

DON'T GO QUIET

WELCOME // online listeners //

Colossians series has been a pretty robust look at how Jesus is Lord over everything ...

Jesus' Lordship not only impacts what we believe, but how we live.

And today we are going to consider it's impact on our relationships.

Relationships define what it means to be human.

We can't exist w/o two people "relating to each other."

While relationships can be a great source of joy; they can also be a great source of pain.

Joy b/c we are made in God's image.

Trinity = Community of love / harmony / peace.

Pain b/c of sin.

We chose self-sovereignty over happiness. [Eden] [I will be judge/arbiter of good/evil for myself.]

That is the root of all strife in relationships:

- two kingdoms / two wills / fighting to win.

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Genesis 3:16b

**16 To the woman he said,
“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children.
Your desire shall be contrary to your husband,
but he shall rule over you.”**

This isn't a verse to “put the women in there place.”

It is pointing to the fact that God's original relationship structure is fractured.

We all want our own way.

The hope for relationships is surrender to God's way.

Colossians 3:18-21

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

19 Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

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

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

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The Gospel shows us the pathway to peace and harmony for the main relationship structures in life.

While the verses here focus on family relationships...

The Gospel virtues described here apply to every relational reality.

So, singles in the room. Don't check out.

If you aren't a parent. Don't check out.

This goes beyond ... it teaches us how to be good leaders and followers. → How to be in authority and under authority.

Let me add that I leaned heavily on Paul Miller's book, *Love Walked Among Us* for this sermon.

Besides the Bible, there isn't a book I go back to more regularly.

It's taught me to lead, husband, father, & friend like Jesus.

It is a book I regularly recommend and use in marriage counseling, even though it isn't a marriage book *per se*.

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All that ... and I don't even get a commission!

[just giving honor where it is due]

There is no way I can cover every relationship type described in these verses, so we are going to take two Sundays to cover everything.

These verses speak to how we lead and how we follow.

Today we are going to focus on leading.

The Gospel teaches us how to lead like Jesus.

Colossians 3:19 & 21

19 Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

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

Men in the room ... your in the crosshairs. This is aiming at you.

All ages ... teens, twenties, singles, marrieds. Pay attention.

Ladies in the room ... this is the kind of man you look for.

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A man of great character is better than a man of great charm.

Charm is froth and bubble. [Eventually it goes away.]

Character is the substance.

The greatest character a leader can have is love.

Not romantic ... low lights, soft jazz kind of love. [sorry guys].

Love like Jesus' love for us.

Lead with sacrificial love.

Bad leaders are consumed with themselves. We call that narcissism.

We all got degrees of that in us.

I'm up here and fight narcissism all the time.

"I wonder if they like my sermon. I wonder if they'll tweet it, instagram it, etc."

"I wonder if they think my outfit is cool. Why are they staring at me ... do I have a booger hanging?"

The point is that our nature is to think about ourselves.

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We have minds that are me-focused.

But Jesus wasn't like that.

He had a mind full of others.

Here is an example of Jesus leading with sacrificial love.

Luke 7:11

11 Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him.

Bad leadership use bad markers to gauge success.

In this case ... Jesus / teacher, discipler / a great crowd could be validating.

As husbands / parents ... what do we look for to validate our markers of success?

We often look at the wrong things.

As husbands, is my wife giving me what I want?

(sex-on-demand / dinner on time / freedom to go out with the boys at will / not complaining about all my over-time / spending on anything I want).

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As parents, do I look to my children to validate me?

(no complaining / whining / following all the rules all the time / getting along with siblings / high performers in education or sports)

Anytime we find validation outside of God ... we are on the pathway to bad leadership.

How do you know if that might be you?

It usually manifests itself through anger or anxiety.

How angry or anxious do you get over your spouse and kids? [or anything else for that matter]

See we can't truly love those we lead until we stop using them to validate our leadership.

That is why Jesus lead with such amazing love. [Father's Love]

He wasn't caught up in the hype of false measures... great crowds ...

... quiet, submissive spouse or kids ...

Check out what happens next in the story.

Luke 7:12-13

12 As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a

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considerable crowd from the town was with her. 13
And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on
her and said to her, “Do not weep.”

Jesus' isn't concerned about his entourage.

He isn't even concerned about himself.

Most likely he had just walked a full day ... maybe 20 miles
or more ... no joke.

It's in moments of weariness where we learn how sacrificial
we really are. [squeezed sponge]

Jesus is thirsty, hungry, tired.

He doesn't see the funeral procession coming and start
running to get ahead of it ...

**I would have; eyes fixed on the Cracker Barrel. [get out
of my way]**

**Jesus doesn't lead toward convenience, b/c he is
always looking away from himself.**

Loving leadership starts with looking out for others.

Jesus doesn't see a problem // he sees a person // he sees
THEIR need.

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When I come home from a long day at work // brain fried
// sometimes emotionally spent //

I just finished my long walk to Nain.

Sometimes I open the door and get hit with chaos. Kid's
fighting with each other or their mom.

I want to ... put it in reverse ... close the door ... walk
away.

Now, I may never physically walk away, but sometimes I
check out.

See, you and I can “be there”, without really “being
there.”

Jesus was always “present” wherever he was at, in
every situation.

Bad leadership walks in the door and feels sorry for
themselves.

“I don't deserve this after the day I had.”

Leadership like Jesus walks in the door looking and
learning.

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Loving leadership looks and learns.

It isn't just that Jesus looks at the situation ... he saw with understanding.

This lady was in a bad way.

This wasn't the first time she buried a family member.

She was a widow. She had lost her husband.

Now she is burying her only son.

To understand the gravity of her situation in that day ...

Imagine being a senior citizen and having no family and no social security or medicare.

Her whole social safety net was taken away.

Jesus didn't just see a funeral... he understood what this widow was going through.

Husbands / parents ... we are called to love our wives & kids with understanding.

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Sierra [4 yr old] woke us all the other night with night terrors. [first time ever experienced this]

She was screaming / losing her mind.

Me: What's the matter.

Her: Spider webs everywhere.

Me: No there isn't. [tada problem solved!!!] [OH NO IT WASN'T]

She persisted for what was probably 5 minutes but in my tiredness felt like 30.

My brilliant fix-it plan was repeating that dialogue and expecting to get a different result.

All the while I was getting more and more frustrated with her.

I was focused on the problem and how it was affecting me.
I didn't have compassion for what she was experiencing.

But leadership like Jesus is fueled by compassion.

Compassion only comes when we look and learn and are willing to enter into that person's reality.

Loving leadership seeks to close the gap.

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This is the whole point of Jesus' incarnation ... a word that means to put on flesh.

By becoming human / putting on flesh / he chose to enter into our world of pain, weakness, suffering.

When we "incarnate" with people ... that is what we are doing.

And that fills us with compassion.

It is why community is so important.

[Sunday's / CG's during the week]

It's showing up ... but in a way that is really "being there" ... that is what it means to put on flesh ... look and learn.

Too often the question we ask is, "How often do I have to do this?"

We try to find the "minimums" for incarnating in community. If that's our question ... we've totally missed it.

What would you say to me if I said, "What is the minimum I need to spend with my wife and kids?"

That shows a lack of love.

When I'm looking for ways to distance myself ... I'm not a loving leader or a loving person.

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But physical distance isn't the whole way we do that.

Also by ...

- Judging others.
- Self-righteousness.
- Legalism.

These all block love and compassion and widen the relational gap.

When you think about these 3 things, they directly tie into that original sin of Adam and Eve.

They wanted the authority to judge right and wrong for themselves.

At the heart of sin is:

- I get to analyze you [judgmentalism]
- I'm right [self-righteousness]
- I make my own rules to measure you by. [legalism]

We all fight this ... Christian or not.

Luke 18:9-14

9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: 10 “Two men went up into the

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temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' 13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

The Pharisee in this story is the example of a heart clogged by judgmentalism, moralism, legalism.

He starts his prayer by judging others.

Judgmental people are great analyzers.

We analyze the snot out of everything from a distance.

We look at people, and size them up.

We don't need to talk to them to learn anything, b/c we know all we need to know already.

This is fed by his own self-righteousness.

Self-righteousness is a curated moralism that fits our personality and strengths; while ignoring our weakness and sinful proclivities.

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Self-righteousness makes us morally superior to everyone else.

It makes us feel justified and qualified to judge others from a distance.

And from our place of superiority, we find it hard to come down to the level of those we look down upon.

This judging and self-righteousness is fed by legalism.

Legalism seeks righteousness through rule-following.

The problem is that we create the rules that define our righteousness.

And legalism gets ugly b/c we use these rules as weapons against people.

That is what the Pharisee is doing in his prayer.

He lists the rules He is living by. Not only for self-promotion, but as a way to tear down the tax collector next to him.

Legalism makes us the accuser of others.

This is different to calling people to repent for sin.

See, we call people to repent, while recognizing we are also sinners needing to repent.

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**But judgmentalism, moralism, legalism ... it
condemns/accuses in order to draw the distinction of
our superiority to others.**

**As much as we don't like to be around certain people //
People don't want to be around us!!!**

Colossians 3:21

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

The language here “provoke your children” is this idea of consistent/prolonged contention.

It is a botanical word that refers to a rough plant that is covered with hard, projecting points. :)

“People don't like me b/c I keep it real honest.”

No, your just a self-righteous, judgmental person.

If your kids don't like being around you ... or your spouse ...

Stop and consider if that may be the reason...

And repent.

Those things block love / compassion / it creates distance.

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But leading like Jesus ... with sacrificial love ...
closes the gap ...
It moves toward others to love them and to serve them.

Loving leadership serves and encourages others.

The opposite of being harsh and provoking is
encouragement.

Our words and actions matter.
They can be life-giving and life-building.
OR they can tear down.

**Our leadership is meant to encourage and cultivate
people.**

**Too often we use the people we lead to encourage and
cultivate ourselves.**

Let's finish looking at the story of Jesus with that widow in
Nain to see how He did this.

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Luke 7:14-15

14 Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you, arise.” 15 And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.

Jesus' words and actions led to this young man being raised from the dead and the life of this widow renewed.

In a similar way, how are we using our words and actions?

What would our spouse, kids, friends, co-worker's say?

Do they feel like they are being built up?

Do they feel encouraged being around you?

Do your words and actions help to heal wounds or make wounds?

The cross is the perfect example of sacrificial, loving leadership.

Jesus was wounded in our place, to heal our greatest wound.

the impossible gap between us and God.

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Godly leadership, whether you are a husband, parent, boss, pastor ... whatever ... Godly leadership is the way of the cross.

It is sacrificing yourself to build and bless others.

Pain in relationships comes from two competing wills or kingdoms.

Peace for relationship comes when we lay down our will and kingdom and surrender to Jesus' will and seek His Kingdom first.

NOT A CHRISTIAN:

Jesus died for your sin to close that gap and to bring you into relationship as a child of God.

Surrender today through faith and repentance.

CHRISTIAN:

How has Jesus been highlighting what surrender looks like today?

What do you need to repent of in the leadership roles in your life?

COMMUNION:

We are reminded by communion that Jesus paid for our sins. [body broken / blood shed]

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We don't have to be perfect leaders.

But we can be humble leaders that realize we are both the Pharisee and the tax collector at times.

We depend on Jesus' grace, the perfect leader who is full of love, compassion, and forgiveness.

He speaks life-giving words over us today.