t need to do anything – that is not a helper.**

**\*\*Helper is not a disrespectful word - The same word is used for the Father (OT) and the Holy Spirit (NT) helping us in times of need.**

**\*\*Submission is not a dirty word – same word used for Jesus (equal with the father) who willing submits to the Father - his earthly role.**

**Wives help us. We need you! We are not alone in this.**

**Husbands - Encourage her to help lead - let her help!**

* + **In both the leadership of the husband and the submission of the wife we see Jesus.**

**(Paul then wraps it up with this) Eph 5:31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother (engaged) and be united to his wife, (marriage) and the two will become one flesh.” (living in union) 32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. (Paul says - we can see a snapshot of the kingdom of God in this) 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.**

**Should a husband love her even when you are not respectful - Yes**

**Should a wife respect him even if he is unloving? Yes:**

1. **You are called to show your husband respect**

**As the husband is to love you - It is food for his soul to respect him.**

**Eph and Col – A woman’s need for love - the man's need for respect. One motivates the other / core of a great marriage.**

**Notice that in both Eph. and Col. Paul starts out talking to wives first - why? Because… Women expect their husbands to lead – but – are prone to take over when they don't (Gen 3). Let him lead – submit.**

**Following his leadership is not contingent on how well he does it.**

**This is as unto the Lord (Eph) / as fitting in the Lord (Col) - It honors God.**

**To love and respect our spouse is an act of reverence to Christ.**

**\*\*\* Be patient, we are learning as we go. Let us fail, let us learn.**

**Where to start.**

**Our family needs so much help. Where do I start?**

**Step 1 - Submit to Christ**

**Jesus is your only hope for yourself and your family.**

**You cannot change or control your spouse, but you have the ability to see yourself change. It starts with your walk with Jesus.**

**Step 2 – Husband lead regardless of her respect**

**Your relationship with your wife is to be a mirror of God’s relationship to us – As Christ led in love – so are we to lead in love.**

**1 John 4:19 - We love because he first loved us. - God did not wait for us to get it right – he came – he led – he stepped out**

**Pride, apathy, distractions, macho-ism often keep us back – When women end up leading in love - it eventually wears on and leads to withdrawal, disrespect, and bitterness.**

**Truth is - most men never learned how to love a woman – we wing it**

**Even positive things we’ve learned are overpowered by the negative.**

**Men as leaders - We must learn the first step is ours to take.**

**Proverbs 4:8 Esteem her, and she will exalt you; embrace her, and she will honor you. / Ecclesiastes 9:9 - Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun.**

**Step 3 – Wife respect regardless of his love**

**As the husband is to unconditionally love his wife – the wife is to unconditionally respect her husband.**

**1 Peter 3:1 Wives, be submissive to your husbands (follow his leadership) so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by your behavior, 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.**

**Respect is an attribute of beauty and attraction to a man.**

**The “Respect test” - Give unmerited respect and watch what happens**

**As a woman it may be hard to grasp – but a man often values respect more than love.**

**I respect you - can be more powerful than, I love you – try it.**

**When men feel disrespected vs. when men feel respected**

**The Miracle cycle: Men love even when you don’t feel respected – women respect even when you don’t feel loved = miracles at home.**

**STEP 4 - See a Christian counselor before the walls get too high and thick.**

**Eph 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.**

**Marriage is not a 50-50 deal – that’s a contract - It’s a covenant, I will do as Christ has done and give 100-100.**

**\*\*\* Next week Paul talks about the kids and parenting.**