

Family and the Church

By Scott Moller

The family has always been God's created design for mankind. However, the Church today is losing its foundation of family, both in the Body and in its leadership, despite the emphasis that the New Testament puts on family in the Church.

Paul instructed Titus to *"appoint elders in every city as I directed you, namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict"* (Titus 1:5-9).

Paul started his qualifications for a Church leader with the foundational qualification of family. The foundational requirement for Elders is that they be husbands married to one wife, and if they have children, that their children are Believers. Apparently, the family is so important to God, that it is a prerequisite for leadership in His church—and the leadership is an example for the Body. Does the modern Church take God's Word seriously? No. Today, the Church is abandoning God's design of the family, ignoring the words of direction God has given us for understanding the importance of family and its purpose according to His perfect plan (see our Scriptural Primer on p. 15).

It should come as no surprise that the more we ignore God's directions about the family and God's desire for it to raise *"godly offspring"* (Malachi 2:15b), the more the foundation of the Church is crumbling. The Christian family is becoming more and more like the world, but we are supposed to be a particular, holy, and set-apart people—*"a people for God's own possession"* (1 Peter 2:9b).

How can the Church be honoring to God when it neglects God's Word—when we don't diligently pass God's Word on to our children as we are commanded to do? *"These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up"* (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

As the Church walks away from God's Word, the family suffers and our children walk away from the Faith.

We need to be faithful and diligent in obeying God's Word, so that we can apply His directions to our personal lives, our families, and the Church—that we would honor Him and be a testimony to the world in these last days.