

“Family” Problems

I’m sure I’m neither the first nor the only one to have said that **“If there is a problem in the church, I know the cause: Someone(s) is not feeling, thinking, and/or acting like Christ.”** Period, end of sentence. The solution, therefore, becomes obvious, though perhaps not necessarily easy to execute (the *problem*, not the *person!*).

But many difficulties we face are family-oriented, thus the ubiquitous “family problems” also deserve some attention. But before we go any further, let’s be clear about a couple of things: 1) The “family” is *ordained* and *ordered* by God, and thus works remarkably well when implemented according to His dictates and parameters for both the family as a whole, and the specific roles and responsibilities within it; and, 2) Thus, most “family problems” result from a departure, or multiple departures, from what God prescribed; and are best treated by a hasty retreat back to the Book and its application.

In this vein, please consider...

- When **husbands** aren’t the kind of *loving, sacrificial, and sanctifying “head”* described and prescribed by the example of Christ in Eph.5:25-31,33a, there will be **“family problems.”** Likewise, when **husbands** fail to *“live with”* their wives *“in an understanding way”* and *“grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life”* as in 1Pet.5:2, there will be **“family problems.”**
- When **wives** are not the kind of *submissive, respectful, glorious, and holy and blameless “bride”* described and prescribed as per the example of the church in Eph.5:22,26-27,33b, there will be **“family problems.”** And again, if **wives** fail to be *“chaste and respectful”* in their behavior and emphasize their *external adornment* over the *inner “imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit”* as 1Pet.3:1-4, there will be **“family problems.”**
- When **husbands & wives** don’t *“honor”* their marriage (Heb.13:4) and follow the described and prescribed *“duties”* of their sexual relationship according to 1Cor.7:1-5, there will be **“family problems.”**
- When **parents**, and specifically **fathers** who are either absent or abdicated, don’t *“bring up”* their children *“in the discipline and instruction of the Lord”* (Eph.6:4) according the *loving* example of God our Father and His *“discipline”* of His children (Heb.12:5-13), there will be **“family problems.”**
- When **children** despise and reject their parents’ *wise counsel* (Prov.1:8ff) and refuse to *“honor”* and *“obey”* their parents *“in the Lord,”* Eph.6:1-3, there will be **“family problems.”**

Some will surely object to these basic dictates with “It’s not that simple!” But dear husband, wife, couple, parents, and children, **“Yes, it is.”** Though not a complete course in combating “family problems,” the above passages contain the basic tenets of God’s wisdom for the proper formation and function of the “family”... **which He created and ordained.** Do we really think we know more about such than the Originator (cf. Isa.55:8-9; Jer.10:23)? So before you destroy your family, why not go back and read (and reread) the “Owner/Operator’s Manual,” and try it again the way its Creator intended? (Philip C. Strong; Viking Drive Church of Christ; 3791 Viking Drive, Bossier City, LA; online at vikingdrivechurchofchrist.com; email to mrpcstrong@hotmail.com)