

## MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

[www.mzluth.org](http://www.mzluth.org)

October 6, 2024

Pastor James Enderle

20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Old Testament Lesson: [Genesis 2:18-25](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 127D CW

Epistle Lesson/Sermon Text: [Ephesians 5:21-6:4](#)

Gospel Lesson: [Mark 10:2-16](#)

### **The Need for Followership Of Christ Know How to Love Their Families THE UNIQUE CHRISTIAN HOME**

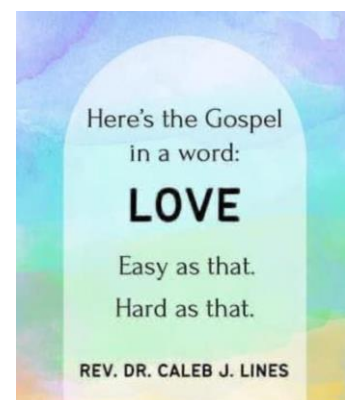
- 1. The focus: The \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.**
- 2. Our challenge: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.**
- 3. Put it into action: Love, respect, honor or \_\_\_\_\_.**
- 4. At the core: A house filled with the \_\_\_\_\_.**

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from Jesus Christ, our Lord:

One of the things I like to do is follow different preachers and different teachings. I like to look at different views in the world and follow different types of politics to get different ideas so that I'm not just seeing one side but seeing many sides. I also follow what you might call "progressive Christianity," or people that maybe teach a little differently to understand why they teach that way or what they teach.

This is a post that I saw this week. We'll see if you can see that while this sounds good, where is the problem in what this says? It is summarizing the Gospel with the word "Love." It maybe doesn't sound that bad, but then the bottom part, maybe that's where you think there might be an issue there. "Easy as that. Hard as that." The question might be—what love is that focusing on? Whose love? Is this Law or Gospel? The Gospel in a word is love? If it's not focusing on the love of Jesus, then whose love is it focusing on? Your love? Is that Gospel? That is actually Law. If the Gospel is that you need to love, that's not Gospel at all. That's actually work righteousness and a law of what you do. The Gospel



is what God has done for you, not what we are to do. So in fact, this kind of is stripping the Gospel of the truth. Instead of saying the Gospel is about what Jesus has done, His love, it's saying "You must do the Gospel." That's Law, not Gospel.



As we look at family, I'm going to put up this next picture and understand that this is in a lot of houses. This is not a bad thing. "This house is filled with love." You maybe have that in your house. Is that a bad thing? Of course it's not. It's good in your house to be filled with love, especially when you think of many of the alternatives. To have a house filled with love is

a good thing. But as we get to the end of our Lesson today, is there a better way to think about what your house can be filled with?

As we look at what God is bringing before us today in His Word, we are going to look at **the unique Christian home**. There are kind of two parts to that unique Christian home. As Christians, we should have a unique Christian home. We should have something that stands out from the rest of the world, but also understanding that within our lives and home life, this is going to be hard. Also, understanding to have this really play out is a unique thing. Why? It's because we live in a broken, sinful world, which means there are broken families. We are sinful people, so that plays out in our families. It's hard! I understand that as we talk about family in today's Lesson that not all of you have families. You may be looking for a future family or maybe the years have passed where you don't really have as much family anymore. While this is directed towards family, I think as we go through this and talk about it, you'll see that there are things you can pick up and learn, not just for your family life but maybe for the Christian family life.

As Paul is writing about this unique Christian home, he has been leading up to it by talking about how we are to live as Christians. He starts out saying "**Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.**" But then he goes on and what I would argue as we go through this section, if you noticed when we read it, did you hear anything stand out? It talks about husband and wife and we are going to hear about children. Do you hear something come up over and over again? He talked about **reverence for Christ**. Christ comes up specifically. He says "Christ" six times, but we see this huge focus on Christ. It kind of stands out in Verse 32, but in Verse 31 it says, "**For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.**" **This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.** So while he is talking about husbands and wives, what is he really focusing on? The focus is on Christ. What is it about Christ? We see *the sacrifice of Christ*. We see that play out here. It says, **Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.** He is sacrificing. Also, **Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her**

***holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*** We see these great things as we see Christ sacrificing for us.

He loves us. It says He takes care of us. He nourishes us. He feeds us. He loves us and has given EVERYTHING. He went to the cross for you and for me, came down from heaven to live perfectly for you, and sacrificed EVERYTHING. And then, He cleanses us, both by his sacrifice on the cross and rising again, but then through baptism. He makes us holy and blameless. He is the head of the Church. We are His Body. These are all things that are really focused on and what I would say are the foundation of this whole lesson as we see family in the family of Christ, but you have to see Christ in it or it doesn't make any sense or we have no power to do any of this because there is really a challenge in what Paul is asking us to do—what God is saying the family life should look like.

It says wives submit to your own husbands; husbands love your wives. *Our challenge is to love and submit.* Is that an easy thing to do? Love is maybe something that seems fairly easy, so let's wait on that one. But submit? Do we cringe at the word "submit?" Why do we cringe at submit? It sounds like someone is putting someone into submission/something forced. But here, submission is something that is willingly done. Why? It's done out of love and thanks. What does submit really mean? One of the best explanations/definitions of "submit" that I've heard is "to trust someone to do their job." Understanding that we have different roles and positions and God has put other people in places that are leading me, I can submit myself to them.

To lead off this section, he says to submit to one another, so when we talk about submission, it's not just wives submitting to husbands but in life, in relationships, we submit to one another. And yes, God is asking wives to submit to their husbands—to follow their lead, to lovingly put them first, to follow out of love. It's not an easy thing in our world where we are seeking our own ways, but God asks us to do that. And it's not an easy thing because we are sinful and then even the leader is sinful. God asks the husband to love, and how hard that is because the example is Christ! The question could be asked, which is an easier job or which is a harder job, to love or submit? I think so often people say, "Oh, submitting is a hard thing," but what is the husband asked to do? He is asked to love as Christ loved the Church—to give up himself. So the typical question is, husbands, are you willing to die for your spouse? Wives might nudge their husbands and say, "You need to be able to give your life for us." And the husband will say "Oh, of course!" But then I ask the simple question, are you willing to get up and show your love in small ways every day to put the needs of your spouse and your kids first?

A good summary of what this looks like (of love and submit) is given in [1 Corinthians 7](#) when it talks about a married couple. <sup>33</sup>***But a married man is concerned about the***

***affairs of this world—how he can please his wife... But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband.*** We are to love and submit, to serve and to show that love. Why is there the head? Why does the husband love and serve? Someone needs to be in charge and lead and they are responsible. It's not that a husband is to lord that leadership over her, but they are the ones responsible for the spiritual care, the physical care. The buck stops there. If decisions need to be made, it doesn't mean that the husband needs to make every decision, but they need to guide and make sure that the family is healthy. So the husband is to lead out of love and to sacrifice for the spouse and for the kids.

That's really what it looks like as we put it into action. We can summarize this in how a husband and wife will lead and then what children are asked to do in the family. Verse 33 says, ***However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise...*** So how do we *put this into action but to love, respect and honor* (honor and obey for kids). But how could you summarize this in one phrase but to *serve one another*. That means to put the other first. It plays out in different ways. The truth is women most often need to be loved more than men need to be loved, and men need to be respected more than they need to be loved. Children need to honor because children, from an early age, they think they know best. So they need to learn that parents love them and want what is best for them even if it's not always what they want or what they think is best.

So how does that play out? As a husband is to love, maybe you can think about it this way. When people think about you, can they tell what you love? Fathers, do you wear Packers clothes? Do you love hunting? Do you love farming? Do you love a hobby? Do you love your work? Is that clear to people and how is that clear to people? Is it clear to your family what you love? I'm guessing it is. What should be clear to your family of what you love? Is it God—to love God first and then to love your family, put your wife first and your children first? Is that evident in how you live your life? Can they see that you love God? Can they see that you put family first?

Wives, as you respect your husbands, women struggle sometimes in maybe wanting to lead. It can be a struggle then if the worst thing for a man is to feel disrespected. Does the man come home and feel disrespect in the house? How can you serve and love? I'm not saying they're perfect but understanding you can love and serve.

And children, to see how you can serve and honor your parents because that changes as you get older. Even as you're an adult, how do you honor your parents?

A good way to summarize (as we said) is to serve, but how does this play out maybe as a father can lead by example. I was at a conference last week and a pastor talked about

how a friend came home and he shared how when he comes home from work, usually the first thing you think of is you need to sit down, relax and be served. He thought *What if I changed that? What if I come home and the first thing I say to my wife is "Honey, how can I serve you?"* That's not saying you must do this but think about how you can serve your spouse. He said, "How much of a blessing that was when you're thinking not of how you can be served but how you can serve the other person." But the big change or the thing that really struck their heart was after several weeks, their son came home from school and the first words out of his mouth were, "Mom, how can I serve you?" The example of the father goes down to the children and how you show that service and love has a huge impact on your family.

Now as we talk about this, if you summarize other than the beginning of this sermon, this has been a lot of Law. When we talk about love and serving in the family, you might be struggling because you're saying "Hey, this is hard. I don't do this. I struggle to serve and I struggle to love and honor and respect." So we go back to that picture of the family again, the house filled with love. Is there a better concept or better way to think about how your house can be filled? What if your house is instead filled with the Gospel? *At the core: A house filled with the Gospel.*

Yes, it should be filled with love and service, but the difference is in understanding that there is a lot of Law in that and a lot of my failure. If you're like me, you're falling short in being a father and being a husband. So we need the Gospel. We need to know that we are forgiven and Christ is that perfect servant, that Christ died and suffered for my sins, and to fill that house with forgiveness and love and mercy; not love based just on my acts but the love that comes from Christ.

How might that play out? Think about this. In the last verse it says, ***Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*** This idea of embittering them or making them angry, often that's because we think (and in our culture and tradition) a father is supposed to bring the law. This idea of what a father should really bring to make his house comes from a book I read several years ago called Being Dad, and it really questioned that idea. It uses this example. It says so often the typical example is mom is at home with the kids and a kid does something wrong. Mom says "What? Wait until dad gets home!" The kid goes upstairs and is maybe crying. Maybe they are already getting some sort of punishment. So is the kid sorry for what they did? Do they know they did something wrong? Have they been punished? But dad comes home and *smack!* There's punishment. Is that what the kid needs at that time? I'm not saying in everything situation, I don't know, maybe the child needs to be corrected a little bit more. Maybe they're not sorry. But most often, what can a father actually focus on? They can focus on giving Gospel.

You're the representative of Christ in the family. You want to build a home where people want to confess their sins and that brother and sister and kids ask for forgiveness

and you hear that you're forgiven and you're loved over and over again. Where do you hear the Law? What functions in the Law—EVERYTHING else in the world. Where do you hear the Gospel and you're loved and forgiven? Here at church, in the Bible, and maybe you can make your home a place that is filled with the Gospel—where you are in God's Word and living that out, forgiving each other, knowing that we are not going to carry this out perfectly. We're not perfect parents. We're not perfect children. But we are forgiven.

So yes, have a house filled with love and service, but more than that, have a house filled with the love and forgiveness of Christ—a truly unique Christian home that is filled with the Gospel. Amen.

***And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*** [\(Philippians 4:7\)](#) Amen.