



The Family Commandment

Judging by the size, expense, even extravagance with which people celebrate weddings today, it would seem that, by and large, they believe marriage is a good thing. Scripture sees it that way, too. “He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord” (Proverbs 18:22).

Judging by the rhetoric one hears from all parts of the political spectrum today, it would seem that people believe that family is a good thing, too. That’s encouraging, because the Lord has important purposes for family. “God sets the lonely in families” (Psalm 68:6). “These should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family...” (1 Timothy 5:4). “Fathers tell their children about your faithfulness” (Isaiah 38:19).

Judging by the rather uncontrolled way in which people use, talk about, and even joke about their sexuality today, people don’t believe God’s commandments about keeping our lives sexually pure have much value or application for them. Here God’s Word suddenly turns into an infringement on their personal freedoms, nothing more than the ignorant or outdated opinions of religious fanatics who lived in another culture and another time. Of course, that is not a new opinion, either. Almost two thousand years ago the Apostle Paul wrote about those who had become so depraved that “God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another” (Romans 1:24).

Do people realize that the sixth commandment, “You shall not commit adultery,” is the marriage and family commandment?

When God gives us his gifts, those gifts have a purpose. Our sexuality is a good and wholesome gift of God. But it serves its good and wholesome purpose only in the context of marriage and family. There it strengthens marriages and gives life to families. Outside of these borders, its use only serves to tear apart those same marriages and families.

One might compare it to fire. In the furnace, in the oven, in the lantern, or in the engine, fire is under control, and it serves a wholesome purpose. It heats homes, cooks food, lights rooms, and powers machines. But let it out and set it free and it destroys and consumes the people and the things it is meant to serve. Just ask the people of Plano who lost their homes to fires last week.



In the marriage and in the family, sexuality is under control, and it blesses us. But let it out and it inflames jealousies, sings hearts and feelings, chars relationships, reduces marriages to ashes, and even engulfs whole societies when it rages out of control.

For God's children, control is something our gracious God both encourages and supplies. "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Jesus has graciously bought us and set us free from our sin. His blood sets us free from the fires we deserved as he forgives us. His Spirit makes our bodies his temples, his homes, and there he provides us with the love and the will to control ourselves. By making us part of his family, he has set us free to live lives which will be a blessing for our families.

In Christ, Pastor Vieths