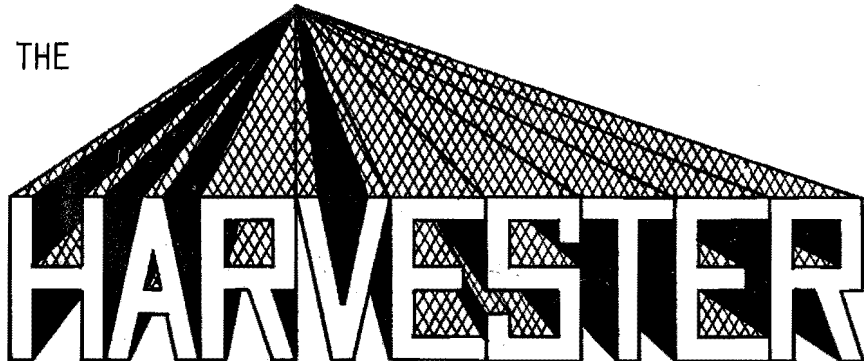


THE



"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

September 1989

No. 045

THE FAMILY IN CRISIS

The family is the most important organization to human existence. We are social creatures and we require the intimate relationships that can only exist within the family unit. Sociologists tell us that all societies, regardless of how primitive or advanced, contain a family setup of some type. They also tell us that in all societies the family has certain functions. It serves to regulate sexual activity and reproduction, to teach the young how to become part of the society into which they were born, and to provide reenforcement of traditional values. These responsibilities are of special importance in Christian families.

Today we find adultery, fornication, homosexuality and prostitution are rampant in our

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society. Alcohol and drug abuse seem to touch just about everyone's life in some way. People no longer seem to respect authority. Crime statistics have gone through the roof in recent years. Our entire society is in a state of total chaos. And at the root of it all is the family. The increase of deviant behavior can be easily correlated with the decline of the family. It is not that families do not still exist, but that the members are no longer filling the roles they were intended for.

But what has led to this rapid demise of our families? There are many factors which have contributed to this. Technology has to be blamed for a good deal of it, and can probably be linked to many of the other causes as well. Our lives have "sped up" in recent years. Despite all the time-saving modern conveniences we have, we seem to have less and less time to spend together as a family. In many families everyone has so many outside interests which must be attended to, that it is a rarity when everyone sits down together to eat a meal. And the success of a family is dependent to a large extent upon how much time is spent together.

Another cause is the rise of the women's rights movement. Now I do not consider myself a chauvinist at all. I do not believe that men are superior to women. And women do deserve equal treatment in the workplace. But in the context of family life men and women have specific roles to fill. *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church."* (Ephesians 5:22-23a) This however, does not make the husband a tyrant whose every word is law. For a marriage to be successful there must be a great deal of cooperation and compromise. In the end the husband is the head of the family. But the women's movement sought to

overthrow the traditional roles of men and women. Women were told to worry about themselves rather than their husband and children. They were told they had the right to abort unborn children if that child would interfere with their lifestyle. What a pathetic excuse for destroying a human life!

The argument that married men and women are equal in authority and responsibility defies all logic and experience. How do you think it would work if we had two presidents? Most of the time they would be too busy arguing over who was going to do what, that nothing would ever get done. You just do not see equal authority placed on two people at the same time. Experience has taught us that it simply does not work. And it will not work in the family either. That is why God decreed that one would have authority and the other would be in subjection.

The mass media has also had a tremendously negative impact on the family. Often when time is spent together, it is spent watching television. But a family needs a certain amount of quality time, that is, time spent communicating and interacting with each other. Often children have problems but their parents seem unaccessible, so they turn to alcohol or drugs instead. And the mass media has had a devastating effect on our children as individuals. The resounding message they get from TV, movies, magazines, books, etc., is that they should "do their own thing." You don't have to listen to your parents; they are just too old-fashioned to understand. This theme has been readily eaten up by our young people. A majority of boys and girls have had sexual relations before they are eighteen. A majority of middle school children (ages 11-13) have used alcohol or drugs or both. Certainly most of this would not happen if parents were more concerned with

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their children. How does someone eleven or twelve years old get alcohol? If their parents were doing their job, and supervising their children, it would be nearly impossible. But parents today do not take the time to raise their children. And if you don't raise your children, the world will be glad to do it for you.

Today, parents laugh when their child does something that you and I would likely have gotten a spanking for. Solomon said, "*He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.*" (Proverbs 13:24) Most people will probably quickly reply, "Well, I love my son so that doesn't apply to me." But he doesn't mean that you have to actually have a feeling of hatred toward your son, but simply that you do not take the time and responsibility to discipline your child. I have heard so many people say, "I love my child too much to spank him." I only wish there was some way to make people see what they are doing to their children when they bring them up this way. But soon enough they will see for themselves. Most of the time that child will turn out to be a total loser. They are accustomed to doing and getting exactly what they want, but the real world doesn't operate this way. Many end up in jail or as alcoholics or drug addicts. And even if they don't, they are usually very emotional and impulsive; they just are not well adjusted for life outside of mother's arms.

And this is exactly what Solomon is trying to get across to us. If we really care about our children, we will take the time to discipline them. It may hurt us to have to do it, but in the long run, it is the best thing we can ever do for them.

The apostle Paul told us how a family should operate. *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in every thing. Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it...So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself...Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband ... Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* (Ephesians 5:22--6:4)

When people do it the Lord's way, there are no problems. In the past when most every woman submitted herself to her husband, the family was strong. Divorces were few. Children grew up to be good citizens. But as always men have to tamper with God's plan. We are told that women are to be equal with their husbands. Child psychologists tell us how to raise our children. You may even be accused of child abuse if you spank your own child! This country, and much of the rest of the world, is experiencing probably the most perilous times anyone has ever faced. And unless we go back

to doing it God's way, I don't see any hope. Things will surely continue to worsen. The "Just Say No" program and the Federal government's "War on Drugs" are noble attempts. But unless the children are taught better at home, these programs will doubtless fail, just as we also are destined for failure if we also reject God in our lives and our families.

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SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!

1. In Isaiah, who does God include in His plan of salvation?
2. What protest did the chief priests make about the note on the cross?
3. What kind of person is like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes?
4. What is the only book in the Bible with seven chapters?
5. What did Aaron use to make the idol for the Israelites?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH ...

and remember last month's questions?

1. Who made Adam's first coat? GOD (Gen. 3:21)
2. In Jeremiah 1, where did God touch Jeremiah? ON HIS MOUTH (Jer. 1:9)
3. With what did Paul say women should dress themselves in 1 Timothy? GOOD WORKS (1 Tim. 2:10)
4. With what did Israel burden God? THEIR SINS (Isa. 43:24)

5. Who is the only person in the Bible who asked, "What is truth?" PILATE (John 18:38)

BIBLE PRINCIPLES OF SALVATION

I. ALL PEOPLE HAVE SINNED

1 Ki 8:46 Rom 3:10 Rom 3:23 Rom 5:12 1 Jn 1:8 1 Jn 5:19

II. A SINNER WILL FACE ETERNAL DEATH

Ezek 33:8-9 Rom 6:23 2 Thes 1:7-9 Jas 1:15 Jas 5:20 Rev 21:8

Unless he:

1. Hears the Word of God

Matt 13:23 Lk 10:39 Jn 10:16 Rom 10:17 Eph 1:13 1 Thes 2:13

2. Realizes Jesus Christ is the Only Way to Eternal Salvation

Jn 6:68 Jn 14:6 Acts 4:12 Eph 2:18 1 Thes 5:9 Heb 5:9

3. Believes Jesus is the Son of God

Mk 16:15 Jn 3:16 Jn 8:24 Jn 20:31 Acts 10:43 Acts 16:31 Heb 11:6

4. Is Convicted in his Heart of his Own Disobedience

Acts 2:37 Acts 16:29 Acts 24:25 2 Cor 7:8-11

5. Repents of his Sins

Lk 13:3 Acts 2:38 Acts 3:19 Acts 17:30 Acts 26:20

6. Confesses his Faith in the Lord Jesus

Matt 10:32 Acts 8:37 Acts 19:18 Rom 10:9-10 Phil 2:11 1 Jn 4:15

7. Is Baptized by Immersion for the Remission of Sins in the

Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Matt 28:19 Mk 16:16 Jn 3:5 Acts 2:38 Acts 8:36-39 Acts 10:47-48
Acts 16:33 Acts 22:16 Rom 6:3-6 Gal 3:27 Col 2:12 1 Pet 3:21

8. Lives a Faithful Life, Guided Only by the Authority of the NT

Matt 25:21 Rom 1:16 Tit 2:11-12 Heb 4:12 Jas 1:21 1 Jn 5:4 Rev 2:10

9. Worships in Spirit & Truth, not forsaking the Assembling, and

Observing the Lord's Supper every first day of the week

Matt 4:10 Jn 4:23-24 Acts 2:42 Acts 20:7 1 Cor 11:20-30 Heb 10:25

10. Prays for Forgiveness, if he should Fall into Sin again

Acts 8:22 1 Cor 10:12-13 Eph 6:18 1 Thes 5:17 Jas 5:15-16 1 Jn 1:5-10

III. ONLY THOSE WHO DO THE WILL OF GOD SHALL BE SAVED

Matt 7:21 Matt 12:50 Lk 6:47-48 Rom 2:13 Jas 1:22 1 Jn 2:17 Rev 22:14

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Sept. 3-8	West Side Church Shawnee, OK	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
Sept. 8-10	Godby Road Church Atlanta, GA	Bruce Kessler (Forest Park, GA)
Sept. 8-10	Hokes Bluff, AL	W.C. Cofield (Woodland, AL)
Sept. 15-17 (F-Su)	Brushy Creek Church Lucedale, MS 7:30 pm	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
Sept. 18-23	Mt. Zion Church Crab Orchard, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

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 + SUNDAY Worship Services +
 + 10:00 am and 6:00 pm +
 +
 + WEDNESDAY 7:00 pm +
 +
 +

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
 All to leave and follow thee:
 All things else I have forsaken;
 Thou from hence my all shalt be.
 Perish every fond ambition,
 All I've sought, or hoped, or known;
 Yet how rich is my condition,
 While I prove the Lord my own!

Author Unknown