

The Sovereignty of God over **All** of Life

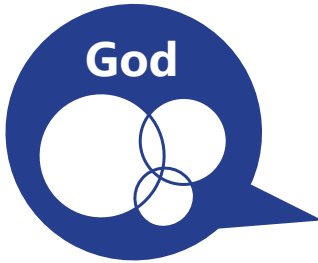
Part 2


The Sphere of Family

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TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- What has been your experience of "family"—chaos or calm, discouragement or encouragement?
- What from Sunday's sermon interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you?
...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?

Observation—*What do I see?*

- Read Genesis 2:15-25. What words would you use to describe the experience of **that** family?
Compare this to the words you used to describe your family experience. What do you find?
- Now read Genesis 4:1-8. Same family—so what can explain the change in family dynamic?
- You may think, "*Thankfully there are no murderers in **my** family!*" —but what does Matthew 5:21–22 say?

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- Sometimes Scripture is "culture bound", so that **principles** must be extracted rather than **directly** applied. For example, 1 Thessalonians 4:11–12 is **permanently** applicable, even though today you may work with a computer in an office complex, rather than with your hands at home (see 2 Thessalonians 3:6–15).

Read Ephesians 5:21—6:4. Is there **anything** in this passage which **could not** be **directly** done today? If your answer is "yes", what in Ephesians 5-6 **cannot** be done today? Support your answer biblically. If your answer is "no", what does that tell you **should** be **normative** family dynamics for you today?

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- From Ephesians 5:21—6:4, make a list of proper attitudes, behaviors and motives for husbands and wives. Husbands—compared to that list, how well are you fulfilling your role and responsibilities? Wives—compared to that list, how well are you fulfilling your role and responsibilities? What changes must you make?
- Remember, we are not alone in fulfilling our responsibilities. The sovereignty of God relates as much to the resources available to us for fulfilling our roles as it does to our responsibility to do so. How can God's limitless resources of love, power and wisdom relate to the fulfillment of your responsibilities. What can you do to access them?



Sermon Summary

God is the absolute Sovereign over his universe. He created mankind in his image, to manage creation for his glory and our flourishing. Since he is a God of order and not of disorder (1 Corinthians 14:33 & 40), he has established several “spheres” of authority and responsibility—the family, the church, and the state—which give us guidance in how to manage God’s world on his behalf. This series explores the concept of living under God’s sovereignty and being salt and light within the spheres of family, church and state. Today we look at the family. But what is a “family”?

God tells us, beginning in Genesis 1:26-28 and 2:18-24. The first family consisted of a man and a woman. This foundation comes right at the very beginning of the Bible, so family must be pretty important in God’s design. Then, in Genesis 4:1-2, children are added. An adult male and female, joined together, united as one, are fruitful and multiply with the help of God. This is God’s design. In my day job I’m a software designer, and what’s true of software design is true of God’s design: if we go outside the definitions, “all bets are off”. Exodus 20:5-6 shows us that children suffer the consequences of our decisions. How we parent has generational consequences.

Ephesians 5:21—6:4 succinctly explains God’s design for the family: “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church... Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church, giving his life for the church... Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.” This is the foundation of God’s sovereign family design. This is how it’s to be built and how we are to interact with each other within our family. But sometimes we go against God’s design.

In Genesis 15:1-6, God described how Abraham’s family should be: a man, a woman, and a child. But in 16:1-3 we see Abraham going against God’s plan by “solving” his infertility problem. This man of faith (see 15:6) faltered. Abraham had a son by a slave-girl, and Sarah demanded that he be sent away (21:11-13). Wow—sending an innocent woman and his own son away! Abraham again abdicated his role as leader and protector. But even though Abraham and Sarah went against God’s plan, God continued to honor his promise and not only does he provide the Hebrew nation through Isaac, he also creates a nation of people through Ishmael. God does not back down from his covenants with us. No matter what we do, He is sovereign and will always follow through. He does not change. He is everlasting. We don’t choose our earthly parents, siblings or children. God does that for us.

Parents have responsibilities for education and instruction for religious and moral development. Parents are free to decide whether schooling will be public, private or in the home. Then, whether it’s college or a trade school, whatever you and your spouse decide is within the God-given jurisdiction of the sphere of your family. You decide what’s best for your family. We cannot abdicate our parental responsibilities to the government or even to the church. There are no perfect parents, but we can’t depend on anyone else to parent for us.

Parents, we need to protect the family—and not just from robbers; we need to protect our families from outside influences which can harm them (movies, books, internet). There’s a lot of garbage that parents and children alike need protection from. You may think you’re safe because you’ve put filtering software in the computer, but there are always work-arounds! TCCer Jason Davis (jason@davisnet.org) has graciously offered to advise you on internet safeguards.

The Bible also talks about family in a spiritual sense. Isaiah 11:1 says that out of the stump of David’s family will grow a shoot - yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root. This is the spiritual family, the family of God. In Matthew 12:46-50 Jesus said that anyone who does the will of God is his brother and sister and mother. Wow! John 1:12-13 tells us how to become God’s child. We can have the privilege of calling God, “Abba, Daddy” (Romans 8:15-17). I won’t say more about the spiritual family, because that’s the topic Brent will develop next week.

Husbands, are we loving our wives on a daily basis? Are we raising our kids biblically with tenderness, firmness, and fairness? Wives, are you following and supporting your husbands on a daily basis? Children, are you obeying your parents? Even when you think they are crazy? Spiritually, since we are family in Christ, are we loving God with all our hearts, souls and minds? Are we loving our neighbors? Are we serving our church family by using the talents God has given us?

Beginning Soon!

The **Art** and **Skill** of
Redemptive Relationships



We all make small talk—but think about **that one friend** who **listens** especially well, **asks** good questions, and **connects** the riches of Scripture to what's on your mind. That's a **redemptive relationship!** We can **learn** the art and skill of spiritual friendship.

- Who?** all TCC adults
- What?** learn to have wise friendships that bring people closer to God
- When?** Twelve weeks, **beginning February 5th**,
Wednesday nights (6³⁰-8⁰⁰pm) **or**
Thursday mornings (9³⁰-11⁰⁰am)
or anytime On-Demand!
- Where?** TCC campus
- How?** simply **scan here** for complete info →



Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

God has delegated authority to families to raise the next generation.

Let's use the "Five Question Bible Study" method to explore how to raise godly kids...

Monday— Examine your expectations (1 Corinthians 13:11; Matthew 18:10; Genesis 33:12-14).

Tuesday— Love your children biblically (Deuteronomy 7:7; 1 John 4:10 & 19).

Wednesday—Be generous in praise and cautious in criticism (Philippians 1:3; 1 Corinthians 1:3-13).

Thursday— Avoid comparison (Galatians 6:4; 2 Corinthians 10:12-13; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

Friday— Never mock, demean or tease (Matthew 7:12; Ephesians 4:29-30; Colossians 4:6).

Saturday— Never make empty threats or promises (Matthew 5:37; James 5:12; Colossians 3:9).

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]