

Sermon Mark S. Aites
THE FAMILY AND HER VALUES CAN BUILD UP THE CHURCH

TEXT: DEUT. 6:4-9,17

INTRODUCTION:

1. No institution so effects society as does the home.
 - 1) Nations have been toppled from within because of the deterioration of the home.
 - 2) History tells the tale of Rome; the once vast empire that was built on strong families; but by the 1st century was crumbling from within from its godless humanism, turmoil in government, and rampant "open marriages."
 - 3) Jerome in his writings spoke of one woman of Rome who had just married her 23rd husband, and she was his 21st wife.
 - 4) Although history tells us of the invading armies that eventually destroyed Rome; it should be noted, that much of Rome's demise came from its deterioration from within.
2. Just as nations can be effected by the home, so can the church.
3. Several years ago, received material: "The church (in any given community), will never be stronger than the strength of the average home in the church."
4. Point: When there is failure in the home, there is going to be failure in the church. When there is success in the home, where God's word is taught and lived diligently, there will be growth and edification in the church.
5. Theme this hour: the family and her values can build up the church.
6. Values - that which is of worth and importance.
7. Those values are important to the church if they have their basis in the Divine Standard -- the Word of God.
8. Moses taught the children of Israel to teach the Divine precepts of God continuously in the home!
 - 1) Sitting in the house.
 - 2) When you're walking with your children.
 - 3) When you are preparing for sleep, and when you wake up.
 - 4) **Deut. 6:6** They were to be in their hearts; memorization.
 - 5) *As frontlets between their eyes* that they would be constantly reminded of these things.
 - 6) They were to write them upon the posts of their homes: some did use small cylinders They attached them to their door-posts with pieces of parchment containing these verses and those of **11:13-21**. (Hebrew custom -- Mezuzah.)
9. God placed the highest priority upon family values; that is values which were based on divine instruction.
10. Premise for this lesson: the church can be built up, strengthened, and edified when the family has proper biblical values.
11. In this lesson we want to consider some things which will help to strengthen families spiritually which will in turn strengthen the church.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PROPER PRIORITIES.

- A. I know of a good congregation, wonderful people.
 1. Notice that the entire community has a great love for sports. Certainly there is nothing wrong with sports.
 2. But some of the families are obsessed with sports; football, basketball, soccer,

softball; all year, sports!

4. While in and of itself, these things are not wrong; many of the families place these events before the Lord; forsaking the assembly; lacking in participation in those matters which would build up the church and save souls.
 5. I have observed these matters for a time. These are members of the body of Christ that need reproof and rebuke (**cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17**).
- B. The Bible has much to say about our priorities:
1. *Thou shalt have no other gods before Me (Exod. 20:3)*. Anything put before the Lord is a god.
 2. *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God (Ex. 20:5; Matt. 6:33)*.
 3. *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break thru and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matt. 6:19-21)*.
 4. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. (Col. 3:1-3)*.
- C. When the priorities in the home are placed on spiritual matters, then the church will benefit and will be strengthened.
1. There won't be the concern with the forsaking of the assembly (**cf. Heb. 10:25**).
 2. There won't be the concern about scheduling gospel meetings or other church activities because conflicts with social and sporting events won't be a problem.
 3. **Illus.** Knew of Deacons in a congregation that bowled in their league during a gospel meeting.
 4. I'm not picking on sports; I'm picking and preaching against mixed priorities!
- D. When the Lord comes first, when we diligently teach His precepts and put the church and its activities first in our homes, as Jesus intended the church cannot help but to be edified.
- E. And while we are speaking about spiritual priorities, emphasis needs to be given in the home to such matters as Bible study and prayer.
1. How much encouragement do we give our young people to study God's Word?
 2. One cannot be about the business of saving souls without spending time with God's Word.
 3. But let me just say, concern needs to be expressed also for our young people as they have so many things to take up their time, and little time for what really matters.
 4. I wish it could be said to every young person in every home: *...from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 3:15)*.
 5. Long ago the wise man wrote: *Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them (Eccl. 12:1)*.
 6. This reminds me of one of the youngest kings in scripture, who took the throne when he was but 8 years old; Josiah who during his reign led a sweeping reformation in Judah (**2 Kings 22ff**).

7. And O the need for prayer: thinking back for a moment on such young and righteous men as Joseph and Daniel; Daniel who prayed 3 times a day (**Dan. 6:10**).
8. When the family and her values include Bible study and prayer, the church will be edified.

II. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FIRM POLICY.

- A. Policy in reference to what our children read and to what they see.
- B. All too often our families are exposed to things in theaters and on television which are inappropriate (profanity, nudity, sex, excessive violence, suggestive talk and actions, etc.)
- C. Several years ago: Movie industry developed a rating system. "PG" - parental guidance suggested -- ought to read parental guidance demanded!
- D. The frightening thing about all of this is that in many homes the TV is raising the children, instead of the parents!
- E. They turn on the set and what do they see?
 1. Est. by age 14, the avg. child in this country will have witnessed some 13,000 murders on TV not to mention excessive numbers of fights, robberies, muggings, rapes, kidnappings, etc.
 2. Before their very eyes, the value of human life is being greatly diminished.
 3. Immorality (work of the flesh, **Gal. 5:19-21**), is common place and is glorified.
 4. Marriage is mocked (cf. **Heb. 13:4**).
 5. Brethren, there needs to be concern and a firm policy of what is and is not acceptable in the home.
- F. When homes are exposed to these kinds of things without restriction, there are going to be unpleasant results.
 1. Some may say, "I haven't seen any yet."
 2. I've heard parents rationalize: "I took my son to an "R" rated movie the other day. I didn't see any harm in it; after all, it's no worse than what he would see on TV if he stayed at home."
 3. There already is a problem: they have become desensitized:
 - 1) Ask them, how about the profanity? "There were just a few bad words." (**Illus.** Youth Leader allowing the teens to watch a movie that contained a lot of profanity.)
 - 2) Ask them, how about the nudity and sex? "There was a little bit, but after all, he is just a boy." -- not even shocked about frontal nudity.
- G. I enjoy working with computers: Old adage says, "Garbage in, garbage out."
- H. The family and her values can build up the church, when those values are based upon strong standards of decency and morality.
- I. Parents; what kind of policy do you have in your home? Beware of the box that sits in your living rooms and dens. Beware of the kinds of movies your young people are watching.
- J. Young people, beware of the peer pressure to watch and read of those things which are indecent and immoral.
- K. The Divine Standard makes it plain that we should not watch such things: *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes; I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not*

cleave unto me. (Psa. 101:3).

- L. **Matt. 5:8:** Does your policy at home invite purity or impurity? the church will be edified when purity is maintained.
- M. Our young people have a hard enough time in this world; let's not make it harder on them.

III. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIFIC PERIOD OF TIME.

- A. One of the things that hurts families today is the lack of quality time between parents and their children.
- B. We live in such a fast paced society. It has been said:
 - 1. On a typical day, the avg. father spends less than 5 minutes in meaningful discussion with his children.
 - 2. On one TV talk show, children were asked which they would rather do without; their dads or their TVs. 4 out of 5 said, "Dad."
 - 3. I realize that many mothers are just as busy; it's hard for families to make ends meet on one income.
 - 4. The concerns need to be expressed: How much quality time are you parents spending with your children?
 - 5. Believe me, if you aren't spending it with them now, there will likely be a rough road ahead.
 - 6. *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil (Eph. 5:16).*
 - 7. *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (Gal. 6:7).*
- C. The church is built up and edified when families spend meaningful time together.
 - 1. God has charged the home with the rearing of the children (**Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4**).
 - 2. The Old Testament provides a story of a man who didn't spend time with his children. His name was Eli; a priest of God.
 - 1) His sons were exceedingly wicked; *they made the Lord's people to transgress (1 Sam. 2:24).*
 - 2) *They hearkened not unto the voice of their father (1 Sam. 2:25).*
 - 3) *Eli restrained them not (1 Sam 3:13).*
 - 4) This suggests that he did not care or spend enough time with them to even discipline them.
 - 5) Being a priest of God, one cannot help but wonder if he allowed his duties to have overshadowed his role as a parent.
 - 3. Too many families today struggle because children are only receiving occasional instruction, rather than the continual instruction that Moses spoke of in our text.
- D. The old saying applies here: "Children don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."
- E. When quality time is spent in the home with one another, the church will be greatly blessed.
 - 1. Families will work together in the vineyard of the Lord.
 - 2. Sons and daughters will want to be Christians, like their parents; they will then be more active in the Lord's work, as they emulate or imitate their parents.
 - 3. Young men will be more inclined to be involved in the worship service; leading singing, offering prayers, serving at the table, and perhaps even preaching the

gospel.

4. All because they were encouraged in the home!

IV. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLICY OF PUNISHMENT

- A. One of the things I alluded to a moment ago, as I mentioned Eli, was his failure to restrain his children.
- B. One of the greatest problems in our society today is the lack of discipline in the home.
 1. Heard report--CNN: 1 in 5 children today carries a weapon; contributes to 11,000 deaths and or injuries every year.
 2. Do these things come from a lack of concern?
 - 1) One wonders: children running wild in grocery stores and doctor's offices; wild behavior in general.
 - 2) Remember, Eli failed because he *restrained them not*.
- C. *He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly (Prov. 13:24 NKJV).*
Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him (Prov. 22:15).
- D. Several things I would suggest to you concerning discipline:
 1. It needs to begin early on (**Eph 6:4**--*nurture*, includes discipline and correction; young child in this verse). You can't wait until their teens or they start school, or even kindergarten.
 2. Many brethren do not understand the need for church discipline. They fail to understand that it is an act of love.
 3. They don't understand it and don't like it because they do not come from a disciplined environment.
- F. The church can benefit greatly when her members understand and accept the need for discipline.
 1. They will have a greater respect for a "thus saith the Lord."
 2. They will have a greater respect for the leadership, and for the Lord Himself.

CONCLUSION:

1. We have only looked at 4 things in respect of the family and her values:
 - 1) Her priorities
 - 2) Her policy toward what's permissible in the home.
 - 3) Her policy in regard to a specific period of time they set aside for each other.
 - 4) Her policy toward the need for punishment and discipline.
- 2, As we pointed out in the beginning of this lesson, when the home is strong, the church will be strong.