

Sermon Topic: God In The Family

Sermon Text: Joshua 24:15

“But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

Commitment and Dedicating a Family to Serve God

Joshua 24:15 → Talks about the reliance on God for the care, upbringing, and government of a family (can be different kinds of family, whether you are married/adopted/fostered into or working for a family):

- Challenges us to make a choice on who we want to serve: God, or our own idols
- Joshua knew that serving the Lord stemmed from his reverence for, and loyalty and obedience to God
- As children of God (belonging to a global Church and a local community), we have to rely on God as well for our care, upbringing, and government as a family

Family Relational Structure and Relationships

Husband and wife: usually begin the journey of marriage by committing the household to the Lord (i.e. the relationships with):

- their children and their spouses (Prov 13:24; Eph 6:4)
- their respective parents (Exodus 20:12)
- extended family (Gal 5:22-23)

Possible Causes of Relational Problems in the Family

1. Neglect in safeguarding relationships
 - a. Work pressures, career priority, health issues, parenting, different values and interests
 - b. Failure to respect extended family and friends

2. Conflicts of most kinds involve:
 - a. blame game, criticism, and sarcasm;
 - b. misunderstanding, misjudgment, and unmet expectations;
 - c. defense mechanisms (i.e. building a 'wall' around yourself), poor management of differences, and;
 - d. withdrawal, loss of understanding and compassion.

Actively Pursue Ways for a Happy Relationship

Keep God at the center of each relationship (i.e. thinking about how the family can be kept united to serve the Lord):

- Family time to nurture 'togetherness': a 'team' mentality and leadership is required
- Seek to understand attitudes and behaviors of others: giving and forgiving attitude
- Show your appreciation to all members of your family (immediate or external)
- Build up respectful communication, a sense of humor, and a supportive network of friends
- Rebuke your children lovingly to teach them the ways they should follow, and honor your family members
- TRUST AND OBEY THE TEACHINGS OF THE LORD!

Application Questions

1. In "pledging" Joshua 24:15, what is expected of you in the context of family relationships?
2. How have you contributed positively or negatively in the quest of a happy relationship?
3. In what ways can you make a conscious effort to improve existing relationships? (note: existing relationships may not necessarily be unhealthy/adverse)

Other verses for reference:

Ps 34:11; Ps 85:8; Prov 3; Matt 6:34; Rom 14:17-19; 2Cor 13:11