

The Discipline of Family Values

By Pastor Errol Naidoo for Gospel Ramah Church Men's breakfast

Saturday 29th June 2013

Definition of *FAMILY VALUES* – *Websters Dictionary*.

Values especially of a traditional or conservative kind which are held to promote the sound functioning of the family and to strengthen the fabric of society

God established the value system that set the foundations and boundaries for strong, healthy and prosperous families. These core family values then set the foundations for the development and growth of civilization. Wherever the family prospered – societies prospered as a result.

1. Discipline of Origin: Marriage and the Family is God's idea.

The Bible begins in Genesis with the marriage of a man and a woman and ends in the Book of Revelation with the marriage of Christ and His bride, the Church. In between, God provides timeless blueprints for family life, which, if followed in a spirit of humility and obedience, provide us with the only true way to maintain healthy family relationships.

The Family Manifesto declares:

Marriage: We believe God, not man, created marriage. We believe marriage was the first institution designed by God. We believe the Bible teaches that the covenant of marriage is sacred and life-long. The Bible makes it clear that marriage is a legally binding public declaration of commitment and a private consummation between one man and one woman, never between the same sex. Therefore, we believe God gives a wife to a husband and a husband to a wife, and they are to receive one another as God's unique and personal provision to help meet their mutual needs.

We believe God created marriage for the purpose of couples glorifying God as one flesh, parenting godly children, and enjoying sexual pleasure. As iron sharpens iron, we believe God uses marriage to sharpen a man and woman into the image of Jesus Christ. Just as the Trinity reflects equal worth with differing roles, we believe God created a man and a woman with equal worth but with differing roles and responsibilities in marriage.

Finally, we declare the marriage commitment must be upheld in our culture as that sacred institution of God in which men and women can experience the truest sense of spiritual, emotional, and physical intimacy, so that the two can become one. (Genesis 2:18-25; Ephesians 5:30-32; 1 Corinthians 7:3; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9, 12:25; Proverbs 27:17; Romans 1:26-27, 8:29; Hebrews 13:4; Matthew 22:30; Deuteronomy 24:5; Song of Solomon)

Family: We believe God is the originator of the family. It was established by God in His inaugural act of the marriage between a man and a woman. The Bible further defines the family through God's

instruction for married couples to have children, whether by birth or by adoption. We believe the purpose of the family is to glorify and honour God by forming the spiritual, emotional, physical, and economic foundation for individuals, the church, and any society.

It is at home that children see manhood and womanhood modelled. It is at home that moral values are taught by parents and placed into the hearts of their children. It is at home that people see the reality of a relationship with Jesus Christ modelled. It is at home that people learn to live out their convictions. Therefore, we are committed to upholding the concept of family as God's original and primary means of producing a godly offspring and passing on godly values from generation to generation. (Ephesians 3:14-15; Genesis 1:26-28; Romans 8:15,23; John 1:12; Galatians 3:29; Psalm 78:5-7; Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

2. Discipline of Calling and Purpose:

Marriage and the Family were established in the earth by God. Jesus Christ established His Church in the earth as the trustee of His Truth to defend and protect these sacred institutions.

1Timothy 3:15, "The Church of the living God is the pillar and ground of the truth."

The Church's purpose in the earth is to represent the precepts, principles and truth of God to a dark and dying world. We are called to be "Salt and Light."

That means, you and I must uphold and protect the sanctity of marriage and the family so that the world might understand that these God-given institutions are vital to our happiness & prosperity.

Tragically, the Church is failing God and society in this area. Divorce and family breakdown is just as rampant in the Church as it is in the world.

But what is the solution? How do we change this tragic situation in the Church and restore the sanctity of marriage and family in the Church once again?

3. Discipline of Biblical Order: It Begins in the Church!

1 Peter 4:17 "For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?"

Marriage and the Family must first be restored in the Church before we will see it restored in the world.

What we are seeing in the world today is nothing but a sad reflection of the state of the Church.

Pastors are getting divorced and re-married while continuing in their ministries. The message they send to congregation and the world – is that marriage is no longer a sacred and lifelong union.

The Scriptures reveal that marriage symbolises Christ relationship with His Church. Christ is the bridegroom and the Church is His Bride. This holy symbolism reflects the beauty and eternal nature of the marriage relationship that must be modelled by the Body of Christ.

Unfortunately, marriage and the family is not a priority in the Church today. Churches are so busy with building plans, television ministries, conferences and other less-important activities that the breakdown of the family in and outside the Church is hardly noticed.

But we cannot ignore these foundational institutions that God has given us. Even the Church is threatened when marriages and families continue to breakdown.

Psalm 11:3, "If the foundations are destroyed what can the righteous do?"

4. Discipline of Biblical Responsibility – It Begins With Me!

Every single born-again, blood washed, Spirit filled Christian is responsible for restoring marriage and the family to its rightful place in society.

If you and I take care of our marriages and families the way God commands us to – the transformation in the Church and society would be phenomenal.

Christians must lead by example when it comes to marriage and family.

Divorce must never be an option to the Christian. God hates divorce! He has never changed His mind about this.

Malachi 2:16 "For the Lord God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers ones garment with violence, Says the Lord of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit that you do not deal treacherously."

Parents must live as godly role models to their children. Raising your children in the admonition of the Lord doesn't just mean teaching them the Bible – it means living out the Bible as well.

Most of what our children learn from us is caught – not taught.

5. Discipline of Defending Family Values in Society.

Jesus said, "You cannot light a lamp and hide its light under a basket." The light must be placed in a high place so all can see the light.

When you and I are born again of the Spirit of Christ, a light is lit inside of us. Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. You and I reflect the light of Christ to a dark world.

When you and I fail to defend the family and the values God gave us to protect the family, what we are actually doing as Christian's, is hiding our light under a basket.

And when you and I hide our light under a basket, society is darkened and people lose their way.

The Bible says in Psalm 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

We are the trustees of the truth of God. You and I are called by God to share His principles, precepts and truth with the world. Not to hide it in the Church or in our homes.

Marriage and the family are under intense and relentless attacks from the devil. But the Church has not defended these God-given institutions. So marriage and family remains vulnerable & unprotected.

And as these institutions weaken and crumble, we experience the social chaos that comes from ignoring God's word. Crime, violence, drug & alcohol abuse, sexual immorality, prostitution, gang

culture, teen pregnancies, homosexuality, school drop-outs, and skyrocketing abortion rates are all consequences of the breakdown of marriage and the family.