

QUESTIONS WE WANT ANSWERED

90 Can the Family Be Saved?

Scripture: Mark 10: 6-9

6. *But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.*
7. *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife.*
8. *And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.*
9. *What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

On this Mother's Day the death of the family is being proclaimed by knowledgeable theoreticians whose premise is that the family cannot survive the epidemic of marriage failures taking place. Magazine articles no longer startle anyone with such titles as, **Is This the Last Married Generation?** Robert Rimmer has written two novels which suggest the family is terminally ill. The **Harrod Experiment** and **Letters From Harrod** describe college life where couples are taught to live together "free from the responsibilities of marriage." There is no shortage of analysts who write and lecture from this perspective. The Christian response is to clearly define the Biblical ideal concerning marriage always realizing that such an ideal is a goal and not a performance standard that we all must meet every day. God's ideal is stated in Mark 10:6-9. Let us consider the following Biblical principles which have the potential of transfusing new life into family life if such is to survive.

I. GOD HAD AN IDEA AND WE CALL IT FAMILY:

College young people are being taught that family life is a product of evolution and came into being only with the passing of time. The Christian teaching rejects this categorically. Genesis 2:24 establishes the family unit as the foundation of society and was so from the cradle of man's history. Following the anatomical study of animal life with the resultant names being given, Adam was given a helper who was "*bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.*" This designation plus the leaving and cleaving (to cling) principle emphasizes the oneness God intended as opposed to divisiveness.

II. HUSBANDS ARE TO LOVE AND LEAD. WIVES ARE TO RESPOND AND FOLLOW:

In Ephesians 5:25-28 we read of the kind of love God calls for in the home. Husbands are to love their wives "as Christ loved the church." This is a **(1)** purposeful love because Christ gave himself for the church. It was a **(2)** purifying love because it was to sanctify and cleanse the church. It was a **(3)** perpetual love because it will issue in the presentation of a glorious church. This is the Christian ideal. Few men can stand up to this but it is what the Christian husband is to strive for and the quality of love the wife is to respond to and follow after.

III. CHILDREN ARE A REWARD TO BE POLISHED, POISED AND POINTED AS ARROWS:

This truth is found in Psalm 127. What is being said is that children are a favor of the Lord. It is significant that children are likened to arrows. The flight, direction and effect of an arrow is determined by how it is produced, polished, pointed and poised. We have a sick society on our hands today because arrows leaving homes today have been dipped in poison. There is also important truth to be found in Ephesians 6:4. The word "nurture" means tender loving care. The mental picture is one of a little plant in the yard threatened on every side. It requires constant care if it is going to survive. There is no instant nurture. Parents are to live for their children. Worthy of respect, children are to honor their parents. Paul enlarges on the fifth commandment in Ephesians 6:1-3.

Home is a safe place to be. Safe, because it centers in a wise God's will for our lives. Safe, because love prevails. Safe, because we gain a sense of identity in the home through those who model before us and shape the direction of our lives as we assimilate (not imitate) their constants and virtues. Through the Holy Spirit we have the capacity to assimilate Christ. The family can survive with infusion of Christ's presence into every function. No new human relationship is needed. When God thought family, He knew what He was doing.

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