

Subj: Marriage and Family

Text: Col. 3:18-25

Meth: Topical

Titl: The Responsibility of the Church to the Family

G.Pp: Instruct and edify

S.Pp: Instruct regarding help the family can expect from the church in order to be strengthened.

Thesis Sentence: The church is obligated to uphold God's standards for the family by protecting itself, teaching sound doctrine, and being supportive of Christian families in all aspects of life and service.

Introduction:

- A. The church is obligated to uphold God's standards for the family by protecting itself, teaching sound doctrine, and being supportive of Christian families in all aspects of life and service.
 - B. Families must take advantage of every biblical effort the church makes to help.
- I. The church has a spiritual obligation to the family.
- A. Keep itself pure from sin (Eph. 5:25-27; 1 Cor. 5:6-13).
 - B. Keep itself faithful to the word (Rev. 2-3) otherwise, the lampstand (right to represent Christ) will be removed.
 - 1. Beyond the regular worship and Bible study times, the church can provide opportunities for companionship and spiritual encouragement for families.
 - 2. The attractions and activities of the world need to be offset by the offering of wholesome, spiritually oriented periods of fellowship and by offering avenues of spiritual service.
- II. The church has a teaching obligation - to uphold God's truth and resist popular error.
- A. To teach and train husbands to be strong, spiritual leaders both in the church and in the home, otherwise both church and family will drift off course.
 - 1. The church must encourage husbands to accept their responsibilities and not abdicate all family matters to their wives.
 - 2. Husbands are to be the spiritual leaders, under Christ's headship, of the home (Eph. 5:23).
 - 3. The church must encourage and teach fathers to be able to train up their children in the Lord (Eph. 6:4).
 - B. To teach Christian women to be loving wives and responsible mothers.
 - 1. The church must encourage wives by teaching the beauty of the God-given relationship between husband and wife - the husband providing godly leadership and the wife cooperating and helping (Eph. 5:23-24, 33).
 - 2. The church should teach Christian women to be aware of the importance and great responsibility of motherhood.
 - a. Mothers should be encouraged to stay at home for the sake of the children if at all possible.

(Numerous studies have shown that the additional expenses of a two job family, i.e. babysitters, day care, work related expenses, higher tax bracket, often erase the advantage of both parents working. Every family with children should closely examine this!)

- b. The church needs to help Christian women to see that the service they render in the home and for the family is also service to God.
 - C. To present the word of God so that children will know how to please and serve the Lord. (Mal. 2:15-17)
 - 1. Bible classes should focus on teaching God's word, not on entertainment.
 - 2. Bible lessons and sermons should include topics that address the needs of young people and their future roles as husbands, wives and parents.
 - 3. The church should always uphold respect for authority in the home, the church and the nation.
 - 4. Adult Christians in the church of today have the responsibility to prepare the leadership and membership of the church of tomorrow.
 - a. The church should not dodge teaching and upholding the truth on marriage-divorce-remarriage.
 - b. Christians should expect regular preaching and teaching about fornication, homosexuality, abortion, and other immoral practices.
- III. The church has a supportive obligation - to help keep Christian families intact in an age when "alternative lifestyles" abound.
- A. To recognize and encourage faithful parents and godly children (2 Tim. 1:3-5; 2 Jn. 4 - "I rejoiced greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father.).
 - 1. To reinforce the teaching and influence of godly parents.
 - 2. To be supportive of families making tough, but biblical decisions.
 - B. Surrogate Christian "parents" and "grandparents" can be of great encouragement to families having problems.
 - C. Help, both spiritual and physical, should be available to families in crisis.

Conclusion:

- A. A challenge for the church in every age is to resist encroaching carnality, and thus becoming a social club catering to "felt needs" rather than a divine institution filling spiritual needs.
- B. A challenge facing the church today is to restore the role of husband and father in the family.
- C. A challenge facing the church today is to help Christian women to understand and willingly accept God's plan for them in the church.
- D. A challenge facing the church today is reaffirming the role that God and His word play in raising godly children, for Jehovah desires a godly seed.
- E. A challenge facing the Christian family today is taking advantage and making use of all that the church is trying to do to help.

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