

Why Satan Is No Friend of the Family

Over the past couple of weeks I've shared a few articles dealing with family from a Christian perspective. We have seen along the way that family plays a very important role in God's plan for God's world. *He* created the family so it's his to define. And he created the family for two great reasons: to carry out his will and to picture his truth.

Today I just want to add this to the mix: If family truly comes from the mind of God and plays such an essential role in his world, don't you think this explains why there are so many attacks on the family? It's pretty clear that Satan is going to be no friend of the family. Think about all that Satan can disrupt if he disrupts family. He disrupts our task of bringing more of God's image-bearers into this world while also eroding the most basic and foundational social structure that supports and strengthens human beings so can they thrive in carrying out God's plan. He also disrupts those pictures that help us understand God as Trinity, that help us understand how God saves his people, how Christ and his church relate, and how we relate to one another. No wonder, then, that the family is such a battleground! And as I'm sure you've seen, the attack isn't just on *the* family, but on *your* family. Satan doesn't just want to destroy family in general, but your family in particular.

So what can you do? I think we are prone to making this way more complicated than it really needs to be. You simply need to go to God's Word and obey its instructions. You'll find that God is *for* family—he is for *your* family. God tells you how to honor and obey him. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church. Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord. Spouses, stay true to your covenantal vows. Parents, raise your children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Little children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. Grown up children, honor your parents and make some return to them. Just look to the Bible and do what it says! This will be good for your family. But it will also accomplish something else that's good for the world.

As you do all those things, you create picture after picture after picture that God can use to teach others about himself. As you live your life in this world, as you invite others into your life and home, they get to see these pictures that point to much greater realities. The fatherless child gets to see a father loving his son, just like God the Father loves God the Son. The child from a broken home gets to see a husband hold fast to his bride, just like Jesus holds fast to the church. The child

born as part of a Canadian parenting contract with 4 equal parents (and who has no siblings) gets to see brothers and sisters who love one another fiercely, purely, and affectionately. All of these give them a picture that points far beyond itself. They may not see these things in their own homes or in their own families, but they can see them in yours.

Do you want to serve and honor God with your life? Do you want to proclaim the love of God for this broken world? Then one of the best and most basic things Christians can do is get married and begin one of these families—a family that is true to God’s plan and according to his design. You will be carrying out God’s will and you will be displaying God’s truth.

Of course, this isn’t the only way to serve God and live out his will. God calls some to special ministry and special dedication that comes with being unmarried; for his own reasons God wills some couples to be childless. And we need to trust him and believe his purposes are best. But for most of us, God calls us to marry, to have children, and to honor him through our families.

Turn on the TV or fire up Netflix and you’ll see picture after picture of society’s distorted plan for the family, society’s unbiblical redefinition of family, society’s vision of how the modern family needs to evolve with the times. They are creating pictures too! Open your Bible and you’ll see God’s much better plan, God’s much sharper definition, God’s much clearer vision. It’s your job and my job to carry out God’s true intention for the family and to create a more accurate picture that he can use—that he *will* use—to proclaim himself and his gospel.

Tim Challies, blogger, author, and book reviewer.