

BIBLICAL • FAMILY • MINISTRIES

Friend of the Family

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Family Issues

Dr. Allen Griffith

It is time for a reminder that marriage and family were originated, defined, and designed by God Himself. They are based on who we are as human beings, created in the image and likeness of God. Their furtherance and development have been clearly outlined and regulated by God and His plan for the human race. If we are just highly evolved animals, none of the biblical guidelines matter. God designed procreation as a function of marriage. Those who pretend to be animals and live accordingly, procreate with whomever they might please and then kill their offspring at their convenience.

Government leaders justify uncontrolled immigration by telling us we need a larger population, while caring little for the 60 million Americans that have been destroyed by abortion over the last 50 years. The dramatic, negative change we have experienced in our culture is related to the disintegration of the family. Today, 7% of the population lives in unmarried co-habitation. I am surprised it is not more. It was somewhat startling to discover, however, that 69% of Americans approve. It demonstrates a low view of marriage and a lower view of God.

About 30% of American children are growing up in a single parent home. That is about 24 million kids under the age of 18. I grew up in a single parent home, but



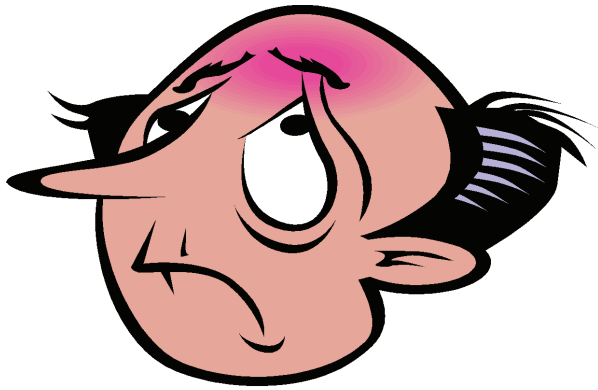
I can only remember one other young person who was also in that situation. Today, it is about 1 out of 3. There is no need to rehearse all the trouble, difficulty, heartache, and other issues produced by such circumstances, but the tragic results are immeasurable. We see low academics, crime, drug use, gang involvement, and more societal ills.

The single parent home sometimes comes from birth out of wedlock, but more often from a marriage which ends in divorce. 50% of all marriages end in divorce. Second marriages falter 67% of the time, with third marriages collapsing 73% of the time. Amazingly, the average marriage in America only lasts for just under 20 years. May God shed His grace and mercy on America. When we throw in homosexual marriages, (so called) and transgender confusion, society borders on total chaos.

Unfortunately, the America of yesterday is gone. Elections will not reverse the social devastation that has come to this sin cursed nation. Tragically, even some “Christian” leaders have yielded to the pressure to surrender standards and values which are taught in Scripture. What can we do? Our only hope is to identify the truth, stand for it, and defend it. In John 17:16-17, our Lord Jesus prayed for His disciples, including us. He said, *They are not of the world...Sanctify them through thy truth, Thy Word is truth.*

More next time!

Trends & Troubles



Most of the “Trends and Troubles” in this column are related to the world and its continuing collapse. Sadly, the church is collapsing too. Many churches are losing membership and attendance. Statistics tell us we are averaging the closing of 30 local churches per state, per year. An estimate regarding the direction of Christianity in America has concluded that between 2010 and 2050 “we” will gain 40 million converts while losing 106 million. If correct, there will be a net loss of 66 million over 40 years.

Neither the church I attend, nor the one you attend, can change the current negativity. What we can do is invest ourselves in our local assembly. As far back as I can remember it was suggested that Sunday Morning attendance would be cut in half for the Evening service and cut in half again for Prayer Meeting. Sometimes I hear of churches that do much better than those numbers, but more often I hear the numbers are worse.

What has happened to spiritual zeal and excitement for the things of God? I have always been stirred by the book of Malachi. Judah had come out of the oppression of Babylon and found great liberty under Persian rule. The Temple was rebuilt. The walls of Jerusalem were repaired, and Judah was granted great liberty as the Yehud Medinata Province. Opportunity to worship and serve the LORD was restored. Even sacrifice in the temple was permitted.

Unfortunately, zeal was gone. Malachi accused the priests of despising the name of the LORD of Hosts (1:6). He said they offered polluted bread on the altar saying, ... *The table of the LORD is contemptible* (1:7). He said they offered the blind, lame, and sick animals, rather than giving their best (1:8). Regarding worship they said, *Behold, what a weariness is it.*

(1:13). With no heart for God, the people stopped giving their tithes and offerings (3:8). Their lack of commitment to the Lord and His Word took its toll on family life. The children of Israel began marrying the heathen, and marriages among the Jews were marred by unfaithfulness and divorce. (2:10-17). Ultimately, for the believer, all of life is affected by our passion for God or lack thereof. How are things in your life and in your church? Has worship become mere routine and attendance governed by convenience rather than conviction and commitment? Has complacency conquered fervor, devotion and passion?



The Apostle Paul made a rather incredible statement as he neared the end of his life and ministry. In II Timothy 4:7 he said, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. I notice that in the original text it says, I have fought the good fight.* Fighting a good fight is somewhat meaningless, if the battle has little spiritual merit. The good fight is the one in which we must be engaged.

Paul understood spiritual conflict and he understood his place in the battle. He fought for the truth and glory of God. He did not quit or falter along the way. When he left this earth, the fight continued, but he had done his part. It is important that we each know our role in spiritual warfare as we enter it. There are many fights that may be worthy of our participation, but none compare with the battle for God's truth. We need men like Paul and each Christian man needs to follow his path.

ARE YOU WILLING TO BE THAT MAN?

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Prescription *For The Family*

We are continuing our discussion on parental authority. In our last article we referred to Proverbs 22:6. It is a wonderful text of encouragement as we take on the task of rearing our children. The text gives us a challenge and an accompanying promise, if the challenge is followed successfully.



child's experience to the way he should go. How do we accomplish the task? If we are successful, there is a wonderful promise in the text. Success in this matter does not come easy, but it is critical to the well-being of our precious little ones.

More next time!

The challenge is, *Train up a child in the way he should go...* The text is obviously directed to parents. It is parents who must train their children. Sadly, many are failing miserably in obeying the instruction. What does it mean to *train*? The Hebrew word rendered *train* is found elsewhere in Scripture but translated differently. In I Kings 8:63, we find Solomon and the people of Israel dedicating the newly erected Temple to the LORD. The term *dedicated* is from the same Hebrew word as *train*. The word is *chanak* and is found five times in Scripture. Four times it is translated *dedicate(d)* and one time as *train*. How can the term legitimately be translated both ways?

The root meaning of *chanak* is to compact or narrow down. When Solomon dedicated the Temple, he was "narrowing down" of the use of the building. It was to be used in sacrificial worship and nothing else. When *chanak* is translated by the word *train*, it is the challenge for parents to narrow down the path and experience of their children. *To train up a child in the way he should go* means to narrow down the

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If you don't see the world through the Bible, you will never see it right.



From Under the Umbrella

By Patricia E. Griffith

As we travel through this life, God has given us His Word to guide us, comfort us, strengthen us, and instruct us. There are many problems and concerns that drag us down. Does God want us to live that way? He has given us everything we need to be a joyful Christian – NO MATTER WHAT WE ARE DEALING WITH!

Nehemiah 8:10d says, *The joy of the Lord is your strength.* Psalm 35:9 says, *And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in His salvation.*

Life is hard, but God has given us all we need to be joyful in our hearts—even in sorrow and trouble. We all have times of trial as we walk with the Lord. Philippians 4:7 says, *...the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* If we will let Him.

Spring is coming and so is our Savior. God hold us close!

BFM RESOURCES:

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Jesus is Coming Again

Patricia and I speak often of the return of the Lord Jesus. We long to see Him and be reunited with precious friends and loved ones who have preceded us to heaven—and to escape the continuing plunge of the world into the depths of sin and debauchery. We speak of being taken up together to meet the Lord in the air. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. At the same time, we are keenly aware that we have friends and relatives who are not saved. Most have heard the Gospel, but to this point have not trusted Christ alone for salvation. Indeed, if Christ comes today, they would be left behind in their rejection of the Lord and they would have no future chance to claim Christ.

We are seeking to increase our ministry outreach, but we are also trying to personally get the salvation message to many. We hope many will come to Christ in 2024.

Time is short, isn't it?