

“Righteousness Exalteth A Nation”

Introduction. Proverbs 14:34 says, “Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.” The “righteousness” mentioned in this proverb is exhibited only through conformity to standards expressed in the Bible. A righteous person adds to the reputation and prosperity of a nation by fulfilling the commands of God. Exaltation and pride are the same processes, but one is by God and is right, while the other is by man and is wrong.

One does not exaggerate when they say, “As goes the home, so goes the nation.” The home is one of God’s masterpieces, and the quality of the home directly influences the quality of the nation. The Lord never intended for Christians to overtake society and force them to do His will (Matthew 26:52; John 18:36; cf. Matthew 13:44-46). Therefore, as the purpose of a Christian home is to be a good influence among society, we need to study different ways in which our nation can be exalted.

I. *The Christian Home Exalts A Nation By Showing How To Have Exemplary Character*

- A. It is astounding that this country has had this debate. How can character not matter? The true Christian knows better.
 1. Thomas Carlyle once said, “Instead of saying that man is the creature of circumstance, it would be nearer the mark to say that man is the architect of circumstance. It is character which builds an existence out of circumstance. From the same materials one man builds palaces, another hovels; one warehouses, another villas; bricks and mortar are mortar and bricks until the architect can make them something else.”
 2. A Christian home must have impeccable character (Ephesians 4:22-32; Colossians 3:5-17), and that character is found in the Bible (Psalm 119:9).
 - a) For example, this is a “Date Line” taken from Dear Abby several years ago: “The parents of my girlfriend place their trust in me. I will not violate it. I will respect my girlfriend as I expect other men to respect my sister. I will respect womanhood, because my mother is a woman. I will ask my girlfriend to do nothing I would be ashamed of if my mother found it out. My girlfriend has given me the honor and pleasure of her company. It is wrong for me to expect more in payment for this date. My girlfriend will be a wife and mother someday. She must be an example to her children and the pride of her husband. I will help her to be as pure and decent as I want my wife to be. Manhood means strength of character as well as body. Lack of self-control is a sign of

weakness. I want my girlfriend to know that I am manly. God is everywhere, sees everything, knows everything. Darkness may hide me from people, but it cannot hide me from God."

- b) We talk about unwed mothers, but there are a lot of unwed fathers out there too. Also, we teach our girls to say no, but how about teaching our boys to not ask?
- B. If Christ is the Master of our lives, the world will see the difference (2 Corinthians 3:2-3; Ephesians 5:8). The Christian home that has members who are honest, decent, and have integrity will show society that we have "been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

II. ***The Christian Home Exalts A Nation By Showing How To Raise Obedient Children***

- A. James Boswell, the famous Scottish author, often referred to a special day in his childhood when his father took him fishing. The day was so fixed in his mind that he wrote about what his father taught him on that day. After having heard repeatedly of that particular day, it occurred to someone to check the journal that Boswell's father kept and ascertain what he said about the fishing trip. Turning to that date, the reader found only one sentence entered: "Gone fishing today with my son; a day wasted." How sad!
- B. Every child, because they are gifts from God (Psalm 127:3), deserves to be taught the truth (Psalm 78:5-7; Proverbs 1:8-9; 6:20-23; 23:22). Furthermore, every child ought to learn that they will be accountable to God for everything they do (Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10). Therefore, they need to remember God when they are young and live by His precepts (Proverbs 23:26; Ecclesiastes 11:9-10).
- C. May we follow in the spirit of our father Abraham (Genesis 18:19), and Manoah, the father of Samson (Judges 13:8). An anonymous proverb says, "Give me a child for the first seven years, and you may do what you like with him afterwards."

III. ***The Christian Home Exalts A Nation By Showing How To Honorably Work***

- A. It is sad to see some who hold the same view of work as Mark Twain: "I do not like work even when someone else does it." Ulysses S. Grant said, "Labor disgraces no man, but occasionally men disgrace labor." Every Christian ought to learn that everything belongs to God and that all is done to His glory (Psalm 24:1; 89:11; Galatians 1:21-24).
- B. Working is integral to God's nature (Jeremiah 10:12), and all His creatures reflect His nature when they work and enjoy the fruits of their labor (Ecclesiastes 3:13). Work is meant to bring us a sense of

joy, satisfaction, dignity, and respect (Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 4:11-12).

1. Jesus and His disciples exemplified a life of working in various occupations, and through many of His parables Jesus taught godly principles by using illustrations involving work: fairness and generosity in dealing with employees (Matthew 18:23-35; 20:1-16), resourcefulness in investing (Matthew 25:14-30), and shrewdness and prudence (Luke 16:1-13).
 2. The Bible specifically details the proper relationship between employers and employees.
 - a) As employees, Christians must render honest service to their employers (Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22-25). This adorns the doctrine of God (Titus 2:9-10).
 - b) As employers, Christians must treat their employees with respect and fairness (Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1).
- C. Working with integrity and diligence is praised, while dishonesty, laziness, and slothfulness are condemned (Proverbs 6:6-11; Ecclesiastes 4:5).

IV. ***The Christian Home Exalts A Nation By Showing How To Face Life***

- A. Some have a terrible view of life. For example, H. L. Mencken said, "Life is a dead-end street" (cf. Ecclesiastes 1:2). But the Christian always must view the godly life as the most desirable and valuable way to live and full of delight, especially during hardships (James 1:2-4).
1. This is in stark contrast to men who set worthless goals and worship the false gods of money, fame, and fortune.
 2. Those who fail to achieve those goals are often disappointed, frustrated, and unhappy while those who do achieve success find that it does not satisfy.
- B. Jesus came to give us abundant life (John 10:10). This is life which is more than one would normally expect or anticipate; it is a full, rich, and satisfying life. Abundant life is found here on this earth by contentment (Philippians 4:11; 1 Timothy 6:8), while abundant life is found in eternity by doing the Lord's will (Psalm 144:15; Jeremiah 9:23-24). Indeed, the best use of life is to spend it for something that outlasts life.

Conclusion. The greatest event that can occur on this earth is for a human being to believe in, love, and submit his life to Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:9). When a truly faithful Christian man and woman marry, establishing a Christian home, something comes into being that is worth more to the nation in which they live than all of the gold, silver, armed

forces, etc., which exists in all the earth. We pray that men and women see the great value of Christian homes and that all may be persuaded to establish and maintain a Christian home.