

SERIES: THE CHRISTIAN HOME Message 3**Sermon Title: Eph. 5:31 The Biblical Concept of Family Oct 28 p.m.****Hymns:**

- 614 A Debtor to Mercy Alone
- 636 My Saviour First of All
- 552 I Surrender All
- 497 He Leadeth Me

Reasons to commence this series:

Not because we think it is easy to establish a truly Christian Home

I know that every true Christian who got serious about living for the Lord in the family found many obstacles. The world, the flesh and the devil are all enemies of a Christ-like home and family. – a Christian home. - Define as Christlike.

1. Because the Christian Family is the essence of true Christianity.

The best witness of missionaries in a foreign heathen culture is to set up a Christian home, where a wife is loved, treated with cared for and children are more than little slaves.

The Biblical command, “**he that ruleth well his own house having his children in subjection with all gravity.**” 1Tim. 3:4,5.

2. Shallow Christianity has brought about a lot of emphasis on the subjective aspect of living and in contemporary churches this is a constant theme.

But against that flaw we can fall into another flaw -In Biblical doctrinal based churches this can be left unapplied.

We need to balance doctrine and application. The home is where we must apply the truths of the gospel.

3. There is a danger that even Christians adopt their family values from the secular society and imbibe the attitudes of loose morality and go soft on the vices of our generation. The public education system seeks to destroy Biblical values on “**lifestyle**” – hence marriage and family is redefined.

4. **Another reason is that our homes are to be little churches:** - The local church is to be an extension of our homes and how we serve and honour God in the home.
5. **Then we are all failures in this area of family and marriage.**
Where there are people there will be problems. When you put two people together there will be issues.***

The young bride may start out with the fanciful idea that she will have the perfect marriage. But problems do arise. Stress, strain and even sin arise. Things can become very bitter and we need the grace of God to keep our homes and our marriages in good order.

It takes maturity and Biblical attitudes to work through problems and issues which arise. They could be sickness, money problems, poor decisions, bad habits, anger and frustrations which get pent up to the explosion point. Marriage is love, but it will take more than romantic love to get couples through deep waters.

6. **One more reason to preach on marriage - preachers are often said to preach on things which are irrelevant.** But not true when we speak on some aspect of marriage and family. This is an ongoing call to live for the glory of God in our homes and with our nearest and dearest to see the grace of God at work in our lives.

1. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FAMILY IN CREATION

WE LEARN FROM Genesis 1 & 2 that the Family was God's plan right from Creation.

Note the "therefore" of **ch. 2:24 = FAMILY** Quoted in **Eph. 5:31**
Eph 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. and again in **Mat 19:4 – 6.**

Mat 19:4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,

Mat 19:5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

Mat 19:6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

All of these references relate to what God did in creation.

Adam in that perfect state – although he was head of the animal world and had perfect fellowship with God – was incomplete. See **Ch. 2:18** “not good for man to be alone.”

[1] God made them male and female.

[2] In that order of creation God made man firstly. The woman was made for the man to be his helpmeet. Eve was to be Adam’s helper

[3] God’s covenant as keeper of the earth and as keeper of the garden was made with Adam before Eve was created. See **Ch. 2:15 – 17** Afterwards Eve was created. So, God deals firstly with the man as the head and as the one responsible for the family order.*****

Eve was to come along-side Adam in his work for God as a helpmeet. Helpmeet” = counterpart or mate. She was specially designed by the Creator’s hand to be exactly suited to his needs.

- **For companionship/friendship/help/love/compassion**

The male is the tough strong worker type - the female would be the gentle, tender, supporter type

- **For procreation - to bare children** See **ch. 1:28** “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.”

So, the woman was equipped biologically to bear children, nurture children, and be the caregiver. That is the role in God’s creation order.

Paul the apostle takes that order into account when he defines the role of women in **1Tim 2. 12-13**. Key words “**Not to usurp authority over the man.**”

Every time that order is broken it creates problems in the family. **

There cannot be two heads in the home. There cannot be two authorities. God’s order is for the man to lead and to lead his wife and children in the ways of truth and blessing – as a disciple of Christ. (In context of praying men **v8**)

So, the family is not a human invention. It is God’s order in creation and it is God’s way of governing society.

The family is the #1 building block of all society.

Any church will only be as spiritually strong and useful to God as the families that collectively make up that church.

The Christian family is committed to God’s ordained plan for the family.

For some this is learned from parents by their example.

For others it has to be learned by throwing away the wrong model and coming to the Bible’s model for a fresh perspective.***

2. THE EXTENSION OF THE FAMILY WITH THE FATHER AS REPRESENTATIVE HEAD

The covenant with Abraham is in view here. **Gen 17:7-9** - the covenant of circumcision.

Every head of the O.T. Israel who would be joined to Israel must be circumcised.

The lesson of **Achan - Joshua 7** when he sinned the curse fell upon his family. The whole family was taken out and stoned. This is the representative factor with God. The father stands in the place of the whole family before God.

When David sinned, he pleaded God's covenant made with him and his family.

2Sa 23:5 Although my house *be* not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things*, and sure: *this is* all my salvation, and all *my* desire, though he make *it* not to grow.

With David the covenant included his family - even though his family was not what any father would have wanted. He was able to plead God's grace through that promise to him.

See **Acts 2:39** - God is pleased to work through families. **"The promise is unto you and to your children..."**

In Eph. 6:4 fathers are commanded to ensure the training of their children in the faith. **"Provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."**

Blessed is the home where the husband and father is a strong spiritual leader.

Where he is a man of prayer - a prophet, priest and king.

The downfall of so many Christian homes is that men /fathers fail to see their work as the representative head in the home. They are the appointed head, spiritual leader to lead in spiritual things as well as the practical.***

God will hold fathers responsible for this spiritual leadership in the home and for the training of their children in the faith.

While Mothers may be deputed to the task, the burden of leading the home and the accountability of it rests with fathers.***

In homes where this happens there is a marked difference from the worldly home.***

The father is to see that the mother is respected and obeyed. He is to see that she is encouraged and cared for. Men, you have a ministry to your wife – she is your first duty of care.

3. THE CODIFYING OF THE FAMILY IN THE LAW OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

I refer here to the 5th commandment which is the first commandment with promise.

“Honour thy father and thy mother Ex. 20:12.”

Honouring parents is written into the law of God – it is impossible to erase.

There is no other way to have God’s blessing. Day to day blessing depends on it and eternal rewards also depend upon honouring parents.

What God has encoded in law of the TEN COMMANDMENTS is everlasting – as long as this world lasts. God has no other arrangement for the government of society than the priority of the home.

Children are to honour parents. “Honour” = be heavy. Heb. (KABAD). In a bad sense it means to weigh down with care. That is done through trouble, rebellion and disgrace. In a good sense it means to honour with respect and with recognition for their worth.

It means to do your parents proud. To add joy and gladness to their hearts.

It is impossible to live the Christian life according to the will of God with an unruly home. We are back to that qualification for office in 1Tim. 3:4,5. “he that ruleth well his own house having his children in subjection with all gravity.”

So, Family and family order is in the very warp and woof of the morality of the Bible. It is the very spirit of godliness.

- The home that is out of order displeases the Lord.
- The home that is governed well is a pleasure to the Lord.

4. THE ENCOURAGEMENT WHICH THE LORD JESUS GAVE TO PROMOTE THE INSTITUTION OF FAMILY.

[1] The Lord was born and grew up in a poor but godly family.

[2] The Lord attended a wedding John 2 Cana of Galilee – where he performed his first miracle.

For the Lord to attend that wedding meant that he sanctioned the very institution of marriage and was there to bless the bride and groom. He entered into and promoted the whole tradition of celebrating marriage.

[3] The Lord had John to take care of his mother - even when on the cross he honoured his mother, who was a widow.

[4] Many of our Lord's parables were based on the very heart-beat of the family.

The Prodigal. What insights to a father's love and tears for his wayward boy are all wrapped up in that short story.

[5] Many of our Lord's miracles were to heal sons and daughters.

- He was moved with compassion at Jairus who yearned for his daughter.
- He raised the widow of Nain's son.
- **He raised Jairus' daughter from death.**

The Lord Jesus understood what bereavement was. He knew what prolonged sickness was.

He entered in and brought His power of healing and life to the homes and hearts of families.

That is the same Lord Jesus we may invite into our homes if we have real Christian homes. If things are in their place and the Lord is truly welcome. A home where the Spirit of the Lord is not grieved by our sin and worldliness. He will NOT dwell with uncleanness.***

Here is an exercise for you. In 100 words describe a Christian home/family.

A Christian home is... where a man of the Bible is joined with a woman who also reads and prays over the Bible, where both man and woman are in agreement with all that the Bible says about truth and error, right and wrong; where they live consciously to please the Lord in every word, action and attitude inviting the Lord to be their head; turning away from those things that grieve the Lord and drive Him out. They fear the Lord no matter who enters their home, whether it be a stranger or their own new born child.
– 99 words.

Is that your home?

