

Do You Have A House or a Home?

By Dr. Edward Watke Jr.

The word *home* stirs our memories. For those who had a happy Christian home, the word is exceedingly precious. Home was the first institution established by the hand of God. It came before the church, school, government, or anything else. God places a premium on the home, and we need to remember that society cannot rise higher than the home. **In fact, the home is the very foundation of civilization! Many have a house but they have never built a home.**

I. WHAT MAKES A HOME?

There are many things that help to make a home, but I can only mention five today -- but these are all important.

A. Godly, Biblical Love: (Eph. 3:17-19; I Cor. 13:1-8)

1. Biblical love is a divine love and it is seen in God's love toward us. --
(Jh. 3:16; 17; Rom. 5:8; I Jh 4:7-10)
2. Biblical love is seen in the words of Christ to His own disciples.
(John 15:9-14; John 14:23; Jh. 13:1)
3. Without the Lord in our lives we live according to our sinful, wayward heart. Then it is the source of our actions and reactions toward others.
4. Why do we read so much about putting away anger, bitterness, wrath, malice, etc., in the Word of God? (Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8) Because we are so prone to react in sinful, damaging, hurting ways because of what is in our hearts! (Study Matthew 12:33-35.)
5. The Love of Christ in our lives (Rom. 5:5), is shed abroad by the indwelling Holy Spirit. He desires to love through us. He will --
 - a. will make the hard places softer,
 - b. the rough places smoother,
 - c. the problems less difficult,
 - d. the questions easier,
 - e. and the burdens lighter.

B. Family Prayers: (sometimes called a family altar)

A young married woman once said to me, "My husband I started a family altar the first night after we were married. Reading the Bible and praying together has been such a blessing to us. We would not cease having our time in prayer and the Word of God for anything in the world."

1. See a family around the bed praying together or moving into the living room after every evening meal to read the Scripture and then all pray together. There home will be greatly blessed.
2. Psa. 37:4; Psa. 1:2-3; Josh 1:8; Eph. 6:1; James 5:16; Matt. 7:7-8

C. Consistent Christian Living: (II Pet. 1:1-9; Eph. 5:9-11)

1. This includes unselfishness, consideration, forgiveness, patience, and many other important character traits.
2. These will be manifested in our lives if Christ dwells there. In ourselves we have only a sin nature and no one has to teach us to sin!!
3. We will consistently fail without having a new life in Christ through the salvation from sin that He offers to us. Then we must have walk in the new life we have in Christ. Study what Paul has to say about our walk in Ephesians 4:1, 17-32 (a continuous section about our walk in the put-off and put-on process), and in 5:1-2, 8-18)
2. Can others see Christ in your words and deeds? Can people see the Lord in your conduct, words, motives, and reactions?

D. Tactful Leadership, Submission, and Authority -- (Eph. 5:21-33; 6:4)

1. Many parents do not lovingly, tactfully discipline their child. We can be firm and kind at the same time.
2. My father never neglected the giving of spankings when I needed them -- but he also gave much love.
3. Read and study Proverbs chapters 1 - 7.

E. Loving Obedience: Eph. 6:1-3

1. The best place to learn to obey is at home. It will come naturally for us to obey the rules at school and laws of the land -- if we learn obedience when children at home.
2. Young man, young lady, there will come a time in your life when you will deeply regret every waywardness, sin, and acts of rebellion.
4. For SIN will ruin your life.

II. WHAT BREAKS A HOME?

We all know that one little word **SIN** is the cause of all the broken homes, the blighted hopes, the wrecked ambitions, the broken promises, the despair, sorrows, heartaches, and frustrations that so many face in life. (Matt. 19:3-9 Eph. 5:21-25)

It is a sad fact that so many marriages are broken by divorces. Someone asked a movie actress, "*Are you married?*" She smilingly replied, "*Yes, occasionally.*" A divorce is a sad, and horrible thing no matter how you look at it. One famous woman went to her attorney and stated, "*I thought I had married my idea, I had an ordeal, and I have come to get a new deal!*" What a sad commentary on what marriage means to many.

Let's consider some things that break and damage homes and bring such sorrow to so many.

A. Selfishness: (Rom. 12:9-21; Phil. 2:1-4; I Cor. 13:1-8)

1. It is easy for selfish people to become stubborn, as well as live very selfishly. *For better or for worse so often becomes worse.*
2. Then we will see indifference, possibly scorn, contempt, malice and desire for revenge. Living lives of competition and combativeness many a marriage goes sour!

B. Intemperance (Dan. 1:8; Prov. 20:1)

1. Good habits and bad habits are easily formed, but bad ones are especially hard to break.
2. How horrible is drinking strong drink and its effects in lives, homes, marriages. WHY do people do what they do? God's Word gives strong warnings in Proverbs 23: 29-35.

C. Disloyalty: (Mal. 2:11-16; Matt. 19:3-9)

1. It is a horrible thing to break marriage vows. Your vows were made as a divine covenant with God Himself.
2. They were made in the presence of witnesses, and before Almighty God.
3. It is better never to make a promise than to make one and break it.

D. Poor Communication: Misunderstanding:

1. If the home is to run smoothly, sympathetic understanding must be applied constantly.
2. Life will have its ups and downs. How do we react to things that come in life?
3. Hearts are very easily broken because they are tender. It is hard to mend one when it is broken. We should never be too proud to quickly say, "I am sorrow, I have sinned, I have hurt you, please forgive me!"
4. A couple should try to understand the other's -- background, temperament, problems, needs, and concerns.

E. Bitterness: So often this is a major problem. (Col. 3:18; Eph. 4:31; I Pet. 3:9)

1. Bitterness is the *embracing of and a deepening of* anger.
2. Bitterness is a decision of our own hearts. No one can make us angry --
 - a. we choose to be angry,
 - b. we choose to hold on to hurts,
 - c. we choose to be unforgiving,
 - d. we choose to hold on to grudges,
 - e. we choose to give back hate.
3. If you look up things under counseling you will find materials to help you in the battle over anger and bitterness. Resentments allow to fester and to grow with bring ongoing bitterness with all of its results.
4. Also the book... "*Emotional Problems*"... found in the section under family will give you many answers. Seek these things from our web site.

Conclusion: A House or a HOME -- which do you have?

1. It takes more than a house to make a home.
2. You can live in a palace and have only a house.
3. You can live in a humble cottage or a small cabin or a small apartment and yet have a real home.
4. It is easy to transform a home into a place of hate, conflict, anger, and even rage.
5. A Christian home is the nearest thing on earth to heaven. It has been called an annex to the Glory land.
6. Be sure you are saved, having Christ in your heart and life. (Act 16:31; Jh. 1:12; Jh. 14:6; Lk. 19:10; Rom. 3:9-12, 5:6,8, 6:23, 10:9-13)