

WHAT HAS THE "FAMILY" TO DO WITH BAPTISM?

1) Family



- ❖ We are all part of families, even if we don't want to be
- ❖ we are interdependent, even if we don't want to be
- ❖ we need one another's gifts and talents for life to go well
- ❖ well = building up each other
 - ✦ we are there for one another
 - ✦ we share a common loyalty
 - ✦ there is a sense of belonging
 - ✦ we help one another
 - ✦ we can call on the help of others in the family
 - ✦ we give and share encouragement
 - ✦ part of its purpose
- ❖ A family has members
 - ✦ one can distinguish members from non-members
 - ✦ members need to be committed to the family and to one another for it to thrive
 - ✦ membership does not depend on the choice of only one individual
 - ✦ there is a commitment to the head of the family which allows it to function properly while allowing all to grow up

Notes

❖ When all do as they please, the family crumbles and all lose out

- ‡ the great things that could happen, don't
- ‡ gentle kindness towards others allows difficult problems to be dealt with in such a way that there is growth and learning

2) Ephesians 5: 21 – 6: 3

- ❖ Our respect for Jesus Christ determines how we treat each other
- ❖ Our caring for each other follows the model of Jesus caring for the church
- ❖ children obey their parents **in the Lord**
- ❖ Fathers are not to exasperate their children; but to bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord

3) And So?

- ❖ Parents care for their children—they:-
- ❖ look after their safety and security
- ❖ teach about life and its conditions
- ❖ teach about hygiene
- ❖ they educate them
- ❖ they love them
- ❖ they encourage them
- ❖ they challenge them to grow up
- ❖ they help them to develop
- ❖ and . . .

Notes

4) The Church Family

- ❖ We are all part of communities, even if we don't want to be
- ❖ we are interdependent even if we don't want to be

- ❖ we need one another's gifts and talents for the church to glorify God

- ❖ in sound church families we build each other up
 - ♣ we are there for one another
 - ♣ we share a common loyalty
 - ♣ there is a sense of belonging
 - ♣ we help one another
 - ♣ we can call on the help of others in the church family
 - ♣ we give/share encouragement
 - ♣ the purpose is: Jesus' mission

- ❖ A church family has members
 - ♣ one can distinguish members from non-members
 - ♣ members need to be committed to the church family and to one another for it to thrive
 - ♣ membership does not depend on the choice of only one individual – it involves the decision of at least the person and the local church family
 - ♣ commitment to the Head of the church family allows it to function properly while allowing all to develop

- ❖ When all do as they please, the family crumbles and all lose out and the great things that could happen, don't

Notes

- ❖ Only God is always right!
 - ✦ Gentle kindness towards others allows difficult problems to be dealt with in such a way that there is growth and learning
 - ✦ joining the church family takes place when the family is together (the main service of worship)

Notes

When G K Chesterton was asked what the problem with the Church was, he said "I am."

The Church consists of God and people like you and me.

5) And So?

- ❖ We expect the church to:
 - ✦ care for our children
 - ✦ look after their safety / security
 - ✦ teach them about spiritual life and its requirements
 - ✦ teach them about spiritual "hygiene"
 - ✦ educate them
 - ✦ love them
 - ✦ encourage them
 - ✦ challenge them to grow up spiritually
 - ✦ help them to develop spiritually
 - ✦ and . . .
- ✦ Parents help children grow up and this involves matters that the child/ren cannot manage alone. The children's dependence on their parents decreases over the years, but the parents' role matters for a long time.

✦ Much of this **training** does not come naturally to the child/ren – no matter how important it is! It is often resisted (and sometimes vigorously!). The parents remain accountable and take the initiative in these areas (as they did in the birth of the child). It is for the children’s long-term good.

6) Implications

A “Christian home” – one where:

a Christian lifestyle is lived out,
Jesus is trusted as Lord and Saviour, and becomes part of everything we think, say, and do
the Bible is read and discussed and children taught to read it for themselves,
the family prays together,
we love and care for one another,
a lived out commitment to Jesus is “caught” by the children.

The life of the Christian community shall mirror the life of Jesus.

The Christian life is a life-long journey into holiness and commitment.

Your child will receive God’s own Holy Spirit in Baptism. This is the same spirit that empowered Jesus’ life and ministry (Luke 3:21-23, and 4:1) and raised Him from the dead (Romans 8: 11).

Notes

Are you clear as to what this may mean, and how you will help your child to grow in the life in the Spirit? Are you living your own life in this power?