



The Essence of a Godly Family

By Ken Doan

Taken from Ken's message at the 2017 CARBC Christian Workers Retreat

I want to address three possible problems to having a godly family. The first is *ignorance*. Some of us have issues that we don't know how to fix.

Another problem is *priority*. Our focus, time, and attention are drawn in a hundred different ways. It's not that we don't want a godly family; it's just that various priorities get our attention.

The final possible problem is *issues with our past*. There might have been heartaches, abuses, things done wrong, or a lot of family dysfunction. These are hard to overcome, though overcoming is possible through Christ and His Word.

What is a godly family? Godliness is both a God-ward attitude and doing what is pleasing to God. One without the other isn't effective. You can go to church and have the wrong attitude. Or you can stay home for a legitimate reason, but your heart is with God, and you may gain much at that moment. The struggle for us is that godliness is the exact opposite of "me." You have a deceitful and desperately wicked heart (Jer. 17:9). That magnifies itself in many families that we talk to, and in our homes too.

What does a godly family look like? You look at Ephesians 5:22—6:4 and Colossians 3:18–21, and you can gain this picture: husbands love, wives submit, kids obey. But isn't a godly family more than that? What about your family loving other people? What about serving other people? What about encouragement?

What is a godly family going to accomplish? From Ephesians 6:3, we learn that a godly family has children who live long on the earth. From Colossians 3:18, a godly family will honor God. Colossians 3:19 speaks of a lack of bitterness. In 1 Peter 3:1 we see the influence of a godly family. In verse 8, the accomplishment is more answered prayers. I don't know about you, but I want more answered prayers.

Being a godly family in itself is not the goal. Is that godly family making a difference in someone else's life? Is that godly family seeing prayers answered? Is that godly family striving to let the banner of Jesus be known to everyone else?



"Now We Are Family"

By Chips Ross

Independence can be a good quality. But it can also be a lonely quality, as Fairway Park Baptist Church discovered. At one point, they thought themselves the only fundamental church in the Bay Area.

But in 2016, by unanimous vote, the church decided to join the CARBC. Participating in the association was not only a logical step for Fairway Park Baptist, but an exciting one. "We know that we're part of something bigger than ourselves," explains Pastor Charlie Eldred. "It is such a big boost to know that we're not alone."

When Fairway Park Baptist began in 1955, the church connected with the American Baptist Association. However, Pastor Elliot Paulsen, who formerly had worked with the FBI, led the church to pull out because the association was soft on Communism. The next partnership was with the Baptist General Convention, but that disintegrated over key doctrinal issues.

The move toward the CARBC began with calling Charlie Eldred as pastor in 2005. Coming from a Bay Area CARBC church, Pastor Charlie asked about interaction with like-minded churches. After receiving the answer that Fairway Park Baptist was the only fundamental church in the area, he moved to start developing friendships. Fairway Park Baptist joined with CARBC churches for Singspirations on fifth Sunday evenings. Teens went to camp at Pilot Lake. Fairway Park Baptist enjoyed no longer being alone in serving Jesus. Ron Schrock, while the CARBC representative, made several visits to the church, coming each time as a friend. Bruce McLain followed up and made a formal presentation of the CARBC.

Time was given for many conversations about concerns and questions, including whether a financial cost would be involved, but no obligation is required to fellowship with the CARBC. Seeing the benefits in being part of the association—the conferences, the leadership development, the camps, a state representative to ask questions of, fellowship, accountability—Fairway Park Baptist unanimously decided to join the CARBC. "We know them. We do things with them," Pastor Eldred says in explaining the church's decision. "The CARBC wasn't a faceless group. They were friends, and now we are family."



Ministry Perspectives:

Super Bowl Sunday

by Javier Caballero

I love football and I am a Patriot's fan! I get excited about playing football. So what do I do as a pastor when it comes to Sunday football games, especially the Super Bowl? I put things in context.

Putting things in context requires us to put the Super Bowl in the category of entertainment. Ask yourself if the things that get you excited fit the description in Philippians 4:8-9. If I focus on things that I have learned and received from Scripture, God Himself will show a special interest for being with me. Now football is a neat sport, but how does it compare to God's plan for corporate worship? Is praising God not one of the noblest occupations of mankind? I would rather be engaged in the things God prioritizes than in being entertained.

So what did I do on Super Bowl Sunday? I focused on worship. I did not change our schedule of worship. We had our annual business meeting, which was well attended. I turned off my smartphone and focused on my wife and fellowship in the Scriptures. Then, after a day of reflection and service, I went through the emotional rollercoaster of watching one of the most amazing Super Bowl games of all time! We have technology that allows us to do this. And yes, being a Patriot's fan, for me New England's win was the ultimate cherry on top.

Put first things first. Encourage other believers to do so as well. Watch what the Lord does when His people get excited about serving and loving Him. How will the world see how precious our Savior is if we put the brakes on church life for the Super Bowl or any other event? How do we get so easily distracted?

The opportunity to make God first is a blessing. Recording the game for later viewing allows us believers to skip junk that is not healthy for our souls. Most importantly, believers can enjoy the game and do so under the influence of an unhindered and intimate relationship with God.

After growing up in New England, Javier Caballero moved to Yuba City to serve as pastor of Grace Baptist Church.



Conscience: What It Is, How to Train It, and Loving Those Who Differ

A Book Review

Martin Luther said, "It is neither right nor safe to go against my conscience." This often states much of our understanding of our conscience. Although the word is mentioned 30 times in the New Testament, we often hold only a vague understanding of this critical subject.

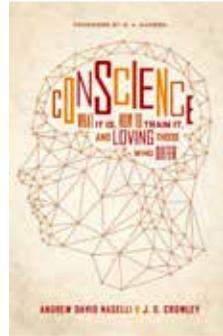
The subtitle of this book by Andrew David Naselli and J. D. Crowley (*What It Is, How to Train It, and Loving Those Who Differ*) indicates that our consciences vary and can be calibrated. The authors work through this calibration from Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 and 9. Their illustrations are not based on fluffy assumptions but on thoughtful decisions. Crowley uses his background as a longtime missionary in culturally different Southeast Asia. The authors wade into traditional topics such as tattoos, music styles, and shorts, as well as more contemporary issues such as free-trade coffee, global warming, and capitalism.

Maybe the greatest strength of the book comes as Naselli and Crowley discuss loving those who hold a different position. A wonderful chart describes the various positions from the Biblical texts. The result is a convicting call to acceptance, tolerance, and even embracing those with different convictions. Crowley's perspective from a significantly different culture points out, painfully at times, obvious areas in which American believers must extend grace.

Naselli and Crowley deal kindly with various positions by pointing out that a person's position on an issue does not always reflect God's position. If our position differs from God's, we can expect that we will disagree with others. Also, at various times, places, or situations, we may have to sacrifice our position to serve where God places us. In fact, God may even place us in these situations for that purpose!

Conscience can be easily understood by the newest Christian, but challenges those who have been saved and studying for decades. The book can be used easily in a Bible study. It will be particularly useful when talking with the younger generation, which holds different perspectives. Consideration of the subject matter should be mandatory for deacons and the leadership community in every church. We can ignore the theology of conscience, but our ministry will be stunted, less loving, and far narrower than God intends.

John Murray serves as pastor of First Baptist, Hawthorne, Nev.



CARBC Annual Bible Conference

April 4–6 at First Baptist Community in Monte Sereno

Dr. David Crandall, Speaker

We are excited to have Dr. David Crandall as our main speaker for the CARBC Annual Bible Conference, this year hosted by First Baptist Community Church in Monte Sereno (Los Gatos). Please contact First Baptist Community Church to register.

David Crandall began his ministry as a youth pastor and then ministered as a senior pastor in New York and Indiana. During his 50 years of ministry, Dr. Crandall has also served on the executive board of ABWE and directed Gospel Literature Services. He currently works with Answers in Genesis.

This year, the conference focus is "Drawing Nearer" as we await the blessed return of Christ. That day has a greater expectation than the next Star Wars movie. Mark your calendars for April 4–6 2017. Look for more information regarding the CARBC Annual Bible Conference at carbc.org.



Churches Seeking a Pastor:

First Baptist, San Dimas; First Baptist, Wilmington.

The CARBC Messenger | Edition 1 of 2017 | Volume 67, Number 1

The *CARBC Messenger* is published by the California Association of Regular Baptist Churches. Cost is 30 cents per copy per issue. Mail checks to CARBC, PO Box 2697 Santa Maria, CA 93457-2697. Send any submissions to the editor, Chips Ross: chippychoopy@gmail.com or 3333 N. Cornelia Ave, Fresno, CA 93722. Please address questions about subscriptions and billing to Bruce McLain at carbcrep@gmail.com.

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Retreat Focuses On Family Life

By Bruce McLain

Meeting in beautiful Monterey, Calif., the 70th Christian Workers Retreat for the California Association of Regular Baptist Churches was a time of blessing and refreshment. Over 50 ministry leaders came together for fellowship and encouragement around the theme "Family Life."

On the first evening, Pastor Ken Doan spoke on the "Essence of a Godly Family," emphasizing the heart attitude of godliness in the home. Pastor Chips Ross surveyed the family of Jacob in his session on "Communication," leaving us with the challenge to walk with Jesus as the key to righteous communication. I shared a strategy for raising children in ministry. Pastor Jay Underwood took us to the Song of Solomon in his message on "Stoking the Flames," handling this topic with humor and practical insights. Pastor Robin Montgomery discussed the mostly American phenomenon of the empty nest, also noting that though all have experienced different degrees of the empty nest, we are never alone. "Your Presence Matters" was the topic of Pastor Pete Austel, who focused on 1 Thessalonians 2 and the two pictures of Paul: nursing mother and disciplining father. He challenged us to make time for our families physically and emotionally.

God gave us two beautiful days in Monterey between the storms that have saturated California this year. We are thankful for the rain and the sun, the blessing of ministry in our churches throughout the state, and the time to come together to be refreshed.

