

The Culture of the Kingdom The Heart of the Fathers Restored to the Children

Studio Session 148

Sam Soleyn

05/07/2008

Continuing our discussion on the culture of the kingdom, we're speaking of the restoration of the patriarchal order to the house of God and we're looking at how this relates to the gospel. In a previous broadcast we addressed the question of whether or not a woman may be a patriarch. But pursuing the overall point, when God created Adam God knew that Adam would sin and indeed Adam did sin. But after he sinned God kept him in creation for nearly a thousand years after he had sinned. And the question obviously is: Why? What did he do? What did his presence in creation contribute to human society for that long a period of time? Why was it that after he sinned God did not simply take him out of creation? The answer is, of course, that he was largely responsible for the way that human society was structured even after the fall. So the description of human society after the fall – and the arrangement of it – was called and is called "Patriarchal". Why? Because the father was the central figure in society.

What's interesting of course is that sociologists and historians can observe this fact and it was true of all societies for a considerable period of time, whether or not one agrees as to how the human race began, what is clear is that human society in ancient societies was arranged patriarchally. Now there are different explanations for this. If one doesn't believe in God then one talks about how human society was arranged along the lines of hunters and gatherers and whether or not human society was arranged according to men being militaristic and warring and whether defense of tribal lands was the primary preoccupation of that time, and so on. Those of us who believe in the Scriptures believe Adam heard from God before he fell and even after he sinned, the thing he knew to do was to establish what he knew from God. Human society resulted from the arrangement that Adam had, the arrangement that represented the imprint of Adam upon creation. But there's more to it than that and there's more to it than a conjecture as to what exactly was Adams influence upon creation.

It's notable that from the time of Adam, the description of human society was quote unquote tribal, but as it related to the fathers who came from the fathers, who came from the fathers; that human society was literally held together by the bloodline of fathers and sons. And great care was taken to maintain these bloodlines. But the question underneath

all of that is: Why? Because we should not be arguing that a patriarchal society should now be superimposed upon or even be the culture of the kingdom if there is no explanation for it. Indeed, one society – one arrangement of society – may be just as valid as another. What causes us to think about whether or not one societal norm is to be preferred over another is: What is the significance of the one versus the other? Well the significance of a patriarchal order is this: even though Adam sinned and indeed the sin of Adam had the effect of separating a man from his father so that the surest indication of sin abounding in human society, is fatherlessness. Fatherlessness - when it is fully extrapolated through human history and across human cultures - would become the scourge of the earth. Today, the greatest problem among nations is fatherlessness. If we are to speak of God addressing the crises of human life, the gospel must indeed be that gospel that restores the relationship between the fatherless and their father.

What we're observing is that the nature of sin in the earth today is that it springs from the breakdown of families, the core of which is the absent father. Whether that father is physically not present in the family so that children are either born into families without fathers (in other words born to single mothers) or children are born initially to mother and father but then by reason of divorce, fathers are quickly absent from the lives of children. Whether one or the other. What is clear is that the lack of order in human society is evident and at the core of that lack of order is the absence of fathers.

On the one hand we have this on the other hand we have patriarchal societies in which the fathers are brutish in the way they treat the children. In numerous countries in the world the shocking unconscionable thing is that often it's fathers who will sell their children into slavery, it's fathers who would turn over children and treat children as if they are assets. It's fathers in some societies who will kill their children, particularly in Islamic society where the woman violates the requirements of living in that society with respect to sexual norms and in order for the fathers to regain their standing, the father is required to kill his young daughter. Or the husband is required to kill the wife to regain his honor, the principle known as "honor killing".

So, often patriarchal societies do not in fact present God. If you take God out of the society you may still have the shell of a patriarchal society administered in brutish reality in a fashion that should not be emulated by any society. But what is true is that there is a pure alternative. When Adam sinned, the sin of Adam separated between this man Adam and his Father who's God and because of that, human society declined to the point where everyone doing what is right in his own eyes has become the norm. But the argument should never be made that this is to be preferred. There is an order to society that upholds the principles of the gospel. And here is that order: the Old Testament concludes with this particular statement. From the book of Malachi chapter 4, the Scriptures say this, God is speaking in Malachi 4 and He says, "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord comes, he will turn the hearts of the fathers

to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers or else..." He said, "I will come and I will strike the land with a curse." And in a previous set of messages I discussed the spirit of Elijah and showed how the natural presents the spiritual.

In the New Testament - in the eleventh chapter of the book of Matthew - Jesus closes the gap between this prophecy and the New Testament application where He says John the baptist came in the spirit of Elijah fulfilling this Scripture that says, "In the last days the gospel will be how God will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers." In brief, John the baptist is a type of Elijah and he came to announce the coming of Jesus who in turn would show us the Father. When you see Christ, you see the Father. John the baptist is the spirit that announces the double portion, like Elijah pointed to Elisha as the one with the double portion, so John the baptist pointed to Jesus as the one with the double portion.

Again this is not an attempt to preach again that which I've already set out in previous messages. However it is to say that the gospel at the end of the age was that gospel in which the hearts of the fathers would be restored to the children, resulting in the hearts of the children being restored to the fathers. Well how would that be, how would that be? The answer is: God intended the order of His kingdom to be that there would be humans - human males, fathers - who in their way of presenting Christ would present the glory of Christ, the glory of God the Father also in such a mature fashion that those under their rule would see God as God actually is. Just as with Elijah and Elisha, with Jesus and John, where the principle is, "My father, my father," the earthly father showing the heavenly father. Jesus Christ functioned in His day as that model to which human fathers in a patriarchal order, would be measured. He is the pattern Son, He is the mature Son who would show the Father, that mature Son is Himself a father; the earthly father who shows the heavenly Father. Jesus, I will remind you, according to a prophecy of Isaiah chapter 9, He was called the "Everlasting Father", "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, the government shall be upon His shoulders, His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." This 33 year old man was called the Everlasting Father because He perfectly represented God the Father. Indeed the book of Revelation would refer to Him as "The Faithful and True Witness," meaning the One who faithful and accurately represented God the Father.

The core of a patriarchal order is an order in which mature men show the nature and the character of God to those under their rule. It is with that in mind that Paul said to the Corinthians the following, in I Corinthians chapter 4 Paul says in verse 14, "I am not writing this to shame you but to warn you as my dear children. Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I urge you to imitate me. For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere

in every church." And then at the end of it he says, "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power. What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a whip, or in love and with a gentle spirit?" The point being, Paul presents himself to the Corinthians as their spiritual father, yet Jesus said, "Call no man on the earth your father because there's One who is your Father who is in heaven," however Paul right here says, "I became your father." Well the answer is very simple: there are nine different meanings of the word "father" in the Scriptures.

The meaning that Jesus was implying was that "God the Father is your Progenitor, you have originated from God the Father." Paul was speaking of himself as a father of their faith, not as the one from whom they were born again. That is why he would say, "I thank God I didn't baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanus, lest any of you should say I baptized in my own name," in other words he was making it clear that the fathering that he was, was that he was instructed and sent to them as being the father of their faith. They had faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that Paul introduced them to but God the Father was the one from whom they were issued as in Hebrews 2:11 which says, "Both the One who makes men holy (who is Christ) and the ones who are made holy (that's us) are of the same family which is why Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers," there the word for "family" is the word "adelphos" which means "to be of the same womb".

So we are born again of the womb of God and God is our Father in the sense of being our Progenitor. That means that there will never be an earthly relationship that will take precedent over our relationship to God the Father. But God assigns us fathers who are mature in their presentation of God the Father because they themselves have been instructed and schooled in the things of God and have practiced and learned the things of God so now they are able to say, "If you've seen me you've seen the Father," much as Paul would say, "Follow me as I follow Christ." Now we have been raised however on the culture that says, "Don't do what I do, do what I say," this is not the culture of the kingdom and such as would instruct us in that fashion are not fathers, they're speakers of word that they're admitting is not true to their own practice; they're not walking in the things that they're saying, therefore their word is devoid of meaning. A father is one whose word and whose deed are consistent and their consistency is that they show the character of God the Father. To say, "Do what I say and not what I do," is exactly like a father promising his children to take them to the ballgame or to take them to some sporting event or to take them to some thing and there's always an excuse as to why he cannot do it. It reminds me of an old song "Cats and the cradle and the silver spoon", always making promises, never fulfilling those promises. That must stop, that must stop. The Body of Christ should have fathers whose word has already been worked in them so that they are accurate representatives of God the Father.

Here I'm not talking about people being perfect but I am talking about people for whom

there's a minimum requirement of consistency. We have excused every foul and contemptible behavior by men in the church and that is precisely why the church is not a bar to the lawlessness of the age of children who have no fathers. It is precisely why men have been raised to abandon their children without a fight and to live selfish lives within marriages and why the family itself has collapsed. All we're trying to do now is to present the kingdom as an extension of that fallen culture. I say, "No, the kingdom is not an extension of that fallen culture, the kingdom is meant to restore the propriety of righteous culture in the earth, where fathers are more than males, where fathers are more than 'pulpiteers', where fathers are more than people with degrees from seminary whose lives are wrecks but who are occupying places of authority and pulpits. It has to be more than this. The culture of the kingdom is meant to restore fathers to the Body of Christ and young men are meant to be raised up and young women are meant to be raised up as proper sons of God. And you heard me correctly; God has no daughters, God has only sons because He is the Father of our spirits and our spirits are neither male nor female. A woman's destiny is to give God a place in time and space in which God may live as Himself through that person, the same as a man's destiny. And in that respect, the destiny of one is not based on being male or female.

Now the order of the kingdom is different from the destiny of human beings; the order of the kingdom is the means, the methodology by which things that symbolize the Person and purpose of God in the earth are presented as such in the earth. So a father is in fact a male; a father is not a male and a female because God does not cross the lines and produce confusion. But a woman is a son because that's not particularly how she represents God in creation, it's particularly who she is in creation, she's a son because God is just as much her Father as God is the Father of a person who happens to be male. Male and female have no relevance relative to sonship. Therefore, one who represents God in creation as a father has only sons under his rule. The patriarchal father is different from the paternal father; the patriarchal father has male and female who are his sons. So if in the case say of a father, a patriarchal father, having a man and wife as his sons and there's a dispute that arises between the man and the woman, the question that arises then is: How is this issue to be solved? The answer is very simple: if the man and the woman cannot resolve the issue, the husband and wife cannot resolve the issue, either one may appeal to the spiritual father. The spiritual father then can judge the matter and when he judges it, he judges it as a matter between two sons, not between a man and a woman.

Now when a man is young and he's the head of his household, a married man is young, he is the husband of the wife and he's the head of the family but he's not also her spiritual father, he's not also the spiritual father of the wife. Why? Because he's too young, he cannot function as her spiritual father. He may function as her husband, he may function as the head but in both cases his immaturity is assumed in both roles but he's not his wife's spiritual father. When I was a young man I was incapable of being my wife's spiritual father. When a wife has a dispute with her husband or the husband has a dispute

with the wife and they cannot resolve the issue themselves, then part of the rules of God's household is that they both be able to and have access to a spiritual father to whom they may appeal. When that spiritual father hears the matter, he's judging the matter between two sons, not between a man and woman but between two sons.

In my case, if my natural son and his wife have a dispute – because I am the spiritual father of both – when I hear the case I will not be hearing the case of my son's wife against my son, I'll be hearing the case of two of my spiritual sons in dispute and my judgment then would be the judgment of a patriarchal father. In the same way because now my son is married and has his own household, I am not the head of his wife, he is. But his family is part of my household. So there are many families within my household. I am therefore a father of fathers, that's a patriarch, that's the historical meaning of patriarch.

God is therefore restoring the order of patriarchs to the Body of Christ. The culture of the kingdom then with respect to fellowship is to recognize whose spiritual household you're in. You may be in a spiritual household but the Body of Christ is still one Body.

I'm Sam Soleyn, continue with me as we talk about the culture of the kingdom. I'll talk to you the next time, bye bye.