

Uncomplicated Series# 2, Family Matters

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Recap:

Relationships Series: "Uncomplicated: Bringing Godly Clarity to Relational Complexity."

Relationships are vital. God made us to function best only in relationship with Him and with others.

God exists in a relationship of three equal persons, Father Son and Holy Spirit.

Christian identity is settled by who we are in relation to Someone Else; God.

Genesis 35:16-18

"Then they moved on from Bethel. While they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and had great difficulty. 17 And as she was having great difficulty in childbirth, the midwife said to her, 'Don't despair, for you have another son.'" 18 As she breathed her last—for she was dying—she named her son Ben-Oni. But his father named him Benjamin.

Ben-Oni, which means in Hebrew "son of my struggles."

Some of us are struggling, having embraced identity from the wrong place; from a place of death and struggle.

The child's father took up the child and re-named him. Benjamin, which in Hebrew means "son of my right hand."

"For beauty and clarity to be revealed you need context. Example: Diamond in setting. The Family of God is the context where the Nature and Kingdom of God are best displayed" — Ps. Karl

INTRO:

Family Matters. It was God's idea. But what do we mean by family?

What is Family? — Merriam-Webster (online dictionary)

"The answer to the question 'what does family mean?' is both difficult to answer and highly subjective. The word has shifted its meaning considerably since it entered our language, currently contains many different senses, and in at least one of these senses may signify different things to different people."

Whatever your frame of reference for family is, its important to note this:

Ephesians 3:15

"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,..."

pas: πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν: all, every

Usage: all, the whole, every kind of.

All families, the whole family, every kind of family gets its name from the Father or our Lord Jesus Christ.

A few observations about family:

- 1. Family is Inclusive**
- 2. Family is Messy (and that's ok!)**
- 3. Family Functions**

1. Family is Inclusive

Psalms 68:5-6

"A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows, Is God in His holy habitation. God sets the solitary in families; He brings out those who are bound into prosperity; But the rebellious dwell in a dry land."

We have to become adept at communicating to a broken, alienated world, where relational and familiar ties are being broken, where families in which people should grow up and flourish are becoming more and more places of pain and dysfunction, we have to be able to speak to a generation and a world around us, "come, welcome home, you have a place in the family of God."

Luke 11:2

"So He said to them, 'When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven...'"

All humanity has our origin in God. Fallen as we may have been, sin didn't change that, it may have marred and distorted it, but never changed it.

Humanity's problem is we have forgotten the Rock from which we were hewn. We as the church, we have an obligation to the world, a debt of love to show them what the family of God looks like, what it looks like to live in relationships of love and self giving, what it looks like to be sons and daughters, and what our relational God really looks like.

2. Family is a Messy (and that's ok!)

What if its messy, broken, I feel like a failure in my family relationships?

First of all, there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. Secondly, Have you seen God's family lately?

Jeremiah 3:8

I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries.

What about God's kids? They get into all sorts of trouble.

Parent shaming: the idealism of unrealistic and misguided expectations where people judge you by the behaviour of your children. That's a real thing! Often comes from idealistic notions of what it looks like to be a good parent, usually taken from some out dated, out of context scripture verse or latest cultural fad.

Proverbs 29:15

To discipline a child produces wisdom, but a mother is disgraced by an undisciplined child.

Others seem to suggest if you have ambitions in the church to lead or serve if your kids don't perfectly reflect Jesus in all their choices then you have somehow failed as a parent and are disqualified from service in his church.

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 ESV

"If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives, and they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard. Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear.'

Who's really lining up to take this parenting advice?

Proverbs 22:6 ESV

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

What if the way we are to train up the child, the way we want them to return to, is to a sense of love and grace, mercy and compassion. A way in which yes, actions have consequences, but where grace does much more abound in the presence of sin and rebellion, and love is chosen because of its beauty and freedom, not out of fear of a rod?

Even the family of God is messy. We are made up of all sorts of people, with all sorts of backgrounds, mindsets, even kinds of faith.

Romans 14:1-3

Accept other believers who are weak in faith, and don't argue with them about what they think is right or wrong. 2 For instance, one person believes it's all right to eat anything. But another believer with a sensitive conscience will eat only vegetables. 3 Those who feel free to eat anything must not look down on those who don't. And those who don't eat certain foods must not condemn those who do, for God has accepted them.

How do we live in a family where there is so much mess, so many ideas, opinions, needs, mess?

Romans 14:13 & 21-22

13 So let's stop condemning each other. Decide instead to live in such a way that you will not cause another believer to stumble and fall... It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything else if it might cause another believer to stumble. 22 You may believe there's nothing wrong with what you are doing, but keep it between yourself and God."

3. Family is Functional

Leo Tolstoy in Anna Karenina (1878):

"All happy families are alike, but every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

Ephesians 5:17-21

"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..."

Be filled with the Spirit. Let Jesus fill your cup, don't put that on anyone else. Jump into relationships full!

Colossians 2:9-10

For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

John 7:38-39

" He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive..."

You animated, flooded and filled with the Spirit of God is the you that brings your best to relationships.

Summary

Shawn Bolz Ignite Conference at Impact Church

The next revival, the next move of God is going to look a lot like "healthy family."

An infilling, an outpouring that results in relational soundness and a functioning family.

Family Matters! It was his idea.

You are welcome, you belong, you have a home in the family of God!