

Sermon for Sunday, September 9, 1979, by Andrew A. Jumper, D.D., Pastor  
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"GOD'S GLUE FOR FRACTURED FAMILIES - VIII"

Titus 2:1-10

Text: "Bid the older women likewise to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be sensible, chaste, domestic, kind, and submissive to their husbands, that the word of God may not be discredited." Titus 2:3-5

Seven Sundays ago when I preached our first sermon on "God's Glue for Fractured Families", I had no idea that it would take us some eight weeks to come to the final sermon. About two years ago I began to develop some deep concerns about the modern American family and wanted to begin preaching and writing on this subject. I did a great deal of study back then and, as a matter of fact, Sydney and I made a joint speech on marriage at a conference in Louisiana and did a couple of video tape recordings about marriage for our tape ministry to use in premarriage counseling. Yet, somehow the Lord never let me really preach on the subject. Then, quite unexpectedly to me and some two years after all of my study and research, when God's time arrived He pushed me into this series. In one sense of the word, he had to let enough time go by for me to forget all the things I had read that other people had said so that he could deal directly with me out of scripture itself. Now, I don't know if this series has been helpful to you, but it certainly has been to me! I suspect that I have gotten more out of it than anyone! One Sunday the wife of one of our Elders said to me, "Andy, that was a wonderful sermon!" Without stopping to think how it sounded, I replied, "Yes, wasn't it!" Well, I really meant that. I meant it because I have felt that these sermons were a direct revelation through scripture to us. I learned so much about the family that I had never known so clearly before. So, I have been excited about the series because I felt God was speaking to us through the sermons. I could take no credit at all for them. The person who is being used of God--when he is sitting at a typewriter, writing what he knows never came from his heart or mind--that they were from God's. That's exciting! When God got ready to address himself to this congregation about the Christian family, he did it. I think many of you have felt as I have about the series because you have taken hundreds and hundreds of copies to share with family and friends. So, I praise God for his faithfulness in speaking to us and I praise him that you have wanted to share them with others.

We have been talking about the three basic elements that form the foundation of God's plan for the family. It's exciting to know that all of life for us is important to God. As you know, the family is the basic unit of human society. Because it is important, God has given us some rules and regulations by which we can measure our life together as a family. They are: Rule, Relationships, and Role. For the past two weeks we have been talking about various roles in the family, focusing primarily on the role of the husband and father. Today I want to focus on the wife and mother and then, finally, address a few comments to the young people.

First of all, in Titus 2:3, St. Paul tells us that a woman is to be "reverent in behavior" and that she is "to teach what is good." This means that the wife and mother is first of all to be a teacher of the things of God and an example of what she teaches. It is true that the husband and father of the home is to take the leadership in spiritual things, but the truth of the matter is, a mother may have a far greater impact on children. That is because she is ordinarily the one who takes care of them, sees to their needs, kisses away their hurts, and tucks them in at night. Because that is so, the kind of Christian character she exhibits is tremendously important. The children will often judge the Gospel and judge

Jesus by what they see in the life of the mother. By her example she is training them, one way or the other. Paul says that she must be reverent in behaviour. A devout mother has had a far greater impact on the lives of boys and girls than perhaps anyone else in all of human history. Now, it is true she shares with the father responsibility for "teaching what is good." St. Paul elaborates on that by adding, "and so train the young women to love their husbands and children." (Titus 2:4) I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for children to have good examples, good patterns of home life, if they are to be good husbands and wives and good parents. We learn how to live together in a home from the environment which nurtures us. Even how we act as parents is a learned behavior. I don't know if you parents realize this or not, but you learn how to be a parent from your own parents and from the parent figure in your background. If the pattern from which we learn is a godly pattern where there is reverence for God in the home, where there is respect for others as persons of worth, where there is love and kindness and consideration, then that is the kind of pattern we will follow in our own lives. Therefore, I cannot emphasize to you young parents how critical it is that you set a godly example for your children.

So, mothers are to be reverent in how they act and they are to share in the teaching of what is good. In the process they are training their children and determining what kinds of homes we will have tomorrow. Oh, how the world today needs that kind of wife and mother. How the world today needs women of God who by word and deed are training their children and laying the groundwork for the godly homes of tomorrow. As I have said so many times before, the world never got a Christ until it had a holy family, and the world will never get Christ-like people without holy families. Do you remember what Paul once wrote to young Timothy? He said, "I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelleth first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you." He was a third generation Christian. (II Timothy 1:5) Yes, through the reverent behavior and the teaching of what is good by godly women, generation after generation had come to know Jesus and the same is true for your children. You are godly as a mother and a father. Generation after generation of children are touched and influenced.

Secondly, women are to have primary responsibility for the home. St. Paul says that women are to be "domestic". (Titus 2:5) What that means is that they are to be responsible for the administration and oversight of the home. St. Paul writes in I Timothy 5:14, they are to rule their households. Now, I take that to mean that the wife and mother has the duty to be responsible for overseeing the details of the home--to be the administrator for the operation of the home. We have already seen that the father is to manage the household well in the sense that he has primary duty for the people in the home, especially in seeing that his children are submissive and respectful. But in the division of the duty that God laid down in the Bible, the oversight and administration of the home itself lies with the wife and mother. Now, that doesn't mean that she is to do all of the work. I have very little patience with men who assume that because the wife is a woman she has to do all of the housework. As a matter of fact, the best mother will see to it that the children and other members of the family share in the duties of the home. One thing that disturbs me the most today is the young people in the modern suburbia of America who have no responsibility, no duties in the home and grew thinking the world owes them a living and they have no responsibility for it. I beseech you mothers, as you administer your homes, to see to it that your young people share in the responsibility for the life together. Also, the good husband is one who will do all he can to help the wife in the home. Yet, the management of the home is the primary duty of the wife and mother.

Now, I realize this whole issue is under debate today in our modern secular society. There are those who say that a woman has just as much right to a career as a man and therefore, the husband has the duty to share equally in the housework. Now, in one sense, I do not disagree with that. As we saw several weeks ago, the husband has the duty to see that each member of the family has the opportunity to exercise the gifts and talents that God gives him or her. If that means that he has the duty to help with the upkeep of the home, then he should do that. But I understand the Bible to say that in the division of responsibility, the woman is responsible for the ruling of the household. As we have said so frequently, there is no such thing as democratic equalitarianism. In every area of a family's life God has laid down some guide lines of who shall resume the leadership role. As it relates to the running of the home, that is the duty of the wife and mother. As a matter fact, it is also the duty of the wife and mother to train the young women of the home as well. In Titus 2:4,5 it is put this way, "...and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be... domestic..."

So, first, women are to be a teacher/example, and second, to be chief administrator in the running of the home. Third, a woman is to be an evangelist. It is often the case that a woman will be a Christian when her husband is not, or she will have a deeper commitment to Jesus than her husband. How is she to respond when that is the case? St. Peter speaks directly to that issue. He writes, "...your husband may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, when they see your reverent and chaste behavior." Then he goes on to add, "Let not yours be the outward adorning with braiding of hair, decoration of gold, and wearing of robes, but let it be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable jewel of a gentle and quiet spirit..." So, the charm and attractiveness of a Christian woman is not so much in outward appearance, but it is an inner beauty of heart and soul. You know, sometimes a woman may try to argue or convince by words and logic to get her husband to become a Christian. Frequently, that may only harden his heart and mind. But it is awfully difficult to argue against a gentle and quiet spirit that reflects Jesus; it is extremely difficult to argue against an inner character that reflects the love of God. Several years ago I was counseling with a family that was in very bad relationships. During the weeks I worked with them, the wife became a Christian and suddenly she began to change. Finally, the husband came to me and said with tears in his eyes, "I don't know what has happened to my wife, but whatever it is I want it, too." Not long afterwards, I had an opportunity to talk with the teenage daughter. "Mother is so different," she said, "can you tell me how to find what she has found?" All of the counseling in the world, all of the logic and reason there is, would not have helped that family. Too much damage, too many bad memories, too much conflict, had scarred them almost beyond repair. But when the mother came to know Jesus, everything changed. Every Christmas I get a letter from them thanking me. But I can take no credit. Jesus did what no human being could do, for he took a woman and made her beautiful inside. And when that happened, her husband and her children were won to the Lord by a quiet and gentle spirit.

Well, the mother and wife is to be an evangelist. She is to be such an example of what Jesus can do in a life that the whole family will see something in her that they want for themselves. The fourth role of the wife is to be a faithful partner. As the man is to give the wife her conjugal rights, so the woman is to give him his. (I Corinthians 7:3-5) But this faithfulness is far deeper than the merely sexual. It extends to every area of life. You see, a woman can be faithful literally in the sense that she does not commit adultery, but she can still respond to the husband in such a way that she is not truly faithful to him. When a woman runs her husband down, when she speaks lightly or disparagingly of him; when she ridicules him, looks down on him, or mocks him--especially before the children or before others--she is being unfaithful to him. When she fails to be submissive to his leadership role in the home, she is being unfaithful. As the Bible says, a

woman is to be submissive "that the word of God may not be discredited."  
(Titus 2:5)

Let me conclude with this word to our young people. The Bible says a couple of things that I want to call to your attention. First, your role is to be obedient. Now we don't like the word obedient, but that is a word that comes straight out of scripture. As the Bible says, "children, obey your parents..." (Ephesians 6:1) Even Jesus gave obedience to his parents, for the Bible says of him, "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them..." (St. Luke 2:51). I realize some of our young people think mom and dad are not "with it" and are not modern and up-to-date. I know you think they don't know very much. But let me assure you that between now and the time you are 25, you will be astounded at how much they have learned! So, obey your parents in the Lord... that is, in a Christ-like manner...for, as the Bible says, "this is right." I think you young people will discover that a great deal of conflict that you have with your parents will evaporate and disappear if you will practice your responsibility to be obedient.

Second, you have the job, the role, of growing in "wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." (St. Luke 2:52) Now, that is the same obligation Jesus has as a boy. God isn't asking you anything he didn't ask his own Son to do. It was his job to grow in wisdom--in intellectual skill and ability--as well as to grow physically. It was in his favour with God and with man. That's your job, too. You need to grow in your intellectual abilities. You need school and education and spiritual development. In the process, your life ought to be such that God will be more and more pleased with you so that he will say of you as he said of Jesus, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." You should also be the kind of person that other people will respect you; the kind of person whose life will reflect Jesus that you will have the approval of men and your life will not be a bad reflection on the gospel.

Third, and last, you have an obligation to make some return to your parents. That's what the Bible says in I Timothy 5:4, where the Bible speaking of children, says, "let them first learn their religious duty to their own family and make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God." This may mean that some day you will have to assume some financial obligation to your parents to help care for them. But even if it doesn't mean that, it certainly means that you have the obligation and the privilege to care for them in other ways--to see to it that they are loved and cherished as long as they live.

Whoever you are this morning, you are the child of someone. Are you giving to your parents some return for the love and care they gave to you? Are there other members of your family who need love and care and attention and concern? You see, if people who are Christians do not provide for their own, the Bible says they are worse than an unbeliever and have denied the faith.

The home is the basic unit of human society. Every great civilization that has risen to power has risen on the basis of its family and the strength of its family. As civilizations have begun to deteriorate and decline, it has been because in the home there was deterioration. Oh, the homes of America today are deteriorating; we see incredible divorce, we see young people living together without the commitment of marriage, we see even in many homes that stay together tension, anger, frustration and unhappiness.

God doesn't want it to be that way. If our families in America continue to deteriorate and fracture, then the end of our way of life is assured. That's what the Bible says. God has given us some rules and regulations, some guide lines, some foundations for making families be what they intended them to be. My prayer for you and my prayer for myself is to follow God's guidelines that we will have His glue to hold our family together.