

Extreme Family Makeover

Imperfect Families

Psalm 127

Dana and I have had to remodel the two homes that we have lived in. I promised her that I would make the house look just the way she wanted it. Remodeling isn't for the faint at heart. It takes a lot of work and when you get started you have to make sure you finish. Leaving a half remodeled bathroom or unfinished painting in the living room will cause stress. It's interesting how we can adapt to incompleteness in our home. After all, it's not so bad, company that comes over never go in that part of the house anyway right? And if they happen to stumble into that unfinished room we can say, "Well, it's a work in progress," Even though it's been two years of no progress. Even though remodeling is messy and time consuming, when finished will add value and beauty to your home. Being afraid to tackle a project is understandable but doing nothing about while it destroys your home is inexcusable.

Today I want to talk to you about remodeling as it comes to your families. Whether your family is young or old, regardless of how long you've been married, all families need occasional remodeling. Some of you are in need of some minor repairs, but others may need a major renovation. And let me just say there are **NO** perfect families!!

Dysfunction has an amazing ability to breed more dysfunction if we allow it. So let's get into our text today, Psalm 127.

If God is not the one building your home, then you're wasting your time. God must be in absolute control. He is the contractor. It is funny to note that Jesus worked as a carpenter.

Having done some remodeling in the past, I have learned some lessons that I believe will help you when you start the process in your family.

1. Remodeling starts with a plan.

All projects start this way. You don't just wake up one morning and start ripping out sheetrock and cutting out plumbing. That's not remodeling, that destruction.

So the question is whether you are content with what your family is. Are you content with the lack of communication? Are you content with fussing and endless fighting? Are you content with rebellious children? Are you content with being a workaholic? Are you content to be married to a nagging wife? Guys are you content with being passive and dismissive? Are you content letting your family grow closer to God without you? The sad part is most people never stop to consider the question.

If you want your family to be everything God wants it to be, then you must be willing to do the following: Take time to examine what I know and can see. Be willing to ask those who are closest to me what they see. Be willing to ask God what he thinks and lastly, be willing to compare my family with the teachings of scripture. This is called having a plan.

When you do this the Holy Spirit will begin to blue prints of what your family could be under his direction and you will be ruined for anything else and empowered to start and finish the job.

2. Remodeling is seldom as easy as it looks.

The pros on those remodeling shows make it look easy. They use editing to mask the true difficulty of a project. It's never as easy as it looks.

So God begins to convict you that you need to get out of debt so you pick up the latest "Get Out of Debt in 30 Days" book. You begin to put those principles into practice but then your car breaks down, or your health insurance is cancelled, or you get an increase in your property taxes. You all know what I mean.

Your kids are out of control so you try those principles you picked up from a seminar. Your marriage is out of control and you read the latest better marriage book. The only problem is the kids keep on being rebellious and your husband still won't open the car door.

And do you know why? Because what God is after in your life and in the life of your family isn't new sheetrock and a new coat of paint, but spiritual

transformation, and most spiritual transformations comes through hardship and trial.

Jesus didn't say, "If any man will be my disciple, I will pave a nice smooth road for him." There is no quick or easy way for spiritual growth. Being a Christian does not grant you immunity from the troubles and worries of this life. Jesus said we had to pick up our cross and follow Him. Real growth and spiritual transformation is a lifelong process of dying, learning, growing, dying, learning, and growing.

Being a pro doesn't come quick or easy. I make painting look easy. That's because it took me years to perfect my trade and skill. I watched and learned from the best. The guy who taught me how to paint didn't on the first day give me a bush and say go paint that exquisite staircase on the first day. On my first day he put me in a closet and said start here.

3. Even The Pro's Asked For Help.

Do you know what a 'know it all' is? A fool. Matthew 14:23 "After he (Jesus) had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside to pray."

Jesus began and ended his ministry with prayer. Jesus is the perfect Son of God, our example of who we ought to be, and here we find him in the most humble of positions praying. Your family is never going to be what it can be if you're unwilling to get the help you need. The Lord is delighted when you ask because it is in those moments that you express your absolute dependence on Him.

Also seek out those who have been there and done that and has seen spiritual transformation in their lives. They may have some wisdom for you to receive and apply in your life and family. What are they doing that can help? What have they been through that you can avoid? Even the pros ask for help.

4. The Longer You Put It Off The Worse It Gets.

The Bible tells us of dysfunctional families like King David's family. David was a polygamist. Even having many wives and concubines he has an affair with a married woman, gets her pregnant, kills her husband and loses the baby. David's lustful heart was never surrendered to God. He had a problem with this sin and

never experienced the spiritual transformation that was needed to influence his family. Instead, he allowed his sin to influence them. David had a son named Amnon, who raped his half-sister Tamar. Here is a second problem but still David refused to take action against his son. After a couple of years David's son Absalom murdered the rapist Amnon and flees the family. David still does nothing until years later. He asked Absalom to move back to Jerusalem, but he refuses to see him. Absalom begs to see his father, but David still does nothing. He continues to put the problem off. Absalom then assaults David's Kingdom, runs him out of the capital and has sex with his step mothers on the roof of the palace where everyone could see. Only killing Absalom ended the episode. You would think I was reading you the latest episode to Game of Thrones."

I don't know what problem or sin exists in your family. Maybe you have a communication problem, or the kids are walking a fine line. If you don't deal with it now it will not get any easier. Take it from King David. Today you laugh at your little girl or boy saying a curse word. Tomorrow you grieve because they are cursing you. Today you are flirting with credit cards and easy consumerism; tomorrow you are drowning in debt. Don't put off confronting sin and dysfunction in your house. Confront it and deal with!!

A family that looks like what God wants it to look is going to require an investment of your time, your energy, your focus, your attention and your resources. You don't grow healthy God honoring families by accident.

5. Lastly, The Best Remodeling Is Done When The Work Will Be Inspected.

We naturally do better work when we know that what we build will be inspected.

Hebrews 9:27 says, "It is appointed unto man once to die and after this the judgment." Men you will give account one day for the way you have led your families. Ladies, you will give an account for the way you led your families under the leadership of your husbands. Those of you who are going it alone will give an answer for your leadership. Kids will give an account of the way they receive or reject the authority of their parents. When Christ returns, each of us will submit

our families for final inspection and on that day will the Lord be pleased with the work you have done?

In closing, I don't know whether your family needs a major renovation or just some minor maintenance, but I do know there is not a family among us that does not need to be offered up to God once again as a family dedicated to honor Him.

Have you ever done that? It's not too late.