

The Home-Life.

by J.R. Miller

The sermon emphasizes the importance of young people accepting their roles in the home and learning the lessons of love, service, and respect for parental authority.

Scripture: Ephesians 6:1

Topics: "Home Life", "Obedience and Respect"

Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes the importance of home-life for young people, highlighting that while homes are not perfect, they serve as essential schools for life lessons. He discusses the challenges young people face in accepting parental authority and the need for obedience, respect, and love towards parents as a divine ordinance. Miller points out that even in less-than-ideal home situations, young individuals must remain faithful and responsible, as their actions can significantly impact family harmony. He encourages youth to cultivate thoughtfulness and a spirit of service, which are vital for fostering a loving home environment. Ultimately, he asserts that the responsibility for creating a happy home lies with both parents and children, and that selflessness leads to true happiness.

Transcript

Perhaps the home-life should present no problem for young people. It would not -- if homes were perfect. But the best homes on earth are only schools, with the lessons only-partially learned. It is important that careful attention be given to these lessons now, for the opportunity to learn them will soon be gone. It is a serious misfortune for anyone to go out from his home without having mastered the lessons which mean so much to him in preparation for life.

It is not always easy for young people to accept their place in the home, and adjust themselves to its limitations. It may as well be confessed frankly that the spirit of independence is usually strong in the heart of youth. Many young people chafe under the restraints of parental authority. They see no reason why they should submit. Some yield only after a struggle, and always with bad temper. Others do not yield at all, continually maintaining a spirit of rebellion, which mars the harmony and the happiness of the home, and leaves them undisciplined in character, and unready for the duties and responsibilities that await them when they leave the home door!

It should be clearly understood by all young people, that parental authority is a divine ordinance. The Bible teaches that children shall submit themselves to their parents. One of the Ten Commandments expressly says, "Honor your father and your mother." To honor includes full and unquestioning obedience, while it

implies also far more than mere external obedience; it asks for love and respect, also homage.

Jesus set the example for all ideal human life, and the honor he gave to his home and to his parents is the example for all young people in their home. It was after he had had a vision of his higher relation to his Father in Heaven, that he went back with his parents to Nazareth, and continued subject to them. He found his heavenly Father's business for eighteen years longer in the lowly duties of the home-life. The submission of Jesus to parental authority and to home restraints, shows that there is nothing unworthy in such subjection -- but that, on the other hand, such recognition of authority is most fitting and beautiful.

The problem of the home-life is entirely solved in most instances, when children have accepted their divinely appointed place in the family. Sometimes, however, there are special and peculiar conditions in a home which appear to young people themselves to make it impossible for them to live sweetly and happily in the condition in which they find themselves. Not all parental government is ideal. There may be too much of the monarchical. Or there may be in the parents a lack of that self-mastery which is essential in those who would rule others well. Or there may be an utter absence of any true discipline -- a home without government of any kind. Or there may be no religious life in the home; it may be thoroughly worldly, or even sinful!

In such cases the question may arise in the mind of a thoughtful young person who is trying to live worthily, "How can I do my part in the home where there is such failure on the part of my parents to do their part?" To this question the answer in general is, that no lack of faithfulness in others, can exempt us from the duty of being faithful, or change our duty in the slightest degree. One sin, never excuses another. One's neglect of duty, never absolves another from duty. You will do most toward correcting the faults or evils in your home, by being all the more careful in your own life.

If one member of the household is touchy, easily provoked, or is always saying or doing something to irritate the others -- the way to make the very worst of the matter is for you to be like tinder, flashing up under every slightest provocation. The best way, however, to cure the fault in others -- is for you to be patient, forbearing, ready by tact to turn the opportunity for bitterness into humor, giving always the soft answer which turns away wrath.

The art of living together, even within the sacred precincts of a home, is one that has to be learned -- it does not come naturally. Home life is a splendid school for self-discipline. No one can have his own way altogether; there must be constant mutual concession. The young people of the household must learn that they, too, have to yield their preferences many times. Not only are there other people -- but the other people are very close to them, and the law of love must ever hold sway in all the relations.

Young people usually have to learn to be thoughtful; thoughtfulness is not, in many people at least, a natural grace. They are apt to speak out their feelings, without thinking whom their words may hurt. They are apt to assert their rights, without reference to the rights of others; and to follow their own hasty impulses, without asking how their acts may affect those who are bound up with them in love's covenants.

The lesson of thoughtfulness well learned, will solve many of the most serious problems of home life. Thoughtfulness includes the whole of the wonderful lesson of love taught by Paul in his immortal thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."

The lesson is put in another form in our Lord's life-motto: "I did not come to be served -- but to serve." Anyone who puts himself on a pedestal, a little throne, in the home, and demands attention, honor, homage, service, from the others -- is going to be a serious troubler of the home life. Love's way is to seek . . .

not to be helped -- but to help;

not to be honored -- but to honor;

not to be waited upon -- but to serve others in all loving ways.

Those who have this aim pervading all their desire help to make the home life sweet and gentle. The spirit of serving -- is the spirit of Christ. We should train . . .

our hands to gentle ministries of service,

our feet to errands of love, and

our lips to encouraging speech.

The duty of making a happy home-life, is for the young people, quite as much as for the parents. They can mar all the beauty and all the good, which the father and mother make with so much toil and care. One selfish son or daughter oftentimes destroys the peace and happiness of a whole household! On the other hand, one thoughtful, self-forgetful son or daughter -- may become the sweetener of the family life, sharing burdens, lightening cares, giving cheer, filling the house with song!

Let the young people therefore accept their responsibility, and faithfully and gladly do their part in making the home. In trying to make happiness for others -- they will find the surest way of making happiness for themselves!

There is need for most careful thought on this subject. The home life is peculiarly sensitive to every attitude and influence from within. We may not be as kind to our own family -- as to those outside. We are apt not to manifest the same service in our household relationships -- as we do with our friends and other social relations. This very sensitiveness of the home hearts, makes it all the more important that we should ever be exceedingly careful in all that we do and say within our own doors. Our own family should get always the best kindness and service we have to give.

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