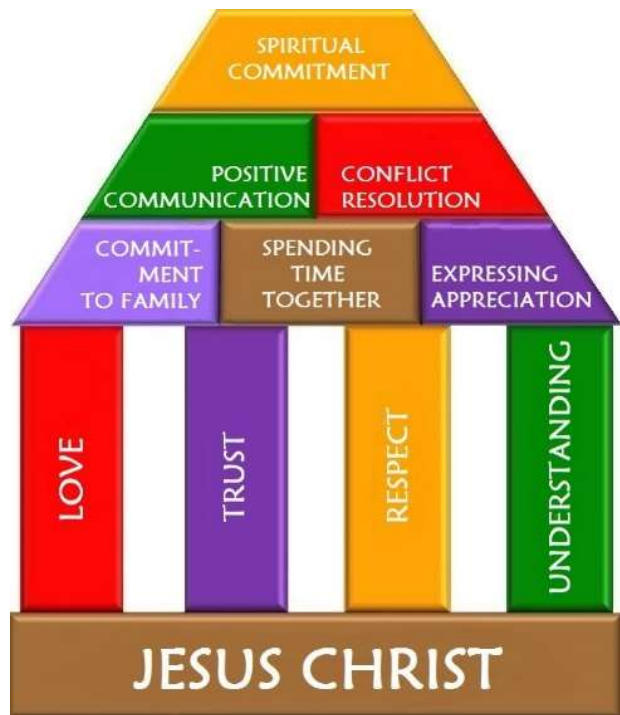


"Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings."

Isiah 58:12 NIV



Building a House Of Oneness

Building houses of oneness. - Phil 2:1-2

1. Foundation - 1 Cor. 3:11 says: 'For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.'

In Christ we find our identity and our purpose. Rom. 12:1,2

2. LOVE - Agape love 1 Cor. 12:31- 13:8a, Eph 5:25, Titus 2:4

Express love through: Eye contact, Physical contact, Focused attention, Loving Discipline (Prov.13:24). Five love languages (Words of affirmation, Time, Gifts, Helping Works, Touch)

Love is also a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22). Pray for more of the Holy Spirit in you, so you can love more.

3. RESPECT or **HONOR** - Respect has to do **with valuing the other person**. Phil. 2:3-4 Valuing feelings and opinions.

Lack of respect causes a low self-esteem. It is very hard to affirm yourself. Respect has to be spoken into our life, by someone that we really admire, or is important to us.

Treat each other like something that has invaluable worth.

Wives are asked to respect their husbands. Eph 5:33

Husbands are to respect their wives: 1 Petr. 3:7

Workers/slaves are to respect their bosses/masters Eph 6:5-8

Bosses/masters are to respect their workers/slaves Eph 6:9

Gal. 3:26-29 We are all one in Christ.

4. UNDERSTANDING. - Comes by listening. James 1:19, Prov. 18:13, Prov. 24:3,4, Prov. 4:7 Understanding someone's: love language, Personality, Family background, Maleness vs Femaleness.

5. TRUST - Trust is the faith you have in someone that they will always remain faithful to you and love you. To trust someone means that you can rely on them and are comfortable confiding in them because you feel safe with them.

When it is damaged or broken, it is very difficult to restore. Wounded/betrayed people do not easily trust again. They build walls to protect themselves. But walls separate, they isolate, they imprison.

Only in an environment of trust, can intimacy be built. Trust thrives on the truth, on honesty, on openness. So, we need to do things that build trust. That means being faithful, to be people of our words, being reliable. John 8:44, Math 5:37, Eph. 4:22-25

Building **STRONG FAMILIES** Strong families are:

6. COMMITTED – Prov. 18:24 Successful couples/families are committed to serve each other. They are committed to sacrifice for one another. They are willing to lay down their lives for one another. We can't build healthy families and do our own thing. In Phil. 2:3-8 the apostle Paul says that we should: turn away from selfishness we should not live for our own personal interests, but we should be willing to live for others, to serve others, to seek to be a blessing for our families and to others.

Family commitments and marriage commitments confront us with our selfishness. Malachi 4:5,6. (Or 3:24)

7. SPEND TIME TOGETHER - Prov. 27:23,24 This flows out of the first one. If you are committed, you invest time. This is the number one reason why most families say that they feel close. Playing together, working together, having devotions, vacations, celebrating together, etc.

We have to give to the family the thing that Jesus gave to the church. He gave Himself. The primary need of your children is not education or money. The primary thing that you need to give your children is: YOURSELF, YOUR TIME! The issue is not; do I have the time? The issue is: How important is this to me? If something is really important I am going to find time for it. Spending time together creates bonding.

Step into your children's world. Try to figure out what their interests are. There is something eternal in it: 'I am with you, you are important!'

Luke 10:38-42 Mary has chosen the right thing, and it won't be taken away from her. When away from the house: Phone calls, letters, social media, playing an online game. Communicating. How do you feel? What has encouraged you? What has disappointed you? Whom did you fellowship with? What did you learn from God?

8. EXPRESS APPRECIATION TO EACH OTHER - Prov. 31:28

The emphasis is on *expressing*. Often we appreciate our partner/child, but we don't express it. Find ways to express appreciation to one another.

When Jesus was baptized, the Father said from heaven: '*This is my Beloved Son (Daughter) with Whom I am well pleased.*' How many would like that to hear from their father? A lot of times parents see the bad things of their children and not the good things. They see the dirt rather than the diamonds. They focus on the things that need to be improved. Refocus and say appreciative things about the qualities a person has and not compare them with others. Is your marriage/your family a safe place where you are being loved and encouraged for who you are?

9. Positive COMMUNICATION - Prov. 25:11, Prov.18:21 tongue can bring life or death. James 1:19, Col. 4:6 This area is an area of great concern. Strong families don't automatically have good communication, but there has to be a commitment to it and an effort to work on it and to develop it. Especially in times when we are angry or disappointed.

10. RESOLVE CONFLICTS AND DEAL WITH CRISES - Prov. 28:23

Don't have the illusion that strong families don't have conflicts. Emotions elevate, they hurt each other, they say things they wish they wouldn't have said. Often, we prefer to avoid conflicts. What destroys the relationship is when one of the partners closes their spirit to the other one. They shut down. They close their heart. They close their spirit. When that happens, normal communication does not work. Proverbs 18:19 And it destroys the relationship. Math 5:23-24 reconcile. Ef. 4:2-3

When someone has closed their spirit, the first thing that has to be done, is: TO PRAY for that person. We can make it safe: by our attitudes, by a forgiving heart, by a gentle spirit, by giving them space, by not forcing them. If there are things we need

to apologize for, humble yourselves, ask for forgiveness, that's part of opening up again.

Healthy families have conflicts, but they find ways to face and to deal with them.

Math 5:23-24 If you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift and first reconcile. Ef. 4:26 Don't let things build up but address these things and give attention to them.

Jesus requires us to humble ourselves, ask forgiveness and clear things up. Also give forgiveness to someone who ask you to forgive him or her. Apologize when you need to, even towards children.

We don't need to be perfect, but we need to be honest, humble and straightforward. Be quick to: apologize, repent and ask forgiveness.

11. STRONG FAMILIES HAVE A SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT.

Col. 1:17 Math. 7:21-25 If you want a healthy family, you need to embrace commitment to your spiritual principles. We need the power and the grace of God to implement the things we know we should be doing: to be humble, to give grace, to forgive. We need to have the fear of the Lord. It brings us to the cross and the grace of God brings us to repentance, to humility.

Coll. 1:17 is a key verse to maintain our relationships healthy. *'...in Him all things hold together...'*

The best thing you can do for your family is: to commit your life totally to the Lord, to surrender to Him, to allow Him to have His way.

To lead by example.