

The Happy Family

Ephesians 5:22 – 6:4

INTRODUCTION: Perhaps you have already noticed that the title of my message today is **THE HAPPY FAMILY**. I could have just as easily called it **THE GODLY FAMILY** or **THE SUCCESSFUL FAMILY** because when a family chooses to act as the Holy Spirit tells us to act in our families, we will have a godly family. It will be a successful family. It will be a happy family.

None of those things mean that the family will be exempt from trials or troubles that bring challenges to individuals within the family and to the family as a whole. But it does mean that the family will be able to negotiate their path through the troubles with the providential help of the Lord, proving that even in trying times they are a successful, godly, happy family.

Now let me address one issue even before we begin to examine God's instructions to us. There are probably some of you who are being tempted right now to check out from hearing what God has to say to us because you have given up on other members of your family. Perhaps with good reason you are saying that one or more members of your family have repeatedly rejected the Lord or His instruction to them, and they are not, NOT, going to do anything God says to make the family godly, successful, or happy!

And you may be right. I hope you are not, and I hope you will not give up on God breaking through stubborn hearts to draw your family members to Himself. However, I want to appeal to you concerning what you do. I want to say to each of us, regardless of what anyone else in our family does or does not do, we can make a difference.

- No, a family will not be as godly as it could be if a husband loves his wife but the wife will just not respect and submit, but the love of the husband will bring it closer to godliness than it will be if he gives up and does nothing.
- A family will not be as successful as it could be if the wife is the one who is obedient to the Lord and the husband refuses to love his wife as Christ loves the church, but the godly obedience of the wife will make it better than it would have been.
- And even the obedience of both husband and wife to God's instructions will not make the home perfectly happy if children within are rebellious against parents and God, but the loving obedience of the parents will do much to make the family as a whole far happier than they would be if all were in rebellion.

So, even if one or all of your family members are at this moment far from the Lord and far from obedient to what He says in these words we are about to read, just listen for

your part. Commit to do what you should do. Pray for the others but then leave them to God. Ask Him to bring them to repentance, faith, and obedience. He can do far more about that than you ever could. But don't give up! **You can make a difference in your family just by your obedience and by your prayers for all.**

So let us read what the Lord tells us about how He designed our families to work and thus to be godly, successful, and happy! Let us stand for the reading of God's Word.

Ephesians 5:22 – 6:4

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let the wives be* to their own husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord *does* the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 "*For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.*" 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects *her* husband.

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "*Honor your father and mother,*" which is the first commandment with promise: 3 "*that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.*"

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

I. MEN, LOVE YOUR WIFE AS CHRIST LOVED THE CHURCH.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her...

A. The essence of this command is sacrifice versus selfishness.

Daily we husbands must ask, "Will I use my office as the head of the house to please myself or to serve my wife and family." This is the very question Christ faced in the wilderness with Satan. "Will I use My power to change rocks to bread?" "Will I use My power to impress the crowd?" "Will I accept an easy

victory rather than enduring the cross, but miss fulfilling the purpose for which I've come?" Men, what shall we do? How do we do this?

1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

B. The man who loves his wife will grow in understanding her by communicating with her.

1. This requires time. Daily.
2. This requires attention. Hit pause and look her in the eye. Take time to hear and discuss.
3. This often requires giving up something you want to do. Golf, fishing pole time, time in the shop, video games, football game.

C. The man who loves his wife will honor her by being a one-woman man.

1. The man who claims to have helplessly fallen in love with another woman is either deceived or a liar.
2. A person may experience an attraction that is a temptation that he or she could not avoid. But dwelling upon the temptation, fantasizing about it, allowing for opportunities for it to develop, nurturing it are all a part of developing a romantic interest in another person. While it might not take much effort for these things to happen, they can be stopped.
3. The time to stop them is before they start. A man who would be a one-woman man should have rules for his own life. Do not spend personal or social time alone with another woman. If this time is needed, include your wife.

D. The man who loves his wife will honor her in his speech.

1. Do not ever compare your wife unfavorably to another woman.
 - a. "I wish you would fix your hair like so-in-so."
 - b. "I wish you would keep the house like so-in-so."
 - c. "I wish you could learn to cook like my mother."
2. Do not engage in inappropriate remarks to or about the opposite sex.
 - a. You may have to walk away from some group conversations at work.

- b. You may have to say to a friend that you really do not want to continue a particular line of conversation he has brought up.

E. The man who loves his wife will honor her in his thoughts.

1. If you really desire to control your actions, discipline your eyes and mind, including what you see on TV, computer, and on your smart phone.
2. If you really desire to control your speech, bring your mind and eyes under the control of Christ.
3. If you keep your eyes committed to your wife and if you keep your mind devoted to your wife, your speech and actions will follow.

F. The man who loves his wife will treat her as the more fragile vessel. I think fragile is a better translation than weaker in 1 Peter 3:7.

1. We men are like clay pots; women are like fine china. Each has its place; each has its value. But the china cannot endure some of the treatment that does not hurt the pottery.
2. Wives are more fragile spiritually and that is why the husband is to be the spiritual leader.
3. Wives are more fragile emotionally and that is why the husband must be careful with his words, tone, and expression.
4. Wives are more fragile physically.

- a. It is a shame to need to mention the application I pause to make here. But men we must know that there is no excuse for using the physical strength God has entrusted to us to abuse or mistreat our wives. Hitting or shoving a wife is not a part of our headship of your home. In fact, biblically you forfeit a portion of your authority in your home if you abuse your wife. Biblically your wife can and should call for the protection of the church and of the legal authorities if this ever happens.

Romans 13:3-4 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

- b. God's Word promises that He will use those He has placed in authority to execute wrath on those who practice evil.

Husbands, let us love our wives selflessly, sacrificially, as Christ loves the church!

II. WIVES, BE A HELPER TO YOUR HUSBAND.

Genesis 2:18 And the LORD God said, "*It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.*"

A. A wife is designed to be a companion who completes. She does for him what he cannot or will not do for himself. Karen is my completer. She makes up for my many deficiencies. You may observe my deficiencies, but I promise you do not see as many as you would if Karen were not my completing companion who helps me all the time.

Proverbs 31:12 *She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.*

B. Examples

1. Positive example: Abigail for Nabal who was described as a fool. (1 Sam. 25)
Abigail used her wisdom to help him, even to save his life.
2. Negative example: Jezebel for Ahab (1 Kings 21, esp. v 25)

1 Kings 21:25 *But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up.*

Wives, be the completing companion your husband needs and make him a better man than he would be if he did not have you! Do not stir up the evil that is within him to make it larger, to cause him to give in to it, to allow him to express it more! Bring out the good. Develop the good within your husband. All us men need all the help we can get!

C. A good wife is submissive.

Ephesians 5:22-24 *22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.*

1. **Meaning - to voluntarily yield to authority**
 - a. In everything (Eph. 5:24) as the church is to submit to Christ.
2. **What is the basis of this command to submit?**
 - a. **Not greater value**
 - b. **Not greater intelligence**
 - c. **God's sovereign decree**

3. **What is the method of submitting when you disagree?**
 - a. **Offer godly council, appeal to husband, appeal to God.**
 - b. **Leave the decision to your husband.**
 - c. **Leave results to your husband as well.** (Without an “I told you so!”)

4. **Result: respect**

Ephesians 5:33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she **respects** her husband.

- a. Respect him as God's chosen instrument for you and your children.
- b. Nagging shows a lack of respect

Proverbs 19:13 A foolish son is the ruin of his father, And the contentions of a wife are a continual dripping.

III. PARENTS, LOVE YOUR CHILDREN ENOUGH TO TRAIN THEM.

Don't just scream, holler, rant, and rave.

Ephesians 6:4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but **bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.**

A. What is this kind of training?

1. **Word comes from military training which speaks of its rigor and thoroughness.**
2. **Must be done in love.**
3. **Must be done with right example.**

B. The parts of training.

The Biblical Pattern

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

1. **Doctrine - the right teaching from God's Word**
2. **Reproof - evidence and reason something is wrong**
3. **Correction - the way to do it right**

4. Instruction in righteousness - practice doing it right

How do you know what is right? From the Bible, the Word of God.

A pastor and church that teaches the Bible will help you to understand it.

IV. CHILDREN, OBEDY YOUR PARENTS.

Ephesians 6:1-3 1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: 3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

A. Obey, not because your parents are always right, but because God is always right.

The only exception to God commanding your obedience is if they command you to do something contrary to God's written word in the Bible.

I am not talking about a command to do something you think God would not like.

"I think God wants me to have a motorcycle so I can join the F.A.I.T.H. Riders."
That's not in the Bible.

"I think God wants me to date that boy so I can win him to the Lord." That is not in the Bible.

If you cannot find it explicitly in the Scriptures, obey your parents because God says to do it. Then, if what your parents said was not best, that is on them and on God. God can handle it! God works all things...

CONCLUSION: OK, everybody! Have you found your part? Don't focus on the part for others in your family. You cannot do it for them, and it does no good for you to spend time thinking bad of them for not doing it. Do what God says to you.

How can you do it better?

How can you be more fully obedient to the Lord's instructions to you?