

San Juan Church of Christ

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What Does God's Word Say About...

Fathers and Families

From the beginning God's original plan was for man to "leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh," (Genesis 2:24). The institution of marriage, established by God, was for marriage to be one "man" and one "woman" for life. Jesus said, "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate," (Matthew 19:6). Paul also wrote, "For the married woman is bound by law to her husband, while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning her husband," (Romans 7:2-3).

Because of the neglect of the principle given in God's word for marriage, we in America are approaching 60% of our children living in homes without fathers. Whenever we leave the principles of God's word there will be detrimental consequences. As we have seen in the news, children raised in a one-parent home are more likely to suffer poverty, commit crimes, become victims of child abuse, and have a higher rate of unwed pregnancies. If parents divorce, or a parent leaves the home, it is likely that the same will occur in their children's lives.

It is the father's responsibility to bring spiritual stability to the family. This is exemplified by Joshua as he declared, "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourself today whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," (Joshua 24:15). Joshua was not only providing spiritual guidance to his family, he was also doing something else that fathers are designed to do: providing leadership. He spoke with the kind of resolve needed by fathers today. He was ready and willing to fulfill his duty to God and his family. He not only had the courage to speak for himself, but he had the courage to speak for his family. He had confidence that his family would follow his example.

The role that fathers have is clearly revealed in the New Testament scriptures: "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord," (Eph. 6:4). "Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart," (Col. 3:21); "for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline...then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them...All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness," (Heb. 12:7-11).

God expects a home to have a two-parent family. "Children, obey your parents [plural] in the Lord...Children, be obedient to your parents [plural] in all things because this is pleasing to the Lord," Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20). God has a plan for families. Anything outside of His plan will have negative consequences.

Please send any comments, questions, or requests for a Bible study to:

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