

# Gospel Unraveled

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Date: 03 October 2021

[ 0 : 00 ] So, Colossians 3, 12 through 19. I want to read it in the state of prayer. Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, and longsuffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another.

If any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness, and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also are called in one body, and be you thankful.

I really love that expression, let the peace of God rule in your hearts. Verse 16, and this is going to happen, verse 16, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husband as it is fit in the Lord.

And husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Heavenly Father, I pray that you would help us tonight, Lord, as we would look at our understanding of who we are and how that will influence everything about us, Lord.

[ 1 : 14 ] I'd ask that you would speak from your word to your people. Remove me as much as possible, Lord, from the equation. I want to make your word known to people. I pray that as a result of our time together, Lord, we know you better.

We'd be a better reflection of you upon this, to this world. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. First thing I'd like to say, I have five different things I'd like to look at from this passage, and we'll see how many we look at tonight.

And the first one being this, first slide, is that before we are told to look at our marriage, we're told to look up to Jesus and in our lives at what He has done.

That's verses 1 and 12. Before I think about my relationship with my wife and begin to read books about marriage and read books about that relationship, but there's an abundance of books that talk about marriage and my relationship with my wife, by far the most important thing that I'm going to look at is my relationship with my Creator and what He has done in my life.

That's where most problems go, break down. I'm glad she's not here. She'll be saying amen too loudly, right? That's where things break down. Every time I can really just come out and see a reflection of my misunderstanding of my relationship with God coming out of my relationship with her.

[ 2 : 27 ] I treat her in the way in which I believe that I'm being treated by God. Does God change? No. Is He always good? Yes. Is He always faithful? Yes. But sometimes my understanding of Him and His love is not what it should be.

So we saw in verse number, Colossians 3, 1, where it says, and if you be risen with Christ and seek those things which are above. If you're a believer, if you're a believer in Christ, if you're risen with Him, and you were, buried in the likeness of His death, raised the walk and doonness of life.

That's what we would say in baptism, but I'm usually so cold that I'm just glad to get the bare minimal in, all right? But that is that idea that we have been. We've been risen with Christ. His resurrection has become mine because He has offered that to me.

And because of that, I want to seek things that are above where Christ sits on the right hand of God. And verse 12, put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness, mind, meekness, and longsuffering.

That armor that we see in the book of Ephesians, it doesn't belong to anybody but Jesus. It is His, and He gives it to us. Just like that day David went and Saul says, here's my armor. Just the same for us.

[ 3 : 32 ] That is His armor. You'll see it throughout the Old Testament. That armor belongs to Him, and we get to put these things on in our lives. And so marriage can be more than just about surviving.

It can be a wonderful ministry to bring glory to God. As my good friend Jeff Bush says, it's not about just surviving, but it's about thriving, right? Isn't that one of your books, right?

About thriving in the Christian life? See me. I have a link. I'll send you to buy it, all right? Some years ago, I had the opportunity to be at a church with a man named Ron Taylor. Ron had just lost his wife, Nicole, the cancer.

He had sat by her for a year, and after I spoke from this passage, Ron came up and he opened up a notebook, and he began to share, and he would name a person.

I'm going to name your names, but there were different people's names, and he would say, Luke Coffey. He likes a Coca-Cola, and he likes Snickers. Brendan Wong, he likes a Payday and an RC Cola.

[ 4 : 29 ] Not a very good Asian choice, but that's what Brendan likes there. And she just went, and he had a list. And this lady had made a list of people in her church and how to care for them.

And he began to just cry and say, I had no idea the ministry that God was allowing me to have with Nicole all of those years. I didn't know that it was big.

I didn't know that it was important. I didn't know that it was special. And now that she's gone, I miss her so very much. That's what we should be looking for in our relationships, is that God would be glorified.

It allows her something so much greater in our relationships, that God would be glorified in our relationships. Inside my wedding band, the one that I lost, and the one my wife lost as well, were peas in a pod, okay?

In our first wedding band, it said the word maximum glory. And that was our decision, is that we had no right to ask God to allow us to be married if we did not believe that we would bring more glory to God together than we would separately.

[ 5 : 28 ] We wanted to be glorified. But now, a lot of times, I live about not maximum glory, but I'm always arguing about minimal expectations. What is the minimal that I can do between now and bedtime where you're not going to be too mad?

And it's like, well, if you'll tuck the kids in bed, if you'll take the trash out, if you do these three things, then I'll say, I agree to four out of five things. I will do it. And you guys are better men than me, but I'm often looking at minimal expectations, and I'm not thinking about maximum glory.

And that is a real shame. And so, if your relationship with God matters to you, and I believe that it does, as I believe that mattered about every parent up there, then all these things that God is going to tell us in this passage really matter because your marriage has an opportunity to display the grace of God.

Our relations up here matter because they're more than just about our own personal enjoyment. It's about the glory of God and making Him known. Ephesians 5, 31 and 32, For this cause shall man leave his father and mother, shall be joined to his wife, they shall be one flesh.

And this is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. The ultimate purpose for marriage was not just about your personal enjoyment, but it was about bringing great glory to God, which brings us great joy that is unspeakable.

[ 6 : 45 ] But if we don't first see ourselves and other believers as saints of God, then none of our relationships on earth are going to be correct. If I don't see who I am before God as His son, child, and as somebody, and I don't see her in the same way, then we're not going to have the same relationship that God designed us to have.

If you want to do something, married men in here, with your lives, married men, if you want to do something meaningful and glorious with your life, being living glory to the Lord, you will do it in and through your marriage, or you won't do it at all.

If you're married in here, and your marriage and relationship with your wife does not bring glory to God, you will not do it in any other avenue of your life.

And those men on this third row here that you want to get married, you need to think about that, all right? Is that you can have great desires and dreams, but the deciding who God would have you to marry, this is the kind of language that you ought to talk about.

Stephanie doesn't even like the Kentucky Wildcats. She doesn't even care when they play. But it doesn't matter, because that wasn't a non-negotiable to me. But she loves the things of God, and she loves talking about the things of God.

[ 7 : 57 ] And I knew when I got married that that was the only reason that I would be allowed the privilege of having a wife, is that if I could help lead her and serve her in a way that would bring glory to God.

Verse 12a, Therefore the elect of God, holy and beloved, you should have a secure position with God. I'll read a quote to you here. It says, Specifically when I see and believe that God has graciously brought security to me before Him and God in the person of Jesus Christ, I don't have to force my wife to do anything that would cause me to be secure.

The security I have in the Lord frees me to graciously live towards my wife in a committed way, leaving, cleaving, and weaving. You like that, don't you, Greg? Leaving, cleaving, and weaving? That's right, all right.

The fact that you have been set apart through the Word and made holy, you are deeply loved by God. And this means that a gospel-secure Christian is not always going around putting out the flaws of their partner, their spouse, but they can humbly seeking to see the gospel lived out in their own lives.

My marriage breaks down when I do not find my belonging and position in Christ, and I try to find it in anything else. I try to find it in her. When I feel like she's not loving and respecting me, and so I try to get it by fleshly means, by raising my voice, or by manipulating, or making her feel bad, what I'm trying to do is I'm trying to take something from her that I was supposed to get from God in my relationship, and now everything is upside down.

[ 9 : 29 ] And so the first thing that you're going to have to decide on if you're going to have a marriage that glorifies God is that you have to be secure in your relationship with Him, and to look upwards, as it would say, and look in our lives.

So I'm going to pray for you, man, but I hope that will be it, and I would like to challenge you. If you're having trouble in any relationship, you're having trouble in marriage, before you just look at the this and that, and before you break it down and say, well, the problem is really this, the problem is really her, or the problem really is that, why don't you look up to heaven and say, God, am I seeing myself as I'm supposed to as one of your children?

Am I seeing her as I'm supposed to as a fellow heir of grace? And I think you'll see that that remedies many of the problems that we have in many of our relationships.

Let's pray, and then Brother David, you'll come up here for a quick financial meeting. Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word. Thank You for the security that we can find in You. And Lord, I pray that my brothers in here will look up to You, and to You, and the things that are above for their understanding, and to their security, Lord, that they won't be trying to find that desire to be respected and admired, and all those things, Lord, that we just seem to be so desperate and hungry for that they will not be trying to demand it from their wives or from any relationship, but they will find that You are all satisfying, that You are wonderful, and knowing that Your eyes are placed upon us, that You see us as Your child, is more than enough, Lord, to satisfy our hurting hearts.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Amen.