



Courageous Relationships: The Richness of the Word of Christ!

The Courageous Series

March 15, 2022

Holy Text: Colossians 3:16:25

As the world continues to spiral out of control, influenced by principality and powers...

Ephesians 6:10-13 (KJV) *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

2 Corinthians 4:4 (KJV) *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

...Let us remember that the devil first attacked Eve, and through her, the first human relationship or household. Is there any area more foundational than the relational area? It defines:

1. How we view and conduct ourselves
2. How we build our households
3. How we relate one to another

Sadly, our sense of personal holiness and our willingness to build our most critical relationships upon the rock of God's Word is badly degraded in 2022. Remember the LORD's encouragement and warning?

Matthew 7:24-27 (KJV) *Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*

Beloved, it need not be so among the Body of Christ...

Psalms 119:9 (KJV) *BETH. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV) *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

Hebrews 4:12 (KJV) *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

James 1:21-22 (KJV) *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. **22** But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*

CRC, we've discovered that because of the ungodly pressure brought to bear by our flesh, the world, and the devil, GREAT COURAGE is needed to build our relationships upon the rock! Remember our definition of biblical courage:

“Biblical Courage is the ability to hold fast to God’s Word, repent in the event of failure, and continue on in obedience, regardless of the circumstances.” Therefore...

- Courageous Relationships begin with repentance and belief in Jesus Christ.
- Courageous Relationships are formed by looking through the lens of the Word of Christ for all definitions, determinations, daily decisions.
- Courageous Relationships are maintained through consistent repentance according to the Word of Christ.

To be courageous in one’s relationships is about bravely attempting to prayerfully and lovingly adjust those relationships according to God’s Word!

Context and Strengthening

As we said previously, when teaching on “The Thankful Church” in Nov 2020:

1. “Colosse was a city in Phrygia, in the Roman province of Asia (part of modern Turkey), about 100 miles east of Ephesus in the region of the seven churches of Revelation 1-3. Although Colosse's population was mainly Gentile, there was a large Jewish settlement. This letter was written from prison in Rome (Acts 28:16-31) sometime between A.D. 60-62 and is, therefore, referred to as a prison epistle (along with Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon).” - MacArthur
2. After extensive teaching on the Gospel and the Deity of Christ (in chapter’s one and two...

Colossians 1:15-18 (KJV) *Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: **16** For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: **17** And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. **18** And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

Colossians 2:6-10 (KJV) *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: **7** Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. **8** Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. **9** For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. **10** And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*

Colossians 2:13-15 (KJV) *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

3. ...Paul then exhorts the church in Chapter 3 in holiness and the Christian life. These attributes and characteristics are the results of Gospel transformation...of the new birth...of salvation!
 - Since you are risen with Christ, seek heavenly things where Christ is! (v1)
 - Set your affections (mind/heart) on heavenly things! (v2)
 - Remember you are dead to this life and alive in Jesus! (v3)
 - Christ IS our life! He's coming back and we'll be with Him in glory! (v4)
 - With this in mind, kill sin and flesh! (v5)
 - Remember how God feels about sin: wrath is coming. (v6)
 - Remember also that you used to sin as the world does. (v7)
 - But no more; put that stuff away! (v8)
 - Don't lie; that is characteristic of the old man. (v9)
 - We are "new and renewed" men and women in the knowledge of our Creator! (v10)
 - Even our ethnic or social distinctions aren't a barrier to our oneness in Christ! (v11)
 - God's people are elect (chosen!) and must live like it! (v12)
 - We can, in Jesus, forbear and forgive! (v13)
 - We can be, by God's power, clothed and united in love (charity)! (v14)
 - God has given us peace; He desires a unified body; and that body has every reason to be thankful! (v15)

Our Text

1. All of these wonderful truths and perspectives are maintained by the rich, indwelling power of the Word of Christ in us! (v16)
2. We should sing God's Word in songs, hymns, and spiritual songs with grace and thankfulness!
3. Indeed, His Word should dwell in us "richly."
 - The word "richly" means "abundance."
 - It not only suggests that Christ's Word is abundant in and of itself, but also that such Word should abundantly dwell in us!
 - In other words, our lives should be characterized by a fullness of and obedience to holy Scripture. Our Master's Words should be our joy!
 - Remember Mary from last week's message? She declared to Gabriel, "*Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.*" (Lk 1:38) She magnified the LORD and rejoiced in God her Savior over His good Word to her! (Lk 1:46-47)
 - Typically, when something good is "richly" present, we rejoice! Can you say that this is your attitude towards God good Word for us in every area, including relationships?
4. Paul's next statement provides holy governance for all of life. All that we do we should do in the name of the LORD Jesus. In other words, all we do should both align with His will and give glory and thanks unto God. (v17)
5. Paul then describes such "doing" and giving thanks...

Beloved, it will take Courage to bring your relationships under the authority of God's Word! For example...

1. **As wives (v18).** Wives are commanded to walk in submission to their husbands.
 - The phrase "submit yourselves" is *hupotassō* in Greek. It means to be subordinate or be in subjection. (Thayer) The same word is used in Titus...
 - **Titus 2:5 (KJV)** *To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.*
 - How much courage does it take in 2022 to live this way as wives...to take your husband's vision as you own...to submit to him as unto the LORD? (Eph 5:22)
 - What fears must you overcome to live this way?

 2. **As husbands (v19).** Husbands are commanded to love their wives and not be bitter against them.
 - Many are familiar with the *agapaō* command for husbands. It is a self-sacrificing love that was preeminently modeled by Christ:
 - *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* (Eph 5:25-27)
 - But what about this command against bitterness?
 - The word for bitter (*pikrainō*) means to be angry, exasperated, or irritated. This can result in grudge-holding and harsh treatment.
 - The connotation is this: husbands might give and sacrifice much, but still be resentful. Much courage is needed to not only do "good man" things, but also "be" a good man. A strong, masculine man is still gentle with his "weaker vessel" (1 Pet 3:7) and quickly forgives her.

 3. **As children (v20).** Children are commanded to obey their parents in all things.
 - This will take courage. Dishonor and disrespect are very common today. These are a part of our sin nature.
 - In fact, for a teen or child in 2022 to truly reverence their parents will take great faith, particularly if they are commonly exposed to the carnal thinking of our day (school, media, music etc.).
 - When teaching on honor in May 2019, we said, "As it relates to the household, Honor is the glue that holds everything together; it is the grease that causes things to run smoothly and the guardrails for when things get testy. With it, the household is a WONDERFUL place to be. WITHOUT it, there is disrespect, distrust, and and disorder. Chaos!"
 - Sadly, many miss out on good things. Courage in this relationship brings blessing!

***Ephesians 6:1-3 (KJV)** Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)* **3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.**

 - May our children walk in holy boldness and resolve to "keep their father's commandment, and forsake not the law of their mother." (Prov 6:20)
4. **As parents.** Fathers are commanded not to *provoke* (intentionally aggravate) their children lest they become discouraged.

- Instead, they are told to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Eph 6:4)
- Scripture is filled with positive command for parents to train up their children in the way they should go, that when they are old they would not depart from it. (Prov 22:6)
- Scripture says, “*And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*” (**Deuteronomy 6:7, KJV**)
- But yes, this too will take COURAGE! Courage to teach them diligently, gently, and firmly. Courage to resist cultural parenting trends. Courage to keep them in church. Courage to set boundaries and say “No!” Courage to not affirm their sinful choices. Courage to make godly educational choices!

5. **As workers.** Servants are commanded to obey their masters not just when they are looking, but also when they aren’t!

- The biblical master/servant principle is one that commands *integrity*. Along with honor, this is the basis for any “work” relationship. (Eph 6:5-7; 1 Tim 6:1-2; Titus 2:9-10)
- Sometimes this will mean taking a moral/spiritual stand (especially in 2022), but often will simply mean being an honest and hardworking member of the team.
- We sometimes forget the importance of the “work” relationship: God uses it to provide for us!
- Let us be strong and courageous in the workplace! As we said in *Building a Financial House*, “Work is one way we worship.” Therefore let us be:

The most punctual

The most prepared for the workday

The most joyful with the best countenance

The most respectful to customers and employers

The most honest (with impeccable integrity)

The first to make peace or repent for wrongdoing

The most helpful, offering respectful suggestions and adjustments

The most generous with their time and treasure as needed ¹

And if you’ll permit us to quickly cover two areas not specifically mentioned in Colossians 3....

6. **As singles.** Scripture exhorts the unmarried to care “for the things of the LORD, how he may please the LORD.” (1 Cor 7:32)

- The unmarried life then is courageously marked by *Kingdom productivity and holiness*.
- It takes great courage and faith to resist the cultural siren call of promiscuity and lasciviousness and give one’s all to family and church in faithfulness.
- It takes courage to “follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness” (1 Tim 6:11) and to be “an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” (1 Tim 4:12)

7. **As friends.** The Bible describes true friendship in terms of sacrificial and constant love...

John 15:13 (KJV) *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

¹ Carlton C. McLeod, *Building a Financial House*, pp.27-28

Proverbs 17:17 (KJV) *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*

- True friends sharpen you (Prov 27:17), will speak hard truths to you (Prov 27:6), will keep your confidence (Prov 17:9), and will not forsake you (Prov 27:10).
- We are too casual with the term “friend.” However, biblically a friend is one who sticks closer than a brother (Prov 18:24). Scripture describes the heartbreak of unfaithful friends...

Psalms 41:9 (KJV) *Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*

Psalms 55:12-13 (NLT) *It is not an enemy who taunts me—I could bear that. It is not my foes who so arrogantly insult me—I could have hidden from them. **13** Instead, it is you—my equal, my companion and close friend.*

- In an age that does not prize loyalty, biblical friendship takes courage. Let us strive to be faithful and trustworthy friends. We all need them!

Final Thoughts

It takes great courage and faith to relate to others according to Scripture! Your flesh won't like it. The world will mock you. The devil works hard against all godliness.

Nevertheless, may you courageously declare like the Psalmist...

Psalms 119:14-17 (KJV) *I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. **15** I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. **16** I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word. **17** Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.*

Amen!

Questions for Family Worship

1. Examine the relationships in your life biblically...
2. Which are strong? Why?
3. Which are weak? Why?
4. What fears do you struggle with relationally? Why?
5. Are you praying for the people in your life?
6. Can you identify any areas of personal rebellion?
7. Are you willing to repent and trust the LORD to help you?