Carbondale A/G

 June 3rd 2018

 Family Matters

Good morning, church. We are in week 3 of our sermon series “Family Matters”. We here at Carbondale believe that family does matter and we as a church should help each other understand why family matters! That’s why over the past several weeks you have heard from some of the finest speakers we have telling you about why we believe that family is Important.

My job today is to speak to you about the importance of family. To be honest I truly believe that we here at Carbondale do this thing called life so well because we truly do understand that we are family.

If you look up the word family, Webster defines it as: ***A group of individuals living under one roof and usually under one head***

 I like the next one because it relates to all of us here today,

***A group of people united by certain convictions or a common affiliation.***

When I look around in the place this morning, I truly believe that this is my family. Maresha and I along with Ty and Trey moved here almost 13 years ago and left everything and everyone we knew behind. It was just us. Nobody else. You became our family. I’ll never forget the first day here Don Casey came up to me and said, “Anything. If you need anything I’ll be here.” He was my friend.

Mike and Karen became our best friends. To be honest, most people thought Karen and Resha were sisters…some still do. Pastor and Paula were instrumental and helping us raise our boys in a way that pushed them to be excellent in everything. Phyllis was a huge part of helping us feel welcomed. This place, because of the people here, never made me feel as if I was alone. I truthfully felt at home!

People like Mark, Bek, Jill, Pastor Brittany, Luke, the Fitzgeralds, Dean, Kelly, Scott, Katie, Matt and Sally these people embraced us and loved us and for that I am forever grateful to this church.

Its been said and I have to believe that its true that everyone is looking to be loved. As a human, that iss in our DNA. All of us are all looking to find that place where we belong.

We are all looking for that place where everybody knows your name. (Cheers). Right Rebbecca (Bek) – See what I did there. You could use Cliff or Sam.

Why is Family Important: That’s what we are talking about this morning, There are several reasons lets look at just a few of them this morning, but before we do check out this video.

Family Matters. what a great show. I used to love to watch it. It was good clean fun with a great story that if you watched closely enough would teach you something valuable at the end of each episode. In the clip you just watched you saw Steve, better known as Urkel, who was longing to have a relationship with Laura. But the truth of the matter is, it wasn’t just that he loved Laura, he loved her family Steve just wanted to belong. He was looking for a family like the Winslow’s. He wanted to be a part of who they were. Why?

Because! In this family there was structure. In this family there was discipline. In this family there was love. In this family there was acceptance. And, that’s exactly what he wanted.

You see my goal as a parent was to raise my boys in such a way that they would one day change the world. I was smart enough to understand that in order for that to happen, I couldn’t possibly raise my boys on my own. I needed help and not just help from anybody but help from my Church Family.

I’d like to think I raised two pretty good boys, but it wasn’t just me. It was Jeff Lawson, Scott West, Barry Douglas, Pastor Phil, Luke Calvert, Pastor Brian, Tim Dunn, Dyce Applegate, Karen Graham, Sister McQueen, Brittany Calvert, Bek Taylor, Sister Paula, Phyllis, Ruth Dunn…all of these men and women who are our church family played a key part in raising my boys. If they hadn’t helped raise my boys; well, truthfully, Resha and I couldn’t have done it and they wouldn’t have turned out the way they did.

The concept of family is extremely important to God and He wants it to be just as important to us, that’s why He mentions it in His word many times over.

***Families are close to God’s heart. In fact, they were His idea in the first place.***

Don’t believe me? Lets just take a look. We don’t have to dig very deep into the Word before we find this to be true.

From the beginning, when God created man, He said, “It is not good for man to be alone,” so He created woman as a “help-mate, suitable for him” ([Genesis 2:18](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%202.18%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)). Then, He blessed them and told them, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth”

Even after they fell into sin, God continued with His plan for families, and even spoke prophetically of the salvation that would come through the seed of the woman ([Genesis 3:15](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%203.15%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)).

And later, after the Flood, He reiterated His plan to Noah and his sons, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Genesis 9:1).

God continued His plan when He chose Abraham and miraculously gave him a son in his old age ([Genesis 21](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Genesis%2021.1-6%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)).

And so it goes, all the way down to the “fullness of time, when He sent forth His Son” ([Galatians 4:4](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal%204.4%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)) to be born in human flesh, to live and to die for the people He Himself had created.

So this morning the question I want to address and try my best to answer is:

 ***Why* is *the family so central to the church?***

The answer to this question is two-fold. Family is key to the future of the church, ***First, because it preserves history from generation to generation and, Second, because it is unquestionably the best place to grow disciples.***

 ***1. Preserves history from generation to generation***

You see, throughout the ages, God’s plan and desire has always been for parents to raise up their children to know and to love Him and walk in His ways.

In Ephesians Paul issues a call to all parents to bring up their children in “the training and admonition of the Lord” (6:4), but the responsibility that parents have in passing on the faith was not something that Paul came up with.

We have to go back to the very beginning of the Bible and you find God commanding the nation of Israel to share the faith with their children.

***“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).***

I love that word “diligently,” don’t you? It rings of constant communication between parents and children. God could have stopped there, but He didn’t want to cast any doubt on what He meant by “diligent,” so He specifically breaks it down further.

***When you sit in your house,***

***When you walk along the road,***

***When you lie down, and***

***When you rise up. Morning, noon, and night parents are to teach their children God’s Word.***

Another passage with similar instructions can be found in the Psalms.

***“For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, the children who would be born, that they may arise and declare them to their children, that they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” Psalms (78:5-7).***

 God’s plan and purpose for the family is unmistakable: It is simply

To pass down His laws from generation to generation.

To preserve the story of God’s works, commandments, and His love for His people.

 ***2. Family Grows Disciples***

One of our biggest mistakes as parents is that we relegate the task of raising godly kids to the church. Don’t get me wrong, its great that we bring our children to church. Its great that we involve them in camps and youth activities, children’s church activities, kids camps…but none of these replace the importance of what happens in the home.

 This is beautifully illustrated for us in Paul’s second letter to Timothy.

“I may be filled with joy, when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also” (1:4-5).

The live-body detail here is fascinating, not only because we are given the names of Timothy’s mother and grandmother, but also because we get a glimpse into his childhood home.

Can’t you just imagine Timothy’s mother and grandmother working together to teach him the Scriptures as a young boy? His mother, Eunice, may have been making bread while his grandmother, Lois, sat beside him recounting the story of Moses crossing the Red Sea.

Every few minutes, Eunice would break in with another detail or insight. And they did this day after day. Their diligence and instruction paid off; Timothy grew up to become one of the leaders of the early church. No doubt, his status as a Christian had much to do with the influence of these two godly women-speaking daily into his life.

A lot of us have been fortunate enough to have had mothers and grandmothers like Eunice and Lois . . . two women faithfully living out God’s command to pass His law down from generation to generation. What a perfect model for Christian homes today.

If we want to raise faithful families and grow future leaders, we must start in the home. That is where true discipleship starts.

 ***Parents don’t underestimate the influence you have over your children***.

There is never a guarantee that children will do exactly as you their parents teach them to do. But parents, trust me, you have the greatest opportunity for discipleship because they live with you day in and day out.

You have countless moments to walk alongside them and to share your faith with them. Disciple making is serious business. It can’t be left to the church or chance. A Christian family doesn’t magically appear because we wish it into existence.

Parents hear me this morning, we have to be serious about the task of passing on our faith. We have to be serious about living our life in such a way that pleases God because the truth is you are making disciples in your home even as we speak.

I have come to the conclusion, our problem today is not merely a lost generation, but it is the product of a lost generation.

***“God created marriage. No government subcommittee envisioned it. No social organization developed it. Marriage was conceived and born in the mind of God.” Max Lucado***

***“Each day of our lives we make deposits in the memory banks of our children.” Chuck Swindoll***

***In addition to teaching your children throughout the day, you must set aside specific, planned times to worship the Lord and learn His Word together. Conducting family devotions requires planning and diligence if this godly practice is to develop and be maintained in your home. John C. Broger***

***We do not develop habits of genuine love automatically. We learn by watching effective role models - most specifically by observing how our parents express love for each other day in and day out. - Josh McDowell***

***Do you rush, push, shout and become generally unpleasant on Sunday mornings? Do you complain about church? Are you irregular in your attendance? Are you over-conscientious about matters that are not really important? Do you always criticize the pastor, the choir, the length of services and the usher crew? Then don't be surprised if your children grow up to look at Sundays as the worst day of the week. - Karen Burton Mains***

***And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. ~ Deuteronomy 6:6-7***

***But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD. Joshua 24:15***

***“Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.  Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one’s youth.  Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them.  They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court.” Psalm 127:3-5***

***“Listen, my son, to your father’s instruction and do not forsake your mother’s teaching.” Proverbs 1:8***