

* Beyond “Two Thieves in the House”

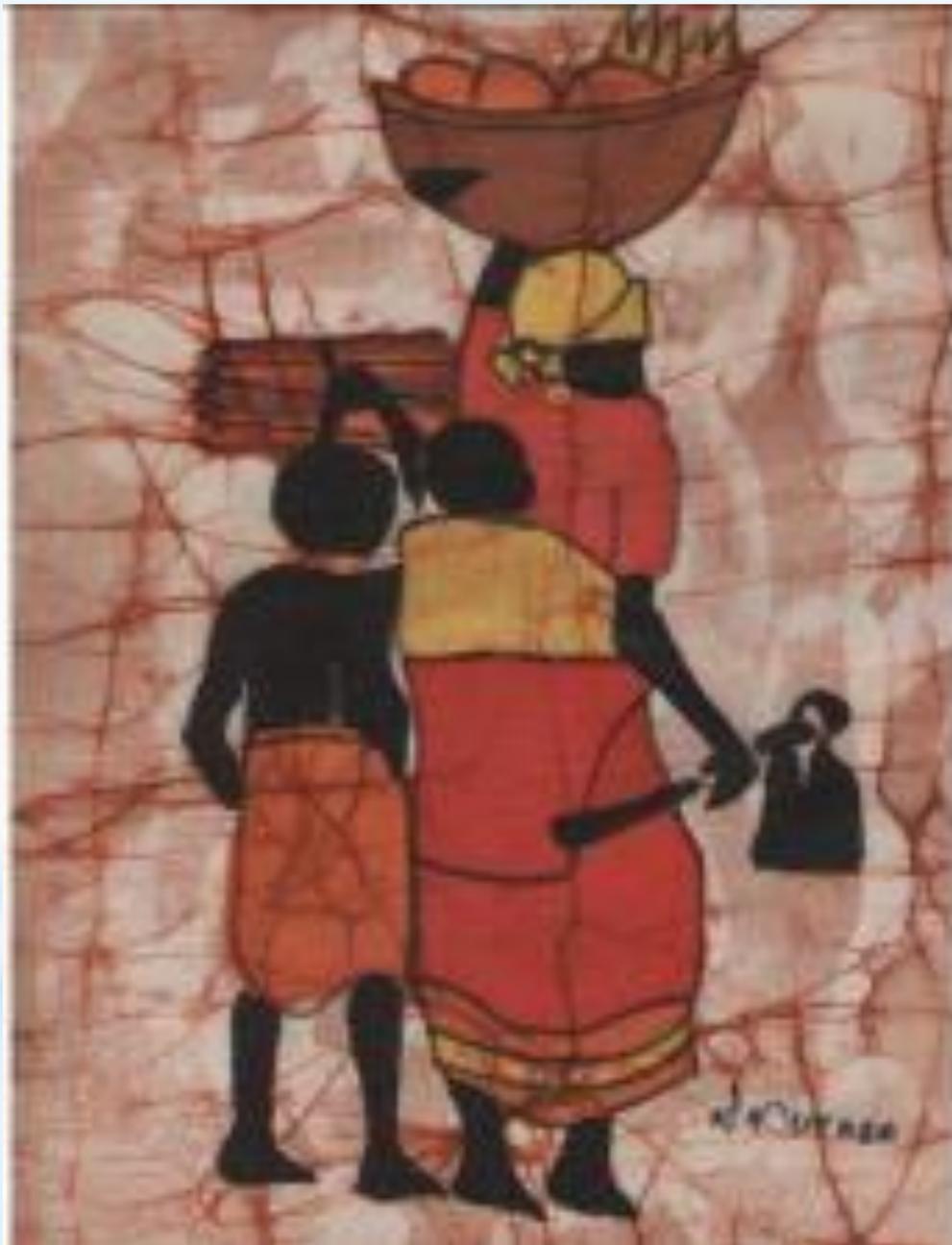
Understanding and Healing Broken Families in Historically Non-Christian Countries

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***What do you want in
a relationship?**





*Children

*Labor/Food

*Sex

*Brideprice: What are
men buying?

*Protection

*Children

*Land to farm

*Cash

*Men's roles

*Extremely hierarchical societies

*“Big man” mentality

*Men's roles

* As men become increasingly unable to provide, the “new” family is a woman, her children, and temporary “fathers”

* “New” Family

- Both man and woman created in God's image
- Both blessed with dominion over earth, children
- Woman created not as an inferior helper but as a 'strength equal' to the man
- Man is to prioritize wife above parents (no patriarchy)
- 'One flesh', 'naked and without shame'

*** Creation Ideal - Matt.
19, Genesis 1 and 2**

- Woman is equal to man
- All men are equal, regardless of social status
- Woman can eat chicken, eggs
- Children belong to woman as well as man
- Women can inherit property
- Woman is a partner to be loved, not a servant to be controlled
- Wife comes before parents
- Honesty and transparency in marriage -- man to share finances with wife, no more 'two thieves in the same house'
- Companionate marriage - holding hands, walking together in public

* Cultural Applications



Demonstrating affection in marriage







Servants	Children	Wives
ObeY Serve God	ObeY Parents	Submit respect
Parents	Parents	husbands
Don't threaten	Don't threaten Raise a child	Love Nurish Grow

- The cultural belief that God cursed the woman in Genesis 3 is the source of much suffering for women.
- BUT Genesis 3 says: The man was with the woman during the temptation (v. 6)
- Only the serpent and the ground were cursed, not the people
- The bad things that God's prophesied would happen (sorrowful toil, man will rule over the woman, men's struggle against other men) are consequences of living in a world of thorns, not curses or punishment

*Genesis 3: The Fall

*“In the beginning it was not so”

- Woman’s worth lies not in her successful accomplishment of ‘women’s roles’ (child bearer, domestic worker, and sexual property) but in her relationship with God
- Women can learn and sit at Jesus’ feet
- Forgiveness, not vengeance, in the family

*Redemption: Jesus

- Men must give up striving for status and power over other men and over women.
- Man's worth lies not in his successful accomplishment of "men's roles" (wealth, dominance over others) but in his relationship with God
- Lead by washing feet, humility, rather than dominating others
- No lusting after women
- No pursuit of revenge
- Forgiveness, not vengeance, in marriage

***Redemption: Jesus**

*Patriarchy and the worldly struggle for power are systematically denied and replaced with *agape* love:

Those in dominant positions (husbands, fathers, masters) are exhorted to sacrifice their own desires in order to care for and serve their wives, children, and slaves

Those in subordinate positions (wives, children, slaves) are urged to cease their manipulative/passive-aggressive behavior and submit in imitation of Christ

*Redemption: Paul

* Program graduates confront men they see abusing their wives

* Even women married to abusive non-believers are encouraged

* **Impact**

*Men who thought their wives were “second class” or assistants to the devil have changed drastically and now regards their wives as a gift from God and treat them with respect.

*Impact

* A pastor grew up admiring an uncle who beat his wife everyday. The pastor knew that as a Christian he should not beat his wife, but he still thought the uncle was very manly. After attending the seminar, he changed his mind about what made a man manly.

* **Impact**

* People come to Christ when they see their husband, wife, or parent begun treating each other according to these principles

* **Impact**

* A man who had been separated from his wife for 25 years was reconciled to her after attending the program. Their children, who had taken their mother's side in the conflict, came back to Christ after seeing his example.

* **Impact**

* A pastor who owned a woodshop confessed he had done everything possible to avoid paying his workers. He left the seminar early to go to the shop to pay them.

* **Impact**



Does Empower really make a difference? According to one community leader in Kenya, it does: "I never used to take time to talk with my wife. I saw her as just as a worker in our family, and did not even sit to eat with her from the same table.

"After attending the Empower conference, things have changed. My wife is now a companion. We eat together, we sit and talk, and

life is so good in our family."