Mother's Day
Rolling Meadows - 1968

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IN NOMINE JESU

Ephesians 5:33-6:2 LET EACH ONE OF YOU LOVE HIS WIFE AS HIMSELF, AND LET THE WIFE SEE THAT SHE RESPECTS HER HUSBAND. CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN THE LORD, FOR THIS IS RIGHT. "HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER" (THIS IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT WITH A PROMISE), THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH."

LOVE, RESPECT, HONOR

Today I want to talk about family life and what makes it tick. There are a lot of qualities which help to make for a happy home, but St. Paul lists the three most important ingredients in our text. They are LOVE, RESPECT, and HONOR! These are the qualities which bind the members of the family together into a single and stable unit. Without love, any attempt to shore up a crumbling family will fail, With love, just about any disadvantage or disability can be overcome. Without respect and honor, love soon ~~dissolves~~ dies or turns into hatred and even violence. With respect and honor, love is kept alive and grows into a great and wonderful relationship.

test *

For Christians the heart, core, and essence of LOVE is found in JESUS CHRIST We must begin there!
The Son of the Living God did not despise our humanness, but He respected and honored it - FOR US MEN AND FOR OUR SALVATION HE CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN AND WAS MADE MAN.* This is the constantly recurring and never-ending SONG of Scripture and of the Christian Church. GOD WAS IN CHRIST RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF! HE LOVED US AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR US. In Christ God was at work binding up the wounds and healing the breaches that would separate us from Himself and from one another. In Christ there is love and forgiveness for everyone. In Christ there is always a new chance for a new beginning - the strength and the will to love, and give, and forgive - the power and ability to put away pride, and jealousy, and selfishness (richness), and everything else that would destroy our life. The Son of God, raised from the dead, is the living Presence of God's love to warm your hearts and to make your home a place where people can live happily and constructively.

born of a human mother - growing up in a human family - providing in love for His mother even from the Cross!

It takes real people to make a real family - not a bunch of tin plate gods. People may be able to make some kind of a "go" in the world of business, in education or social life, or even in the church, by playing make-believe - playing a role that is foreign to them and pretending to be what they are not - but it takes

more than make-believe to live happily together as members of the same family. Here you find out the stuff of which people are really made. If life under the same roof in the same home is going to be livable, something more is required than playing house on an adult level - something greater than a mere marriage contract.... LET EACH ONE OF YOU LOVE HIS WIFE AS HIMSELF, AND LET THE WIFE SEE THAT SHE RESPECTS HER HUSBAND. CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN THE LORD, FOR THIS IS RIGHT. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER! This is God's plan for the family!

A modern sociologist has stated that he now advises young people that they should enter marriage expecting that before life is over to have been married at least three times. This is the trend, he says, and he sees no reason for even trying to stem the tide. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE, he insists, TO EXPECT TWO PEOPLE TO BE PROPERLY SUITED TO ONE ANOTHER OVER A WHOLE LIFE SPAN. PEOPLE CHANGE AND DEVELOP TOO MUCH TO EXPECT THEM TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE TO LIVE UNDER ONE ROOF FOR A WHOLE LIFETIME. FAMILY LIFE, AS WE HAVE KNOWN IT IN THE PAST, IS ON THE WAY OUT! God help us if he is right!

Of course people change as the years go by. No one denies that! The girl you married 5, 10, 15, 20 years ago is not the same woman to whom you are married today. She doesn't have quite the same man either, for that matter. Yet living under the same roof in the bond of marriage a Christian man and a woman proceed from youth to middle age and then to the golden years - and along each step of the way that love grows as it goes.

To be known, love has to be practiced. To grow, love has to be tried. It is not one of those things you just talk about, and let it go at that. A lot of people talk about the love of God, but they do not really know the love of God in Christ. For all practical purposes they might just as well be talking about some abstract philosophical proposition or a Pythagorian theorem. They know nothing about the vitality of this very personal relationship that binds the Christian to his Lord - the forgiven one to the Forgiver.

So in marriage! Marriage is not so much the result of love as it is the opportunity for love. It is not some magical fate or destiny that binds two people together until death them do part - but it is a life of mutual respect and

concern where love is nourished along the way. It is the hardships that have been faced together. It is bending over children's sickbeds and struggling with budgets - it is a thousand good-night kisses and good-morning smiles - it is vacations at the seashore and conversations in the dark - it is growing reverenc for each other which comes out of honor and esteem. That's how love is practiced. Through ups and downs, stress and turmoils, joys and good times, they are drawn closer to each other. And their children HONOR them and RISE UP TO CALL THEM BLESSED.

It is truly and great and thrilling thing to see such homes where love, respect, and honor are present. George Sweazey tells of watching two children standing on the platform waiting for the commuter train to come in. When the train arrived they waited on tiptoe looking up and down until the right man appeared. They rushed to him with the wild abandon of delight. Arm in arm they walked down the platform and got into a car. Then, * says Sweasey, THE MAN LOOKED AT THE LADY BEHIND THE WHEEL WITH A GLOWING 'THIS IS IT' EXPRESSION, AND SHE LOOKED AT HIM AS THOUGH HE HAD COME FROM HALF-WAY AROUND THE EARTH.

the thing that really took me aback

The man who loves his wife as himself and the wife who respects her husband will constantly be building each other up. It is a wife's duty to make her husband feel twice as tall as nature made him. Someone has said, THE ROAD TO SUCCESS IS FILLED WITH WOMEN PUSHING THEIR HUSBANDS ALONG. The best way of pushing is by making the husband feel that he is the greatest and most important man in the world.... Likewise, it is a husband's duty to make his wife blossom under the warmth of his love and praise. The beauty of a mature woman depends less on the geometry of her face or the efforts of the beauty parlors than on whether she thinks she is loved. He husband's approval creates a glow and a confidence that are the source of real charm.

Christian husbands and wives will hold each other up in high regard before the eyes of the world. Many a marriage has fallen on the rocks because a husband got some sort of satanic and unholy glee over badgering his wife in public, dragging out all her faults and frailties for all to see and laugh about. This

may be a weak attempt to demonstrate one's own worth or to enlist sympathy, but it is no way to demonstrate love.... Likewise many wives seem to find special delight in cutting down their husbands in public with jibes, ridicule, and constant complaining.- WE'VE ALL HEARD THAT STORY BEFORE, DEAR - HE LOVES TO PRETEND HE IS SOME GREAT FISHERMAN OR BIG HUNTER - WILL SOMEONE PLEASE TELL ME WHY HE LOVES THAT SHIRT?

And when such disrespect is displayed in the presence of children, it is no wonder that they grow up to be contemptuous of authority - man's or God's. OBEDIENCE and HONOR must be earned from children as well as demanded from them. The breakdown in respect for a parent can cause a lasting trauma. It shatters the structure of authority on which a home depends. If parents have to criticize each other they should make sure their children are not present. Children are torn if their parents do not present a united front. And if a parent takes a child's part against the other parent in a matter of discipline, the child is left completely confused and without honor for either parent. To say: DO IT, BUT DON'T LET YOUR FATHER KNOW, or WE WON'T TELL MOTHER, is an injurious breach of faith - killing all love, respect, and honor! Christian parents hold each other up to admiration for their children's benefit. There is a world of truth in the one short sentence: THE MOST IMPORTANT THING A FATHER CAN DO FOR HIS CHILDREN IS TO LOVE THEIR MOTHER

This does not mean, of course, that families and children will never have a falling out. But it does mean that they will NOT LET THE SUN GO DOWN UPON THEIR WRATH. Daily they will kneel at the foot of the Cross to receive forgiveness from their Lord and from each other. And they will rise from their prayers and the peace of the absolution to look each other full in the face with radiant love, respect, and honor. They are a family, you see, and they all walk together as CHILDREN OF GOD BY FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS - and that makes the difference. AMEN.

HEIRS of THE Grace of life!