

The Importance of Family in the Bible
FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
May 29, 2010

Our group seems to have a strong feeling for family. Sometimes, family brings great joy. Too often, family brings a great deal of stress.

This past week, Genevieve's sister died and her son, Carl, had some challenges following his knee surgery.

This weekend, many of our group are off with their families. Carissa and Vicki have started a traditional Memorial Day mini-vacation in San Antonio. The Cavender family is together for a reunion of sorts. Carmen's sister is in town. Pat Nelson is with family. And some Sabbaths we just declare a "family day".

Sometimes our "family" has "extensions". My parents were so close to some people that we called them Uncle and Aunt even though they were not blood relatives. Uncle Myer and Aunt Betty, Uncle Bo and Aunt Ruth were as close, and maybe, in some ways, even closer than blood relatives. Many of you have described this group as your "family" and we all try to treat one another as such.

The Bible stresses the importance of family in many ways. The first that I will draw to your attention is in the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 20

- 12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

"Honor" is Strong's #3513 = kabad = to be heavy, either in a good sense or a bad sense

Matthew 15:

- 1 Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying,
- 2 "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."
- 3 He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?"
- 4 "For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.'
- 5 "But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God" --
- 6 'then he need not honor his father or mother.' Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.

"Honor" is Strong's #5091 = timao = honor; value; esteem

Matthew 19:

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FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
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- 16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"
- 17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."
- 18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,'
- 19 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"
 - Jesus felt this commandment was important enough to include it in identifying the commandments He was citing.

John 8:

- 45 "But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.
- 46 "Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?
- 47 "He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."
- 48 Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?"
- 49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.
 - Everything Jesus did, He did as the will of His Father – to honor Him

John 12:

- 26 "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.
 - By obeying God's commandments, and Jesus' example, we honor God

Ephesians 6:

- 1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
- 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise:
- 3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."
- 4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.
 - Paul adds the caveat that fathers are to treat their children properly, too

Family was important enough for God to make it one of the Ten Commandments. It is:

- number 1 among the list among the final six commandments regarding how to live with others – ahead of:
 - killing
 - adultery – also related to family
 - stealing
 - bearing false witness
 - coveting

The Importance of Family in the Bible
FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
May 29, 2010

- the first 4 tell us how to honor God – including Sabbath observance which is last
 - have no other gods before Him
 - do not worship idols
 - don't take His name in vain
 - observe the Sabbath
- it is the only commandment with a promise

Family and related words (children, sons, daughters, mother, father, brother, sister, wife, bride, husband and groom) are mentioned over 8000 times in the Bible (NKJV)

- Family = 246
- Children = 1191
- Sons = 2800
- Daughters 488
- Mother = 296
- Father = 1441
- Brother = 872
- Sister = 120
- Wife/bride = 495
- Husband/groom = 129

Expositor's Commentary:

“... to ‘honor’ one’s parents, involves;

- Prizing them highly
 - ***Proverbs 4:***
 - 5 Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth.
 - 6 Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you.
 - 7 Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.
 - 8 Exalt her, and she will promote you; She will bring you honor, when you embrace her.
- Caring, showing affection for them
 - ***Psalm 91:***
 - 15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him.
- Showing respect, fear or revering them
 - ***Leviticus 19:***
 - 1 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
 - 2 "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

The Importance of Family in the Bible
FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
May 29, 2010

- 3 'Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.

When Ephesians 6. 2-3 (as we read above) says, "Obey your parents," it immediately and necessarily qualifies it with "in the Lord". Parents are to be shown honor (v.2), but nowhere is their word to rival or be a substitute for Gods' Word.

The promise in Ephesians 6.2-3 attached to this commandment to revere one's parents is unique even though there is a sense in which the promise of life stands over all the commandments... The promise of a long life in the land refers primarily to the land of Canaan and the people of Israel. The national character of this language can be confirmed by referring to Deuteronomy 4.26, 33, 40; 32.46-47. The captivity of Israel would be caused, in part, by a failure to honor their parents (Ezekiel 22.7, 15). This commandment possesses what we might call a ceremonial or a national promise, but it does have present-day individual application in the same way that all the commandments were meant to give a new quality of life (without creating a merit system to gain eternal life)."

Psalms 103

- 1 Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name!
- 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits:
- 3 Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases,
- 4 Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
- 5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- 6 The LORD executes righteousness And justice for all who are oppressed.
- 7 He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.
 - David calls Israel the children of God
- 8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.
- 9 He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever.
- 10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities.
- 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;
- 12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.
- 13 As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him.
 - David acknowledged that God deeply cares for His children - us
- 14 For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.
- 15 As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes.
- 16 For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, And its place remembers it no more.
- 17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children,
 - For those of us with grandchildren, this verse takes on a deeper meaning

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May 29, 2010

Psalms 128

- 1 Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, Who walks in His ways.
- 2 When you eat the labor of your hands, You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.
- 3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine In the very heart of your house, Your children like olive plants All around your table.
- 4 Behold, thus shall the man be blessed Who fears the LORD.
- 5 The LORD bless you out of Zion, And may you see the good of Jerusalem All the days of your life.
- 6 Yes, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel!
 - Again, David relates the joys of not only children, but also of grandchildren

Proverbs 13

- 22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, But the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.
 - Our grandchildren are to benefit from our estate

Proverbs 17

- 6 Children's children are the crown of old men, And the glory of children is their father.
 - As my father told me when Quinn was born “you will enjoy your grandchildren more than you enjoyed your children”

Proverbs 31

- 10 Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.
- 11 The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain.
- 12 She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.
- 13 She seeks wool and flax, And willingly works with her hands.
- 14 She is like the merchant ships, She brings her food from afar.
- 15 She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants.
 - Remember that providing food for the household was nothing like sticking a frozen entrée into the microwave
 - She had to pick the veggies
 - She may have had to kill the meat – chicken or ox
 - Cooking it often took hours, rather than minutes
 - The meal was also for the hired hands – and possibly for the grandparents
- 16 She considers a field and buys it; From her profits she plants a vineyard.
 - She was the business person in the family
 - The husband may have been at war or otherwise engaged
- 17 She girds herself with strength, And strengthens her arms.
- 18 She perceives that her merchandise is good, And her lamp does not go out by night.

The Importance of Family in the Bible
FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
May 29, 2010

- 19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hand holds the spindle.
 - So much for the argument about a working mother!
- 20 She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.
 - She provides assistance to others
- 21 She is not afraid of snow for her household, For all her household is clothed with scarlet.
- 22 She makes tapestry for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
 - She made clothing for herself and her family
- 23 Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.
 - This is not a very flattering statement about the husband
 - There was most likely a lot more to it than this
 - But this scripture is about the wife, not the husband
- 24 She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies sashes for the merchants.
 - She also makes clothing for sale
- 25 Strength and honor are her clothing; She shall rejoice in time to come.
- 26 She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue is the law of kindness.
- 27 She watches over the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.
- 28 Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her:
 - Everyone is impressed by a woman of this type
- 29 "Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all."
- 30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
- 31 Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates.

Ephesians 3

- 14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

Acts 13

- 26 "Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent.

We are all children of the family of Abraham.

John 19:

- 26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"
- 27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

The Importance of Family in the Bible
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May 29, 2010

When there is a death, someone needs to step in to fill the void. That is our duty. One of the final actions of Christ was to see that His mother was left in good hands.

James 1:

- 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

We are all one family – the church – the ecclesia – the called out ones. We are the children of God, and He wants to spend eternity with us!