

**Subject: A Christian Home, Part 5**

**Scripture: Ephesians 6:1-4**

We come to the final message in this series. In Ephesians 5:22-6:4, God has given a clear message to husbands and wives, children and parents. It is a blueprint for the family.

The home is under attack. We no longer live in a culture that supports the family and Christian values. ***Psalms 11:3*** *If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?* We must establish the solid foundation of God's Word and the principles He gives for the family. Our goal is to have Christian homes. They're not perfect, but they are different. A Christian home is not pleasing to the world, but it is pleasing to God and it brings Him glory, and that's all that matters.

We need to understand God's plan and purpose for the home and we need to understand the forces that are attacking and undermining the family.

**GOD'S PURPOSE FOR THE FAMILY**

His purpose started with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. God established the family and intended it to be a blessing to the first couple and a pattern for all future generations.

God chose a man named Abraham and told him that He would bless other people through him and his descendants. ***Genesis 12:2-3*** <sup>2</sup> *And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:* <sup>3</sup> *And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.* The family was to be a means of blessing.

God revealed the main truth about Himself in the great Jewish confession called the Shema (Heb. "hear"), ***Deuteronomy 6:4-7*** <sup>4</sup> *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:* <sup>5</sup> *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* <sup>6</sup> *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:* <sup>7</sup> *And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.* The family was to be a means of learning. There was to be a verbal and visible commitment to God's Word in each home. God assigns each family the responsibility of passing on His Word from one generation to the next. ***Psalms 78:4-7*** <sup>4</sup> *We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.* <sup>5</sup> *For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:* <sup>6</sup> *That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children:* <sup>7</sup> *That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.*

It's important to understand that the Bible is primarily about God, not about the family. We must use the Bible not as a tool to fix the family, but as a lens to focus on God and His will. God's purpose was undermined by sin and neglected by families so God brought judgment instead of blessing.

**PROBLEMS THAT UNDERMINE GOD'S PURPOSE**

- Man's sinful nature undermines the family

Original sin and the curse affected the world and everything in it, including the family.

**Jeremiah 17:9** *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?* It is the sinful heart that causes husbands to be selfish and indifferent and not love their wives as Christ loved the church. It is the sinful heart that causes wives to be independent and not submit to their husbands as unto the Lord. It is the sinful heart that causes children to disobey and dishonor their parents. It is the sinful heart that causes parents to frustrate their children and neglect their assignment of training them in the way they should go.

- The evil world system undermines the family

God warned His Old Testament people Israel about the ungodly influence of the world, **Leviticus 18:3-4** <sup>3</sup> *After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.* <sup>4</sup> *Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God.*

God warned His New Testament people, the church.

**Romans 12:2** *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

- A humanistic worldview undermines the family

Ungodly humanism leaves God and His Word out. Liberal thinkers say that families need to be liberated from traditional morals and values. Children need to be liberated from parental authority and corporal punishment. People should have complete sexual freedom including the right to homosexual marriage and abortion on demand. Some are advocates for gay rights, women's rights, and even children's rights to do such things as suing their parents and being allowed to choose their own family. This is a world that attacks the family from every angle. What's a family to do? Reject the world and its views and seek the Lord and His will. God has given a word to women, a message to men, a command to children, and a plan for parents.

### **THE NEGATIVE COMMAND: Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath**

How do parents provoke their children to anger and resentment?

- When parents are overbearing and harsh
- When parents are inconsistent and unpredictable
- When parents are too busy for their children
- When parents don't keep their promises
- When parents won't admit when they're wrong
- When parents don't control their anger
- When parents show favoritism
- When parents smother their children and overprotect them
- When parents drive their children to unreasonable goals
- When parents never compliment or encourage them
- When parents don't allow their children to grow up at a normal pace
- When parents use love as a tool of reward or punishment
- When parents abuse them physically, verbally, or emotionally

When we provoke our children to anger and resentment, we need to ask for forgiveness.

**THE POSITIVE COMMAND: *Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord***

Nurture refers to discipline and admonition means instruction. Both of these ideas are involved in the concept of training children. Parents need to teach their children, discipline their children, and train their children by example. God gives us helpful instruction in the book of Proverbs. Here we find wisdom (skill for living), and where better to learn it than in the home?

**Proverbs 22:6** *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

**Proverbs 20:7** *The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.*

The best training is by example. We ought to be able to say do as I do and not just as I say. And when we fail, we need to be honest and admit our failures and confess our sins. This is the prescription that could strengthen many a family and set it on the right road:

**James 5:16** *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*