

The Family Time

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Ephesians 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Ephesians 4:3 Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

In our last session, we made the point that in order to build a home of love we must build a love for Christ. *Review and Herald, Oct. 15, 1895* expands on that somewhat.

Those who cultivate love in the home life will form characters after Christ's likeness, and they will be constrained to exert a helpful influence beyond the family circle, in order that they may bless others by kind, thoughtful ministrations, by pleasant words, by Christlike sympathy, by acts of benevolence. They will be quick to discern those who have hungry hearts, and will make a feast for those who are needy and afflicted. Those who have heavenly discernment, who exercise tender regard for every member of the family, will, in doing their whole duty, fit themselves to do a work that will brighten other homes and will teach others by precept and example what it is that will make home happy.--*Review and Herald, Oct. 15, 1895.*

But, unfortunately, in too many families this is not the case

In many families there is not that Christian politeness, that true courtesy, deference, and respect for one another that would prepare its members to marry and make happy families of their own. In the place of patience, kindness, tender courtesy, and Christian sympathy and love, there are sharp words, clashing ideas, and a criticizing, dictatorial spirit. *{AH 83.1}*

As we have said before:

True love is not a strong, fiery, impetuous passion. On the contrary, it is calm and deep in its nature. It looks beyond mere externals, and is attracted by qualities alone. It is wise and discriminating, and its devotion is real and abiding. *{AH 51.2}*

That is why, whatever the circumstance, whatever the difficulty:

1. Every couple who unite their life interest should seek to make the life of each as happy as possible. *Why?*
2. *Because*, that which we prize we seek to preserve and make more valuable if we can.
3. In the marriage contract men and women have made a trade, an investment for life, and they should do their utmost to control their words of impatience and fretfulness, even more carefully than they did before their marriage,
4. For now their destinies are united for life as husband and wife, and each is valued in exact proportion to the amount of painstaking effort put forth to retain and keep fresh the love so eagerly sought for and prized before marriage. *{In Heavenly Places 206.5}*



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Whatever the disagreement, whatever the problem, a resolution needs to be sought. Remember, the rest of the family is directly impacted by lasting intractable conflict.

To a large extent parents create the atmosphere of the home circle, and when there is disagreement between father and mother, the children partake of the same spirit. Make your home atmosphere fragrant with tender thoughtfulness. If you have become estranged and have failed to be Bible Christians, be converted; for the character you bear in probationary time will be the character you will have at the coming of Christ.--Lt 18b, 1891. *(AH 16)*

It may appear that your conflicts are not affecting those around you, but they do, more than you can imagine.

By contention over trivial matters a bitter spirit is cultivated. Open disagreements and bickering bring inexpressible misery into the home and drive asunder those who should be united in the bonds of love. Thus thousands have sacrificed themselves, soul and body, by unwise marriages and have gone down in the path of perdition. *{AH 83.4}*