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Four priorities for the Christian family

It is stating the obvious to say that family life is under serious threat in our nation. Sadly, it is part of the constant erosion of biblical standards and values that characterise our generation. One hindrance after another has been put in the way of Christians in this area. So what are we to do?

The nub of the answer to that question is twofold. *Firstly*, we are to ‘pray without ceasing’ (1 Thessalonians 5:17) for the recovery of all that has been lost regarding robust family life, and to pray for Christian families themselves that they would be emboldened to hold fast and hold firm to the principles for family life which God has set out in Scripture. Then, *secondly*, we are to look to our own responsibilities as Christians, in order to ensure that (the Lord himself being our helper) we are practising these principles ourselves. In this latter connection, here are *four areas* which we need to take with special seriousness.

The first is *family worship*. Each Christian family is like a little church in the home, where God is worshipped and adored. Whether husband and wife are on their own or with children, family worship is an absolute priority (daily, or both morning and evening). Ideally it will consist of the singing of God’s praise, the reading of God’s Word and the seeking of God’s face in prayer.

The second is *family government*. This will include the cherishing and maintaining of biblical roles for husbands (‘love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church’) and wives (‘submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord’), as in Ephesians 5; the spiritual and physical training and disciplining of our children (as in Ephesians 6); and the making of God’s Word the rule for all things in the family.

The third is *family enjoyment*. By this is meant choice time together, time for one another, the sheer pleasure of ‘doing and being’ together as a family. Central to this will be a regular weekly well-kept Lord’s Day. There is absolutely no substitute for this.

The fourth is *family consideration*. All are precious and valuable in the family, from the very youngest to the very oldest. Let love, care and thoughtfulness abound (including to those in the *church family* who are on their own), rather than the spirit of each doing their own thing.

Such biblical family distinctives as these are intended by God to be the most wonderful blessings for which we are to be thankful. The potential for good from the example and testimony of Christian families is immense – in the families themselves, in the church as a whole, and in the nation at large.