

CHRIST THE CENTER OF THE FAMILY

Houses of Light Church • April 30- May 1, 2022 • Pastor Netz Gómez

Col. 1:16b *"all things were created through him and for him [Christ]."*

I. THE NUMBER ONE TRAIT OF EVERY SUCCESSFUL FAMILY IS GOD.

A. Every successful marriage and family truly exists for a greater reason than the marriage or family itself. The greatest reason of all is God. Sometimes we have reduced our marriage to just focusing on paying the bills; take the children to school and to their extracurricular activities; money or work. **THERE IS A PLAN OF GOD IS THAT IT IS BIGGER THAN OUR BEST GOALS.**

1. If they are only together because of the children or the desire to have a good time, they may not survive. Our children are precious and very important but they cannot and should not be the center of the family. When they become the center they become self-centered, they believe that everything is about them but our children are not our first, they are children of God (Ps. 127-128). You are not only with your children because of them or yourself but in favor of God and the plan that He has for them, which is the greatest of all.

2. If entertainment, fun or pleasure becomes the center of the home, although it sounds very positive, we will not survive because entertainment and fun are not big enough to fill our void; Christ is enough.

Jn. 4:14 " but whoever drinks of the water that I [Jesus] will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

B. God is the only one who brings the order we need to properly live our lives and our families. In your marriage not everything is about you, in your life it is not only about you. If you are going to have an excellent family, you must get out of your small individual purposes and enter into the greater purposes that God has outlined.

C. We must remember that this world is only for a little while compared to eternity. This whole world is fading but what will last forever is the Kingdom of God. **People who are living up to that great story have successful families. Let's see the importance of embracing God's highest purpose for our family:**

1. **THAT CREATES UNITY:** Did you know that it is difficult to make people live for you? **But if we all live for Jesus, an immediate unity is created.** Neither is going to dominate the other but we are both going to live our lives for God. It is easy to unite around God. **When there are two kingdoms trying to dominate, there is war but when King Jesus reigns, there is peace.**

2. **INSPIRES YOU:** Your spouse and children do bigger and better things when they are living for a higher purpose which is God Himself. When

you don't live for those high purposes, you end up doing things you wouldn't want to invest your life in because you didn't have the right focus in your life.

3. IT GIVES US THE REASON TO DO THE HARDEST THING: Every marriage is going to go through difficulties, none of us are the exception. Some people get divorced for the lamest of reasons; 86% of all divorces are for non-serious circumstances, only 14% are abuse or severe conduct. Your family will only be able to survive and succeed if the reason they exist is greater than the pressure they are facing.

D. If you are in your family for a reason less than God and His purpose and the pressure hits you that is going to test the glue of your marriage. The only thing that will keep you when the pressure comes is if the main reason for your marriage is greater than the pressure you are under. No pressure is greater than God.

II. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE GOD AS THE REASON FOR YOUR MARRIAGE?

A. God's will and purpose for your family is the primary motivation for your decisions, priorities, values, and behavior. Why do you do what you do with your money? with your children? with your time? **And THE ANSWER YOU MUST GIVE IS BECAUSE GOD WANTS IT THAT WAY. You must surrender your life to God, He must come first.**

B. The family is surrendered to God: Nobody is dominating the others.

C. All less important issues are decided by the big picture. When you are under the authority of God and you surrender your life to God, the lesser things line up. Too often we get caught up in winning the little conflicts and we lose sight of the big picture of what marriage is all about. If you don't understand that it's not about you but about God.

III. THE CALL TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR HEART

Matt. 22:37-38 "And He [Jesus] said to him, "You shall love the Lord... with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment."

A. The priority of the Holy Spirit is to establish the first commandment in the first place of the family and the church. This statement by Jesus is one of the most significant statements in the Scriptures. It has many implications: it reveals the personality of God, our value, and how we function, our destiny, and how we see and value others (because God loves them deeply).

B. **Jesus expanded Moses' exhortation and prophecy by adding two words: first and greatest. Without understanding that God is committed to helping us in our walk in the first commandment, we can become confused about his leadership in our lives. His priority is that we grow in love. However, it is natural that our most important goals are related to our lives being calm, happy, and popular.**

- C. **The first commandment does not begin with us, but with God's love for his people.** He loves us with all his heart and with the same intensity that he loves in the communion of the Trinity.

Jn. 15:9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love."

- D. **"Abide in my love"** it means that we regularly re-align our hearts to focus and live in the love of God.

IV. WE MUST LOVE GOD ON HIS TERMS

- A. **One of the battles in our culture concerns how we define love.** We must define it in God's terms, but the enemy gives false definitions of love that seduce the church from loving God.
- B. Jesus defines loving God as being rooted in a spirit of obedience and faithfulness (**Jn. 14:15-21**). Keeping his commandments includes not giving up in our search for God with all our hearts, in the face of temptations and difficulties.

Jn. 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

1. **LOVING GOD WITH ALL OUR HEARTS:** We must be fully committed and enthusiastic about seeking Jesus and obeying His word. Some look for ways to obey and seek Jesus less, by looking for ways to give Him less, less time, and less money. Some are dedicated when they serve Him, but are disconnected in the heart of Him. **We can "put" our love or affections into whatever we choose.** One of the most important decisions in our Christian life is when we intentionally determine that "the main dream" of our life is the first commandment. Our "main dream" is what we talk to God about most often.

Psal. 91:14 "Because he has set his love [heart] upon Me, therefore I will deliver him;"

Psal. 18:1 "I will love You, O Lord, my strength."

2. **LOVING GOD WITH ALL OUR MIND:** We can fill our minds with things that inspire love for God or that diminish our ability to love him. What we do with our minds affects our ability to receive and express love. **We show our love for God by taking time to fill our minds with His Word so we can come into agreement with the truth and by refusing to feed our minds with darkness.** (Job 31:1)
3. **LOVING GOD WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH:** We can express love for God in the way we use our strength or resources (time, money, energy, talents, words, influence). We tend to use our strength to increase our honor, personal comfort, etc. But God is pleased with the little things his people do to invest their strength in ways that express love for him and help others love him (**Heb. 6:10**). We love God with our strength when we actively do the things that Jesus stated in the Sermon on the Mount (**Matt. 5-7**) by serving, giving (6:1-4, 19-21), praying (6:5-13), and forgive (6:14), etc.

4. **LOVING GOD WITH ALL OUR SOUL:** We re-align our identity based on our relationship with God rather than our accomplishments and the recognition we receive. Our identity is determined by how we define our success and worth, and therefore how we see ourselves. When we take our identity from our achievements, recognition, or our failures, we end up in an emotional storm by being preoccupied with ourselves. **Our main success is in this definition: "God loves me, and I love God, therefore I am successful."**

V. REFLECTION QUESTIONS

5. What priority does the First Commandment have in your family?
6. How can you practically love God more with your heart?
7. How can you practically love God more with your mind?
8. How can you practically love God more with your strength?
9. How do you define success in your family?

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **CORPORATE PRAYER:** Thursday, June 4 at 7:00 p.m.
2. **WOMEN'S CONFERENCE:** May 27 (English) and 28 (bilingual). Please purchase your ticket at the bookstore or at www.housesoflight.org
3. **BAPTISMS:** Saturday June 4th and Sunday June 5th during our weekend services. Please register at the Information Center after the service.
4. Our **SCHOOL OF DISCIPLESHIP AND AFFIRMING YOUR STEPS** in Spanish and English begins May 9. Please register at the tables outside after the service.
5. **Saturday May 21 SPECIAL SERVICE CELEBRATING THE XL ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF KEITH GREEN.** That day our service starts at 7:00 p.m. and it will be in english.