

Faithful Families

By: Lenny Chapman

Local neighborhoods, communities, and churches are all made up of families. The strengths or weaknesses of these places are dependent upon the families that make up their body. Unfortunately today, the strong, vibrant, morally sound family is becoming an endangered species. The weakening of the family structure has been declared a major concern by our own government. Federal funding has been directed to this cause for television advertisements ranging from teaching parents the importance of talking to their children to having at least one meal a week together. God's plan for the family has never been to breed weakness or non-communication between family members.

In the beginning, after man was created, God saw that Adam was alone. He created a "help-meet" for him (Gen 2:18). As the two became one in marriage, (Gen 2:24), the responsibilities (roles), of the man and the woman began. There are generally two types of responsibilities to make a family strong in foundation and faith. The two types are mutual and specific. The mutual responsibilities deal with the love and respect each member has for the other, as well as the upbringing of the children. The specific responsibilities relate to the God given roles of the husband, wife, and the children. Accepting and applying these responsibilities as God directed, will build the strong, solid foundation for a faithful Christian family.

Husband & Wife

The union of the husband and wife designates the start of the family. The man and woman need to choose their mate carefully, for marriage is intended to last a lifetime, (Rom 7:1-4). As important as choosing the right mate, is marrying for the right reasons, and committing to the marriage completely, (Eph 5:25-33). The husband and wife have responsibilities to love, and to be faithful to one another, along with accepting the marriage roles given by God, (1Pet 3:1-8; Col 3:18-19; Heb 13:4; 1Cor 7:2-3). Willingly accepting these roles will allow the marriage to mature with the least amount of difficulties.

Parents

It is extremely important for the parents to understand their God given duties because they are an example from which their children will learn. From an early age children begin to imitate their parents, and usually desire to be "just-like" mom or dad. Children learn at a rapid pace and it is vital to the success of the family that Christian values have a high place on the learning scale. Those parents that live with God at the foundation seem to have it easier as their children grow older, (Pro 22:6). Many of the key ingredients of a Christian may be instilled in them from years of observing their

parents behavior. Practicing what you preach is imperative. A child will also be influenced by verbal teachings from their youth, (2Tim 1:3-5). Parents who put God first in the family will be able to teach their children the benefits of sharing a deep love for one another. By example, parents can also teach their children to study the Bible, pray regularly, and the importance of doing work for the church, etc. The most important responsibility a parent has is to raise their child in the admonition of the Lord, (Eph 6:4).

Children

For children and teenagers alike, life can seem very challenging at times. These years can be some of the best in life while living under the guidance and securities of their parents. As parents do their part to give a strong foundation to the family, the children also have responsibilities that need to be fulfilled. They are to love and respect their parents and siblings. They should obey their parents without resistance, (Col 3:20; Eph 6:1-3). Young people should learn how to work at home, and in the community. Doing so will teach them to provide for themselves as they grow older, and even for their parents if necessary, (Eph 4:28; 1Tim 5:4).

The blueprint to building a strong, faithful family is written within the pages of the Bible. A family that builds with God as its foundation is a family that will enjoy all the blessings of a close, loving, faithful family.