

A Redeemed Culture #5 – Starting At Home (Eph 5:31-32)

Once upon a time, - there was a glorious culture, although just in seed form. And this culture had two aspects to it that were central – life with God and life in the family. From these two aspects a third aspect, life in the world, was to come forth. In proper relationship with their Maker, and in proper relationship with one another, the man and the woman would be fruitful and multiply and take dominion over the earth. They would be able to tend and keep the garden in such a way as to reflect the very image they bore and all to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31).

The relationships were called covenants, both God with man (Hos 6:7) and man with woman (Prov 2:17, Mal 2:14). These covenants were originated, administered, and empowered by God in His sovereign wisdom and power, they were gracious means by which God condescended to care for man, and they always contained blessings and curses. Because of Adam's fall, the story manifested mainly the curses of these covenants, the deep consequences of disobedience, rebellion, and faithlessness.

Adam was also the covenant head of the whole race of man. God did not only establish a covenant with Adam, but through Adam with all men. That is why in Adam we all sinned (Rom 5:12, 17, 1 Cor 15:22). This same covenantal connection describes Christ's relationship with His people, so much so that Christ is called another Adam. "*The first Adam became a living being. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit*" (1 Cor 15:45). Something greater is happening in the second Adam. His work brought justification upon all those who are in Him (Rom 5:17-21) outdoing the results of the first Adam in all respects, and so in this second Adam, the story will be manifested by a growing and dominant blessing upon the earth.

Those in Christ are also called His bride (2 Cor 11:3, Rev 21:2-3, 9-10) and the efficacy of this New Covenant is to find its manifestation not just in the heavens, but in the homes of believers upon this earth (Eph 5:22-33). And so each new groom and bride is in effect another Adam and Eve and therefore each new couple in essence hears from God the same words about their relationship with Him and their relationship to one another.

So What? – All of this to say that a reformed culture, a redeemed culture, will only be manifested through the reformed cultures that exist in our homes. And we are promised that our redeemed homes will create a redeemed culture and reverse the curse (Mal 4:4-6). Our impotence today lies in our lack of faith and in our lack of obedience. The tragedy today is that there is so little difference in much of the church at large between believing and unbelieving homes. Divorce, abuse, neglect, abdication, unconfessed sin and bitterness, are often just as prominent in believing communities as in unbelieving homes. We cannot export what we do not have and therefore we must repent and turn our hearts to our homes and to what the scriptures require of us there.

The Manifestation of This Mystery (Eph 5:31-32) – Here is the mystery. You cannot talk about the victory of Christ through His body over the earth without talking about the victory of Christ's glorious marriage to His perfect and perfected bride, the church. And you cannot talk about these things without talking about husbands loving their wives and wives submitting to their husbands and parents raising their children in the promises with a view to total and complete world conquest. And you can't talk about those homes, those marriages, those families, without seeing Christ and His bride, Christ and His body. And it goes around and around: The Last Adam and His Eve taking dominion over the earth given to them by the Father and through the Spirit. And so -

Fathers/Husbands – You are involved in direct culture wars when you lead your family in faithful devotions in the Word, sing the psalms and hymns of our faith by faith, sacrifice yourself for your wife with the love of Christ, seeing her both as your bride and your sister in the Lord. You are tearing down the walls of Hades when your table is full of laughter and thanksgiving, celebrating the goodness of Christ and fellowship with one another. When these things occur because God is at work in you and yours, it cannot help but spill over.

Wives/Mothers – You are involved in direct culture wars when you refuse to set your sights out into the world for your sense of purpose, but see yourself directed towards your husband and his home for the sake of your family, his name, and your Lord. Every moment you spend nurturing your children you need to remember by faith that you are involved in spiritual warfare and the kingdom is being strengthened and spreading.

Children – When you obey your parents, and older children, when you honor your mother and father, you set the kingdom of darkness on its head. The enemy's goal is to create a 'generation gap' so that he can attempt to destroy the promise of covenantal succession. He will ultimately lose in this battle, but there is a battle going on and it is real and there are real casualties.

And All By Faith – Remember, a culture is not redeemed by our works, but by the Word and work of the Lord. We are more watching what He is doing than doing something for Him. We did not volunteer; He called us. And He didn't call us because we were qualified in any way; He called us in spite of how unqualified we are. That is the glory of the gospel.

And this flows over into how you think about your duties in the home. You are not qualified to be a father, mother, husband or wife. You are not qualified to train up future warriors for the Lord, future lords and ladies of the King's court. But you have been summoned to be his wife and her husband and their parents and their children. And there, by His grace, He will manifest His glory in a home built up by Him. Your home will take dominion in the name of the King of heaven and earth. What are you required to do? Believe Him. Believe His promises. Believe the gospel. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.