

## What Does God Think of Family Relations?

How did Jesus relate to His earthly family? Matthew 12:46-50, Mark 3:31-35

The enmity kindled in the human heart against the gospel was keenly felt by the Son of God, and it was most painful to him in his home; for his own heart was full of kindness and love, and he **appreciated tender regard in the family relation**. But with their short measuring-line his brothers could not fathom the mission that he came to fulfil, and therefore could not sympathize with him in his trials. {RH, June 9, 1904 par. 4}

What does Jesus say our relationship ought to be? Luke 14:26-27

"If any man come to me," Christ declared, "and hate not **[love less than God]** his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." {YI, May 27, 1897 par. 13}

What is Jesus' thoughts on interaction with relatives? Matthew 10:34-40

But how different is the case of him who refuses to receive the salvation purchased for him at infinite cost. He refuses to look upon the humiliation and love of Jesus. He plainly says, "I will not have this man to reign over me." To all who take this attitude, Jesus says, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." **Families must be divided in order that all who call upon the name of the Lord may be saved**. All who refuse his infinite love will find Christianity a sword, a disturber of their peace. The light of Christ will cut away the darkness that covers their evil doings, and their corruption, their fraud, and cruelty, will be exposed. Christianity unmasks the hypocrisies of Satan, and it is this unmasking of his designs that stirs his bitter hatred against Christ and his followers. {RH, July 24, 1894 par. 2}

How high of a calling is it? Matthew 19:24-30

Christ meant something when he said, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." He intended to impress upon us the fact that we must make **eternal things of first importance**, and so relate ourselves to the cause and work of God that we shall not be hindered by things of a temporal nature. **Everything of this character must come in secondary**. The armor of God, once put on, is not to be laid off for slight excuses. {HS 128.1}

What we need now is untiring energy and perseverance, so that we will not be broken off from the work by difficulties and home perplexities. If we do allow our interest to be thus separated, the enemy will understand it, and he will make trouble right in our families to draw us away from the work. But if we firmly take our stand as God's workmen, saying, "The Lord has given us a message, and we cannot be faithful watchmen unless we stand at our post of duty; we will carry the work through at all hazards," then we shall find that angels of God will minister to our households at home, and will say to the enemy, "Stand back." It is a great and solemn

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work in which we are engaged, and God will help us to carry it forward, if we learn to rely wholly upon him. {HS 128.2}

How few there are in our day who follow this example! **On the part of too many parents there is a blind and selfish sentimentalism, miscalled love**, which is manifested in leaving children, with their unformed judgment and undisciplined passions, to the control of their own will. This is the veriest cruelty to the youth and a great wrong to the world. Parental indulgence causes disorder in families and in society. **It confirms in the young the desire to follow inclination, instead of submitting to the divine requirements.** Thus they grow up with a heart averse to doing God's will, and they transmit their irreligious, insubordinate spirit to their children and children's children. Like Abraham, parents should command their households after them. Let obedience to parental authority be taught and enforced as the first step in obedience to the authority of God. {PP 142.4}

Christ carried out in His life His own divine teachings. He was absorbed in the work He came to perform; His devotion to the work of saving the lost was manifest on all occasions. While He rebuked sin with severity, He ever showed tender love for the sinner. In Him were blended the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove. His zeal never led Him to become passionate. He manifested consistency without obstinacy, benevolence without weakness, tenderness and **sympathy without sentimentalism**. He was highly social, yet He possessed a reserved dignity that did not encourage undue familiarity. His temperance never led to bigotry or austerity. He was not conformed to this world, yet He was not indifferent to the wants of the least among men. {ST, September 23, 1908 par. 7}

Abraham our example: Genesis 12:1

The message of God came to Abraham, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee." In order that God might qualify him for his great work as the keeper of the sacred oracles, Abraham must be separated from the associations of his early life. **The influence of kindred and friends would interfere with the training** which the Lord purposed to give His servant. Now that Abraham was, in a special sense, connected with heaven, he must dwell among strangers. His character must be peculiar, differing from all the world. He could not even explain his course of action so as to be understood by his friends. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and his motives and actions were not comprehended by his idolatrous kindred. {PP 126.1}

But what of the grandchildren, cousins, etc.? Genesis 24:3-9

The Canaanites were idolaters, and the Lord had commanded that his people should not intermarry with them, lest they should be led into idolatry. Abraham was old, and he expected soon to die. Isaac was yet unmarried. Abraham was afraid of the corrupting influence surrounding his son, and was anxious to have a wife selected for him who would not lead him from God. He committed this matter to his faithful, experienced servant who ruled over all that he had. Abraham required his servant to make a solemn oath to him before the Lord, that he

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would not take a wife for Isaac of the Canaanites, but that he would go to Abraham's kindred, who believed in the true God, and select a wife for the young man. He charged him not to take Isaac to the country from which he came; **for they were nearly all affected with idolatry**. If he could not find a wife for Isaac who would leave her kindred and come where he was, then he should be clear of the oath which he had made. This important matter was not left with Isaac, for him to select for himself, independent of his father. Abraham tells his servant that God will send his angel before him to direct him in his choice. {ST, April 10, 1879 par. 1}

- Can't we just avoid politics and religion conversations? No. Religion cannot be separated from a lifestyle. For example:
  - Weather is pretty crazy. **Yes, Jesus predicted it would be.**
  - So another breakout with measles, people need to vaccinate. **Nope. It is purposeful exploitation to capitalize on fear so that pharmacies, as predicted, can be used to control the masses.**
  - So Wal-mart continues to force little stores out of business. **Yep, just as predicted for the last days that monopolies would rule.**
  - So another recall on fruits and vegetables, so see, even a Vegetarian diet isn't safe. **It would be if they didn't raise cattle next to those fruits and vegetables.**
  - So the holidays are coming, and what are you wanting from Santa Clause? **We don't teach our children that lie.**
  - So they made another law for protecting us. **Yep, another scare tactic as predicted for the last days so as to eventually give up our freedoms.**
  - So let's talk about TV and movies. **No thank you. I don't watch that agenda influence, anti-biblical content.**
- And if we try to answer by holding back, we are actually denying Christ.

What may happen? Matthew 10:12-15

- Houses include family gatherings and reunions

How can we resist the influence? Deuteronomy 7:2-7

"Thou shalt make no covenant with them," God had said; and those who had recently rededicated themselves to the Lord at the altar set up before the ruins of His temple, realized that the line of demarcation between His people and the world is ever to be kept unmistakably distinct. They refused to enter into alliance with those who, though familiar with the requirements of God's law, would not yield to its claims. {PK 570.1}

The principles set forth in Deuteronomy for the instruction of Israel are to be followed by God's people to the end of time. True prosperity is dependent on the continuance of our covenant relationship with God. Never can we afford to compromise principle by entering into alliance with those who do not fear Him. {PK 570.2}

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There is constant danger that professing Christians will come to think that in order to have influence with worldlings, they must to a certain extent conform to the world. But though such a course may appear to afford great advantages, it always ends in spiritual loss. Against every subtle influence that seeks entrance by means of flattering inducements from the enemies of truth, God's people must strictly guard. They are pilgrims and strangers in this world, traveling a path beset with danger. To the ingenious subterfuges and alluring inducements held out to tempt from allegiance, they must give no heed. {PK 570.3}

It is not the open and avowed enemies of the cause of God that are most to be feared. Those who, like the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin, come with smooth words and fair speeches, apparently seeking for friendly alliance with God's children, have greater power to deceive. Against such every soul should be on the alert, lest some carefully concealed and masterly snare take him unaware. And especially today, while earth's history is closing, the Lord requires of His children a vigilance that knows no relaxation. But though the conflict is a ceaseless one, none are left to struggle alone. Angels help and protect those who walk humbly before God. Never will our Lord betray one who trusts in Him. As His children draw near to Him for protection from evil, in pity and love He lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. Touch them not, He says; for they are Mine. I have graven them upon the palms of My hands. {PK 570.4}

- Can you fight against an enemy when you have ties, sympathy relations with? Of course not.
- Today, we must also kill and destroy... spiritually.
- When we interact with such, then:
  - We learn their ways
  - They have influence over us
  - Leads to compromise
  - We recognize that they are not so bad of a people
  - We consider them simply mistaken
  - We develop sentimentalism