

God's Design for Family, Part 4

Introduction

Once more, we return to the theme of God's design for family. Thus far, we have stated:

- 1) Worship is a family activity
- 2) The family must pass on godly wisdom that leads away from sin and toward God
- 3) Our imperfect families provide opportunity to reflect the perfect love of God

Today, we want to discuss that the family is a defense against societal decay. The family can keep sin out even if society allows itself to be bathed in evil.

"The way you help heal the world is that you start with your own family." Mother Teresa
"If you want to bring happiness to the world, go home and love your family." Mother Teresa

4. Family is a defense against societal decay

- ❖ Joshua 24
- ❖ Jeremiah 35
- ❖ Noah

Joshua 24

In Joshua 23-24, Joshua says farewell to the nation. He dies after leading Israel into the Promised Land (Josh 24:29). Joshua was Moses's right hand man and he knew the behavior of the people. He was there for the golden calf and when they first refused to enter the Promised Land. In these two chapters Joshua expresses concern to the leaders and the nation itself about their service to the Lord.

a) I am going to hold my family to God's standard

Joshua's determination is that he and his family will serve the Lord. He does not know what the rest of the nation is going to do with their spiritual life, but he does not have to wait to listen to see which direction others will go. As a matter of fact, he is confident many will choose not to be faithful, but that makes no difference to him or his family. He has decided they will not be directed by the constantly changing views of culture but their beliefs will be grounded on the never changing teachings of God.

The rest of society may change their mind about what is good, as they often do (see Isa 5:20) but that does not matter. Our families do not have to follow the madness of society. We can teach, follow, and hold each other accountable to what God has said. He does not know which way society is going to go or what will be popular in 10 years, but he is going to instruct his family on the path to righteousness. This is what Joshua says that his family will do.

b) Realize who we can influence

Joshua is a leader of the nation and has been in the position for some time. He has led the nation into the Promised Land and is well respected by them. Yet, despite his position he knows that he has limited influence in the nation. His greatest influence is found among his family not among the nation. We should always have a bigger impact on our family than some outside figure. Our advice may not make national news, but it could make a big difference to our family.

c) What serving the Lord Looks like

- ❖ Fear the Lord (24:14)
- ❖ Serve in sincerity and Truth (24:14)
- ❖ Holy and Jealous (24:19)
- ❖ Obey (24:24)

Jeremiah 35: Separate from the world

In the context of this passage God is using the Rechabite family to address a national problem. God tells Jeremiah to gather the family of the Rechabites and offer them wine to drink. Jeremiah does so but the family refuses and explains why (35:6-11).

Jonadab's Commands

- ❖ Do not drink wine
- ❖ Do not build houses
- ❖ Do not plant vineyard or seed
- ❖ Live in tents not house
- ❖ Moved into Jerusalem due to Babylonian invasion
- ❖ Reason: You may live many days in land (35:7)

We might look at these instructions and wonder what is wrong with living in a house or having a farm? We would say, "But everyone else is doing it!" Yet, the continue to follow these instructions long after their forefathers has died. God praises them for listening to him (35:18-19).

The family can demonstrate how we are to live separate from the world. The family can show how we are called to be separate. Everyone else may wonder what the big deal is but this is the way the family has chosen to live.

Noah: Salvation

- ❖ Genesis 6-8
- ❖ Hebrews 11:7
- ❖ See also 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5

I feel one of the overlooked aspects of Noah's story is that he saves his whole family. In the story Noah's family is referenced several times (Gen 6:18; 7:1, 13; 8:16, 18; 9:1). In the New Testament the references to Noah always mention he and his family were saved (1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5)!

- ❖ Hebrews 11:7

Did it even make a difference that Noah was righteous in such a wicked age? It did to his family. Noah saves his family!

Joshua reminds us to live faithful not matter what
The Rechabites show us how to be separate
Noah reminds us the difference it can make for our family

You may not be able to change the world, but you can influence your family!