

S.N July 4, 82 P.M. ✓

"THE FOUR CORNERSTONES OF THE CHRISTIAN HOME"

Luke 2:52

This evening we want to talk about really a Heaven born program for the home. Marriage and love are really a foretaste of Heaven. Marriage without love is a real good example of the other region that is in contrast to Heaven. Love is in the family - is one of the chief sources of peace. It is a great inspiration. And love is the secret - a priceless quality of homelife which we call happiness.

I think this is one of the most mysterious things on earth. That families can have devotion to each other and with God, which is no accident. Marriages should be made in Heaven.

But marriages have to be lived on earth. And there are tragedies that often happen. Because, perhaps, some boy hastily sings "I Love You Truly". And the girl quickly sings "Ah, Sweet Mysteries Of Life, At Last I Have Found You".

Someone has said it is better for the girl to say "no" before marriage than Reno afterwards.

And of course there is the thrill of the prospects of the honeymoon, the Silver Anniversary, and a Golden Anniversary.

Perhaps some of you tonight remember the first time you met the girl you married, and you looked into her eyes and you went home. You told somebody that you have found the person that you wanted to marry. But then, that person, you have to prove your love, over and over to them. And then they become your

companion. And there is a devotion in this.

There is a story about (Mrs. Charles A. Linberg's) mother. Later in life, she was asked by Paderewski - Paderewski asked her (if) she ever went back to her college campus. She replied, frequently. I love to go back to the college chapel and sit in the quiet and think how much happier I am now than I ever expected to be at that time.

The famed Polish pianist was astonished. Happier now than you thought you ever would be, when you were 20. And she replied that she was much happier, he arose, he bowed - and he said "I want to meet your husband."

He might have said also that he wanted to meet her children. Children are a heritage of the Lord. As arrows are in the hands of the mighty man, so are children of the youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them.
Psalms 127:3-5.

By the standard of the Psalmist, many parents would have been called happy people years ago. Because they did not think about getting riches. The Roman Matron Cornelia pointed to her children and said, these are my jewels. There are few joyous satisfactions in older years as rewarded to parents, as the memories of their children. Their children, being converted to Christ. Graduating from school, happily married.

Now (marriage) is not a failure but many married people are. There are some tendencies in the modern home. That are dangerous and some are tragic. One dangerous thing is that we are now so regulated, as some outside institution. Food once produced in the home is now brought in in cans. When the wife says - if a man is asked (if) his wife is a good cook, the loyal bridegroom will always reply, yes, sir! She is the niftiest little can opener you ever saw.

Clothing was once made at home - but is now bought ready to wear.

The Home Economic trades on the farm were taught. Young people today go to finishing schools, where father's pocketbook is finished. There is very little entertainment that is created or provided in the home. Except television, with so much of that which is positively harmful. Now this is not all bad, and it doesn't mean that it is a good, moral, and religious in its instruction. Because Edgar Guest once wrote - it takes a heap of living to make a home.

Twice before in history of Western civilization, family life has gone on the rocks. Once by the Greeks, about BC 300. And again in Rome about AD 300. In each case the disintegration of family life was accompanied by deterioration of the entire political structure.

The symptoms were the same. First, there was almost a universal disregard of the marriage agreement.

Second, there was a declining birth rate, a symptom of pre-occupation of things rather than commitment to persons.

Third, there was a disintegration of parents, irresponsibility on the part of children toward their mothers and fathers. And on the part of mothers and fathers toward their children.

Fourth, there was a tremendous rise in juvenile delinquency. Which then, as now, was preceded by adult delinquency.

Floy Valentine said that the United States now has the highest divorce rate in the world. For the first time in history, both the president and the vice-president

of the United States are married to women who have been divorced. And the latter is himself a divorced man.

Hence, divorce is directly effecting most families in the nation. Including many families in the church.

There is an indication that this nation's declining birth-rate may not really be related to the serious moral problem, of over population in the world, but rather it may reflect a materialistic, selfish - oriented to gadgets. And people are becoming creatures of comfort and love luxury. Linked with this, he says, is the absentee fathers and mothers of the home. And the fact that juvenile and adult delinquency is really growing.

He put out the question - what can the church do to help families, find stability and strength in the midst of such current crises.

When the Roman empire fell, (St. Augustine) said, for want of order in the soul - it is not the churches business to prop up the empire. It is the churches business to bring order in the soul. And to do this, we must bring Jesus Christ back into the home. And teach these ideals and principles of the Bible.

Now Jesus was brought up into a home which was the glory of his country. Joseph, the head of that home was a saintly, wise man. Who told care of the household affairs and it also reveals that his mother was a very religious (student) of the Scriptures. In his home there was the intimate relationship with brothers and sisters. Two of these, James and Jude - we have their epistles in the Scriptures. He received his (education) at home. Or from a Scribe attached to the village synagogue. His love of knowledge was early awakened within him. He daily knew of the joy of deep and happy thought. He devoted himself to the study of the (Old Testament) His sayings, which are full of quotations from it, give abundant proof of how constantly it formed

the food of his mind and really the comfort of his soul. His quotations also shows that he mastered the tongue of his day and was able to read the sacred pages in the language and in the thought of his time.

Now the home of Jesus, where he grew up, was a most beautiful place. Nazareth, situated in that little cup like valley, in the midst of mountains. With its little white houses and vines clinging to the wall. Amidst gardens and groves of olives, figs, oranges, etc. Where the fields are divided by hedges. Where there are flowers of every hue. And the village behind is, rises a hill perhaps 500 feet in height. It is a wonderful view. And there are the mountains of Galilee on to the North. And the roads of Carnal which go down to the sparkling waters of the Mediterranean to the West. Jesus as a boy wandered around this territory.

We know that his educational influence was important. Every year, after he was 12 years old, he went down with his parents to the Passover at Jerusalem. And fortunately there has been preserved an account of these first visits. His destination to that city where all the Jews loved to go. A city that was full of strangers, speaking many languages.

It is no wonder that when the day came to return home, he was so excited with the new objects of interest, that he failed to join the others. And they found him in the temple - there with the masters, asking questions. And seeking to learn more.

Our text says that Jesus increased in wisdom and in favor with God and with man.

From this we discover at least four cornerstones of a happy Christian home. And no one can successfully have a Christian home without these cornerstones being present. You can go out here, get in your car, and drive down the highway with two wheels off. You need all four, to have a well rounded Christian home.

I. PHYSICAL

The first cornerstone has to do with the physical. Jesus grew in (stature) He grew in age. He developed. Wholesome food, proper sleep, warm clothes. All of these have to be provided in the home.

Gandhi was right - men can live without masses of things. Wealth can be either a blessing or a curse to the home. Certainly it is not a necessity for happiness in the home. The earliest happy memories that I have about my home is not about the wealth - for we did not have. And think about the clothes that were passed down from one child to another. And think about how one would out grow some garment and pass it on. And another would save it and pass it on down. But as children, we were proud of it.

It was not easy for young people to be at the business of some hard work, on Saturday when there were some neighborhood boys who wanted to play baseball, on some lot somewhere. Yet there had to be a proper balance between the physical work and the play. And whether it was to work the vegetable garden or do something else - it turned out to be a glorious day. Now today, most people live in a glorious, lovely house. And they have so many labor saving gadgets, and so much in great abundance. However, a wise balance between work and play will help young people to grow and will contribute towards a joyous homelife.

Back during the (depression days), they had what they called house-to-house salesmen. And one of the favorite expressions these men were trained as they came to the door, would be this - "is the lady of the house at home." Now we have used that to refer to the lady of the house. She has been called a housewife, a homemaker, household engineer. And this lady of the house title, carries a position of dignity.

They love their homes - they are filled with joy.

The woman of the house likes to know if there is a future in the man that she is marrying. Someone has described a woman shopper who can hurry through a department store aisle 18" wide without brushing against the piled up glassware. And then drive home and knock the doors off a 12' wide garage. That's the way Faulkner described the frustrated housewife. And who wouldn't be frustrated. Many times the husband is hardly out of the house before he phones his wife to bring him his wallet at his office. Or when she told him that she would like to see a play, he took her to a ball game. Or the husband who wanted his wife to share in the activities, she finds the hammer, holds the ladder, cleans the paint brushes, and straightens up the cellar. And even after he spends the day fishing, he rushes home and lets her clean and cook the catch.

Now all of this has to do with physical - it is indeed important in the home. Now the wife may read the grocery ads in the newspaper and make pencil notes, and then spend a dollars worth of gas to save one grocery penny.

II. EDUCATION

This is the second cornerstone - to have a happy Christian home. Parents need not expect young people to have hungry minds, craving higher education, unless there is an appetite that is encouraged and created in the home.

Jesus grew in wisdom - he was the best educated man of his day. And he spoke at least two languages and maybe three. He knew a great deal about astronomy and ethics, and sciences. Better than any man. But he knew the Bible of his day, as no other man knew it. Undoubtedly there was an educational program in his home in Nazareth.

Today there should be some sort of a library in every home. Some interesting and wholesome magazines.

And then families should talk about education.

It is very wonderful, as I remember in my childhood, that on a few occasions the public school teacher was invited to be a visitor in our home. And to talk about the values of better education and the needs that we had.

I think concerning parents with purpose and plan to develop the child educationally as in Jesus time.

Many times if you ask a parent today something about religious education for the child, he needs to be in the Sunday School and Worship Service, you get this answer - "you don't realize how much children have to do these days. My child just has to drop something."

And therefore the mother and the father, drop religion. And the child without any religious foundation is going to become spiritually and morally unprepared for life.

Mozart, when just a child, was instructed in the home by his parents - musically. When he was 3, 4, and 5 years old - he was writing compositions of music. And composing it and expressing himself musically. And of course, he was exposed to the great music in the cathedrals and the orchestras, and the concerts that were given. And the whole family was involved in this. Now this was the thing that has to take place in the home. This cornerstone that we are talking about, has to be here - education. This is the second cornerstone.

III. SOCIAL

This third cornerstone, every home needs a wholesome social program. The Bible says Jesus drew his favor with men. He was socially adjusted among the masses of people.

We are glad that Jesus was not shut up by himself. Forbidden to go out in the public among the people. He was in the life stream of humanity that day. In fact, he attended the parties. And wherever the family went, he was there. And the older people adored him, loved him.

Now this was not by accident. There was a social program in his home.

Young people today, and children, need social nurture. Which is natural - it is God given. And it is of untold worth. Parents can starve it and develop a warped personality. They can neglect it and the devil will poison it with midnight rides, drinking parties, dance halls - and you can recognize that this is not a Heaven born experience that he is going through.

Every parent is given the opportunity to develop the wholesomeness of his child. And home should be where young people would rather be than anywhere else on earth. A child should have the best time at home.

A social program at your home should require some parental prayers, planning, some money to provide it. That God-given social nature ought not to be starved or poisoned. It is natural for teen-age boys to love to be with the girls. It is just as natural as the sparks fly up. It is just as natural for girls to love to be with the boys - just like water flowing down a hill. And when the young people want a social affair in the home, it pays to go to any trouble, or expense you need to go too to let them have it.

I remember Dr. Levell writing about his own daughter that was about to graduate from High School. She asked if she might have a slumber party on Friday night with her graduating friends. He happily agreed. On Wednesday we asked, how many she had invited to her slumber party. I have asked only about 45 so far. But I'll get the remainder by Friday. Mercy, we exclaimed, where are we going to find a place

for them to sleep. We have beds only for 12 people. In surprise she said, oh, they won't have to sleep, this is a slumber party.

They came, 64 of them. They romped and played the piano. Cooked hamburgers. Roasted hot dogs. They drank cold drinks. Slid down the banister until Dr. Levell came home the next morning. He said I left my wife - my wife played with them all night. She was a brave soul. I left home. The wreckage was considerable but a good time was had by all.

Happy is the family where the husband and wife can agree to maintain a program of family entertainment - both indoors and outdoor emphasis that will be social for the children.

Home is a place of varied interests. Edgar Guest says it takes a heap of living to make a home. Yes, a lots of things happen in our homes that are not perfect. Husbands are not perfect, wives are not perfect, children are not perfect. But a husband needs to know that it takes this cornerstone to make his home go.

Quite often husbands have a stubborn streak - two men were talking about their wives. One was speaking about how sweet and lovely his wife was. He said, why she is just like an angel. And he outlined her wonderful characteristics. The other fellow said, you know my wife is an angel too - she is always in the air harping on the fact that she doesn't have any earthly thing to wear.

It is refreshing to know that there is a relationship among fathers and mothers and these guidelines which we have layed out as a cornerstone are very neutral. Physical, education, and social.

IV. SPIRITUAL

Now as we come to the last, and the most important of all that we have to say tonight, the spiritual cornerstone is something that is very, very important in the program of the home. And couples need to give importance to this. The first question is simply - does God really live in your home. After all, what is a home. And if you would study the definition of a home and in the various languages. The Greek word for home literally means the shrine of the gods. For the Greeks with their pagan Gods - to them the home was a place where the Gods lived. Even though this comes out of deep paganism - the concept is good. In the Garden of Eden, was call Paradise. Because God lived there. And we call Heaven Paradise. Jesus spoke of this when he said to the thief on the cross, today you shall be with me in Paradise.

The big question also under the religious cornerstone is what have they seen in thine house. Isa. 39:4 is a heart searching question that was asked. What do people see in our homes when they visit. Do they see a king spirit, a happy spirit, a Christ like manner. What do the children see. You can fool some of the people all of the time, all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all of the time. Somebody has said.

If a child lives in criticism, he learns to condemn. If he lives in hostility, he learns to fight. If he lives in ridicule, he learns to be shy. If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to be confident. If he lives with praise, he learns to be appreciative. If he lives with acceptance, he learns to love. If a child lives with honesty, he learns justice. If he lives with security, he learns to have faith. And this is what we are interested in on this mother's day. Is what your child is living in.

Is every member a Christian in your home? Is every member of the family taking part in this? Do you know the nearest place to Heaven in this world. Of course we get close to Heaven when we are in the church and worshipping God. And fellowship with

other Christians. But did you know the nearest place to Heaven on this earth, ought to be found in your home. However, do you know that some homes are the nearest place to Hell on this earth. Because there is so much hatred, bitterness, ugliness, and strife. Is your home growing more like Heaven.

The challenge has been given to show any two people who begin their married life with family worship every day and who keep it up - whose romance went on the rocks of divorce. The key note and the cornerstone of a Christian home should be sounded at the beginning of the day. At breakfast when prayer is offered. And in the tone of reverence, it should be that children are brought up in Sunday School. They are seldom brought up in the court when they are brought up in Sunday School. All of the Bible teachings in the home should be magnified.

This is the place for character building. The parents want to bring up a child in the way that he should go, they must walk in the pathway themselves. Juvenile delinquency is on the increase. It is a national tragedy. But many say it is the lack of parental example, and discipline in the home. Where honesty, truthfulness, and purity must be taught.

I could never forget the effort my mother made to teach me honesty, and the need of obedience of growing up, and truthfulness. If there is no constituted authority in the home, there will be little in childhood. And a child will likely have and give little obedience to the authority and laws of this land or to the school without discipline he will not follow the right way.

I remember reading of a preacher who said when he was small, his mother made him memory the 8th Psalm. And recite it to her and his father - as she planned a visit very soon. On arrival, the boy was stubborn and said he didn't want too. And grandpa begged him. But he wouldn't. Later in private, mother told him that if he refused again he would get a switching. The next day he went to visit a cousin and the mother

told him to say the 8th Psalm. He refused as before. And he had gotten away with it. They begged but mother said she would take care of that later. So on the way back from grandfather's farm, they stopped by a weeping willow tree to get a switch. ^{In House} The mother said get me a switch. The boy said that he learned why it was called a weeping willow. She stood him up in the buggy and wore the little switch out on his legs. The next day, he said he went to see an aunt. While my mother was greeting the ladies there and putting her hat on the bed, the boy ran to his mother and begged, Mama, let me say the 8th Psalm.

He said mother's old hump-backed trunk him her dressing room, over which she knelt daily in prayer for her boys, and over which she later on in the day, frequently stretched out for a little of what the boys called peach tree tea. He said many of the limbs on the four peach trees in the back yard never lived to grow any peaches. He said, we laughed about this, and accused her of telling the Lord that if he would work on the inside, she would work on the outside.

Now of course this sort of (discipline) will bring about a well ordered home. And it will produce something - righteous authority. And will be the kind of a cornerstone that will develop young people.

And of course the home that is spiritual will always have guests coming in. And you can never get ride of those influences that influence you - whether it is the Preacher, a missionary, or some outstanding person who comes to the home. If the parents want their children to know and be known by the pastor, or by religious leaders, or by outstanding people in the community - then it is good for them to invite them to meals. And let them be with the children. Now it makes no difference if the family eats in the kitchen. That's where the preacher and the pastor eats in his home. But to carry out the Bible exhortation, to be given to hospitality is another way of saying - it is more blessed to give than receive.

John Howard Payne, on a gray fall day in Paris, France, was homesick. He was heart sick for home in America. He wrote the words = Home, Sweet Home. The song was first sung in the London theatre. But it was soon taken to the heart of the English speaking people. And appealed to the universal longing of men. Because everyone wants happiness. No wone can be happy without a happy home. It is sad to say, so many couples never live together, long enough to sing - "Darling, we are growing old. Silver threads among the gold."

They divorce. But when marriage is founded upon these four pillars, and cornerstones that we are talking about - how different it will be.

Brought New Orleans Sunday
Dr. Q. Levell, a wonderful man of God who gave himself devotedly, said that his mother had devotions in her home for her family. She had nine boys. She said half of her heart was full of the love of Christ and his church. And the other half was for her family. She said that she kept the family pews filled and full of boys every Sunday. During the worship she would smile, weep, rejoice, pray, and watch. See if her boys were listening. After the pastor, Dr. Borem would preach one of his soul moving sermons, we boys at the dinner table said, Mama, he took you right up to the pearlie gates today, didn't he! And she taught a class of children in the Sunday School for over 40 some years. She did much, he said, and more visiting than the average paid visitor in the church. She would hitch the horse up and go all over the countryside and the town. She'd go to the rich, the poor, she loved missions. And she said one time Dr. Gambel was taking a collection for foreign missions. And she had no money to give. She took off the gold watch and chain that the father gave her on their wedding night and put it in the collection plate. A rich man redeemed it. And my father saw that it was left at home on missionary days thereafter. He said this same spiritually was shown day after day in his home. She would read the Bible at sunrise, while churning, and then conduct family worship at the breakfast table. She prayed for the boys daily as she bent over a trunk in her dressing room. Her home was a haven of

hospitality, for visiting preachers, friends, and those that had needs. He said once an old woman, who mother did not even know, came and said I heard you was a good woman. And announced that she had come to visit awhile. She stayed and enjoyed his mother's free board from September until Christmas. He said time failed him to remember and to tell the ceaseless number of souls she was able to win because of the Christian life that she lived. He said they found a pencil written letter in her old Bible when she died. "My dear, dear boys. My Lord may call me at any time. How sweet it will be to be with Jesus. He has sweetened the time, so death is robbed of its terror. My heart's desire and prayer for each of you is that you may ever live for Jesus. That your chief aim and desire may be to glorify God. Oh, ever live for Jesus. That he may always use you for his glory in bringing lost men to the cross in the extension of his kingdom. At last may we all be gathered around his throne. An unbroken family, to praise his name forever. Signed, (Mama.)"

I'm talking to you tonight about the cornerstone of a great, Christian happy home.

Dr. Ted Adams shared a personal letter from a woman who wrote to him these lines. I've been married for five years now. God has given us one lovely child, and another one is on the way. We have found in our home, the Heaven on earth - that true love can bring. I want to share with you and perhaps through you with others, the advice the preacher gave us when he married us. He said, marriage can either be Heaven on earth or Hell on earth. It will be as much of Heaven as there is God in it. And as much of Hell is there is, the Devil in it."

May God help each of you to live in your home, that there will be Heaven in your heart and in your home. And accept the great truth of Jesus Christ, increased in wisdom and stature-- and in favor with God and man. And may this be true of each

home which we challenge and touch tonight.