

**Christ Community Covenant Church  
Authority in the Family  
Pastor Dave Scherrer - May 26, 2013**

**Intro Curt Vogt and prayer**

Last week we established the foundation for authority in the family. I liked the sermon but I had some trouble in that I had to cut about 6 pages off the content to make it work. So I decided to do that second half that seemed so important to me at the time. I honestly don't think that are too many more important social sermons than the series we started last week on authority in the family and will continue through June.

**What was right? Everything**

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

<sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there ***be light***," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> And God saw that the ***light was good***. And God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of ***the waters***, and let it separate the waters from the waters." <sup>7</sup> And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let ***the dry land appear***." And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw ***that it was good***.

<sup>11</sup> And God said, "Let the ***earth sprout vegetation***, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. ***And God saw that it was good***. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so. <sup>16</sup> And God made the ***two great lights***—the ***greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night***—and the stars. <sup>17</sup> And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. ***And God saw that it was good***. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> And God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms ***of living creatures***, and let ***birds*** fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens." <sup>21</sup> So God created the ***great sea creatures*** and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." <sup>23</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> And God said, "Let the earth bring forth ***living creatures*** according to their kinds—***livestock and creeping things and beasts*** of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. <sup>25</sup> And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. ***And God saw that it was good***.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us ***make man in our image***, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” <sup>29</sup> And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. <sup>31</sup> ***And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.*** And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

I want to go back up to verse 27 -

#### ***Genesis 1:27***

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Because we see that we are made in God's image and this has very important implications. Male and Female are made in His image,

#### ***Both male and female are created in God's image and what this implies***

Genesis 1:27 is the eminently important foundation for understanding what it means to be human, especially what it means to be human as male and female. God is careful to specify the words "male and female" to make sure that no one makes the mistake of thinking that the word MAN in this verse ("he created man in his own image") refers only to the male human and not to the female human.

The clear teaching of Genesis 1 is that human beings, both male and female, are utterly unlike all other creatures because humans alone are in the image and likeness of God—both male and female.

If God created us in his image as male and female AS MALE AND FEMALE, that implies equality of personhood, equality of dignity, mutual respect, harmony and a unified destiny.

Equality of personhood  
Equality of dignity  
Mutual respect  
Harmony and completion  
A unified destiny

- Equality of personhood means that a man is not less a person than a woman because he has hair on his chest like a gorilla, and woman is not less a person because she has no hair on her chest like a fish. They are equal in their personhood and their differences don't change that basic truth.
- Equality of dignity means that they are to be equally honored as humans in the image of God. Peter says (in 1 Peter 2:17), "honor all," that is, all humans. There is an honor to be paid to persons simply because they are humans. There is even an honor that we owe to the most despicable of criminals, just because he is a human and not a dog. And that honor belongs to male and female equally.

- Mutual respect means that men and women should be equally zealous to respect and honor each other. Respect should never flow just one direction. Created in the image of God, male and female should look at each other with a kind of awe that is tempered but not destroyed by sin.
- Harmony means that the music of our relationships should not be merely the sound of singing in unison. It should be the integrated sound of soprano and bass, alto and tenor. It means that the differences of male and female will be respected and affirmed and valued. It means that male and female will not try to duplicate each other, but will highlight in each other the unique qualities that make for mutual enrichment.
- Finally, unified destiny means that male and female, when they come to faith in Christ, are "fellow heirs of the grace of life" (1 Peter 3:7); we are destined for an equal enjoyment of the revelation of the glory of God in the age to come.

So in creating human beings as male and female in his image, God had something wonderful in mind. He still has it in mind. And there is more.

Turn now to where your thumb is in Ephesians 5, where we were two weeks ago. Jump in at verse 31 where we see our Genesis 1:24 verse quoted,

#### ***Ephesians 5:31-33***

31 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This ***mystery is profound***, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

#### ***The Mystery of Marriage***

Now why is marriage a mystery? Some of you are saying "It's not a big deal! My marriage has been a mystery for a long time." I think the whole coming into the marriage and leaving as one is a mystery. That is like the coolest of magic tricks. And when exactly does it happen? And of course it isn't really true; there isn't just one person, so it is obviously a metaphor but a metaphor for what . . . ? What exactly is THE mystery of marriage?

Paul's answer in verse 32 is this: the marriage union is a mystery because its deepest meaning has been partially concealed, but is now being openly revealed by the apostle, namely, that marriage is an image of Christ and the church. Verse 32: "I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church." And it is the Unity, the Oneness of Christ and the Church that is the mystery that is being celebrated.

So marriage is like an allegory or an image or a picture or parable that stands for something more than a man and a woman becoming one flesh. It stands for the relationship between Christ and the church. That's the deepest meaning of marriage. It's meant to be a living drama of how Christ and the church relate to each other.

Notice how verses 28–30 describe the parallel between Christ and the church being one body and the husband and wife being one flesh. "Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it." In other words, the one-flesh union between man and wife means that in a sense they are now one body so that the care a husband has for his wife he has for himself. They are one. What he does to her he does to himself. Then he compares this to Christ's care for the church. Picking up near the end of verse 29, he says the husband nourishes and cherishes his own flesh, ". . . as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body." In other words, just as the husband is one flesh with his wife, so the church is one body with Christ. When the husband cherishes and nourishes his wife, he cherishes and nourishes himself; and when Christ cherishes and nourishes the church, he cherishes and nourishes himself.

If you want to understand God's meaning for marriage, you have to grasp that we are dealing with a copy and an original, a metaphor and a reality, and parable and a truth. And the original, the reality, the truth is

God's marriage to his people, or Christ's marriage to the church. While the copy, the metaphor, the parable is a husband's marriage to his wife. Geoffrey Bromiley says, "As God made man in His own image, so He made earthly marriage in the image of His own eternal marriage with His people" (*God and Marriage*, p. 43).

*Let me editorialize for a moment on the circumstances that make me so passionate about this subject. Why I spent ten years of my life advocating and imploring churches and parents all over the world to do a more and better effort in communicating to their children and teens the holiness and majesty of marriage done well. It is not the psycho-social health of marriage, it's not the caring for the children, it's not that it serves culture best and is economically sound. No it is the mystery Paul is so pointed about. It is the one and only last best hope for understanding God's love for his church, and the mystery is more profound than that. It is the essential oneness of the church and Christ.*

*When we mess with this relationship it messes with our understanding of the holiness and majesty of the church and Christ. You know what I think is the single most dangerous behavior that threatens this mystery; it is living together as man and woman before marriage and enjoying the intimacy of that relationship without the covenant of that relationship. Sleeping together. Moving in together. And we hardly ever talk about it. It is equally condemned by God as is adultery, homosexuality, and other forms of sexual sin. Statistically it is by far and away the most common sexual sin, and because we have winked at it, and given it a pass because "boys will be boys" or "girls will be girls" or "What are you going to say?" - it has become an insidious part of our culture. I'm not talking about our culture in general I'm talking about our Christian culture. In my mind the biggest unconfessed sin in our Christian culture is heterosexuality gone wrong.*

But as you know this is not the only thing that went wrong since Genesis 1. In Genesis 3 we see that what went wrong was everything.

### **What went wrong? Everything**

Everything went wrong, all of creation got off center. But at the core of the disaster is the trauma that happened to relationships. Racism, Chauvinism, Feminism, prejudice against the aged or the unborn, prejudice against the poor or the rich. These all find their birth in the garden. It gets back to the two fold sin I spoke of early on in this series. Let me show you.

Turn to Genesis 3:16. Adam and Eve have both sinned against God. They have distrusted his goodness and turned away from him to depend on their own wisdom for how to be happy. So they rejected his word and they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God calls them to account and now describes to them what the curse will be on human life because of sin. In Genesis 3:16 God says to the woman, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, and your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

This is a description of the curse. It is a description of misery, not a model for marriage. This is the way it's going to be in history where sin has the upper hand. But what is really being said here? What is the nature of this ruined relationship after sin?

The key comes from recognizing the connection between the last words of this verse (3:16b) and the last words of Genesis 4:7. Here God is warning Cain about his resentment and anger against Abel. God tells him that sin is about to get the upper hand in his life. Notice at the end of verse 7: "Sin is crouching at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it [literally: you shall rule over it]."

The parallel here between 3:16 and 4:7 is amazingly close. The words are virtually the same in Hebrew, but you can see this in the English as well. In 3:16 God says to the woman, "Your desire is for your husband, and he shall rule over you." In 4:7 God says to Cain, "Sin's desire is for you, and you shall rule over it."

Now the reason this is important to see is that it shows us more clearly what is meant by "desire." When 4:7 says that sin is crouching at the door of Cain's heart and that its desire is for him, it means that sin wants to overpower him. It wants to defeat him and subdue him and make him the slave of sin.

Now when we go back to 3:16, we should probably see the same meaning in the sinful desire of woman. When it says, "Your desire shall be for your husband," it means that when sin has the *upper hand in woman, she will desire to overpower or subdue or exploit man. And when sin has the upper hand in man, he will respond in like manner and with his strength subdue her, or rule over her.* We will each want to be the supreme authority in our lives, we will not want to serve and submit.

So what is really described in the curse of 3:16 is the ugly conflict between the male and female that has marked so much of human history. Maleness as God created it has been depraved and corrupted by sin. Femaleness as God created it has been depraved and corrupted by sin. The essence of sin is self-reliance and self-exaltation. First in rebellion against God, and then in exploitation of each other.

So the essence of corrupted maleness is the self-aggrandizing effort to subdue and control and exploit women for its own private desires. And the essence of corrupted femaleness is the self-aggrandizing effort to subdue and control and exploit men for its own private desires. And the difference is found mainly in the different weaknesses that we can exploit in one another. ~ *J Piper*

This is not the way God meant it to be before sin, when man and woman were dependent on him for how to live.

### **Addressing a Culture in Mass Confusion**

How we understand what it means to be a man and a woman is under tremendous attack today. It has been for some time. And the result in our culture is mass confusion. At least two generations, maybe three, of men and women have been raised in this country without a positive vision of what it means to be male or female. We have been told many negative things—things we ought not to be, things we are to be liberated from.

For example, manhood is not sexual exploitation. It is not scoring. Manhood is not being cool and macho, rational un-emotionalism. Manhood is not the ruthless task-oriented drive to conquer. It is not collecting things that make noise. So be liberated, men! On the other hand womanhood is not boring domesticity. Womanhood is not homebound motherhood. Womanhood is not mindless emotionalism. Womanhood is not sexual compliance. Etc. So be liberated, women!

But when all our talk is done about what manhood and womanhood is NOT, what have we got? A big void of confusion about what they are. Frustrating, guilt-producing, destructive confusion.

And with it a tidal wave of sexual sin and depravity of all kinds, an epidemic of divorce, an increase of violent crime, growing domestic abuse, and tens of thousands of suicides every year, 75% of whom are men.

We engage in sin one and sin two. Sin one is to claim to be God of my life. Sin two is to fail to proclaim the authority of God over every aspect of our family's lives and to instead let someone else do it. It is simply an abdication of our moral and spiritual responsibility to tell young people to avoid negative stereotypes and then not give them a positive, practical, biblical vision of what it means to be a man and or a woman. And one of the reasons we abdicate our responsibility is because it is the path of least resistance. It's easy to tear down negative stereotypes; but it's hard and risky work to rebuild the positive archetype.

No one will criticize you if you poke holes in ugly stereotypes of manhood and womanhood. That's a very safe and customary pastime. But a hundred people wait to be your judge if you try to develop a positive vision for your daughters of what it means to be feminine, or for your sons of what it means to be masculine. And so by and large we don't do it. And we leave them confused—telling them what it's not but not telling them what it is.

Over the nine years of my pastorate here I have counseled dozens and dozens of couples seeking to be married. My experience has been that it is rare indeed to find a young couple who have a clear vision of what it means to be a Christian husband and a Christian wife. By and large couples will readily admit that they don't know whether being male or female implies any special God-given responsibilities. Or, if they think there are some special responsibilities, they generally don't know what they are. And that confusion has ominous implications for the stability of marriage and the way the children will be prepared for life as male and female.

***From where does our help come?***

***Psalm 121:1-2***

***I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?***

***My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.***

Our help comes from God. Church, we are one with Him. He has the best and brightest hope for us in Christ. His laws are not burdensome, His promises are not blank. We must defeat the two fold sin – we must yield to the will of the Father as Jesus did and God will exalt you in your humbleness. And we must not abdicate our right and responsibility to establish the authority of God over our families.

I mention this just to highlight the challenge before us as a church. God has a vision for a redeemed manhood and womanhood. He wants us to recover what we've lost because of sin. And so next week I want to begin to reconstruct from God's Word as best I can the shattered vision of manhood and womanhood that God ordained before the fall and that he is calling us to recover through Jesus Christ. I ask for your prayers and for your very serious consideration of these things. Where our authority comes from and how we apply it as male and female and husband and wife goes to the heart of our personal identity and how we will see God. If we are confused here, the repercussions will be very profound and pervasive.