

The Value Of A Great Family

Introduction. God intends for every family to be great! Great families are not reserved for any specific group because of location, age, color, race, or economic position, but they are great if, and only if, they adhere to God's instructions. Happiness is found in the home! Sociologists, psychiatrists, marriage counselors, and preachers all affirm the great truth that the home is the foundation of society and civilization. In fact, the home is so fundamental to society that a nation reflects in graphic detail the kind of homes found in that country.

Disaster seems to be coming ever closer in our generation because of our neglect of family and home. Unfortunately, the Athenian syndrome, or desiring to hear or tell of something new (Acts 17:21), has often caused the neglect and rejection of truth until disaster strikes, but good principles have been around for a long time in the Bible. Society cannot survive if the God-ordained institution of the home and family is destroyed. It should be obvious at least to Christians that the home is essential to society and the church, so today we are going to examine what makes a family great and where this greatness can best be seen.

I. **What Makes A Family Great?**

A. Godly husbands and fathers.

1. The husband is the cornerstone of discipline, the strength of love, and the example to emulate. He must bear responsibility, bear up under adversity, and seek the spiritual welfare of each member of the family including himself.
2. To be a truly great Christian husband and father one must be the right kind of man. There are many scriptures regarding the responsibilities of husbands and fathers.
 - a) He is to be the head and provide spiritual leadership for his family (Genesis 3:16; 18:19; Joshua 24:15; 1 Corinthians 11:3, 7-9; 1 Timothy 3:4-5).
 - b) He is to love, understand, honor, and be loyal to his wife (Ephesians 5:25, 28-29; Colossians 3:19; 1 Peter 3:7).
 - c) He is to give spiritual training to his children (Psalm 44:1; 78:5-7; Ephesians 6:4).
 - d) He is to show compassion and care for his children (Psalm 103:13; Matthew 7:11; 1 Thessalonians 2:11; 1 Timothy 5:8).
 - e) He is to control and discipline his children (Proverbs 13:24; 19:18; 1 Timothy 3:4-5; Hebrews 12:5-11).

B. Godly wives and mothers.

1. Motherhood is perhaps the most special and dignified position of all God's gifts, save the gift of being made in God's image. She is

uniquely qualified for the work of bearing children, keeping the home, and of fostering love, companionship, and security for her husband and children.

2. The following are some of the responsibilities of a godly wife and mother.
 - a) She is to submit to her husband (Ephesians 5:22, 24; Colossians 3:18; 1 Peter 3:5-6).
 - b) She is to respect and love her husband (Ephesians 5:33; Titus 2:4).
 - c) She is to help in the spiritual training of her children (Proverbs 1:8-9; 2 Timothy 3:15).
 - d) She is to care for and love her children (1 Thessalonians 2:7; 1 Timothy 5:10; Titus 2:4).
 - e) She is to be virtuous and productive (2 Timothy 1:5; Psalm 128:3; Proverbs 31:13-31; 1 Timothy 5:14).

C. Godly children.

1. Children are a heritage from the Lord (Psalm 127:3). They are a grand blessing and we must do all we can to raise them properly.
2. However, they bear responsibilities just like their parents.
 - a) They must remember God in their youth (1 Kings 18:12; Ecclesiastes 12:1).
 - b) They must obey their parents (Proverbs 7:1-4; 23:22; Ephesians 6:1; Colossians 3:20).
 - c) They must honor their parents and heed their instruction (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 4:10; Psalm 34:11; Proverbs 1:8-9; 3:1-2; 31:28; Ephesians 6:2-3).
 - d) They must care for their parents (John 19:25-27; 1 Timothy 5:4).
 - e) They must have integrity and moral purity (Proverbs 11:3; 19:1; 1 Timothy 4:12).

D. Godly grandparents.

1. Grandparents can be a fantastic help to great families (Proverbs 17:6), and Lois, the grandparent of Timothy, gives us a wonderful example (2 Timothy 1:5).
2. The overall role of grandparents is their ability to teach by their means of righteous example, by their words of counsel, encouragement, sympathy, and by their helpfulness in times of need.

II. ***Where Can A Family Be Great?***

A. The home.

1. The most obvious place where a family can be great is the home. Family members who are godly, well-taught, well-trained, and well-disciplined make homes which will function in the best possible way.
2. Whenever a family has been scarred by divorce, rebellious children, or some other sin, it leaves a very distinctive mark.
 - a) "Nuclear families" are on the decline and single parent or same-sex marriages are increasing.
 - b) When children grow up and raise families along these same principles, pretty soon you have increased crime, lowered morals, and little respect for the pattern God placed in the Bible for a happy, healthy home.
3. We need people like Jacob who, when called by God, told his family to put away evil and turn to God (Genesis 35:1-4).

B. The church.

1. Great elders, deacons, preachers, Bible class teachers, and members are usually products of good homes.
 - a) If the husband is supplanted as the head of his wife, then Christ's position as head of the church will not be respected.
 - b) If children are no longer required to obey and honor their parents, obedience and reverence for God will diminish.
 - c) When marriage vows are easily broken, faithfulness and commitment to Christ will often be casually abandoned.
2. Good homes provide a congregation with stability. The members of a good home can be counted on because they know who they are and who to serve. They have in their homes a sense of belonging and a sense of worth. They have solutions instead of problems. They are able to serve, not just be served.
3. Churches need people like Paul who honor truth enough that when they learn they are wrong, they do not hesitate to repent (Acts 26:15-19).

C. The community.

1. If the home allows, pornography, gambling, prostitution, and crime will proliferate. But if homes are concerned and unite, they can often strike down enemies in their community, in a lawful manner, thereby making it better.
2. Great families have great opportunities to be salt and light by their godly example (John 4:28-29). These opportunities allow us to spread the gospel to those closest to us and have a counteracting effect on society's sinful influences.

D. The nation.

1. In foreign countries, you can easily see the effect when biblical principles and Christian values are replaced by different religious systems.
 - a) Islam allows polygamy which attacks the very foundation of a great home by breeding jealousy, immorality, and deceit.
 - b) It degrades women and neglects children. As a result of such poor conditions in a home the entire nation suffers.
2. Those nations which have become great and accomplished lasting good had as their basis good homes where children were taught, trained, and nurtured in love, discipline, honor, and godliness (Proverbs 14:34). The Israelites were blessed when they stood unflinchingly in the truth (Deuteronomy 28:1-2).

Conclusion. Only a few short decades ago, children were loved and desired, parents sacrificed, and children obeyed. Today, our homes, churches, communities, and nation suffer because of materialistic attitudes, selfishness, neglect, and a lack of respect for God.

The family can make all the difference and the difference is made by the family. Great families make a great world and our families can be great. Good and godly homes can only come from good and godly people, and their value can be eternal.