

## **AN AFFIRMATION OF THE FAMILY**

Biblical basis for Family Ministry is essential. The following are truths we affirm with supporting Scripture passages.

### **I. Human beings were created and redeemed by God for relationships.**

Men and women were created for relationships with God (1), (2) and with others (3). Both creation and redemption declare His desire to be in relationship with us (4).

(1) Rom. 14:7, 8; (2) Col. 1:16; (3) Gen. 2:18; (4) Eph. 1:4,6

### **II. Marriage and the family were instituted by the Creator to meet human beings' primary need for social relationships.**

The image of God is expressed in human beings as male and female (1). The creator's act of bringing together the two as equals (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9) in a monogamous (10), (11) heterosexual (12), (13) union established the pattern for marriage (14). This union of marriage is designed to provide companionship, fulfillment (15), (16), (17), and perpetuation of the human family (18). The intimate relationship of marriage is employed to represent the sacred union that exists between Christ and His people (19).

(1) Gen. 1:27; (2) Acts 17:26; (3) Gal. 3:28; (4) Gen. 1:27, 28; (5) Prov. 31:10-31; (6) Mark 10: 2-12; (7) John 4:7-30; (8) John 8:1-11; (9) Mark 14:3-9; (10) Gen. 2:24; (11) S. of S. 2:2, 3; (12) Lev. 18:22; (13) Rom. 1:26, 27; (14) Matt. 19:4-6; (15) Gen. 2:22; (16) Prov. 5:18; (17) Mal. 2:4; (18) Gen. 1:28; (19) Eph. 5:30-32

### **III. God's relationship with His people is the model for family relationships.**

In God's covenant with us as His people, we experience love, forgiveness, commitment, acceptance, intimacy, and even sacrifice, that our deepest needs might be met (1), (2), (3). As we live out the gospel in our families, our relationships with each other are fashioned after the likeness of the divine relationship with humanity (4), (5). Indeed, strength and grace from God are promised to accomplish this. We love, serve and forgive as He loves, serves and forgives us (6), (7), (8). Sin separates, but covenant love knits together (9), (10). As the cross is uplifted, alienated people are brought near to God and to each other, and the blood of Jesus breaks down the walls of hostility that the enemy has built up (11).

(1) Jer. 31:31-34; (2) Heb. 8:10-12; (3) 1 John 3:16; (4) Eph. 5:21-33; (5) Titus 2:4; (6) 1 John 4:7; (7) Matt. 20:26-28; (8) Eph.4:32; (9) Hosea 11:4; (10) Col. 2:2; (11) Eph. 2:13, 14

### **IV. Marriage is a three-fold, lifelong covenant.**

The couple enters into a covenant with each other, with society and with God to be faithful to one another (1) until death do them part (2), (3), (4). This human vow bespeaks a commitment with a quality of endurance like that found in God's everlasting covenant with His people (5), (6). The human covenant is not only like unto the divine, but draws its strength from the provisions made in the divine covenant, God promising to do for the couple what they could not do in their own strength (7).

(1) Hos. 3:3; (2) Mal. 2:14; (3) Prov. 2:17; (4) Matt. 19:5, 6; (5) Ps. 89:34; (6) Ps. 119:89; (7) Jer. 31:31, 33

## **V. The pattern for marriage was established at creation.**

The creative act set the standard of monogamous (1), (2) heterosexual (3), (4), (5) marriage. In the intimacy of marriage we come the closest to understanding the relationship God desires with us (6).

(1) Gen. 2:24; (2) S. of S. 2:2, 3; (3) Gen. 1:27, 28; (4) Lev. 18:22; (5) Rom. 1:26, 27; (6) Eph. 5:30-32

## **VI. Children are a gift from God to be trained for His service.**

Children are a precious heritage from the Lord. Their care is entrusted to parents and the church (1) that they might be led to be obedient, and responsible (2) to their parents (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), others, and ultimately to respect God's authority (8). Parenting responsibilities include providing (9), training (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), and correcting (15), (16), (17) that children may come to know God (18), (19), understand and choose Biblical values (20), (21) and be prepared for responsible self-government (22).

(1) Ps. 127:3-5; (2) Prov. 20:11; (3) Ex. 20:12; (4) Eph. 6:1; (5) Col. 3:20; (6) 1 Tim. 5:8, 16; (7) Prov. 1:8; (8) Lk. 2:52; (9) Matt. 7:9-11; (10) Deut. 6:4-7; (11) Deut. 32:45, 46; (12) Eph. 6:4; (13) Deut. 6:6-9; (14) Prov. 22:6; (15) Prov. 3:12; (16) Prov. 19:19; (17) Prov. 13:24; (18) 2 Cor. 6:18; 2 Sam. 7:8; (19) Ps. 103:13; (20) Heb. 11:24-26; (21) Josh. 4:6, 7; (22) Judg. 13:8, 12

## **VII. God's special acceptance and protection are over those who by choice or circumstances face life alone.**

God provides for the needs of the widows and the fatherless(1), and He blesses with both the gift of singleness and the gift of marriage (2), (3).

(1) Ps. 68:5, 6; (2) Matt. 19:11, 12; (3) Cor. 7:7

## **VIII. Human life is sacred and should be revered since it is a gift from the Creator and has been redeemed by Him.**

All human life (1), (2), from the womb to the grave (3), (4), (5), is ultimately a gift of God and belongs to God (6), (7). Infinite value is bestowed on every person by virtue of creation and redemption (8), (9).

(1) Jn. 1:3; (2) 1 Tim. 6:13; (3) Isa. 46:3, 4; (4) Eccl. 12:7; (5) Ps. 139:13-16; (6) Dan. 5:23; (7) 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; (8) Isa. 44:24; (9) Isa. 43:1, 4

## **IX. The family altar is to be a place of covenant renewal.**

Scripture provides the model of morning and evening worship (1). The corporate covenant was regularly renewed, both as a nation and in the family setting (2). As priest and spiritual head of the family (3), (4), the father reaffirmed God's Lordship over the household (5) and gave witness to the corporate family faith in the merits of the atoning blood (6). The intercession of the parents opened the way for God to intervene in the lives of their children (7), (8). As Christians we also establish the family altar to celebrate our united faith in the atoning merits of Jesus and His victory in our behalf (9).

(1) Ex. 29:38, 39, 42, 43, 45; (2) Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:3, 4; (3) Gen. 18:19; (4) Job. 1:5; (5) Josh. 24:15; (6) Ex. 12:21-27; (7) Mk. 9:22, 23; (8) 1 Cor. 7:14; (9) Rom. 8:31; 34-39

**X. God is giving, in the spirit and power of Elijah, a final heart-turning call designed to turn this generation toward Him and family members toward each other.**

As Satan wars unceasingly against marriage and the family (1), (2), God purposes before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord (3) to "restore all things," (4)—including the twin Edenic institutions of marriage (5) and the day of the family (6)—to call His children to a true hierarchy of values (7), and to prepare the earthly family to accept its privilege of uniting with the heavenly family (8).

(1) Eze. 20:32; (2) Rev. 12:12; (3) Mal. 4:5, 6; (4) Mk. 9:12; (5) Gen. 2:22, 24; (6) Gen. 2:1-3; (7) Ex. 20:2-17; (8) Eph. 3:14, 15

**XI. The church functions as an extended family, with individual families the elemental components.**

The family unit is not self-sufficient and self-contained as a body of believers. Rather, it has need of continuing support from others around it (1). The church, then, functions as an extended family (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) to provide practical help (7), (8), (9), fellowship, and nurture (10), (11), (12) as well as to equip individuals and families to utilize their spiritual gifts within the home and in outreach to others (13), (14), (15), (16), (17).

(1) Heb. 10:25; (2) Eph. 3:15; (3) 1 Thes. 2:7,8; (4) Acts 2:42-27; (5) Acts 4:32-35; (6) Eph. 2:19; (7) 1 John 3:16-18; (8) James 2:15-16; (9) Eph. 5:29-30; (10) Gal. 6:2; (11) Gal. 6:10; (12) Rom. 8:16, 17; (13) Acts 16:31-34; (14) Acts 2:42-47; (15) Col. 1:15-20; (16) 1 John 5:1-2; (17) Eph. 4:15, 16