

The Key to a Great Relationship

Ephesians 5:15-21; Philippians 2:1-4

East Berlin Community Church

Pastor Keith A. Mosebrook

May 10, 2020

Introduction

- A non-traditional “Mother’s Day”
- Relational strain caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing
 - *“We found social factors that put people more at risk for violence are reduced access to resources, increased stress due to job loss or strained finances, and disconnection from social support systems. With this pandemic, we’re seeing similar things happen, which unfortunately leads to circumstances that can foster violence.”* (Dr. Josie Serrata, APA: “How COVID-19 May Increase Domestic Violence and Child Abuse”)
- Only in the movies do people live “happily ever after”.
- Why do some have great relationships while others struggle?
 - Human point of view: due to personality and temperament
 - Christian point of view: due to spiritual maturity and fruit of the Spirit

The Key to a Great Relationship: Mutual Submission. Ephesians 5:15-21

- Ephesians 5:15-21-- *“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.”*

A. What is “Mutual Submission”?

1. A By-product of being “filled with the Spirit”
2. The word “Submit” is a military word which means to “arrange oneself under” another.
3. God never envisioned marriage to be a “general-private” relationship, but each submitting to one another.
4. Jesus’ model of servant leadership
 - Luke 22:25-27-- *“The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them and those who exercise authority are called benefactors. But not so among you; on the contrary, he who greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves?”*

B. What does a mutually submissive relationship involve?

1. Commitment

- a. Example: Husband-wife relationship as God originally intended.
 - Genesis 2:24-- *“Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and they shall become one flesh.”*
- b. The level of commitment differs depending upon the nature of the relationship.
- c. It takes two to make a great relationship—each equally committed to the other.

2. Compromise

- a. For any relationship to work, there must be some level or form of compromise!
- b. Areas where we, as Christians, should never compromise:
 - 1) The truth of God’s Word
 - Jude 3-- *“contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”*
 - 2) Matters of holiness and purity.
 - Ephesians 5:3-- *“But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be named among you, as is fitting for saints.”*
 - Ephesians 5:11-- *“have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”*
- c. The source of relational problems—unwillingness to compromise.
 - James 4:1—*“Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?”*

- d. What does a good “compromise” look like?—Philippians 2:1-4
- Philippians 2:1-4--*“Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”*
- 1) We need to be on the “same page”—Philippians 2:2
 - 2) We need to consider others better than ourselves.—Philippians 2:3
 - 3) We need to “look out for one another’s interests”—Philippians 2:4

3. Communication

- a. We need to “speak truth” with our neighbor.
- Ephesians 4:24b-- *“put on the new man, which was created according to God in true righteousness and holiness.”*
 - Ephesians 4:25-- *“Therefore, putting away lying, let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.”*
- b. “Speaking truth” must be tempered by....
- 1) **What** we say—our words.
 - Ephesians 4:29--*“Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.”*
 - 2) **Why** we say what we say.
 - James 3:5-6-- *“the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire by hell.”*
 - a) Our words have the power to harm or destroy.
 - b) Our words are to “build up or edify” others.
 - 3) **How** we say what we say
 - Colossians 4:6-- *“Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.”*

4. Charity or Love

- a. Three Greek words for “love”
- b. Biblical “love” is the giving of oneself to God for the benefit of others.
- 1) God Himself models this kind of love—1 John 4:9-10
 - 1 John 4:9-10-- *“In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”*
 - 2) Jesus Christ was committed to restoring our relationship with God—Philippians 2:6-8
 - Philippians 2:6-8-- *“who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”*
- c. We are to “love one another”—1 John 4:11
- 1 John 4:11-- *“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another!”*
- d. How does “charity” express itself in relationships? 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7-- *“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”*