

THE BLESSED CHRISTIAN FAMILY



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The family is the smallest unit of a country or a church. However, the family is a very important unit for several supporting reasons, as described below:

The Family Is Created by God

First Reason: The family is a unit created by God Himself. Since the very beginning when God created man, He planned to make man as the object of His love. Therefore, even after the fall, God continued His plan for families, and all the time throughout the centuries God longed and planned for parents to raise their children by teaching them to know and to love Him and live His ways so that they would gain more of His love.

The Marriage at Cana

Second Reason, Jesus performed his first miracle on a wedding party, and many commentators said that He did it because a family is important. The fact that the first miracle took place in a marriage showed this significance. Through His presence, Jesus granted His consent to the marriage vows and by performing the miracle He showed from Whom the blessings of a marriage originated.

Strong Family, Strong Church, Strong Country

Third Reason, it was said that strong families would make a strong church, and if extended, would make a strong country too. A good family would be a prominent example for the entire community. Father, mother, children should make great efforts together to build a strong family. If one of them fails the whole family would collapse, and this is often the case nowadays. However, if they succeed, they would become a good example and make a strong impact on the society. The family makes a

strong impact on the society and the society on the country. So a good country is established not only by the government, but also by each member of every family.

A Fortress

Fourth Reason, in these last days of the end times, the family will be our last fortress against improper teachings and particularly in time of persecution. During the period of persecution, the pastor or the elder we know might have moved to some place we don't know, and if by God's grace we are blessed to be still united with our family, then only with them we can encourage and strengthen each other. Therefore, we should seriously take time and make every endeavor to build a strong family, a family blessed by God.

The Power of Two Individuals Who Agree

Then the **Fifth Reason:** there is a very important message recorded in Matthew 18:19, *"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."* (KJV)

Or *"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven."*(NIV)

So actually, where is the promise of the greatest blessings to be found? **In the family,** because it is written, *"If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them."* Except salvation, is there any other blessing greater than this promise, which proclaims that the Father in Heaven **will grant whatever** we ask for? Indeed it is not written here that the two individuals belong to one family, but we certainly approve that normally it is easy to agree between members of one family as they lead the same life, and so their burdens and struggles are relatively similar. For a more extensive explanation of the above verse can be read in the book **"The Family Worship"**.

Heaven and Hell on Earth

Now the **Sixth Reason**. I remember attending the marriage ceremony of a niece in some church, which was led by a senior pastor. He said, *"If there is heaven on earth, then it is to be in the family. Because so much happiness is found solely in the family"*. We can seek and find some happiness in many places, but there are specific happiness found only in the family. For example, when we play with our children or just hug and kiss our child. This kind of happy feelings we can not find anywhere else.

But then he continued, *"And if there is hell on earth, then it is to be in the family also. Because most of the physical or mental injuries occur inside the family, not outside."*

So we can see that the family is very important, because it can become like heaven on earth, but it can become like hell on earth too. If our family is like heaven on earth, then we will enjoy happiness throughout our lives in this world. But if our family is like

hell on earth, then we will suffer tearfully throughout our lives.

Since the family is so important and valuable, no wonder the devil always tries to undermine or ruin the family.

The Devil's Attempts to Ruin The Family

From the early ages on, the culture traits of free sex and polygamy have been flared out and thus make it difficult for the family to agree with each other or to live in harmony, so that they can not gain the blessings God has promised.

Hence families are also cornered or put into a difficult position as they believe in some predictions or assumptions that there would be no peace or harmony between family members if, for example: one child is considered incongruous with the mother, then the father is considered incompatible with someone else in the family, or in certain years or certain months the husband would be in disharmony with his wife, and many other

superstitions. All these disconformities are Satan's deceptions to cause disharmony in the family so that they can not enjoy heaven on earth, instead they continue to suffer and feel like living in hell.

In fact there is an extreme false precept that teaches its followers to have sexual intercourse with prostitutes before coming to worship, if they desire their worship or offerings to be more acceptable.

While family life is very important and should make a positive impact on many areas, we need to learn how to keep our families be blessed by God and all the family members can enjoy heaven on earth.

To Fear The LORD:

The Secret of A Blessed Family

The family blessed by God is discribed in Psalms 128:1-4.

128:1 A Song of degrees. Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways!

2 For thou shall eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

3 Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table!

4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

If we study the verses above, we will find that Psalms 128:1-4 consists of two parts. The first part is Psalms 128:1-2. These verses describe that anyone, either man or woman, who fears the LORD God, will be blessed. He/She would be able to enjoy the results of his/her efforts, to eat the labour of his/her hands. Then further, *"happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee"* means that he/she would be happy, while *"be well"* refers to a good condition, a healthy condition.

Whereas verses 3 and 4 are written particularly for **men** who fear the LORD.

Men who fear the LORD, besides getting the divine favors mentioned above, would also be granted a family that is blessed by the LORD.

So the requirement for having a blessed family is a husband or father who fears the LORD.

What is meant by to fear the LORD, or what is it like, a man who fears the LORD? If we make an analogy between to fear the LORD and to fear the police, what are the conditions so we can fear the police?

We can fear the police, if:

First: we know for sure what the police is like. For not all clad in uniforms are policemen. Soldiers too are in uniforms, also some public organizations, even security guards.

Second: we fear the police not only the individual but also all the signs and the rules made by the police. If there is a police line, for example, we will not cross or pass through the line, whether the police is or is not there. Therefore we need to learn and understand all the laws and regulations related to the police and his position or his post of employment.

Third: we obey. It is unlikely for us to obey the police if we do not know what the police is like, and also if we do not understand the laws and regulations of the police.

Likewise, we can fear the LORD God only if we know Him, His laws and regulations, and obey. So the requirements for us to have a family blessed by God is that the husband should seriously learn to know God and all His laws and regulations. And this can be done, for example, by reading the Bible, for God and all His laws and regulations are written clearly in the Bible. We may have the opportunity to listen to sermons in the church only once or twice a week. Therefore the husband as head of the family needs to increase his comprehension about God and His laws by reading the Bible diligently, and then teach them to the whole family while doing God's Word obediently either within the family or in our daily life.

The Wife Is As The Vine

What does the blessed family look like, the family promised by the LORD to men who fear Him? It is said that *"Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house."*

The above verse says that the wife of such a man would be like a fruitful vine producing good grapes in his home. There is a symbolic meaning implied in this phrase. Let us imagine what happens when the time arrives to harvest the grapes. The grape harvest is a season for the people to rejoice, to celebrate gladly and joyfully.

Jer 48:33 "And joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the winepresses: none shall tread with shouting; their shouting shall be no shouting."

Moreover, grapes or wine also illustrates a warm joyous gaiety, because the presence of grapes itself as an edible fruit or wine as a drink will enliven the festive atmosphere.

Wine can also be used as a cure or remedy, Lk 10:34 *"And went to him, and **bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine**, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn,*

and took care of him." Even the blood of the Lord Jesus Himself is symbolized by wine, and the blood of the Lord Jesus is the obvious proof of God's great and wonderful love. *"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."* (Mt 26:27-28)

So the LORD God promised to any man who fears the LORD a wife who can bring joy and excitement, creating a cheerful atmosphere, who can cure the physical wounds or the heart, comfort or entertain, even radiate or reflect God's love.

Not only that, God promised that the wife of a husband who fears God would become a source of joy, a source of comfort inside the home, not outside, *"Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine **by the sides of thine house.**"*

Today numerous phenomena show that there are many wives who serve very actively outside their homes, yet not inside their homes. She becomes a fruitful vine outside her home, but not inside. Many children of such activists and ministers complain, "Well, Mom is incredible

outside, very attentive, very patient, very good, but not so when she is within her own home". However, God's promise was not like that, instead, our wives would become like **fruitful vines in our own homes.**

This does not mean that a wife is not allowed to serve outside her home. Indeed, we must serve, but what is our most important service? It can be read in the book: "**Our Major Ministry**". We must teach God's Word repeatedly to our children that they may understand and wholeheartedly accept the Lord Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. We also need to continually educate our children so that they would become **true and faithful** children of God. The assurance of this should be properly checked and rechecked, lest our children would abandon their conviction in Christ by turning to another belief and guilty of apostasy.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 should be made our firm resolution:

6:4 Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD!

5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6 *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart.*

7 *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.*

8 *And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.*

9 *And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*

For more details, please read this book, **"A People Prepared For The Lord"**.

Communication at Mealtime

Then the verse continues, *"thy children like **olive plants** round about your table"*. Thus God promised that our children would become children of God. The olive tree is a symbol of God's children as is written in Ro 11:24 *"For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?"* (KJV)

Or Ro 11:24 *"After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated*

olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!" (NIV)

The olive tree has green leaves, leafy, shady, while the fruit are very useful and can be pressed to get olive oil, and from olive oil people can make ointments and anointing oil. God promised that our children except becoming children of God, good children, devout, they also would become children who glorify the name of the LORD.

Then the emphasis added, *"thy children like olive plants round about your table."* The question among us is: are there still some activities done together with the whole family members in our homes? Some families hold a brief worship or devotion every morning by reading God's Word and pray before breakfast. Some others hold it late in the evening, to discuss spiritual things while dining together.

Our family worship which we hold every night is a primary joint activity in our family. We always try to have this family worship attended by the entire members of our family.

Moreover, the writer put a high priority on having meal together with his family. Hence, for quite a long time to dine with the entire family members has been considered a priority, so the writer very rarely arranges meetings late in the afternoon or evening. He wants to be home no later than 6 pm, just so that he can have dinner with the whole family. Dining together with the family is very important, because it is an opportunity to talk with wife and children, and can become an appropriate time to teach or educate the children.

**To Know God the Father
from the Life of A Father**

A few years ago, when the second child of the writer was still studying in America, he came home at one time, and said that he had read an interesting book, entitled ***Experiencing Father's Embrace***. Honestly speaking, the writer himself has not read the book yet. Briefly, this book tells us how we personally can feel the loving and comforting embrace of God the Father, and highlights areas which may prevent

us from experiencing a closer or more intimate relationship with our Creator.

Jack Frost, the author, is a leader in Christian ministry and an educator. In this book he reveals the love of God provided for each of His children. His love is not limited by age, race, gender, politics nor denomination - his embracing arms are for all, whoever they are. The author offers many ways to bring God's children, both new and senior believers, to get closer to Him. The truth shared in this book can cause a positive change in our lives, in the lives of our loved ones and especially in our relationship with God the Father - Who longs for us to have fellowship with Him.

A Discordant Image

Yet according to the writer's son, *Experiencing Father's Embrace* also explains that today there are many, especially children, who do not comprehend what God's love is like. Why are there so many children who can not understand the love of God? Because the Bible

records that God often depicts Himself as a Father, alike our actual father in the real life. Unfortunately, the reality is often not aligned or discordant with God's divine concept. To witness their actual father at home often beating their mother or themselves, to hear him uttering rude words and telling lies, to see him being selfish, the children get confused. Is it true that the manifestation of God's love is like what they see in the behavior of their father? The confusion of these children does not occur among non Christian communities only, but among Christian communities also.

There was a case where a child witnessed how his father rendered more attention to other children in the congregation than to him, his own child, concerned of other families in the church more than of his own family, spent more time for the church members rather than for him, his own family member, so that the child became confused: Is this the image of God's love?

No wonder if there was a pastor's child who appealed to his father to treat him as one of

his church members, not as his child, because he felt that his father gave more attention to them than to him!

Conclusion

Some of us may feel that our family is already blessed by God, or at least we already have a good family since all the members of our family are in good standing. No one is a narcotic addict, given to drunkenness or involved in other bad behavior. Some of us also assume that we already have a family which is like heaven on earth, because we live in a prosperous economic class and travel frequently.

But to be sure, let's do three simple tests.

Let us analyze ourselves, either as a father, a mother, or a child. As a father, let us think about the past 2 weeks: who was the last woman we have hugged and embraced lately? Have we hugged and embraced our own wife or someone else's wife, whether she was the wife

of a church member, or any depressed or deprived woman? Or we might not have embraced any married woman, whoever she could be. Then, who was the last child we have recently hugged? Was he/she our own child, our friends', some church member's, our boss', our employee's, or an orphan? Similarly, as a wife, who was the last man we have hugged? Was he our own husband, or someone else's husband? Likewise, as a child, whose father or mother have we hugged and embraced lately ?

Then, try to think about the past two weeks, to whom did we convey our gentlest words? Did we do it to our wives and children, to our husbands or friends, church, customers, or maybe our boss? Likewise, during the same period, to whom did we give our sweetest smile? Did we give it to our wives, our husbands, our children, our boss, or our customers?

If we do not give all the best that we have to our families, then surely we do not have a blessed family as the Lord promised, because we **have not yet become the vine in our homes.**

Therefore, as husbands, let us learn to become God fearing people. Take time every day to read the Bible. Meditate or contemplate on every God's Word we read or hear, and obey them in our lives. Then be the priest in our own family, hold a family worship every day and anticipate how God will pour out His blessings upon our families.