

THE MASTER BUILDER

THE MASTER BUILDER OF MY FAMILY

Neil Gallagher

Family definition: *a type, class or kind of people or things that are related and share the same kinship.* (Strong's concordance)

The family is a masterpiece plan of God's creation, the key component to society, in which the Bible throughout its contents has much to say about.

... And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. (Genesis 12:3, NKJV)

God sets the solitary in families... (Psalm 68:6, NKJV)

The apostle Paul speaks of the family both spiritually and earthly.

From whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named (Ephesians 3:15, NKJV)

The Natural Family

Not all families are the same, they can differ a lot on size, circumstances, i.e. some have both parents, some are led by lone parents, but all families through keeping Christ at the centre can be happy and blessed.

The nearest thing to heaven on earth is a happy Christian home. - Dr. M. R. De Haan

The Concept Of The Natural Family In The Bible

The first institution God established for human interaction was a family (Genesis 2:22–24). Marriage and parenthood reveal God's character.

Marriage:

The Lord God created a wife for Adam and joined them in marriage. Marriage within the natural family is held by God in the highest esteem, as it is God's plan for one man and one woman to remain married until one of them dies, as Jesus stated "*What God has joined together, let no man separate*" (Matthew 19:6).

Marriage is ordained and approved by God, and whom He bestows his blessings and favour upon (Hebrews 13:4, Proverbs 18:22, Proverbs 19:14).

Human marriage is the earthly image and metaphor of Christ's love and covenantal union with the church (Ephesians 5:25).

Parenthood:

God desires to bless the marital union with children (Psalm 127:3), who are to be raised “*in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*” (Ephesians 6:4).

Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.” (Exodus 20:12, NKJV)

Honouring our parents brings great rewards with it is very much tied into us having a good journey in life.

Families in the Bible

The Bible doesn't hide the flaws of its heroes, as it records a number of family problems, starting with the first ever family, where Adam 'shifted the blame, towards his wife for defying the commandment over the Tree of Life (Genesis 3:12). There are examples of sibling rivalry and treachery, Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, and Joseph and his brothers. Eli and Samuel dealt with wayward children. Jonathan was almost murdered by his father, Saul. David was broken hearted by his son Absalom's rebellion. Hosea experienced marital difficulties. In each of these cases, relationships were damaged by sin.

On the other hand we see aspects of families in the Bible that were well and should inspire us, Joshua's decree that for him and his family they would serve the Lord. Ruth and her relationship with her mother in law Naomi, Phillip the evangelist who had four daughters who all prophesied the word of the Lord (Acts 21:9).

Peter prayed for his mother in law to be healed, Moses heeded the wise advice of his father in law Jethro (Exodus 18: 1-27). Abraham's nephew Lot separated and settled for less. The Apostle Paul's nephew came to his aid whilst imprisoned in the barracks. (Acts 23:16)

The Spiritual Family Concept In The Bible

A family relationship is at the heart of the kingdom of God. God wanted a family of believers so He sent his only begotten son Jesus Christ (Hebrews 2:10).

As we are born into our natural family, so must we be birthed into our spiritual family (John 3:5-7).

We have the privilege of knowing and relating to God as “Father” (1 Corinthians 8:5-6). Since God is our Father, we are His children, a family relationship is seen.

- We are called “children of God” by Paul in Romans 8:16.
- ‘Brother’ (or brethren) is used some 319 times in the New Testament, where ‘sister(s)’ is used 22 times.
- Jesus himself emphasised that our brothers and sisters in real essence are those who do the will of God. (Matthew 12: 46-50)

The Family Concept Is A Perfect Spiritual Parallel To The Church

The New Testament refers to the church, not as an organisation, society or a grouping, but rather as a household (family) (Galatians 6:10, Ephesians 2:19, Hebrews 10:21, 1 Peter 4:17).

Harvest City Church consists of people from different places of origin, diverse languages, tastes, and walks of life, yet the glorious truth that unites us is that we have the same Father, God, which then makes us a church family.

Common worldly proverb/saying: '*Blood is thicker than water*'. This implies that the bloodline family that you born into should take the highest precedence.

What is more profound and greater than that statement is that the spotless spiritual covenant bloodline of Christ, that unites us as a family is far thicker and greater than any natural bloodline.

Jesus when informed that his mother and brothers were waiting for him clearly defined His '*family as those who do the will of God*', emphasising it is the fact that the spiritual family that takes precedence (Matthew 12:46-50).

'Your spiritual family is even more important than your physical family because it will last forever. Our families on earth are wonderful gifts from God, but they are temporary and fragile'
Rick Warren

The Blessing Of Belonging To A Local Church Family

- A place where we can identify and belong to. *God sets the solitary in families* (Psalm 68:6).
- There is spiritual covering and protection (Hebrews 13:17).
- A safe place to grow and prosper (Psalm 92:13).
- We get to partake in serving the plan of God upon the earth (Ephesians 4:16).
- Discipline (Hebrews 12:7).
- We can get to build lifetime loving relationships (1 Corinthians 12:25-26)
- The anointing amongst us is greater than the anointing of one of us (Acts 4:24-31).

The Relationship Between The Home And The Church Family

- The family life should be aligned into the life of the church (Matthew 6:33).
- The home should reflect what is taught and practised in the church (Acts 2:46).
- The autonomy of every home within the church family is self-governing and self-sustaining (2 Corinthians 1: 24, 1 Timothy 5:8, Ephesians 6:4, Proverbs 22: 6).
- Churches should maintain a healthy balance between church programmes and family home time.

What Makes A Strong Church Family At Harvest City Church

- Keeping the master builder Jesus Christ at the centre of our focus (Psalm 127:1).
- Praying together (Acts 2:42).
- Committed covenantal relationships (Colossians 2:2). Nothing works without commitment. The term 'covenant' is defined as 'abandoning the right to walk out of one another.'
- Bearing with one another even if it requires blood sweat and tears (Ephesians 4: 2).
- Having a home (HCC) first perspective.
- Showing honour and obedience to our spiritual parents (Ephesians 6:1).
- Submitting to one another (Ephesians 5:21, Philippians 2:3-4).
- Unity. Listening to one voice, moving together in one direction (Psalm 133:1, Philippians 3:16).
- Showing the same love, care, support to one another (1 Corinthians 12:25-26, John 13:34).
- Being there every time the church family meets (Hebrews 10:25). We should never choose to miss any church family gatherings through choice.
- A readiness and a willingness to defend the family (Nehemiah 4:14).
- Growth through winning souls (Acts 2:47).