

# Building Up the Church Through Strong Church Families

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## INTRODUCTION:

### A. Case Examples:

1. **ITEM:** A sixteen year old boy comes to your speaker with this startling confession: “I can’t stand my parents. I hate my dad, I wish he was dead. In fact, I tried to kill “
2. **ITEM:** A seventeen year old youth comes to your speaker with this pleading request: “Can I please talk with you. My parents won’t listen. My dad is an elder. He has time for everyone else, but he doesn’t have time for me. He thinks I don’t have anything worth while to say.”
3. **ITEM:** A nineteen year old coed on a Christian college campus comes to your speaker to ask for help. Her problem? For the past six years her father has been involved with her sexually. Her father is supposedly a leader in the Lord’s church.
4. **ITEM:** An adolescent, between the ages of 9 and 14, a resident in a children’s home in California, writes a night time prayer for sinners, wherein she prays: “I admit I am very sinful. I had a hard time with the family. Now I have no family. I was starved when I was little.”
5. **ITEM:** A college junior comes to your speaker and relays a sad message: “My parents have just informed me that I can never come home again. I am no longer their daughter. They never want to see me again.”
6. **ITEM:** On the afternoon prior to the concluding service of a gospel meeting that evening, a seventeen year old girl that had been attending the meeting, calls your speaker with this message and plea: “My mother has just kicked me out of the house. I have no place to go. I wish I were dead. In fact, about a year ago I tried to kill myself. I have been under psychiatric care. Can you help me?”
7. **ITEM:** An early morning emergency phone call, an urgent Saturday morning visit to the office and a desperate plea for help from a hurting and frustrated mother is a nearby congregation. Her problem? The night

before she had discovered that her husband had been going to their daughter’s bed before coming to hers.

- B. Each of these seven case examples have a least three major things in common.
  - 1. They are true . . . they actually happened.
  - 2. They each suggest some serious problems in the area of parent/child relationships in some homes.
  - 3. Are you ready for #3 . . . They each involve a supposedly Christian home or environment.
  - 4. They are not the strong families of which strong congregations are built.
- A. I am not plowing new ground when I tell you that today many homes and families, in the church and outside the church, are in serious trouble.
  - 1. No doubt, you know some.
  - 2. No doubt you have shed tears over some.
  - 3. Not doubt, you will again.
- B. Tragic things are happening in and to homes and families today.
  - 1. 50% of all marriages end in divorce.
    - 2. One-half of all children now live with one parent.
  - 3. 700,000 young people drop out of school annually.
  - 4. 5,000 to 6,000 young people commit suicide annually.
  - 5. 40% of all teenage girls become pregnant one or more times before reaching the age of 20.
  - 6. 52% or youth fatalities are alcohol related.
  - 7. Child abuse and abandonment are on the rise. In the past several years, there has been a 300% increase in placement of children outside the home.
  - 8. Homosexual marriages (men marrying men, women marrying women) then wanting to adopt and rear children in such an unscriptural and unwholesome environment.
  - 9. Abuses (sexual, physical, parental, etc.) running rampant through our society.
- E. A young person’s world is a turbulent world. Let me tell you what happens in a young person’s world in just one day. Each day in the United States of America . . . . .
 

2,795	Teens get pregnant
372	Teens miscarry
1,106	Teens get abortions
1,296	Teens give birth
689	Babies are born at a low birth weight
67	Babies die before one month
105	Babies die before their first birthday

27	Die from poverty
10	Children are killed by guns
30	Children are wounded by guns
6	Teens commit suicide
135,000	Students bring a gun to school
7,742	Teens become sexually active
623	Teens contact venereal disease (V.D.)
211	Youth are arrested for drugs
437	Youth are arrested for drunken driving
1,512	Teens drop out of school
1,849	Children are abused or neglected
3,288	Run away from home
1,629	Children are in adult jails
2,556	Babies are born to single parents
2,989	Children see their parents divorce

- F. My listening friend, this is not the way God intended for homes, families, and individual lives to be.
1. And because God did not want it to be this way, this is exactly the way the devil has influenced it to become.
  2. **The outcome of your home will depend on what you allow to come into you home.**

## THE HOME AND FAMILY

- A. By way of definition: ***THE HOME IS A SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP (INSTITUTION) ESTABLISHED BY GOD FOR MAN’S GOOD AND GOD’S GLORY.***
- B. By way of time: The home is the oldest institution on the face of the earth, dating back to the garden of Eden and Genesis 2.
- C. The home is God’s will and God’s way for His human creation.
1. **Genesis 2:18** – “And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”
  2. All that God legislated for the home, he legislated for man’s good. (“Man” here is used generically)
    - a. One man and one woman married for one complete lifetime.
    - b. Children conceived brought into the world through married couples.
    - c. Proper organization with the family unit.
      1. Husband as the head.
      2. Wife in subjection.
      3. Children obedient to their parents.
      4. Parents loving and caring for their children.
    - d. For love and obedience to be a part of every family unit.
    - e. Each family member fulfilling his or her God-given role.

- f. Loving each other.
  - g. Caring for each other.
  - h. Being good **to** each other.
  - i. Being good **for** each other.
  - j. Being good **with** each other.
  - k. And all . . . serving God together.
- D. Of the some 65,000,000 million families in the United States, some of them are members of the Lord’s church. May their numbers become legion.
- E. In the Bible I find:
- 1. The word “families” appearing but one time.
  - 2. On the other hand, “family” appears some 285 times. Out of those 285 times:
    - a. 284 are in the Old Testament.
    - b. One in the New Testament, and that in **Ephesians 3:1 5** wherein Paul writes “From whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.”
- F. The Lord’s church is made of up individual Christians, and Individual Christians identify with a specific congregation under the oversight of Elders and have a working relationship with a specific part of God’s overall family.
- 1. The family is made up of individuals.
  - 2. You and I are those individuals that make up families, congregations, and the church.
  - 3. You and I are the common denominators of the family, a congregation, and the church.
- G. Please listen carefully to the next six statements, for they will constitute some of the foundation upon which the remainder of the lesson will be based.
- 1. A **STRONG CHURCH** will contribute to making **STRONG FAMILIES**.
  - 2. A **WEAK CHURCH** will contribute to making **WEAK FAMILIES**.
  - 3. **STRONG FAMILIES** will contribute to making a **STRONG CHURCH**.
  - 4. **WEAK FAMILIES** will contribute to making a **WEAK CHURCH**.
  - 5. **STRONG FAMILIES** are made up of **STRONG INDIVIDUALS**.
  - 6. **WEAK FAMILIES** are made up of **WEAK INDIVIDUALS**.
- H. Therefore:
- 1. To have a stronger church, we must have stronger families.
  - 2. To have stronger families, we must have stronger individuals.
  - 3. To have stronger individuals, we must become stronger individuals through spiritual growth.
- I. Does it not stand to reason that:
- 1. If I want a stronger thee I must become a stronger me, and therefore will become a stronger we.
  - 2. When I help me I am helping my family, and when I help my family, I am helping the church.

3. When I hurt me I hurt my family, and when I hurt my family I am hurting the church. Listen to the apostle Paul as he writes in **Romans 14:7** - For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.
  - a. No one lives in a vacuum.
  - b. Every word we speak affects more than ourselves.
  - c. Every behavior impacts others.
  - d. Every mood swing . . . temperament change . . . attitude change . . . affects others  
. . . and often those others are our precious family members.
  - e. Sadly, we fail to realize the determinant all this has on the souls of our family members.
4. When you are strong in the church, you should be strong in the family.
- J. The weak cannot carry the strong anymore than the blind can lead the blind.
  1. Jesus said in **Matthew 1 5:14** - . . . And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.
  2. Paul said in **Romans 15:1** - We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Why? In order not to make ourselves weak, but the make the weak strong.
- K. Therefore:
  1. If I want a **STRONGER CHURCH** . . . I must be a **STRONGER ME**.
  2. If I want a **BETTER CHURCH** . . . I must be a **BETTER ME**.
  3. If I want a **MORE ACTIVE CHURCH** . . . I must be a **MORE ACTIVE ME**.
  4. If I want a **HARDER WORKING CHURCH** . . . I must be a **HARDER WORKING ME**.
  5. I help to **BUILD UP THE CHURCH** as I **BUILD UP ME**.
  5. And all of this bettering of self will also help better your family.
- L. When you build up you, and the building up of you helps build up your family, and you and your family help build up the church . . . then the church helps to build up weaker families.
- M. Let us examine two extremely important areas.
  1. How can families build up the church?
  2. How can the church build up families?

## HOW CAN FAMILIES BUILD UP THE CHURCH?

- A. By each member of the family being the best and most faithful Christian that he or she can.  
To the extent that you fail to do so . . .
  1. You detract from yourself.
  2. You detract from your family.
  3. You detract from the church.
- B. By each member fulfilling his or her God-given role within the family.

1. **PERMIT ME TO SPEAK TO ALL HUSBANDS . . .** May God richly bless you in your role as the husband in your home and family.
  - a. **Be a leader in the home.**
    1. **Ephesians 5:23** – “For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.”
    2. Head of the household but in devout servitude to Christ as Head over you.
  - b. **Love your wife more and more with each passing day.**
    1. If you **DO**, there will be a lot of right things you will do and a lot of wrong things you will avoid.
    2. If you **DON’T**, there will be a lot of wrong things you will do and a lot of right things you will leave undone.
    3. **Ephesians 5:25** is still in the Book – “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”
  - c. **Be faithful to your wife in all things and at all times.**
    1. Be faithful emotionally.
    2. Be faithful financially.
    3. Be faithful with your time.
    4. Be faithful romantically and sexually.
    5. Be all that God would want you to be as a husband to your wife.
  - d. **Be a good father and properly train your children.** **Ephesians 6:4** – “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”
  - e. **Provide for your physical and material needs of your family.**
    - 1 **Timothy 5:8** – “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”
  - f. **Be the spiritual leader in the home.**
2. **PERMIT ME TO SPEAK TO ALL WIVES . . .** May God richly bless you in your role as the wife in your home and family.
  - a. **Love your husband.** **Titus 2:5** – “Wives are To be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”
  - b. **Obey your husband as the leader in the home.** **Titus 2:5** – “Obedient to their own husbands.”
  - c. **Be a good keeper of your home.** **1 Timothy 5:14** – “Manage the house.”
3. **PERMIT ME TO SPEAK TO ALL CHILDREN, YOUTH, ADOLESCENTS, AND TEENS.** God has really blessed you already in having been born into a good Christian family and home. He will continue to bless you.
  - a. **Obey your parents.**

1. **Ephesians 6:1** – “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.”
  2. **Colossians 3:20** – “Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord”
  - b. **Honor your parents.** **Ephesians 6:2** – “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise.”
- C. Some additional suggestions and recommendations to **ALL** family members.
1. As a family unit, faithfully attend all the services of the church.
  2. Be an active participant in you Bible class.
  3. Participate in the programs of work in your home congregation specifically.
  4. Be active with other members of your age groups specifically and other age groups as well.
  5. Attend special services such as gospel meetings . . . Vacation Bible Schools . . . seminars . . . works-shops . . . Lectureships . . . ladies days . . . etc.
  6. Have family devotionals at home.
  7. Subscribe to good, sound Christian publication and read them . . .discuss them together.
  8. Watch sound brotherhood television programs and listen to sound gospel radio programs.
  9. Spend **QUALITY** time together.
    - a. The **QUALITY** of time may be more important than the **QUANTITY** of time.
    - b. A family night each week with each family member taking turns planning them.
    - c. Sometimes do nothing . . . but do it together.
  10. Concerning communications within the home.
    - a. Communicate . . . communicate . . . communicate.
    - b. Talk to . . .and with . . . one another.
    - c. Use pleasant tone . . . not harsh ones. Remember the great hymn . . . “Angry Words”?
      - 1 1st stanza . . . “Angry words O let them never from my tongue unbridled slip: May the heart’s best impulse ever Check them ere they soil the lip.
      2. 2nd stanza . . . Love is much too pure and holy, Friendship is too sacred far, For a moment’s reckless folly Thus to desolate and mar.
      3. 3rd stanza . . . Angry words are lightly spoken, Bit-t’reast tho’ts are rashly stirred, Brightest links of life are broken By a singly angry word.
    - d. laugh with one another
    - e. Listen to one another.
    - f. Weep with one another.

- g. Rejoice with one another.
  - h. Hurt with one another . . . and help each other get over the disappointments and hurdles.
  - i. Understand one another.
11. Recognize problems. Don't ignore them but rather resolve them according to the Bible.
  12. Love each other . . . and each other love God more.
  13. Be good to each other every day.
  14. Be helpful to each other.
  15. Be supportive of each other.
  16. Be a good example to each other. Offer encouragement to each other. Lift each other's spirits.
  17. Pray for one another . . . pray together . . . pray separately . . . pray often.
  18. Don't wait until a “little” problem becomes a “big” problem before dealing with it.
  19. Establish good family rules. sometime negotiate . . . always be fair.
  20. Always . . . And I mean always, put God first!

### **HOW CAN THE CHURCH BUILD UP FAMILIES.**

- A. Every congregation should be what Christ wants it to be and should minister to its families.
- B. Some suggestions as to how the church can build up it families.
  1. Provide proper Biblical teaching in the classrooms and from the pulpit.
  2. Know your families and know them well.
  3. Be prepared to help families when problems arise.
  4. Serve families in health and sickness . . . success and failure . . . from birth to death.
  5. In ministering to hurting families, do it as quietly as possible and in complete confidence. As families become stronger privately, it will become obvious publicly.
  6. Work with husbands, wives, counselors, attorneys, judges, and the courts in reclaiming home that are in trouble and on the verge of breaking up.
  7. Find a vital place for every family and every individual in the congregation.
    - a. Make the family feel wanted . . . needed . . . and important.
    - b. Feelings are fragile . . . handle them prayerfully.
  8. Be aware of the developmental needs of every age group and look for pressure points in individuals and families.
  9. Teach families how to conduct family devotionals at home. Explain.



**CONCLUSION:**

- A. To be scriptural in the congregation you must be scriptural in the home.
1. You can not be a hypocrite in the home and be faithful in the church.
  2. If you are strong enough through the week you will come to the congregation strong on Sunday.
  3. If you leave the congregation strong on Sunday, you will return to your family strong in the home. That is good for you . . . that is good for them . . . that is good for the church . . . and that is good for God.
- B. Brethren and listening friends:
1. Never stand guilty of weakening yourself.
  2. Never stand guilty of weakening your family . . . your home.
  3. Never stand guilty of weakening your congregation.
  4. Never stand guilty of weakening the Lord’s church. The church is the lord’s bride, and you don’t do something against another man’s bride (wife) without getting the other man’s attention. Christ is watching.
- C. You can build up the church by having a strong Christian family. You can have a strong Christian family by being a stronger Christian yourself.
- D. So much is being said today about the plight of the homeless . . . and rightly so.
1. But what about the spiritual homeless?
  2. Are you a spiritual orphan?
  3. Are you without a spiritual home?
- E. I know of a Heavenly Father that wants to adopt you into His wonderful family.
- Galatians 4:5-7** – “. . . that we might receive the adoption as sons.
- And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"
- Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”
- F. Is your family covered by the blood of Christ?
1. **ILLUSTRATION:** It was a dark night in old Egypt. The merciful Jehovah had instructed each captive family to take a lamb in its prime, shed its blood, and place the blood upon the lintels and the side post of their houses, that they might be spared when the avenging angel Passed over the land. Out of this background comes this beautiful traditional story.
- She was a little crippled, Israelitish maiden, lying upon her pallet that Passover night. As the hours passed under the cloak of darkness, the little girl called to her father, “Father, is the blood on the doorposts of our house?” “Yes dear, the blood is on the doorposts of our house.” A short time later the little girl again asked, “Father, are you sure that the blood is on our house?” The father replied, “Certainly dear, I sent one of my faithful servants to place the blood on our house.” A short time later, the little maiden said, “Father, would pick me up and carry me out so I can see

the blood on the doorposts of our house?” Gently, the father picked up his crippled daughter and carried her just outside the door. Much to his shock and amazement, there was no blood on the doorposts. Quickly he took her back inside then returned . . . secured the necessary blood from a lamb . . . and just at the last moment of grace . . . sprinkled the blood on the doorposts.

2. Friends, are you sure the blood is on the doorposts of your life?
  - a. Don't take chances, for safety and salvation is found only under the protecting blood of the Lamb of God “Who takes away the sins of the world” . . . your sins . . . and mine.
  - b. I do not want to see this service close without giving you the knowledge you need . . . and the encouragement to come to Jesus Christ in obedience to His divine will for you . . . your lovely family members . . . and all others as well.

#### **G. God's Plan for man's Salvation.**