

BIBLICAL • FAMILY • MINISTRIES

# Friend of the Family

Second Quarter 2025

Volume 31.2

## Family Issues

Dr. Allen Griffith

What brings success and blessing to a family? What produces failure? Perhaps a word should be said about what defines a successful family?

It begins with a genuine man of God. It continues with the next generation loving and serving that same God. When the Bible addresses marriage and family, it generally starts with a challenge to the wife. There is a reason for that which we will seek to address in a future article. I want to start however, by addressing the man of the house.

Of course, there are no perfect families, because there are no perfect men. Ultimately, however, the success of the family will fall on the man, who God has appointed to lead his wife and children.

After the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:22 tells the wife to submit herself to her husband, he drops a bombshell on the man in Ephesians 5:25. He tells us (I am included), to *love our wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it*. That challenge puts a man in a sobering position. He is to measure his behavior toward his wife against the undying, unwavering, abounding love of Christ toward His bride, the Church.

The Church began on the day of Pentecost and was established based on the sacrificial death of Christ on the Cross. As Ephesians 5:2 says, *Christ...loved us and hath given Himself for us...* I John 4:19 says, *We love*



*Him, because he first loved us.* The relationship between Christ and the Church is rooted in the sacrificial love that drove Him to Calvary. The love relationship comes full circle, when the Church responds in love to the Savior.

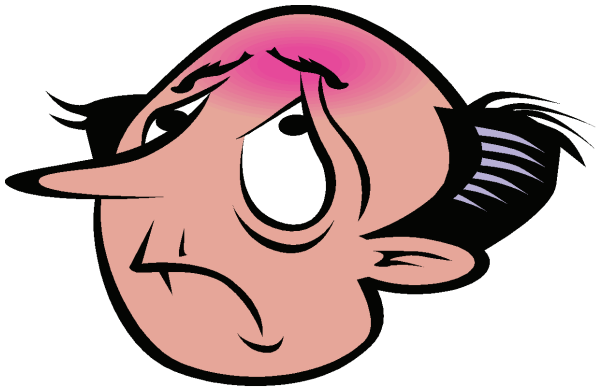
Marriage is to reflect that spiritual relationship. Recognize that the wife is a *responder*. She loves, in response to the love of her husband. The failure of the husband to love as Christ loved, gives little motivation for the wife to love.

How does a man love his wife as Christ loved the church? What is it about a man that will cause his wife to joyfully surrender to his headship and leadership? It is when the man catches the vision of Christ-like living, and is devoted to meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the woman he has married. Can she see Christ in him? It is critical as a Christian, in one's personal life and certainly for the man who wants to live as a Christ-like husband, to recognize that Calvary was only the beginning of a wonderful, permanent, living relationship.

Our Lord did not save us and then left us to fend for ourselves. He takes us into His arms and will never let us go. We are secure in His love, leadership, compassion, and mercy. Nothing can separate us from Him. He is the same – yesterday, today and forever. We can trust Him and never fear. We men are only human, and are only sinners, saved by grace—but our wives and our children must see Christ in us. He is perfect; we are not, so our task is great.

More next time.

## Trends & Troubles



As we continue consideration of Titus 2:11-14, I hope you believe that our Lord Jesus Christ could return to take His Church to heaven at any moment. That hope is a God-given motivator to pure living. In case you discarded the last Friend of the Family (How could you?), I am going to again quote 1 John 3:2-3. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

No one knows how quickly after the Rapture we will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. In Revelation 22:12, John quotes the Lord Jesus as saying, *And, Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*

Paul speaks of the rewards that will be given to the believer in I Corinthians 3:14. Those rewards are described as crowns in I Corinthians 9:25, I Thessalonians 2:19, II Timothy 4:8, James 1:12, and I Peter 5:4. In Revelation 4:1, we see a clear portrayal of the Rapture. In Revelation 4:10, the crowns of believers are cast before the throne of the Heavenly Father. It would seem like the Judgment Seat of Christ is carried out in conjunction with the Rapture. It appears that after a very short time, the crowns received will be cast before the Father with the words of Revelation 4:11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

All that takes me back to Titus 2:11-14. If we are anticipating the return of our Savior and Lord at any moment, and if we recognize that we will be judged

when He comes, should we not be living a godly life? Remember that the people of Crete professed that they knew God, but in works they denied Him. Were they unaware that Christ was coming back? For some reason they were not motivated to reject the world and worldly ways. Paul's message to Titus was that looking for Christ should produce change in our ways. We will discuss more about the Titus 2 challenge, but I wonder if the growing rejection of Rapture hope is why so many believers live in spiritual compromise.

Are you ready – are you looking?



I like to preach about Elijah. Unfortunately, he fell into depression and defeat. In I Kings 19:4 he asked the Lord to take his life. His discouragement was so great, that he rejected the ministry of a God sent angel, who fed him and sought to encourage him to get back in the battle for truth.

Sadly, when the Lord told him to leave his hiding place and go back into ministry, he complained and refused. He was filled with a measure of pride, thinking he was the only one faithfully serving the Lord. In I Kings 19:18, the Lord rebuked him by telling him that 7,000 in Israel had not turned from the Lord and had not entered idolatry.

One might ask why God would be looking for a man like Elijah. Though he struggled in many ways, the amazing thing about him was that when he thought no one else was standing for truth and righteousness; he stood openly and publicly for truth. He was willing to stand alone!

**ARE YOU WILLING TO BE THAT MAN?**

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# Prescription *For The Family*



In our last article, we quoted Proverbs 22:15. It says, *Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.* As we stated last time, the problem identified in this text is extremely serious. Foolishness must be conquered and proper use of the rod of correction is an important element of success. Let it be quickly affirmed that a wise parent does not use the rod of correction to address every problem of disobedience. Many times, a word of rebuke and a one-time warning would be sufficient.

On the other hand, the rod of correction is very important in dealing with rebellion, disrespect, and rejection of the one-time warning. What is the rod of correction? The term from Hebrew is *shebet*. It is a *stick*. The term is pen and dart. It suggests something rather small, as opposed to an instrument that might do physical damage. I always say it is intended for use on that soft round spot on a child's bottom (never on a bare bottom).

Some people discipline with their hand. I suggest we want to convey to our children that our hand will never hurt them. It is only an instrument of love and tender care. I like the rod of correction to be hanging on the wall or kept in a drawer, so the child knows there will be no slap or physical punishment, until the rod is retrieved for that purpose. There is no clear directive for discipline with the rod, so I

will give you some ideas for success. There need not be public discipline, except verbal correction. A child should be sent to a private place, where he/she can think about the wrong that has been done. If there is no suitable private place, a quiet whisper, *We will deal with this when we get home* will be sufficient. More next time!

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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

Psalms 71:8 says, *Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day.* There is nothing like waking up at 5:00am to the bird's sweet chatter and the soon rising sun! I LOVE springtime! God's beautiful creation coming alive is so special. Morning devotions and prayer time are the most wonderful times of my day! We have our daily routines, but this precious time I spend with the Lord is priceless.

I hope you have a special time with the Lord each and every day! Whatever comes to us each day, is so much more manageable when we start the day with the Lord. I sure hope you can have a quiet time with God, our Heavenly Father each day, too! Have a great spring!!

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## Evangelizing?

Every person you know, see, or meet is going to exist forever. The question is – where? I wonder how many people who stand in judgment before God – shortly to be cast into the Lake of Fire, will look at you or me and say, "Why didn't you tell me?" A tearful, "I am sorry", from us will be meaningless.

Do your neighbors know you are a born-again Christian? Have you ever given them your personal testimony or even given them a gospel tract? What about people at work or school? Do they know you are saved? Do you give gospel tracts to your waitress at a restaurant or to someone who knocks on your door? Do you have relatives who are lost? Have you witnessed to them? If you met someone who wanted to get saved, would you know where to open in your Bible, so you could lead them to Christ? I believe the time is short. I want Christ to return today – but who would we leave behind, perhaps to be lost forever?