

The Christian Home I Corinthians 13

I cannot remember the author or the reference, but many years ago I read a story which time has not erased from my memory. According to the story, an artist wanted to paint the most beautiful picture in the world. His preparation motivated him to ask several people the question: “What is the most beautiful thing in the world?”

First, the artist asked this question of a pastor who said: “Faith is the most beautiful thing in the world. Faith leads to a transformed life!”

Second, the artist asked a young bride the same question. “Love is the most beautiful thing in the world,” she replied. “Without love, there is no beauty.”

Third, a weary soldier who had just returned from the front lines of battle was asked the question. “Peace,” said the soldier, “is the most beautiful thing in the world. War is terrible – an ugly thing. But wherever you find peace, you find beauty.”

How can I paint faith, love, and peace? thought the artist. And then he left his studio and went home. When he got home, he saw faith in the eyes of his children and love in the eyes of his wife. Sensing faith and love in the lives of his family members, the artist felt peace in his own heart. And so the artist painted the picture of “the most beautiful thing in the world.” And when he had completed the picture, he called it “HOME.”

I wish he had called it “The Christian Home!” Words or even a beautiful picture cannot adequately express the true beauty of a Christian home. Nor can we seem to find words to really express the vital need for real Christian homes in our day. But, with God’s help, we can try.

- I. The world today – perhaps as never before – needs strong Christian homes. Someone has said: “The world today is falling apart. A rescue is needed. And Christian home life is one powerful force in this rescue.” And someone else has wisely said: “National life never rises above the home life of the nation’s citizens and never sinks so low.”
- II. Our churches today need strong Christian homes. Dr. Robert Dyer, one of my religion professors at Wake Forest College, used to tell us: “The Christian home is the seed-bed of the church.” The Christian home and the church must work together – stand united in the accompaniment of God’s redemptive purpose in the world.

My first pastorate was at a church near Oxford, North Carolina. While reviewing our calendar of activities one month, I realized that every week the church was engaged in activities which separated families. And so the deacons and the church accepted my proposal to have “family night at church” on Monday evenings. The families came

together and our various missions activities were available for all the members of the family – even the nursery.

Every church should prayerfully examine family ministry.

- III. Every individual – especially every child – needs a strong Christian home. This involves providing all the basic necessities of life – including careful and prayerful attention to spiritual concerns. I read sometime ago about a strong Christian lady who was asked about her childhood. During the discussion she described the Christian home where she grew up and said: “My mother and father did not leave us much in the way of worldly goods, but they left us something far better – SPIRITUAL VALUES.” Thank God that was also true for me!

Yes, we need Christian homes. But what are some of the major qualities of a Christian home? Dr. Olin T. Binkley – my Christian ethics professor at seminary and one of my heroes in the ministry – lists three basic qualities of the Christian home:

1. A home dedicated completely to God and to His will for the lives of family members.
2. A spiritual fellowship with Christ at the center.
3. A producer of Christ-like character in the lives of family members.

We need Christian homes. With the hymn writer our prayer should be:

God give us Christian homes!
Homes where the Bible is loved and taught,
Homes where the Master's will is sought;
Homes crowned with beauty thy love hath wrought;
God give us Christian homes!

Amen! May it be so.

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