

Essentials For A Good Christian Family And Home.

Text: 1 Tim 2:8-10

1) Pious parents

Suggested Hymns:

2) An atmosphere of love

587, 442, 588, 589, 164

3) A proper sense of values

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is 1 Timothy 2:8-10, ⁸ *I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;* ⁹ *in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing,* ¹⁰ *but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Mother's Day has gained much popularity in the world. It isn't necessary for the church to exhort people on this day to give expression to love for mothers or to cherish memories of mothers who have been called into eternity.

Nevertheless, as we focus attention upon the holy station of motherhood in life, we cannot but be conscious of that particular unit in human society where the mother is queen and where she is most important — namely, the family.

Today the church needs to focus attention upon the family. It is no secret that many thoughtful people have come to the conclusion that something has been lost in our family life in the past few decades. Many people are disturbed by juvenile delinquency. That is, young people being disrespectful to parents and authority, breaking the law and committing crimes.

The trouble is that many families apparently no longer supply to their children that which they need most of all for a stable decent Christian life. Therefore something needs to be done to help our families maintain such stability and wholesome influence that our boys and girls may grow up to be decent Christian citizens.

With that in mind, let us make a worthy contribution to the observance of Mother's Day by considering the message concerning the family.

On the basis of our text let us consider the *Essentials for a Good Christian Family and Home*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. Pious Parents

Our text is from a chapter in our Bible which outlines instructions regarding the proper order and responsibility of men and women in the church. It does not have anything to do specifically with family life as such, and yet the principles upon which these instructions are based are essential for the kind of family life we need.

First of all, on the basis of our text we want to say that it is essential for a good Christian home that we have pious parents in our homes. In other words, God-fearing parents. We have a reference to men in our text; and, of course, in the average normal home there is a man, the father of the family.

A Christian father should be characterised as one who prays to God, trusting in the crucified and resurrected Saviour for the forgiveness of all sins and for every blessing in life.

Surely, if we are to have a decent family life, then the father, who is the key figure in the family, must have holy hands, exercising spiritual leadership in his home.

That means that his life must be characterised as being definitely and positively Christian. He must be a person who is engaged in things that are pleasing to God. He must be concerned constantly about doing the right things, keeping his whole life free from such entanglements and activities that are contrary to the standards which God has set up for His people.

The father should lead a fine Christian life, giving his family a worthy example. Children should know their father as a godly man who knows how to talk to God, and who daily brings the problems and the trials that often beset the family to the Father in heaven in fervent prayer.

And then the mother in that home should match that godliness of the father. She should be a person who is humble and modest, knowing her life position in the home as the helpmeet of the husband. She should have high ideals that are

not compromised with worldliness, and being busy with her family, she should strive to make her life fruitful in good works, setting an example for her children.

She should rear her children in such a manner that they grow up to be fine Christian men and women, useful to God and mankind in this world. A godly mother and a godly prayerful father are the first essentials for a really good Christian family life and home.

2. An Atmosphere Of Love

There are other essentials that are important for a fine family and home. The next I would point out is this, that we must have a home in which there is an atmosphere of love.

Our text speaks about men holding up holy hands making prayers. Then it adds this significant expression for us, “*without wrath and doubting.*” In other words “without quarrelling, and without bitter arguments.” This points to something very important in the family life.

In the Christian family unit, husband and wife, parents and children need to be knit together closely in the bonds of faithful love. Our families and homes must be characterised by unselfish love on the part of all those who live there.

There can be no lasting contentment in the home in which there are wrath, anger, bitter quarrels, and arguments. Children who see their parents constantly at odds with each other, angry and hateful toward each other, are apt to be unhappy and ill-adjusted now and also later on in life.

If in their homes they see only heartache and find little peace, and therefore no real stability, they are likely to follow in the same steps when they grow up. Such children live in insecurity and fear, constantly worrying lest something be done or said that might disrupt the entire family. Such a home can never make for happiness and contentment, nor can it make for stability and decency in the life of the children.

Mothers in loveless homes never really have a Mother’s Day. All they have is heartache and tears, there being nothing rewarding in their lives. There is no formula for true happiness in homes where there is no love. It is very important, if we want a fine Christian family life and home, that our parents understand the need of love for each other and for their children.

They must create an atmosphere in their home that constantly will promote unity and peace and understanding among all the members of the family. Our children need to know that they are wanted and loved.

We who are parents must put out of our lives and out of our thinking those tendencies which lead only to the tragedy of unhappy family life. It is the parents' responsibility to promote a relationship in the family that makes for confidence and joy in being together.

To this end there must be in every home a pervading love which gives strength and meaning to life for everyone within the family circle. This is something we ought to take for granted in our Christian families, but tragically, we are all sinners and have to contend with the weakness of our flesh.

We need to crucify the old Adam in us and be ruled by the Holy Spirit. In this power of the Holy Spirit, let us look to our loving Saviour and follow after Him who has demonstrated a remarkable sacrifice of love for all of us. In patience, with understanding and compassion, He deals with us, always ready to forgive our sins and to wash us white as snow in His precious blood, keeping us secure in the family of God. Rejoicing in our Saviour's love, let us have families and homes where love rules in the hearts of all.

3. A Proper Sense of Values

There is yet another essential ingredient for good family life that is frequently overlooked. We must have a proper sense of values in life. That is brought to our attention in the words of our text that are addressed especially to women. We read in our text, "*in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing.*"

These words indicate to us that, in general, Christian women ought to have a good understanding of the things that are really important in life. Life is more than just fashionable clothes and costly ornaments of gold and jewellery.

Our text is a general admonition to women in the church that they should keep themselves humble and modest, knowing that the most important values in life are that they adorn themselves with good works as is fitting for women who profess godliness.

We recognise that fashions today are different from what they were 2,000 years ago, when our text was written. We realise that in those days it was mostly women of ill repute who adorned themselves with all kinds of things that set them apart from respectable society.

Paul wants Christian women to know what truly makes them beautiful in the eyes of God and of their fellow Christians. How you dress reveals what you think, what is important in your life, and what is in your heart. *“To dress modestly, with decency and propriety”* does not call for clothing that is unattractive, drab, uncomely, or an appearance that is neglectful and disorderly. Rather, it speaks of a sense of what is proper and in good taste. It shows good judgment, recognising what is decent and proper according to God’s standards. Thus it can give evidence of a heart in which Christ dwells by faith.

On the other hand, hair “braided” in a way to attract undue attention, striking golden jewellery and pearls, and expensive clothes that make a show of riches may tell the observer about a woman’s vanity and a preoccupation with displaying and making a show of her physical beauty. It may reveal a heart that is centred on self and wealth.

Today in explaining the meaning of the term *“braided hair”* we could also include the description of ungodly spiky coloured hair styles and also tattoos. All of which attract undue attention.

Christian women are to adorn themselves *“with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.”* Their beauty is not simply external but a beauty of the heart that expresses itself in doing works that are pleasing to God.

Peter, addressing Christian wives, similarly describes their true beauty as we read in 1 Peter 3:3-6, ³ *Do not let your adornment be merely outward -- arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel --* ⁴ *rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.* ⁵ *For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands* ⁶ *as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.*

Peter referred to the example of Sarah. Paul could have cited examples like Lydia,¹ Phoebe and Priscilla,² and many others. Proverbs 31:10-31 gives a comprehensive description of a *“wife of noble character.”*

Therefore today, Christian women and mothers will seek to appear truly beautiful in a way that far surpasses mere external beauty as they live lives of faith, love, and service that reveal their true inner self.

The principle involved here is one which still applies also in our family life. We are living in an age when people consider it essential to have everything possible to make life easy and to keep up with the general trends in our society.

There are many fathers who have the notion that they are good fathers only if they succeed in business and have an income adequate to supply their families with a modern beautiful home, an expensive car, and other appliances and luxuries that money can buy.

Having supplied such material advantages, they feel that they have done their duty by their families. Thus it is easy for parents to give children the impression that the things that really count in life are the things they can buy with money.

For many children, success in life means nothing more than an abundance of material possessions. Such standards in life misdirect children and are responsible for many of the problems of frustration, instability, and delinquency.

It is essential for a good family life that our parents demonstrate in our home what are the true values in life. They should understand that the important things in life are the spiritual, things that have eternal significance.

We read in Matthew 6:33-34, ³³ ***“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ”*** ³⁴ ***“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. ”***

Children should grow up to understand that the highest prize we can have in life is the forgiveness of our sins and peace with God, our Father, in Christ Jesus. They should be led by their parents in the thrilling experiences of living, not for themselves but for the Lord who has redeemed us, and for our Father in heaven, who so wondrously has blessed us in His Son.

Worship at home through family devotions, and worship in the church as a family, should come to be regarded as a happy and important part of life. It is in this spirit that we ought to set up a standard of values for our children.

Blessed are the children who see in their parents the proper evaluation of the things that are spiritual and eternal. Their life will be centred in the Saviour and His kingdom, and they will grow up to have the right measurement of all the issues in life.

They will see that people can be truly happy and have a wonderful life, even though they may lack many of the conveniences and comforts that a great many other people possess.

They come to understand that God's children have their treasures in heaven, where thieves cannot break in and where moth and rust cannot corrupt. These are the values that people must learn to have in life if they truly want a fine Christian family life and home.

We want for ourselves and our children a happy Christian family and home.

So these are the essentials under the blessing of God: pious parents, a home in which is created and maintained a beautiful atmosphere of love, and a way of life that maintains a proper sense of values.

Follow these essentials in building and maintaining your families and homes, and you will have many reasons to thank God for the joy and contentment and strength that comes to you in life.

Thus, on Mother's Day and always, we, as faithful believers in Christ Jesus, should seek to glorify our God in our families, and finally, all rejoice together in the realms of glory with the angels and all saints as one great family in heaven. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Acts 16:14-15

² Romans 16:1-4