

From The Pulpit

by Rev. Donald M. Clark

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

Text: "God Setteth the Solitary in Families." Ps. 68:6.

The Christian Home is made up of persons. A person is not a "thing." There are families in which the members treat one another as "things" are treated. They use one another as objects of convenience. The Moslem world has suffered severe criticism because of this attitude toward women and slaves. It is not unknown in Western homes. Such treatment is contrary to the Christian doctrine of the infinite and eternal worth and dignity of the individual. A person has intrinsic worth as one created in the image of God, redeemed by the love of God, and useful in the purposes of God. The Christian family is made up of such persons.



REV. D. M. CLARK

The Christian Home is made up of communicating persons.

There are families in which communication between its members is not conspicuous. In them communication is for convenience, seldom or never for personal nurture or personal enjoyment, much less for strengthening the bonds of kinship and friendship. Often the home becomes a boarding house or rooming house, little more. And, of course, it becomes easy to change boarding houses.

In the Christian Home there is giving and taking, sharing and mutual dependence, mutual sharing of thoughts, ideals, plans, purposes. There is no lack of communication between the older, wiser generation and the younger generation acquiring new knowledge. Each appreciates the other. The members of the family are born kinsfolk, but they should also become friends.

The Christian Home is made up of changing persons. A person can change. That is one of the hazards and one of the glories of being a person.

How often in homes that are not really Christian, members of the family deteriorate in character. This sometimes happens in Christian homes. But in the latter, the prodigal never is forgotten or forsaken. The Christian parent, brother or sister, is aware that the possibility is always there that the prodigal can change his ways and return to the Christian life.

It was said of Jesus that He grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. Such a changing person was the Master, and such changing personalities are seen in Christian homes. How wonderful to watch the members grow out of babyhood into childhood, through youth to manhood or womanhood, and, even after stature has been attained, then into the wisdom and favor of true maturity.

The Christian Home has ideals.

The family lives its life under a kind of critical principle which is its ideal. Together, the members of the Christian Home know that attainment is to be made. There is tension and there is upward pull. Each member knows that he strives to attain his potential. The image of what he should be becomes his ideal. This situation is most wholesome.

This means that the Christian Home is made up of free persons. The free person is not one who can do as he pleases. The free person is not one who can smash the piano with a hammer, if he wishes; the free person is one who can play the works of Chopin or Mendelssohn with his fingers. He is free because he is under restraint. Ideals are enabling restraints. They make for free persons.

Ideals bring happiness to the home and its members. There is much more happiness where John can play the piano than where he can smash the piano, if he wishes to do so. Happiness is not the child of license; it comes from restraint of ideals. Ideals deliver the home



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from the vagaries and frustrations met in modern living. Ideals of honesty, temperance and purity, when planted in the home, bring forth the fruits of happiness in the lives of the children. Is there any greater happiness in the lives of parents than to see this come to pass?

Ideals enable the family and its members to appraise correctly the values of life. How much of personality development, growth in wisdom and happiness, depends upon knowing values! The good book on the living-room table may be more important than the new gadget in the kitchen or on the car. It is by ideals that the family problems concerned with television are solved. It is by ideals that the adolescents, as well as other members of the family, are kept under their own self-control.

Ideals are not static. They enlarge with the growing person and bring added growth. They are dynamic. They are the guidelines of life. The Christian Home is deeply and essentially a home of love.

Through love, Christian grace is channeled into the home by Christian parents. They are in touch with the Source of love. It is altogether possible that even before the home as we know it was established, there was a solemn compact

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Young People: Wednesday, 8 pm
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Sunday School: Sunday, 9:45 am
Morning Service: Sunday, 12 noon
YPWW: Sunday, 6:30 pm

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ST. JAMES CATHOLIC CHURCH
Msgr. William J. Devlin, 382-9953
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Sunday Masses: 11 am and 5 pm
Weekday Masses: 7:30 am; Saturday, 9 am
Holyday Masses: 9:30 am and 7:30 pm
Confessions: Saturday, 4-4:30 and 7:30-8 pm
Adult Classes: Monday and Friday, 7:30 pm
Child Classes: Monday, 4-5 pm; Saturday, 9-10:30 am
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made that the family should be pervaded by Christian love.

Love becomes the communicating medium of the household. Love is received; love is given. Love is transmitted beyond the doors of the house into the community. It is in love that the ideals of the home restrain and spur the members of the family.

When love enters the home, Christ enters. His spirit is present. His values are known. His character is made the personal ideal. Unto his will, life is committed. He becomes very real. He becomes an unseen, but known, Presence in the family circle.

In short, Christ is a member of the family in the Christian Home. When He is excluded, deterioration and disintegration sets in. After that--chaos.