

IS THERE HOPE FOR THE FAMILY?

Joshua 24:11-15

Today our families are in a hostile environment. 50% of marriages are ending in divorce. That is the just the ones who go to the courts to make it legal. Many more are divorced even though they live in the same house, drive the same car, and eat at the same table. They just have not made it official yet. There is much fighting and broken homes. There is an enemy out there, called satan, who wants to destroy your family and mine. And yet we, like Jacob's family, we cannot see the bigger picture. There is trouble in the tribe.

For many of us Xians we do not see our homes as a sacred place. We undervalue and underestimate God's place in the family.

We have replaced the home with the church. For many Xians and their families all spirituality is exercised in church, all prayer is in the church, all teaching in the church - and not the home. In too many xian homes there has been an abdication of responsibility for godly leadership, family worship and spiritual discipleship.

So the question is how can a family survive today? The text before us I think will give us the answer.

1. **CHOOSE TO MAKE YOUR HOME HIS HOME**

Josh. 24:15 - "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord".

Josh. Made a choice for his family. His choice was for his household to serve one God only, to worship one God only. It was a choice against idolatry and for faithfulness. Regardless of the choice of others, Josh's wife and children new which way he would lead them.

The challenge of Joshua's day are the same for us today. We have to choose to live according to God's design for us in our homes and families.

As I was growing up there was a plaque on the wall of our home

Christ is the head of this house

The unseen guest at every meal,

The silent listener to every conversation.

Is your home his home? Do we behave at home as we do at church? Are we giving greater worship to things and people rather than God?

I thank God today for godly parents who showed us the way to trust God what ever the situation. When we live and walk in the ways of God, our families will be blessed.

2. **WELCOME HIS PRESENCE IN THE FAMILY**

2 Samuel 6:11 *“The Lord blessed him and his entire household”*

For 3 months the awesome symbol of God’s presence was seated in Obed- Edom’s home.

This box was the most sacred article in all of Israel’s history- the most powerful object on the face of the earth. This box was the focal point of the home. I am certain that this box changed the way they lived in the home. Everyday for three months they were aware that God was living with them. When God’s presence is welcomed and encouraged a family is truly blessed.

The box at the centre of Obed-Edom’s house brought blessing. It reminded them daily of God’s presence and goodness to Israel, His faithfulness, promises, power and glory.

Inside the ark of the covenant were three items...

The two stone tablets of the law given to Moses – God’s word in our homes.

A jar of manna from Israel’s wanderings – God’s provision for the home.

Aron’s staff – God ordained leadership in our homes.

Each of these I believe should be represented in our homes, and when they are the family will be a blessed one.

In Jacob’s house God was acknowledged, valued and treasured. Jacob valued the worship of God in his

family – GEN. 35:2-3 –READ. “ I will build an alter to God.”

Is there an alter in your home? – not a construction of gold or wood and stone but a time when the family comes together to love and worship God?

3. BUILD AN ARK OF SALVATION IN YOUR HOME

Heb. 11:7 *...By faith, Noah, when warned about things not seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family.*

Noah did all he could to save his family from the impending judgement on the earth. He could not drag them into the ark- but he warned them and built them a way of escape in his home.

The salvation of our homes ought to be of paramount importance. We cannot save our families only God can. All we need to do is to point our families to Jesus our Saviour.

Our children will make their own choices – but we must point them to Jesus.

Our wives will make their own choices – but we must point them to Jesus.

Our husbands will make their own choices – but we must point them to Jesus.

Our children will one day leave home one day.
One day they will have a family – but I pray that
One day they will declare “*As for me and my house we will
serve the Lord.*”

So then where do we begin? How then will God bless
our families? We need to...

EXALT God in our homes

EXAMPLE Christlikeness in your home

ENCOURGE faithfulness in your home

EDUCATE Your children in God’s way in your home

ESTABLISH Godly values in your home

And then declare like Joshua – “*As for me and my
house we will serve the lord.*”

AMEN

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