



October 2008 **Pastor Randy Richards**
Sunday School 9:45 ~ Worship Service 11:00

A Note From Our Pastor:

Dear Family of God,

It's October already, fall has arrived, and so has the time for our annual Family Day that we will have on the second Sunday of this month. So, my thoughts this month are upon the Family. One of the fascinating things about the New Testament's teaching on family life is that really there is not a great amount that is actually said. We all know that the family is a major part of any society as well as the church and that its failure is a failure of the whole society or church and will eventually lead to their destruction. We know that God is aware of the importance of the family, but for some reason he chose to record little in terms of space devoted to the family itself. Don't get me wrong, I'm not questioning or suggesting that God should have included more than what he did in the Bible. What is written is more than enough to guide us. There are the passages that instruct us on the order of the home, the authority and submission necessary for its proper function. The obedience of children is seen in several places. Husbands must love their wives and fathers must discipline their children. This is about all that is written about the family in the Bible. These verses on family life are enough that they should get our complete attention. Sermons should be preached on these passages. These verses should be used for helping troubled families. And, when the world becomes weak, as it has today, and families are being broken and destroyed, then it is necessary that we look to the scriptures and concentrate on the teachings of these family-related passages.

So, what is the point of mentioning the lack of verses on family life? It is for this reason: to point out that the way to be a good husband and father and a good wife and mother, or a good child—to actually please God in this—is more about being a careful follower of Christ in general than about any specific code of behavior related to the family itself. For instance, if a man is kind in his home, not cranky or disagreeable or argumentative, then the family will be a much more peaceful place. If a child lives lovingly toward the other members of their family, just as he is commanded to do towards all people, then the home will have relief from many of its troubles. If the wife will forgive the husband for his faults, (and vice versa) then there will be hope for harmony and happiness in their marriage. There is nothing in what I've said that is not expected of every Christian; actually this should be the goal of every Christian. However, for your family itself or in a family's particular situation, such simple acts may be the key to having hope for keeping the family together. If so, then a good place to start might be applying the following verses as a general rule of thumb in regards to the home: **“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.” (Ephesians 4:31-32)**

There is enough in these two verses to greatly transform homes. It would surprise a lot of folks to see what joy can return to the home if these very verses are obeyed. Of course, I'm already feeling guilty because I often fall short of this law of love. We all become very unlikable when we get too focused on the self. But there is hope. Like exercise, we will have no benefits from any truths, unless they are practiced and obeyed. So, if we want our family to remain strong and unified, then we must abide by the principles of these verses, as well as other truths in God's Word.

These verses are a family seminar in a capsule. Memorize and practice these important words and you will benefit perhaps more than if you had spilled your soul to a counselor. If family counselors could read this, I would suspect that they would agree with me. However, I realize that some people are too far gone in their marriage and some may have some really difficult issues to deal with that require expert help. I also know that simple statements about loving each other may not seem to be enough. But these words are not just any words, and they are not insignificant-- they are God's plan for us, our families, to get along. Even the early apostles had to live by these warnings. If the Apostle Paul himself were your counselor, he would point you to this same set of commandments. And, remember, if we are true Christians, we can and should obey them. May God bless each of you and your families. My prayers are with you all, day and night.

In Christ's Love -- Randy