

- It has been said many times that strong families mean strong nations. We understand this to be logical because the very foundation of society is built upon families and not individuals. Therefore, as the family goes.... so goes the society and nation. The exact same thing is concerning the church. The church is made up of many individual families, so if we want to be a strong church, then we need to have strong families. If we want to glorify God in all that we do, then we need to strive to have families that are God focused.
- This morning, we will continue our 2015 Sermon Series by turning our attention to the family by asking the question, "What is needed for our families/homes to be glorifying in the sight of God?" I think it begins with being God focused. We need to be developing and maintaining God focused homes. What that means is that each individual within the home needs to understand the role that God has designed for them to play. We want to look at what God expects from fathers, from mothers, and from children. If we are all working hard on a daily basis to fulfill our role, then our families as a whole have an excellent chance of living up to the standard that our Lord has set for His people. People who are focused on God seek to obey His will in their lives. Let's learn and be reminded of the roles that God has given to us within our families.

God focused homes need:

I. Husbands/Fathers that...

- A. love & nourish their wives.
 - 1. Paul's writings to the Ephesians includes the use of the marriage relationship to help them understand the relationship between Christ and the Church. **(Eph. 5:25-30)**
 - a) Husbands are to love their wives just as Christ loves the church. He must be willing to sacrifice for her. **(vv.25-27)**
 - b) They are to care for their wives. Men and women are different and husbands should nourish the wife as being different from them. **(vv.28-30)**
 - 2. The relationship between a husband and his wife should be one of love, joy, peace, and happiness. **(Col. 3:19; I Peter 3:7-9 *people trying to get to heaven*)**
 - 3. The husband's love and care for his wife should emulate the love and care that Christ has for His church. He should be living in such a way that shows his desire for purity and a home in heaven.
- B. instruct & discipline their children.
 - 1. Sadly, our country is reaping the rewards of the failure of so many fathers in the right raising of their children.
 - 2. Fathers are charged with the awesome responsibility of raising their children as the Lord would will. This is obviously a great responsibility because it is spoken of so many times throughout the Scriptures.
 - a) Fathers are to raise their children in the discipline & instruction of the Lord. **(Duet. 6:6-9; Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4)**
 - b) They are to be consistent and loving in raising their children. **(Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21)**
 - c) They are to provide discipline when the child/children stray from the right way. **(Prov. 13:24)**
 - 3. There should be no greater joy for a father in this life than to see his children walking in the truth. **(III John 1:4)**
- C. provide for their families.
 - 1. There are many needs within the family, and God has given man the responsibility to fill many of those needs.
 - 2. The husband/father is to provide leadership to his family. **(the man was given the responsibility of leading his wife and family, Eph. 5:23. They are to lead like Abraham, Noah, Moses, Joseph)**
 - 3. The man is to provide protection for his family. **(love his wife and children as his own body)**
 - 4. The man is to provide for the physical needs of the family. **(I Tim. 5:8)**
 - 5. A man who desires to live up to the role God has given him, is a man that is willing to put forth the effort to do all of the things God desires for him to do as a husband and a father.

II. Wives/Mothers that...

- A. respect & follow their husbands.
 - 1. Again, we look to **Ephesians 5:23,24;33** for some teachings from Paul on the subject.
 - a) Wives are to submit or follow the leadership of their husbands. **(vv.23,24)**
 - b) They are also to respect their husbands. **(v.33)**
 - 2. Paul's writings to Titus echo the same teachings of loving and respecting husbands. **(Titus 2:3-5)**

3. We can go all the way back to the beginning to see why God designed the marriage relationship to be such. **(the man was created first Gen. 2:21-25; Eve lead Adam to sin 3:16)**
 4. For some, it is difficult to learn to submit and follow a man, but to be a godly woman and to conform to God's design, a wife must learn to follow her husband, even if he is not a godly man. **(I Pet. 3:1-6)**
- B. care for & keep their homes.
1. Many reject the idea of the wife or mother being responsible as the keeper of the home, but that is exactly what God desires for God focused wives and mothers to be. **(Titus 2:3-5)**
 2. This doesn't mean that they can't have outside jobs or that they can't take care of business outside the home. We see many women throughout the Bible who take care of outside business, specifically the woman of **Proverbs 31** comes to mind.
 3. However, they should never become so caught up in their outside business or work that they fail to take care of the needs of their families.
 4. Husbands and wives should love each other and the Lord to the extent that they are always working together to make sure that their marriages and families are striving to live up to the standard that God has set for them.

III. Children that...

- A. love & respect their parents.
1. Our entire lives are a result of our parents bringing us into this world, and God makes it the highest of priorities for us to love and respect our parents. **(Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16; Eph. 6:1-3)**
 2. Loving and respecting our parents is a pretty big deal in the eyes of God and we should be thankful that we didn't grow up under the Law of Moses. **(rebellious kids stoned to death Deut. 21:18-21)**
 3. Our love and respect is shown to our parents through our obedience to them. **(Eph. 6:1)**
 - a) As God focused children, we should obey our parents because in doing so God is pleased.
 - b) If we are striving to be Christ-like, we need to obey because Jesus was obedient in all things. **(Phil. 2:8)**
 - c) When we obey our parents then we are setting ourselves up for success in this life. **(Eph. 6:3)**
 - d) Obedience is critical because it can lead to great rewards! But if we disobey...then we will face sad and not so good consequences. We will all be accountable for how we treated our parents.
 4. Not all children are blessed with parents who truly love them. Let us not waste God's great blessing of godly parents by failing to love and respect them.
- B. grow & mature in the Lord.
1. We mentioned earlier about John's writings concerning his happiness for seeing his spiritual children growing in the Lord. Seeing our physical children growing in the Lord is just as vitally important.
 2. God focused children need to be heeding the teachings of their parents in the Lord. **(Prov. 1:8)**
 3. Listening, learning, and growing from their godly wisdom will be extremely beneficial to us. **(Prov. 1:9)**
 4. Solomon goes on to say that by receiving wise teachings from parents we can learn a true fear of the Lord and a knowledge of God. **(Prov. 2:1-6)**
 5. Great joy is present within the hearts of parents who see their children growing up in the Lord. We must do everything we can to please God first, but also provide that joy to our God focused parents.

Being a God focused family takes much effort and work from every involved. Our first step to being a strong church family is to make sure that our physical families are focused on what we need to be focused on every single day. Will there be bumps in the road? Sure there will be, but with God's grace and help we can all be families that glorify God in this life. May we lean on God for His strength and guidance and glorify Him in all that we do as God focused families.