

RESURRECTED FAMILIES: COLOSSIANS 3:12-14, 18-25

Happy Mother's Day! Otherwise known as Happy Homeschool-Teacher, Executive Chef, Technical Coordinator, Chief Operations Officer, and Doer of everything else no one wants to Day. These days, Moms pretty much do EVERYTHING, all at once.

Early in this coronavirus quarantine, a friend sent me a video. If you haven't seen this, after this service is finished, go to YouTube and search "A Desperate Mother's Prayer". Here are some of my favorite lines:

"Father-God, I am a child of God. What I am not is a home school teacher, Father-God... Father-God I am Your humble servant, what I am not is a math teacher! Lord God the spirit of Common Core has attacked our household... I ask that ya send down Your angels of the carry-over, Lord, teach her, that if you carry the one over to the tens place you can get the answer, Lord God! Lord God, I am a layman in Your vineyard. What I am not is a cafeteria lady! I need You to help her understand, Lord, that just cuz there's a refrigerator don't mean the door got to be open!"

The first three times we saw that, Christina and I practically rolled on the floor. My favorite is the angels of the carry-over. Yes, Lord!

Mothers, you are pulled in so many different directions and for that Moms we say, "Mom, what's for dinner?" THANK YOU!

Very often Moms are thought of as the heart of the family. One of the things I appreciate about Christina is the sentiment she had when her adoptive Mom was still alive: that home was wherever her Mom was. I'll bet our kids feel the same about their Mom.

Today we are going to talk about resurrected families. This is our fifth message in a series called "Resurrection Power". Pastor Richard kicked off this series on

Easter Sunday as he said, “We can know now, even today, the power of His resurrection and walk in newness of life.”

The Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in all those who are trusting Christ for their salvation. That means that if you are born again, **the resurrection power of God is available to you in EVERY AREA of your life!** If you want that power, the first step is asking God for it.

Every area includes families: God wants you to have a new, or, resurrected, family.

Resurrected Families includes every member of the family, in whatever configuration that family is: Mom and Dad and kids, single Mom with kids, single Dad with kids, a couple with no children, or those of you with grown children, there’s something here in the Word for everyone, including you. The Word is comforting, the Word is challenging, the Word is confronting, and - like its Ultimate Author - God’s Word is good.

Our passage from Colossians begins this way, “Therefore as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved...” let that sink in for a moment. Did you know that you’re not an afterthought? It’s easy to feel forgotten, dismissed, or otherwise invisible, especially these days. But you are *chosen*... because of the blood of Jesus Christ shed for you, you are *holy*, and you are *dearly loved*.

1 Peter 2:9-10 says, “You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

We need to recognize our redeemed situation. Here’s some group participation, are you ready? Out loud, I want you to SAY the word “Chosen”. [beat] We - you and I - are chosen by God. God’s design is for us to choose to follow Him, but *He*

has chosen us and wants us to be close to Him. Now say the word “Holy”. [beat] Because of the blood of Jesus, if we are trusting in Him as Savior, we are holy. As we surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, *He brings forth holiness in us.* Now say, “Dearly loved.” [beat] That’s US... you and I are dearly and lavishly loved by God! Chosen, Holy, Dearly Loved: this IS *your* redeemed situation.

One funny reality of staying-at-home is that wardrobes haven’t been rotated in a while. Sweats and shorts and t-shirts seem to be universal and year-round. Well, okay, shorts and t-shirts *are* year-round here in Bakersfield, but it seems that the same pair of shorts and the same t-shirt is worn ... let’s just say repeatedly. It seems like the clothes that get worn repeatedly all seem to be deteriorating in the same places! I’m not a big shopper, but I’m looking forward to doing a little bit of clothing shopping soon, so I can wear something different.

Our Scripture passage goes on to say that there are clothes that will never wear out, and although they may seem old-fashioned, will always be classic. We’re calling this our resurrection wardrobe. **Wear your resurrection wardrobe.** “Clothe yourselves,” the Scripture says. It’s a choice! *Choose these clothes:* compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. If you belong to Jesus, they’re hanging in your closet already, and as you wear them, they’ll only get stronger, more comfortable, and even better fitting! And one more thing... over all these things, put on LOVE... if you’re putting it on over something, that is likely the first thing everyone is going to see. But you know what? I doubt that anyone is going to look at you funny and say, “what? You’re wearing love again?” :)

So... a little review so far...

The resurrection power of God is available to you in EVERY AREA of your life, including your family.

Resurrected Families includes every member. Moms, Dads, children, whatever configuration.

Our reality can be re-formed as we recognize our redeemed situation: chosen, holy, dearly loved.

We have a resurrection wardrobe! We can choose to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience and above all LOVE.

One of the not-so-funny realities of staying-at-home with the kids is that ... it's hard, especially when you're told not to go anywhere! It's hard to stay home day after day after day, to make sure the kids stay on top of homework (will they ever turn it in?) and to keep them otherwise entertained so that their brains won't turn into one big video game. It's difficult to shelter in place day after day with those you love because... eventually you don't like them anymore, and they don't like you either!

Sometimes the emotional pressure of it all gets to you. Sometimes a word said light-heartedly becomes a jagged arrow that gets stuck deep in the heart of someone you love. Relationships are amazing when everything is right, and can seem so hopeless when something is not right.

Listen to these words from the apostle Paul:

“Bear with each other, and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” This bearing, and this forgiveness are the keys to **living in renewed relationships**... relationships renewed by the resurrection power of God!

I'll bet I don't need to tell you this: bearing and forgiving aren't easy!

“If he tells me he's done all his schoolwork when he's been working on it for only 10 minutes... “

“If she walks past without putting that away one more time...”

“If she doesn't get more positive *right now*...”

“If he yells into the phone like a deaf man again...”

I'M GOING TO EXPLODE!!!

Bear, forgive, wear love on your sleeve! And pray, pray, pray, pray, pray. If that's not bad enough, the apostle Paul *goes in* on every member of the family - because, after all, the resurrected family includes every family member. No one is left out. He starts with wives, then moves to husbands, then goes to children and finally has something to say to just the Dads.

Working backwards a little: Since it's Mother's Day, and this verse is in the passage, and it's been my life verse for the past 25 years, I get to quote my favorite verse today, Colossians 3:20, "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord."

"Fathers," the apostle Paul continues, "Do not exasperate, frustrate, provoke, or intentionally aggravate your children!" As I was rehearsing this message with Sizakele this week she pointed out that this is NOT my favorite verse. Many modern Bible translations include mothers in this by saying, "Parents," instead of just, "Fathers." As parents, mothers and fathers have incredible influence on their children... and the powers of life and death are in their tongue. Their words are powerful, and their actions are even more so. God's design is that parents in resurrected families seek to nurture and strengthen the spirits of their children, and not intimidate or damage.

"Husbands," ... the apostle Paul looks straight at married men, "love your wives and do not be harsh with them." That doesn't mean you can never have a difficult conversation, but in the day-to-day... are you kind and gentle, loving, and forgiving, or are you harsh? The choice is ours to make men. And now we come to wives and Moms, in verse 18.

One of the things almost all of us know how to do now is Zoom. From small groups to meetings to family time - lots of us use Zoom. A few weeks ago my sister got our whole family together on Zoom - aunts, uncles, cousins. It was hysterical! There were lots of texts and emails after - why didn't we do this sooner?

Since it's Mother's Day and I had this passage to speak about, I thought I should zoom my Mom this week and ask her some questions about Dad and marriage and see if she had any words of wisdom. I knew she would, and I'm thankful that she was having a good day.

[VIDEO - 2:37 LONG]

Thanks, Mom. you said everything way better than I could have. **Resurrected families live into renewed relationships.** There is mutual submission toward a common goal. There is give and take. There is kindness and forgiveness, and most of all, there is love.

I'm thankful for my Mom, Grandmas and mother-in-law, and my wife, everyday and especially today in her role as mother of my children. I'm thankful for faithful, godly women I have the pleasure of knowing as friends, and serving as a spiritual leader. The Kingdom of God has no shortage of great Moms.

As each member of the family re-forms their reality by recognizing their redeemed situation, choosing to put on the clothes of the resurrection wardrobe, and living in renewed relationships, they can experience resurrection power in resurrected families. I've had time to about scratch the surface of this issue. If you would like to go a little deeper in this passage, I plan to go live this week on Facebook - probably Wednesday. If you have any questions about this Scripture passage, you can email them to me or save them for the live session and try to put me on the spot. If you have other questions you'd rather not share publicly, or if I can support you in prayer about the things I talked about today, please email me. It would be my pleasure to serve you this week.

As I close I want to say again something I hinted at before: no family is perfect. Lots of us as parents are feeling overwhelmed. We see the toll this is taking on our children as well. Don't underestimate the power of prayer. There is One who is perfect and who is not overwhelmed, and He longs to share His power - the

resurrection power of the Holy Spirit - with every one of us. When all else fails - and please, before you even see failure - pray, pray, pray, pray, and pray - some more.

You are chosen, holy, and dearly loved. You have the clothes of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and love to wear. You are restored by God's transforming power and love to live into renewed relationships. He can make a way, even when the way is invisible to us. Amen.