

Title: Living Together As a Family

Text: I Corinthians 13:11-13

Back in the 1950's when television began its influence over ~~n~~/// our/ minds, a classic television advertisement went something like this: The subject is an advertisement for an encyclopedia. A child is looking up into his father's eyes. He asks him, "Daddy, why is the sky blue?" Of course, good old dad doesn't have the faintest idea why the sky is blue. But he simply turns in his neat swivel chair, opens the encyclopedia on the shelf behind him, and discovers the answer. This is supposed to be a subtle hint to Daddys all over America that if they don't want to look stupid in front of their children they better purchase this set of encyclopedias, fast. That's the way it was in the 50's.

But in the 70's the scene has changed. The questions are a little tougher, and the children are a great deal more aware of what is going on in this world. The child now asks, "Daddy, why is ^{their} ~~their~~ hate?" There is no pat little paragraph in a bound volume to answer that question. It's a question about values, not about facts.

This story of the television ad is symbolic of so much of the tension that exists between parent and child in our day. I want to explore this tension with you. ~~We~~/// I want to examine what it means to be a parent ^{and} ~~and~~ what it means to be a child in 1973, a time when the gap that really matters is not a knowledge gap or a generation gap but a value gap. How can we make sense out of life in a time when encyclopedias or scientific journals or business weeklies not longer give important answers?

I've chosen a text that we **can** all agree upon, Paul's great words from I Corinthians: "When I was a child I spoke as a child, I thought as a child, I reasoned as a child; when I became a man I gave up childish ways...So faith, hope, love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love."

I want to use these three words: faith, hope, and love, as the focal points for our message this morning. Using the words faith and hope I want to discuss what it means to be a parent (or for those of you who would like to apply it another way: what it means to be a person). Under the heading of love I shall explore what it means to be a young person in a family.

I First Faith

① Having faith and being a parent has a double focus. The first is obvious, I believe. The parent who does not have some sort of a *JSK about faith* profound faith and trust in God is an unfortunate parent. Unfortunate not because he or she is wrong, but unfortunate because without God, the raising of children is such a lonely ordeal. As an athiest or an agnostic, *being* a parent becomes such a private and ingrown matter, and potentially such a burdensome task. *but* If we trust God we know that the up-bringing of our children is not a lonely matter: we know that some how good characterisitics will develop withing the Child because God is concerned and he loves and he guides us in the raising of our children.

Faith in God makes us realize that God is deeply involved in the lives of our children, very often in spite of us. *Reason why children love God and their parents.*

② The second aspect of having faith in God and being a parent is the parent's faith in the child. This is a bit more touchy than ~~the~~ faith in God. I refer here especially to when thildren grow older, when they go to college or into a careers. The events that have shaped

the lives of contemporary young people are vastly different from those which shaped ours. It is hard for many parents to understand this.

It takes a lot of faith in our children to get out of the way ~~of~~ ~~the/new/~~ and let them learn and make their own mistakes. If we can't lend a hand in creating the world of peace ~~and/~~ that they feel is possible, then the least we can do is get out of their way and let them proceed with their ~~task/~~ task.

~~/III/~~ II - Hope

Having hope and being a parent is the second aspect of parenthood I would like to examine. But first, let's make sure you know what Christian hope is all about. Christian hope is not pie-in-the-sky-by and by. Christian hope is a ^{knowledge} ~~feeling~~ that things should be better than they are - not a little bit better but a great deal better.

If we parents have this kind of hope for ourselves and ^{our} ~~our~~ families - real christian hope - then ^{we are not} ~~they~~ cannot be satisfied with the way things are. If things - events - ideas - programs - polices - are going well for you and the world seems perfect to you, then you don't want any change. Hope is meaningless to you. And you are without hope.

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A woman was shopping one day and found a plaque which said: "Prayer changes things." She purchased it, took it home, and put it up in the living room. When her husband came home from work he looked at the plaque, tore it down, and said: "I don't want thing changed. I like them the way they are."

^{christian} Hope implies that we don't like things the way they are, for we hope for seomething better. Too often as a young person approaches a parent the message comes from the parent: don't bother me, don't change me, I'm older than you are, and I know life better than you, and you, my son, are just a ^{vision} ~~dreamer~~. Such a parent has no hope in his heart; he has given up hope. I would really like to know what are your hopes and vision for this church for the years to come.

lovely concepts and surely in stark contrast to the materialism of so much of modern life.

But, I have come to realize that "love" is a much deeper experience than a slogan or a ~~word~~^{word} or two on a psychedelic poster. "All you need is love" is a poster in our fellowship hall. Or the poster which reads "peace and love" ~~and~~^{What The World Needs is} "luv". These are just simple little statements. They are faddish, gimmicky, and they have bugged several generations of parents because of their implied sexual license and apparent disregard for the responsibilities that real Christian love brings.

So ~~before I get into this further~~^{young people, Parents}, let me say that ~~as~~^{do} parents ~~we~~ know a great deal about love or ~~we~~^{those then you do} should. And I firmly believe that the most important thing a father can do for his children is love their mother.

But, beyond this love between parents, let us look with clear eyes on what has become known as the "love generation". Young people, it would be impossible for me to categorize you, as it is impossible to categorize parents. But try this little poem and see if it doesn't fit sometimes:

My flower child has gone to seed -
Has gone to pot -
Is ~~stake~~ smoking weed.
He whispers peace but what it means
Is sitting sadly in his jeans.
He mentions love most fervently
Yet all the love must come from me.

And I think it is Time for Christian young people to get involved with their parents

You know, young people, you can get involved with just about everything, and everybody except your parents. It's easy to blame everything on parents because they are "up tight" or "out of it" or "they just don't understand." But - love is a two-way street and must be struggled at and worked over and constantly renewed. And you, young people, are just as responsible for this struggle as your parents.

Tell me - When was the last time you told Mom or Dad - Hey, I Love You
"He mentions love most fervently, yet all the love must come from me."
This is what Wordsworth called the "sad music of humanity."

If you are now prepared to rush home to parents or parents you are ready to rush home to your children and quote that catchy phrase, "All the love must come from me," remember: There were three things I said this morning: and any one without the other is incomplete. First, I said that parents should have faith in God and then they can have faith in their children. Second, I said that parents ~~might~~ must examine the kind of hope they have in this world and whether or not it is simply a hope that hopes that nothing will change. If it is that kind of hope - it is profoundly un-christian hope. And finally, I suggested that love is a two-way street. It is not a political word or an anti-establishment word; it is a deep and profoundly important aspect of life lived together.

"But now abide faith, hope, ^{love} ~~love~~, these three; but the greatest of these is love. God's meaning of love is: patience, kindness, love is not jealous; love is not arrogant; it does not seek ~~its~~ ~~own~~ to provoke others to anger, does not rejoice in unrighteousness; but love rejoices with the truth, it ^bears all things, believes all things, and hopes all things." That is christian love.

"Daddy, why is there hate?" I'm not prepared to answer that. ^{God's love}
But I do know if there is love - real love - there can be agreements to disagree, there can be trust in the unknown and uncertain, there can

be no desire to hurt, and there can be growth and excitement in the most fantastic and incredible unit ever created by God, the unit of// we call the family. *Whether we mean by family the*

~~Shall we pray~~

local unit or the church unit.

Shall we pray