

**A Different Perspective
Building a Godly Family (1)
09-26-1
Family Matters**

It's great. Here we are. A new week. And today we're going to start a discussion, you and I, about something completely different. Something that, well if you're a regular with us here on A Different Perspective, something we haven't talked about in quite a while. And yet it's something that impacts almost all of us. In fact, I think it impacts all of us. Because one way or another we're all part of a family.

And so this week and in fact, over the next few weeks on the program, we're going to be taking a look at what it means to build a Godly family. Tell you why! Recently here, at the ministry of Christianityworks, we asked our friends and supporters to write into us and share their prayer requests. I for one love praying with people.

And here's what struck me. At least 80% of the prayer requests we received. And I have to tell you, there were a lot of them. At least 80% were people asking for us to pray for their families. For my son. My wife. My daughter. My husband. My aunty. My cousins.

You know something, we actually care about our families. As difficult and as strife torn as many families are, blood is thicker than water. And our families really matter. So it kind of makes sense to me to spend some time talking about what it means to build a Godly family. What do you think?

Each of us, you know, we can look at our families. The good, the bad and the ugly. Kind of strange thing - families. We all imagine that out there somewhere is a perfect family. You know, mum, dad, 2.4 well adjusted children. And that perfect family is living out a perfect life. In fact, not just one of them but lots of them. Thousands. Hundreds of thousands. Millions of them. All these perfect families out there. I mean look at them, they all look so, well, perfect.

But not me. No, not my family. Mine's a blended family. Mine's a dysfunctional family. There's arguments and there's strife and people are pulling in different directions. People who haven't talked to each other for years. There's parents who drive their children nuts. There's children who just don't get it. They go off and they do their own thing and they leave their parents shaking their heads.

You get what I'm saying, right? It feels like sometimes it's just our family that's in a mess. And everyone else has got it together. You know why? It's those happy ads on television. When they're selling the four wheel drive there's always 2 or 3 happy, smiling, well adjusted children sitting in the back seat. When they're selling the breakfast cereal. The ad where the sun's shining in through the kitchen window and mum's pouring fresh orange juice while the kids are sitting there smiling, eating their healthy cereal. Oh, give me a break!

Now we're going to talk about dysfunctional families later in this week. But right now, let me make this point. It's not just you. It's not just me that have families that have tensions and issues. 99.9% of people have those sorts of families to one degree or another. And those who don't, I've got to tell you, are just kidding themselves. It varies of course. Not everyone's kid is doing drugs. Not every husband is beating his wife. But there is no such thing as the perfect family out there, there just isn't. So let's stop carrying around this burden that we've plonked on our heads that somehow 'my family doesn't measure up'.

It's not about measuring up. In my book it's about what can I do from this moment onwards to build a Godly family? What seeds can I sow? What plants can I water so that the fruit of a Godly family will grow for all to enjoy? I think that's what it's about because our families matter.

Let me ask you this - how much does your family matter to you? Just stop and sit and think for a moment. Chew it over. How much does my family mean to me? I don't know what your family looks like. Maybe some of them aren't with us anymore. Maybe, maybe some of them you haven't seen for a while. Maybe you live alone and the whole 'family' thing is distant. Maybe you never knew your mother or your father or both.

But it doesn't matter who we are or where we're at. What our family looks like. How we were brought up. Somehow we're all part of a family. And my hunch is that it was God's plan for it to be that way. It's more than a hunch.

God is three persons in one. God the Father. The Son. And the Holy Spirit. Living in perfect community. Not sure if you've ever quite thought of it this way but there we have it. The very first family - God Himself. And He says, this God who creates man, He says to Adam. Have a listen to what God says:

"It is not good that a man shall be alone so I will make him a helper as a partner."

Comes from Genesis chapter 2, verse 18. And right throughout the Old Testament, what you see is that Gods blessing for the Israelites is about having two things. Their own land and lots of children. It's about, it's about this sense of place and sense of family.

We know that family's are meant to be a blessing. It's a God thing. Right from the beginning, God isn't just one person, He's "three". He doesn't create one man alone, He creates a man and a woman so that they can have a family. In fact the very first four words of the first chapter of the first book of the Bible - Genesis, starts this way.

"In the beginning God..."

And the word for God is 'Elohim' which literally means 'Gods', plural.

Family really matters to God. And I know that, for some people, just hearing that is going to hurt. It's going to hurt an awful lot. Almost half of all marriages, in the wealthy west, end in divorce. I have friends who have lost loved ones in the ravages of war. Every day 25-30,000 children die of poverty and starvation, disease and AIDs.

So thinking about family for some, depending on your particular situation and circumstances, well it can really hurt. But the reason it hurts so much. The reason divorce is such a scourge. And losing someone we love causes such tears and tears our insides out. The reason that is, is because family matters.

We want our family's to stay intact. We want our kids to grow up strong and healthy. And have a listen to what the Psalmist writes in Psalm 37, beginning at verse 25.

"I've been young and now I'm old yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging for bread. They are giving liberally and lending and their children are becoming a blessing."

See, that's Gods perfect plan for our families. The righteous are those who honour God and God wants to bless us. God wants to bless us by making our children a blessing. He wants for us to live a good life and for us to be a blessing to our children and for them to go on and be a blessing to others. It's a story that's written in our very DNA. It's a story that plays itself out in our hopes and

dreams. But it's a plot that's, so easily, we lose in the business of a consumer orientated, entertainment orientated, credit card orientated world in which we live.

Let me ask you again. Out of everything in your life. Everything you have. Every hope. Every dream. Every possession. Every desire. Out of everything, how much does your family matter? My hunch is that, for most of us, the answer is an awful lot. Family matters an awful lot, doesn't it? And if it does, if it really does then surely, surely we need to invest in this thing. These relationships. These people who matter more to us than any other people on this earth.

That's what we're going to be talking about in these coming days and weeks. Making that investment. How to build a Godly family. Because there is so much blessing in that - so much.