

## CHRISTIAN HOME IN AN UNCHRISTIAN WORLD

by

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### THE CHRISTIAN WIFE AND MOTHER

#### "No Greater Calling"

We have considered the Christian husband and father; and before we begin the consideration of the Christian wife and mother, I would like to read a paraphrase by an unknown author of 1 Corinthians 13 which applies both to the man and the woman.

*"Though in the glamour of the public eye I saw the emotions of man by my oratory, or by my silver singing, or by my skillful playing, and then go home and gripe because supper is late, or because my clothes weren't made to suit me, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.*

*And though I am able to impress others with my vast knowledge of the deep things of the Word of GOD, and though I am able to accomplish mighty things through faith so that I become famous among men as a remover of mountains, and have not the love that reads the deep longings of the hearts around the family circle and removes the barriers that grow up in shy and tender hearts, I am nothing.*

*And though in the glamour of public praise I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I win the name and fame of a martyr by giving my body to be burned, and yet close up like a clam at home, or behave like a snapping turtle, knowing nothing of the glory of giving myself in unstinted, self-denying service to those nearest and dearest, it profiteth me nothing.*

*Love is never impatient, but kind; love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade; gives itself no airs.*

*Love is never rude, seeks not her own, for fights for her own rights, is never resentful, never imagines that others are plotting evil against her; never broods over wrongs; never exults over the mistakes of others; but is truly gladdened by goodness.*

*Love suffers silently, is always trustful, always cheerful, always patient."*

Home is the acid test of the truly yielded life, for in all other phases of Christian service there is

a certain amount of glamour; but in the home one is confronted with the bare facts of life, stripped of all glamour. The home is given to help every Christian "**not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think.**" And it is in the home that we have the privilege of demonstrating that the Christian life is "**faith which worketh by love.**"

Why is it that children fail?

To answer this directly and specifically, they fail because they are a chip off the old block. They are the imitators of their parents' moods, thoughts, motives, and the result of their parents' conversation. Many has been the time that I never realized my own unconscious action or attitude until it came back to me mirrored through my child.

Parents have come to me and asked what was wrong with their children, and why did they act like they did? If you tell them the truth that they are this way because they have picked up their parents' attitudes and actions, their own critical spirit and disposition -- they get mad. How do you like that!

People ask you for the answer and get mad when you give it.

About a year ago, a lady asked us here at 3BSB how to keep her children from being so rebellious and mean. We answered her by telling her that she needs to obey GOD herself and give her children an example - and then we posted some information about how to establish godly rules in the home - AND SHE GOT MAD AT US!!!

Why? Because she, like so many other people, was not really seeking an "ANSWER" or a "SOLUTION" to her problems - but she wanted a "BANDAID" to put on where it hurt! She had no intention of changing her life or her attitude, she just wanted us to give her a religious "feel-good" pill so that she could feel better about herself.

She wanted the kind of cheering up that she might get at a place such as some Christian Messageboards that are more interested in how to feel good than to be good! They run polls and post threads to find out what they should believe!

Well, that woman got pretty sore at us and left - and my guess is that she is still having the same kind of problems she had with her kids before she even visited us -- except that now they are worse, because the kids are a year older.

My pity is with her when they become rebellious teens. I could pray that she won't have to attend a son's funeral or visit him in jail because she was not interested in living GOD's life according to GOD's rules. Because so many people are so afraid of being called a "Legalist" they will allow their family to go to hell.

In our last lesson we saw that the Christian life was to be lived first in the home. Why is this so important? It is important first because this is where the child spends most of his or her waking hours.

Very little time is spent in Sunday School or church (at the most 5 hours a week).

Considerable time is spent in school (during the school year approximately 35 hours per week.

But most of the time is spent at home (all the rest is related to the home).

We saw that the father's responsibility was first of all in the home, then in his social contacts with the world, and finally in the church. If he is faithful in the other spheres, then, and only then, could he be used in the church. Too many young men are entering the ministry whose homes are a mess - and because so many churches are no longer living close to the world, they welcome their new pastor into a position of leadership and spiritual authority, even while the kids are swinging from the light fixtures. Oh, the signs are there - but the professing church has grown very blind and dim to the truth.

But since the home is the first place to live the Christian life, and the most important sphere from every standpoint, the wife has a far greater task and responsibility in the home than the husband.

This is due to the fact that the husband is normally only around the home 1/10th of the time that the wife is during the waking hours of the children.

For this reason, the time the husband and father is home is very important. He must meet the needs of both his wife and his children. He must be given to them and to their needs. He must not be "always" occupied with his own business and pleasure. A husband that comes home and sticks his nose in a book contributes nothing to the needs of his wife or children and can be a great detriment in the home.

There is nothing wrong with reading a book, and the average person does not read enough, but there is a principle at stake here.

For the wife and husband to grow together, they must spend time together; else they will grow apart, and he will seek his social needs elsewhere and she, elsewhere, and then the home becomes only a place where you tolerate one another and learn to live with one another without love.

The father that doesn't play with his children should never have married.

Just providing a roof over their heads and food on the table is not providing their emotional needs. Nothing upsets a wife more than to see her husband starve the children in the very thing that is most important to them. It is far better to eat beans in happiness than steak in bickering and contention. Many homes would be far better if the husband made less money but loved and played with his family, rather than working long hours and being so irritable that no one enjoys anybody.

Let me say something right here for those of you that are caught in our present day culture working long hours or gone away from home traveling for days at a time. It is possible to work under this strain and adjust to the situation. You must make every effort to devote the time you are home mainly to your wife and children.

Once in a while you may do something you want to do, but this must be the exception rather than the rule. It is making the time you are home count toward the needs of your family that is important.

In light of the fact that the wife is home with the children much more than the husband, who has the harder task and the greater responsibility in the home? The second in command does by far. Hers is the job of guiding the home.

Paul states this concerning the wife: I Timothy 5:14, " . . . **bear children, guide the house.**"

This is her responsibility. I may make suggestions, but I dare not nag her even as she is not to nag me. The kitchen is hers to manage in accordance with the budget.

In guiding the children she is second in command. If she makes a decision in reference to the children, I must stand by her at all costs; else she will become frustrated in the management of the home that she will fear to make any decision. If I feel her decision is not right, or not the best, I will speak to her in private, not before the children or before others.

These are merely business principles of management, and it is so surprising to see men manage a company with men under them, and yet not realize that the same principles apply in the home.

A manager in business must give those who manage under him some latitude in decision making.

If he does not do this, they are not managing at all, but are only employed to carry out his own dictations. Very few men would continue to work under a man like this, and who can blame them? Would you continue working at a plant if the boss tore into you before all the other employees you managed? Think it through, and perhaps you can understand something of the emotional strain of the wife.

The wife must be the Queen of the home; her role must never be reduced to that of servant.

When a woman feels she is only a servant in the home because everyone takes advantage of her, then everything caves in upon her. She will work from morning to night and never complain at all if she is loved and respected by her husband and if he sees to it that the children always show her proper respect. But let her husband not stand with her and the children will also soon rebel, and then the roof of her home caves in upon her. She becomes frustrated, discouraged and defeated.

When love goes, service becomes drudgery.

Since a woman's present home conditions are not always ideal, Paul gives specific instructions to Titus in reference to the Christian wife who is living under adverse conditions.

**"The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not**

**blasphemed"** (Titus 2:3-5)

The Christian wife is to keep the home, "workers at home," "good housekeepers." Her God-given sphere of operation and service is the home. This is the woman's high calling. This is her "**good work**" (I Timothy 5:10).

GOD has called her not to teach in the church over men (I Timothy 2:12), but to teach in a far greater and much more significant and important place -- to teach children in the home. She is to mold lives when the clay is still soft and pliable. She is to do a work for GOD that in the final analysis is in no way less important or significant than man's work. It is only in a different sphere.

If the Christian woman fully understands the significance and responsibility of her God-given sphere of operation, she could want nothing greater or different because there is nothing greater. Whenever a woman seeks to work in a different realm than that of her calling according to the Word of GOD, she seeks a lower position and service, not a higher one.

[BBB Note]

The reason that the churches are in a mess today, and the reason that the Pastor struggles so terribly against non-compliance among the members of his church is not that he isn't a great preacher, and a holy, dedicated, separated man of GOD - but because he has so little to work with in the way of good, godly men.

This is because the mothers have been so busy out working to draw a paycheck and neglecting the bringing up of the children - and vying for spiritual roles not for her in the church -- that their greater ministry of moulding and making their young boys into solid and steadfast men has been left to an already overworked pastor twenty years TOO LATE!

From Proverbs 31 we come to understand that there are two essential qualities for a great wife and mother. These are industry and thrift. "**Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her**" (31:28).

Someone has expressed the woman's sphere with these words:

"The mother's heart is the child's schoolroom."

Her influences in the home is immeasurable.

Her attitudes, conduct, words, faith, love, judgment and appearance make an indelible impression upon her children. Sometimes it is for good; other times it is for evil.

GOD shows this over and over again in the account of the kings of Israel and Judah. He does this by recording for us the mother's name of a king in this way signifies that as the mother, so the child.

[\*\*\* You want to raise a young man that will be a good husband? Then raise a young boy to be a

good son to his mother. You prospective brides-to-be out there, if you want to know how that man will treat you -- just watch how he treats his mother. Remember that a young man in the courting period is always on his best behaviour - but a sharp, keen, perceptive young lady such as yourself will be able to see when he is being his true self. If you detect rudeness and insincerity toward his mother - and you still marry him - well, sigh, there really isn't anyone else to blame later on, is there. This is why the mother has often been referred to as the "HOLY SPIRIT of the family." Just as the HOLY SPIRIT leaves an indelible mark on an obedient child of GOD - so to does the mother leave her image impressed upon her son.]

Let us look at a few of the many instances of kings and their mothers that are given in the Word of GOD.

I Kings 14:21-22.

The king is Rehoboam the son of Solomon. His mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. GOD's prophet records her name to show that her heathen extraction and her influence were the cause for the spiritual apostasy in Rehoboam's reign. The remote cause was Solomon's for taking her as his wife, but the immediate cause is a mother's influence over her son.

I Kings 15:2.

The king is Abijam, and his mother's name was Maachal, the daughter of Abishalom (i.e., the granddaughter of Absalom [II Chronicles 11:21]). This was a marriage in the family, but the prophet goes on to write that the son did not do as David did (I Kings 15:3-5). The son's acts were a mirror of his mother's teachings. GOD gives her name as a record for all eternity of her influence over her child.

I Kings 15:9-15.

Here is an exception to the rule. Asa revolted against his own mother, and his revolt was for good while her influence has been evil.

II Kings 8:26.

King Ahaziah's mother was Athaliah, and he was so evil that he married a wife just like himself (8:27). When you compare Scripture with Scripture you find the full significance of his mother's name. Athaliah was the daughter of Omri, who did evil above all the kings before him (I Kings 16:25; 22:52; II Chronicles 24:7).

Since most of the kings were evil, most of the mothers were bad and, therefore, most of the examples are negative. but this is not true in every case, so that we might realize that this works also for good.

II Chronicles 29:1 with 26:5.

King Hezekiah's mother was Abijah who was the daughter of Zechariah and he was a man of GOD.

Thus, over and over again GOD records that it was for good or for evil, depending upon the mother, not the father. This is the reason that a good king might have an evil son and an evil king might have a good son. The moral and spiritual state of the child was not conditioned by the father, but by the mother.

Notice also what Proverbs says about the home training.

At the very beginning of the book we read: "**My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother**" (1:8).

Proverbs 20:20, "**Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.**"

This is a serious thing and his lamp, i.e., his life will be snuffed out.

Proverbs 23:2-5 and Proverbs 30:11-12, 17.

Why is this instruction given? Why does GOD say this, and why is it so important even to be repeated in the New Testament so that we might know that this is still GOD's method of operation?

The reason is because the home is GOD's divine institution for the training of the next generation. The future of the world is in the hands and arms of this generation.

The place of training of Christian standards and principles is in the home.

It is not up to the Sunday School teacher or the pastor or youth leader to teach your children Christian instruction. This is your responsibility. They may help; they may supplement you, and reinforce you -- but they can never relieve you of your obligation.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 gives the principle: "**And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 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.**"

I knew one mother that would cover the cereal boxes with Scripture verses because this was one thing her children read at the breakfast table.

We as parents are to be continually speaking of the things of the Word and of the Lord. Yet this is usually the last thing most of us talk about with our children. Normally our conversation is negative. When we speak to them it is to find fault with them in this and that and then the other thing. We talk about other people and their faults before them. We complain about all that is going on at school, at church, at business, in the world. Then we wonder why it is that we have trouble with our children when they become teenagers. We just cannot understand it, for we have provided a good Christian home for them all their lives.

I was in a home in another state for several days; and during each meal, I would seek to bring the

conversation upon spiritual things. Not once in the entire two days was I successful, yet this is what would have been classified by most of us as a good Christian home. Today the children of that home have little interest in spiritual things.

Whose fault is it?

It is the parents'.

They are reaping exactly what they sowed.

And that is sad, and so unnecessary.

When do you start this teaching and training in the home?

Isaiah 28:9 and 10 tells us: "**Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little.**"

You teach by words from the time they are weaned.

You teach in other ways even before this time.

When do you stop teaching?

When they leave your home and establish their own; but until that time it is line upon line, here a little and there a little. It is to be a moment by moment instruction in their lives.

What do you do about a child that rebels?

Notice what Israel was to do under law.

**"If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear"** {Deuteronomy 21:18-21).

This shows something of how strongly GOD feels concerning the home, and the home training.

Every Christian home has some minimum standard, based upon the teachings of the Word of GOD.

This is individualistic for every Christian family. This is the minimum standard of conduct that is



permitted in the home. If a child is old enough to rebel against that minimum standard, that child is old enough to be out on his own and to live under another roof.

If they refuse to obey their parents, who have by GOD's providence been placed to instruct them, then they have lost all respect for their parents, and for what their parents stand. If this ever happens, the ministry of training the child is over.

"Oh, but if they do not stay at home they will get into all kinds of trouble." Undoubtedly they will. But they will get into a lot more trouble if you lower your standards in the home, and continue to supply them with free board and room thus giving them all the more time to do nothing but get into trouble.

If you have faithfully taught them as you should, the promise of GOD remains. They will be back if you have done your job faithfully day by day.

**"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it"** (Proverbs 22:6).

So strongly do I feel about this that if one of my children rebels from the Christian life, two things will take place.

- (1) They will leave home.
- (2) I will leave the ministry.

I may well imagine that some might think: "Why that is a terrible teaching, this thing of casting a rebellious son or daughter out of the home."

I would remind you first of all that there is always "an open door" whenever the child is willing to return and live by the minimum standard set by the Word of GOD for the home.

Secondly, if you feel this is a terrible thing to do, you do not in any wise realize the seriousness of this sin in GOD's sight.

- This thing is equal to witchcraft.
- It is equal to incest of the worst sort.
- It is equal to sin of the worst nature, and so the punishment is identical.

The reason the punishment was to be so great in the nation of Israel was because if a child gets by with this, everything falls. This only leads to further rebellion against other God-given authority. They will rebel against governmental authority as well as parental authority and GOD's authority. Consider what Peter and Jude, as well as Paul and John, say about men in the last days and their rebellion against authority.

This rebellion against all authority is just what is happening today. In the last days there will be a complete breakdown of the home, and the end result, chaotic conditions in every sphere. We are living in an age where the Christian home is a unique thing. GOD wants us as families, as well as individuals, to shine as lights in the world.

GOD's desire is that our homes be guided by three governing principles.

1. Parents in a place of God-given authority and are thus respected by the children.
2. Wrongs must be punished.
3. Love is given to all members of the family even in the midst of punishment and in spite of unloveliness. Love is never to be conditional. You never say to Johnnie, "If you do this, Mommie won't love you . . . or will love you."

Why does GOD desire these things? Simply because if a child learns respect, discipline and unconditional love in the home, he will understand the Lord in the spiritual realm.

The Lord must be respected: "**Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire**" (Hebrews 12:28).

He cannot let wrongs go unpunished even though He will be long-suffering. His love for us is unconditional. He loves us in spite of our sins.

The key to the future homes, for good or for evil, is in the hands, not of the men, but in the hands of you mothers.

It is no small task and no little calling.

In fact, what greater calling could anyone have than to hold the destiny of other generations, if the Lord should tarry His coming, in your hands and arms?

Never despise your position nor the Lord's calling for you, but use it by His power and ability to His glory, and great shall be your reward.

You may never cross an ocean and speak of the Lord JESUS CHRIST in a foreign language, and so feel your life has never accomplished great things for the Lord, but such need not be the case as Hattie Vose Hall brings out in her poem, "A Child's Immortal Soul."

"A builder builded a temple:  
He wrought it with care and skill --  
Pillars and groins and arches,  
All fashioned to do his will,  
And men said as they saw its beauty,  
'It shall never know decay.  
Great is thy skill, O builder!  
Thy fame shall endure for aye.

"A mother builded a temple  
With infinite loving care,  
Planning each arch with patience,  
Laying each stone with prayer.

None praised her unceasing efforts,  
None knew of her wondrous plan,  
For the temple the mother builded  
Was unseen by the eye of man.

"Gone is the builder's temple --  
Crumbled into the dust:  
Low lies each stately pillar,  
Food for consuming rust.  
But the temple the mother builded  
Will last while the ages roll,  
For what a beautiful unseen temple,  
Was a child's immortal soul!"

~ end of chapter 9 ~

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