

Sermon Notes by Pastor Jamie Tonge



A Christ-Centred Life.

Col 1: 27 : *Christ in me the hope of glory.*

Christ in My Family Life.

1. Christ – The Head of My Home.

Who you are is reflected in your home, no matter what type of home you have, whether you are;

- Married/family
- Single on Your Own
- Single / shared accommodation
- Single living with Mum & Dad

Whatever the situation, there is part of that home that you influence.

Am I prepared to invite Christ in to influence the area that I am responsible for?

There used to be plaques up in people's homes that read; ***“Christ is the Head of This House, the Silent Listener to Every Conversation, the Unseen Guest at Every Meal.”***

Maybe we all need reminding some times that He is around.

There was a home in a town called Bethany that gives us an example of Christ being Head.

We find the home in ***Luke: 10: 38 – 42; John: 11: 1 – 12: 1***

This was the home of two sisters and a brother.

It seems none are married, but we are not told about this – only that the three lived together.

What does this teach us about Christ's Influence in this home?

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| • Jesus is invited in when He passed by | <i>Luke 10: 38</i> |
| • Jesus brings the benefit of his teaching | <i>Luke 10: 39</i> |
| • Jesus will not force them to honour Him | <i>Luke 10: 40</i> |
| • Jesus will challenge customs and traditions | <i>Luke 10: 41 - 42</i> |
| • Jesus may be accessible but not command-able | <i>John 11: 3</i> |
| • Jesus may seem to not care | <i>John 11: 6</i> |
| • Jesus will not be influenced by outside pressure | <i>John 11: 21 7 37</i> |
| • Jesus brings comfort, empathy, wisdom, faith-building, instruction, resurrection | <i>John 11: 17 - 44</i> |
| • Jesus comes to the banquet | <i>John 12: 1</i> |
| • Jesus receives the thanks of a grateful heart | <i>John 12: 3</i> |
| • Jesus is honoured, but there is always some one who wants to spoil the party | <i>John 12: 4</i> |

What can we expect from Jesus in our family home?

- He comes by invitation.
- He brings His teaching and influence.
- We have the choice to honour Him or not.
- He will challenge our traditions and customs.
- He's not our 'go-for'.
- His aim is not to just make us feel good, but to bring life abundantly.

- He is not influenced by our emotional pressure.
- The benefits far outweigh the costs.
- Jesus loves a party, but expect the extremes.
- There's always some one who wants to spoil what He enjoys.

Jesus changed the Home of Martha and her brother and sister. He will do the same in our home.

2. *Christ and My Spouse.*

Genesis 2: 18 - God said "it is not good for man to be alone. I will make him a helper, a companion (The Message)

God said it is not good for man to be alone. I will make him a suitable helper (NIV)

If you are here today on your own, for whatever reason, God wants you to know that He has a plan and purpose for you. Give to him your fear, loneliness, regret, hopes and expectations. Being married is not the answer to every problem. There are some who would probably say that being married **is** the problem!

However, marriage was God's idea in the first place, but He is not against singleness (***Matthew 19: 12***) ***Married life. It requires a certain aptitude and grace. Marriage is not for everyone. Some from birth seemingly never give marriage a thought; others never get asked – or accepted; and some decide not to get married for Kingdom reasons. (The Message)*** Also ***1 Corinthians 7:7***

Here are a few thoughts on looking after our spouse

Love Each Other 100%

Christ in you will enable you to do this. It is no 50 / 50 affair. It is 100% from me.

We were visiting friends when they received a telephone call from their recently married daughter. After several tense minutes on the phone, the mother told the father to pick up the extension. The newlyweds had had their first big fight. In a few moments, the father rejoined us and tersely explained, "Said she wanted to come home." "What did you tell her?" I asked. "Told her she was home."

Larry Cunningham (Billings, Montana), *Reader's Digest*.

Respect Each Other.

Christ in you will enable you to respect and honour the differences you have.

Do you and your spouse feed each other a steady diet of put-downs? If you do, your marriage could be headed for divorce court.

When psychologists Cliff Nortarius and Howard Markman studied newlyweds over the first decade of marriage, they discovered that couples who stayed together uttered 5 or fewer put-downs in every 100 comments to each other. But couples who inflicted twice as many verbal wounds -- 10 or more putdowns out of every 100 comments -- later split up.

Watch what you say! Little, nit-picking comments are like a cancer in marriage, slowly draining the life out of a committed relationship.

Dr. James Dobson's *Focus on the Family Bulletin*, May, 1994.

Understand Your Differences.

Husbands try to understand your wife. Christ in you wants you to love her and understand how she thinks, acts, reacts – the why's and wherefore's of the female.

Wives try to understand your husband. Christ in you wants you to love him and understand how he thinks, acts, reacts, etc.

We need to understand, respect and harness the differences between us. We were made to complement each other – not repel each other.

God called Adam and Even to work together.

Marriage is when you agree to spend the rest of your life sleeping in a room that's too warm, beside someone who's sleeping in a room that's too cold.

Build Each Other Up.

If we have some understanding of each other, we can know how to harness them, so that instead of pulling one another down, we build each other up by words, deeds, respect and honour, encouragement and attention.

Apply *1 Corinthians 7: 3-4*

Ask your spouse what this means to him/her and tell him/her what it means to you.

There are many other things we could look at, but it is so important to make our marriage a priority.

If you abuse it, you may lose it

3. Christ and My Children.

1. Children see hypocrisy faster than Superman can fly
2. They will say it like it is.
3. Demonstrate that you love them by:
 - Giving them time
 - Giving and receiving respect
 - Giving them parameters (whose in control)
 - Teaching them your standards before the world teaches them it's
 - Giving them praise
 - Giving them discipline
 - Giving them guidance

All children alarm their parents, if only because you are forever expecting to encounter yourself.

An 8-year-old wrote, "A grandmother is a lady who has no children of her own, so she likes other people's boys and girls. Grandmas don't have anything to do except be there. If they take us for walks, they slow down past pretty leaves and caterpillars. They never say 'Hurry up.' Usually they are fat but not too fat to tie shoes. They wear glasses, and sometimes they can take their teeth out. They can answer questions like why dogs hate cats and why God isn't married. They don't talk like visitors do, which is hard to understand. When they read to us, they don't skip words or mind if it is the same story again. Everybody should try to have a grandma, especially if you don't have television, because grandmas are the only grownups who always have time.

Christ in My House.

What we do in our home is just as important to God as what we do in Church. Our home in many ways is an extension of ourselves; there are three things that are important to develop as a habit that will be of great benefit to us and our family.

Family prayer

There are many books on the subject of family prayer and it would be a good thing to invest some time in finding what suites you.

Don't make it complex.

Don't make it boring.

The thing that will encourage your family to pray together is prayer that gets answered.

If you treat it like something to be endured so will the kids!

Family bible reading

What has just been said about prayer can be said about reading the Bible.

Make it live for your children by living it in your own life.

‘Within the covers of one single book, the Bible, are all the answers to all the problems that face us today--if only we would read and believe.’

Family time

Do family things I have a list of one hundred ideas for the family/couples and parents to do if you want one collect one after the meeting.

If being at home is fun then no one will want to leave. The difficulties our generation endured and the mistakes we made, don't have to be repeated in the next generation. *Christ in our home is the hope of glory.*

Becoming good at the things that build inner confidence and calm takes practice -- and a dash of creativity! The following list might provide some ideas for a brainstorm or two of your own. Have some fun with your family...and get ready for a good rest.

1. Pay off your credit cards.
2. Take off ten pounds or accept where you are without any more complaints.
3. Eat dinner together as a family for seven days in a row.
4. Take your wife on a dialogue date (no movie, guys).
5. Read your kids a classic book (Twain's a good start).
6. Memorize the Twenty-third Psalm as a family.
7. Give each family member a hug for twenty-one days in a row (that's how long the experts say it takes to develop a habit).
8. Pick a night of the week in which the television will remain unplugged.
9. Go out for a non-fast food dinner as a family.
10. Pray for your spouse and children every day.
11. Plan a vacation together.
12. Take a vacation together.
13. Read a chapter from the Bible every day until it becomes a habit.
14. Sit together as a family in church.
15. Surprise your teenage. Wash his car and fill up his gas tank.
16. Take an afternoon off from work; surprise your child by excusing him from school and taking him to a ball game.
17. Take a few hours one afternoon and go to the library as a family.
18. Take a walk as a family.
19. Write each member of your family a letter sharing why you value them.
20. Give your spouse a weekend getaway with a friend (same gender!) to a place of their choice.
21. Go camping as a family.
22. Go to bed early (one hour before your normal bedtime) every day for a week.
23. Take each of your children out to breakfast (individually) at least once a month for a year.
24. Turn down a promotion that would demand more time from your family than you can afford to give.
25. Religiously wear your seat belts.
26. Get a complete physical.
27. Exercise a little every day for a month.
28. Make sure you have adequate life insurance on both you and your spouse.
29. Write out information about finances, wills, and important business information that your spouse can use to keep things under control in the event of your death.
30. Make sure your family car is safe (tires, brakes, etc.) and get it tuned up.
31. Replace the batteries in your smoke alarm.
32. Put a security system in your house.
33. Attend the parent/teacher meetings of each child as a couple.
34. Help your kids with their homework.
35. Watch the kids on Saturday while your wife goes shopping (but if a friend calls, don't say that you're "babysitting").
36. Explain to your spouse exactly what you do for a living.
37. Put together a picture puzzle. (One thousand pieces or more.)
38. Take time during the week to read a Bible story to your children and then discuss it with them.
39. Encourage each child to submit to you his most perplexing question, and promise him that you'll either

answer it or discuss it with him.

40. Finish fixing something around the house.
41. Tell your kids how you and your spouse met.
42. Tell your kids about your first date.
43. Sit down and write your parents a letter thanking them for a specific thing they did for you. (Don't forget to send it!)
44. Go on a shopping spree where you are absolutely committed to buying nothing.
45. Keep a prayer journal for a month. Keep track of the specific ways that God answers your needs.
46. Do some stargazing away from the city with your family. Help your children identify constellations and conclude the evening with prayer to the majestic God who created the heavens.
47. Treat your wife to a beauty make-over (facial, manicure, haircut, etc.). I hear they really like this.
48. Give the kids an alternative to watching Saturday morning cartoons (breakfast at McDonald's, garage sales, the park, chores, etc.).
49. Ask your children each day what they did at school (what they learned, who they ate lunch with, etc.).
50. After you make your next major family decision, take your child back through the process and teach him how you arrived at your decision.
51. Start saying to yourself "My car doesn't look so bad."
52. Call you wife or husband from work just to see how they're doing.
53. Compile a family tree and teach your children the history of their ancestors.
54. Walk through an old graveyard with your children.
55. Say no to at least one thing a day -- even if it's only a second piece of pie.
56. Write that letter to the network that broadcast the show you felt was inappropriate for prime-time viewing.
57. Turn off the lights and listen to a "praise" tape as you focus your thoughts on the Lord.
58. Write a note to your pastor praising him for something.
59. Take back all the books in your library that actually belong in someone else's library.
60. Give irritating drivers the right to pull in front of you without signaling and yelling at them.
61. Make every effort to not let the sun go down on your anger.
62. Accept legitimate criticism from your wife or a friend without reacting or defending yourself.
63. If your car has a Christian bumper sticker on in -- drive like it.
64. Do a Bible study on the "wise man" and the "fool" in Proverbs...and then apply what it takes to be wise to your life.
65. Make a list of people who have hurt your feelings over the past year...then check your list to see if you've forgiven them.
66. Make a decision to honor your parents, even if they made a career out of dishonoring you.
67. Take your children to the dentist and doctor for your wife.
68. Play charades with your family, but limit subjects to memories of the past.
69. Do the dishes for your wife.
70. Schedule yourself a free day to stay home with your family.
71. Get involved in a family project that serves or helps someone less fortunate.
72. As a family, get involved in a recreational activity.
73. Send your wife flowers.
74. Spend an evening going through old pictures from family vacations.
75. Take a weekend once a year for you and your spouse to get away and renew your friendship.
76. Praise your spouse and children -- in their presence -- to someone else.
77. Discuss a world or national problem, and ask your children for their opinion on it.
78. Wait up for your teenagers when they are out on dates.
79. Have a "quiet Saturday" (no television, no radio, no stereo...no kidding).
80. If your children are little, spend an hour playing with them -- but let them determine the game.
81. Have your parents tell your children about life when they were young.
82. Give up soap operas.
83. De-clutter your house.
84. If you have a habit of watching late night television, but have to be to work early every morning, change your habit.
85. Don't accept unnecessary breakfast appointments.
86. Write missionaries regularly.
87. Go through your closets and give everything that you haven't worn in a year to a clothing relief organization.
88. Become a faithful and frequent visitor of your church's library.

89. Become a monthly supporter of a Third World child.
 90. Keep mementos, school projects, awards, etc. of each child in separate files. You'll appreciate these when they've left the nest.
 91. Read the biography of a missionary.
 92. Give regularly and faithfully to conscientious church endeavors.
 93. Place with your will a letter to each family member telling why you were glad you got to share life with him or her.
 94. Go through your old records and tapes and discard any of them that might be a bad testimony to your children.
 95. Furnish a room (or a corner of a room) with comfortable chairs and declare it the "disagreement corner." When conflicts arise, go to this corner and don't leave until it's resolved.
 96. Give each child the freedom to pick his favorite dinner menu at least once a week.
 97. Go over to a shut-in's house as a family and completely clean it and get the lawn work done.
 98. Call an old friend from your past, just to see how he or she is getting along.
 99. Get a good friend to hold you accountable for a specific important need (Bible reading, prayer, spending time with your family, losing a few pounds, etc.).
 100. Establish a budget.
 101. Go to a Christian marriage enrichment seminar.
- Tim Kimmel, [Little House on the Freeway](#), pp. 219-223.