

GCFSM SUNDAY BULLETIN

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SERMON OUTLINE

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES: PARENTS AND CHILDREN

EPHESIANS 6:1-4 | REV. ERWIN AMADOR

Household Code in the New Testament provides us a glimpse into the dynamic relationships within the family (Col 3:18-4:1; Eph 5:20-6:9; Titus 2:1-10; and 1Pt 2:18-3:7). It contains instructions on how to appropriate Christ in the family life—i.e., how to relate to each other and engage society as a Christian family. The family composition and structure that the Code addresses are common in the NT times. But what makes this Code distinct from its social-historical context is its ethos. That is, Christ is not presented as an addition to the family life, but as the center of the family—providing its identity, ethics, and goal. Conforming to the practices in the Code has a social-cultural impact (1 Tim. 3:7; 6:1; Titus 2:5, 8, 10; 3:8; 1 Pet. 2:12) and, consequently,

has evangelistic implications (1 Thess. 4:12).

Parents prepare their children to walk in the ways of God. The means to prepare their children is to teach them God's Word (Deut. 6:4-9). The teaching is not just about knowledge, but it includes obedience (Mt. 7:24-27). Parents are called to pass on to their children God's Word and His ways, and also to leave a legacy (Ps. 78:5-8). Paul reiterates this in Eph 6:4. The word "discipline" means educating the children for "responsible living." This has to do with the child's behavior. Moreover, the word "instruction" means "to put in mind." This has to do with the child's worldview. It is the parents who are responsible to disciple their children.

In return, children are required to honor their parents (Eph. 6:2-3) and to obey their parents (Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20). The word "Honor" means to "show a high regard." To show high regard is to be respectful to their parents and other people. This word also carries the idea of "monetary value." Therefore, children are called to help financially their parents when able (cf. 1 Tim. 5:4). The word "obey" means "to follow instruction." This is the right ethic for children (Eph. 6:1). Obedience to parents is pleasing to God (Col. 3:20).

As disciples of Jesus, let us continually make Jesus the center of our families so that we may all fulfill our God-given family responsibilities. ✱

"PLOK!"

DR. MARIA SUSAN LIM

It was raining cats and dogs outside, and the storm drains in the basement parking lot sounded like rushing rivers! The canals were filled to the brim! I felt so blessed to have parked at this coveted slot in the doctors' parking area in the middle of a busy day at Asian Hospital. I prepared to alight from my car, with my doctor's gown in one hand, and my keys on the other. Then, in a flash, I saw my cellphone slide from my gown's pocket and dive into the black waters of the canal beside my car! "Plok!" I hurriedly plunged my hand into the canal, in the hope of saving my dear phone! Thankfully there were construction workers nearby who helped retrieve my phone from a canal that was half an arms length in depth.

With a very heavy heart, I brought my phone to the Samsung center on the same day, hoping they could resuscitate it, but to no avail. I was so downhearted because the phone went down the waters, with all my files - my photos, my videos, memories of my recent travels with Jod, my notes. And I had no back up of those files! That evening, I watched a movie on Disney Plus with Jod. Well, not just one, but two movies! I felt I deserved it. I watched "Saving Mr. Banks", where Tom Hanks played the part of Walt Disney, and actress Emma Thompson played the

part of Pamela Traverse, the original author of the novel Mary Poppins. Mrs. Traverse, a snooty English woman, had been adamant against the original story being put out as a movie, much less, a musical. But after going through a lot of catharsis of her own sad childhood memories, eventually agreed to the musical, and the rest is history. The movie Mary Poppins won Best Original Song and Best Actress award for Julie Andrews in the 1965 Oscars Award.

When the movie showed Mrs. Traverse' flashbacks into her sad childhood memories, I was unmoved. But when the scene showed a sobbing Mrs. Traverse, as she watched Mr. Banks (representing her father) walking away, Walt Disney comforts her, "Mrs. Traverse, don't worry, Mr. Banks will come back. That's our role as storytellers, we redeem stories, over and over again." All of a sudden, tears streamed down my cheeks! I was sobbing uncontrollably! I am a storyteller. I love to write! The phone that went down the drain that very morning had my diary in it. It contained every hurt, every pain, every tear that I shed, for my family. God wanted me to lose that record of wrongs. It has not been and still is not an easy journey. God wanted me to write a book, to testify of God's goodness in our lives, despite.

God is the Master storyteller.

The Bible is rife with stories of families being reconciled, just like Joseph and his brothers (Genesis 45) and the story of Jacob and Esau (Genesis 33). No matter how painful the journey, God wants to redeem every hurt, every pain, every tear, and make it His story, for His glory. Just as He reconciled us back to His heart thru Jesus, His Son.

We, at Family Builders and Marriage Life Matters Ministries, believe that God wants to redeem every family's story. Thus every September, we celebrate Family Month. On September 1, we will launch Family Month with the Family Crest making, where families will be encouraged to make a crest of their own, representing their values, their identity. On September 8, we will honor our grandparents, as they pass on to us their legacy of faith. Join us on September 14, Saturday, at 830 am -12 nn, as Dr. Jun and Anne Ardina will speak on "It Starts at Home: Raising the 21st Century Child". We will be distributing the Blessing primer next weekend. Read it and start preparing your blessing for your child/children as early as now. We will use what you prepared during the worship services on September 29, as we pray and bless our children. And by lunchtime of the same day, we'll have the culminating activity, the Family Potbless, where all the families of GCFSM will fellowship over fun, games, and food! ✱

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