

## **Our Families Have Changed!**

What has happened to the American family? To say it has changed is an understatement! In the past few decades the whole fabric of our society has changed, and many of these changes relate directly to the deterioration of our family life.

Now we see rampant divorce, maladjusted children, an increasing homosexual population, an epidemic of unwanted pregnancies, millions of aborted children, an escalating drug culture, spreading sexually-transmitted diseases, alarming increases in teen-age suicide and crime. Homes have never looked better on the outside and yet are filled with conflict, bitterness and unhappiness within.

Surely somewhere we made a wrong turn! As a society we have lost our bearings. We have lost faith in the simple prescription that originated in the mind of God and was passed down as conventional wisdom from generation to generation. We have exchanged the truth of God to experiment with self-indulgence. We took an incredible gamble to try the new morality and its attending "alternate lifestyle"...and lost!

Is there an answer? Indeed there is. We must come back to the wisdom found in God's word. After all, who knows more about the home than its creator?!!

## **God's Plan for the Family**

God's prescription for a happy family begins with a man and woman, who putting Him before everything (Mt. 6:33), have chosen to date those of honesty and goodness (1 Cor. 15:33). Each realizes that who we marry has a dramatic impact on the rest of their lives. Among those they date there may be one with whom they share a special relationship that grows out of common faith, interests, and values. As the love of the two deepens with time, they each know that they want to please the other and meet the needs of the other (1 Cor. 7:32-34). They are willing to make a commitment of themselves to each other for life (Mt. 19:6) and to let the Lord's will determine their conduct in every part of their home life (Col. 3:17-21). His values are their values!

The husband will accept the role of loving leadership in the home (Eph. 5:25). He will provide for his family's varied needs, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually (1 Tim. 5:8). He will be himself a model of godly

conduct (Tit. 2:6-8); he will lead his family in prayer and service to God (1 Tim. 2:8). He will nourish and cherish his wife (Eph. 5:29) as if she were a part of himself, growing in his understanding of her needs and respect for her as a fellow-heir of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7).

In a similar way, the wife will submit to her husband's leadership with a respect that is evident in how she addresses him and how she responds to him (1 Pet. 3:6). She will model purity and kindness before her family, giving her affection to her husband and children. And, she will be a worker at home so that the needs of her family are provided (Tit. 2:4-5).

Both the husband and the wife will strive to lovingly meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the other. The children who come into this kind of home will be trained in keeping with the Lord's will (Eph. 6:4). They will be encouraged to know the Lord and obey his will. In return they will be obedient to their parents' will and treat them with honor (Eph. 6:1-3).

Such a home will enjoy all of the fruit of the Spirit--love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). In it, hearts will

be prepared to hear and obey the gospel; in it souls will draw nearer to God and heaven.

If your heart is stirred by the picture God's word creates, then realize that this description is neither mythical nor naively idealistic. This kind of home does exist in reality. And you can have such a home if you and your family will make your home a place where Christ is Savior, where the Holy Spirit is teacher, and where God is Lord of all.

Maybe now, you know where you made a wrong turn. It's not too late to do something about it. We can help each other to become more like what God wants us to be.

--Johnny Felker

If you enjoyed reading this article, let us know. Other short tracts on various subjects are available. Let us know how we may help you.

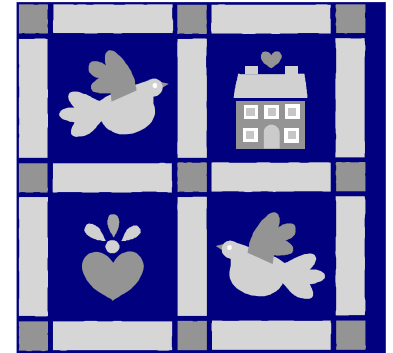


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Sun. 9:00 a.m. (Bible class)  
9:55 a.m. (Worship service)  
6:00 p.m. (Worship service)  
Wed. 7:00 p.m. (Bible class)

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# Family



## ...God's Way

God's word holds the answer to a happy family life. Only when Jesus Christ is the Lord of our homes can our homes be what God intended.