Mother's Day
Rolling Meadows - 1970

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IN NOMINE JESU

Philippians 2: 1-8 SO IF THERE IS ANY ENCOURAGEMENT IN CHRIST, ANY INCENTIVE OF LOVE, ANY PARTICIPATION IN THE SPIRIT, ANY AFFECTION AND SYMPATHY, COMPLETE MY JOY BY BEING OF THE SAME MIND, HAVING THE SAME LOVE, BEING IN FULL ACCORD AND OF ONE MIND. DO NOTHING FROM SELFISHNESS OR CONCEIT, BUT IN HUMILITY COUNT OTHERS BETTER THAN YOURSELVES. LET EACH OF YOU LOOK NOT ONLY TO HIS OWN INTERESTS, BUT ALSO TO THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS. HAVE THIS MIND AMONG YOURSELVES, WHICH YOU HAVE IN CHRIST JESUS, WHO, THOUGH HE WAS IN THE FORM OF GOD, DID NOT COUNT EQUALITY WITH GOD A THING TO BE GRASPED, BUT EMPTIED HIMSELF, TAKING THE FORM OF A SERVANT, BEING BORN IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN. AND BEING FOUND IN HUMAN FORM HE HUMBLED HIMSELF AND BECAME OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH, EVEN DEATH ON A CROSS.

I should like to ~~Let me~~ begin this sermon for Mother's Day by stating a few axioms: "Father may be the HEAD of the home, but mother is the HEART of the home" — "Father may provide the bread and butter, but mother is the keeper of the domain" — "Father steers the boat, but mother looks after the passengers" — "Father is the hearth, but mother is the fire in the hearth" — "Mother is the 'HEART' whose beat fills the whole house with living warmth!"

Of course, I am speaking about the ideal situation - where father and mother really complement each other because they have been welded together into "ONE FLESH" - and where children therefore grow up in an atmosphere of happiness & love and affection. St. Paul says that this kind of joyous, harmonious living together - for and with one another - is all made possible through Christ Jesus.

I can't think of a better description of what a Xian home ought to be like than the advice which our text gives: "IF THERE IS ANY ENCOURAGEMENT IN CHRIST, ANY INCENTIVE OF LOVE, ANY PARTICIPATION IN THE SPIRIT, ANY AFFECTION AND SYMPATHY, COMPLETE MY JOY BY BEING OF THE SAME MIND, HAVING THE SAME LOVE, BEING IN FULL ACCORD AND OF ONE MIND. DO NOTHING FROM SELFISHNESS OR CONCEIT, BUT IN HUMILITY COUNT OTHERS BETTER THAN YOURSELVES. LET EACH OF YOU LOOK NOT ONLY TO HIS OWN INTERESTS, BUT ALSO TO THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS." There you have it. If that isn't what it takes to be a family, I don't know what it does take.

Christ shows us how to live - how to love - how to give! "HAVE THIS MIND AMONG YOURSELVES, WHICH YOU HAVE IN CHRIST JESUS, WHO, THOUGH HE WAS IN THE FORM OF GOD, DID NOT COUNT EQUALITY WITH GOD A THING TO BE GRASPED, BUT EMPTIED HIMSELF TAKING THE FORM OF A SERVANT, BEING BORN IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN. AND BEING FOUND

IN HUMAN FORM HE HUMBLED HIMSELF AND BECAME OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH, EVEN DEATH ON A CROSS. His was a love that went all the way, even to DEATH ON A CROSS - so much did He want us to be members of God's family - so much did He care about us.

The story is told of a father who came home from work one day; and as he was coming up the driveway, his own children and some of the children from the neighborhood met him. "What's the matter?" he asked. "We want to play Jesus die on the cross," explained his little daughter, "but we don't know how."

The father agreed that that was a problem. How do you act out a crucifixion and a resurrection? "Well," the father asked, "why did Jesus die on the cross?" "For our sins" came back the prompt answer which some of the children had learned in Sunday School. "Yes, Christ did die to forgive our sins," the father said. "But why did He do it? Why did He die?" The children thought for a moment and then one of them said "Because God loved us." / "That's a pretty good answer," said the father. "God sent Jesus to show that He cares about what happens to us, that He loves us. So how could you play Jesus on the cross?"..... "Maybe," replied one little fellow, "by loving one another."

The discovery was as exciting to the children as it had been for St. Paul. The father went into the house and wondered how it would all work out. He thought he would let them work that one out on their own.

Whatever the method was, it didn't work for very long. The sounds of a quarrel soon erupted, and the father had to go out to restore some semblance of order, if not of love.

Children are something like adults. They know the right answers, but they always do not do what they know they ought to do. It is not as easy as all that. I guess that is why the apostle found it necessary to remind people who had come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior: "DO NOTHING FROM SELFISHNESS OR CONCEIT, BUT IN HUMILITY COUNT OTHERS BETTER THAN YOURSELVES. LET EACH OF YOU LOOK NOT ONLY TO HIS OWN INTERESTS, BUT ALSO TO THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS."

Is that the way it is in your home? Understanding and doing are often two

different things. Understanding is often only skin deep. But love - genuine lo like the love of God in Jesus Christ - stops at nothing. It goes all the way. is the ultimate quality that makes life worth living.

Even where love should be blooming at its glorious best - in the home - it is often found withering on the vine. Today mother is honored with cards, corsages, presents - perhaps even with dining out at a nice restaurant. Tomorrow it is likely that the rest of the family will have fallen back into the same old rut Mom has had her day - now we can start all over again to use her, abuse her, take advantage of her for our own selfish interests. HOME becomes NOT a corner of heaven with "EACH ONE LOOKING NOT TO HIS OWN INTERESTS, BUT ALSO TO THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS." Rather it becomes a corner of hell with each one living for himself and looking out for himself. Each member of the family is determined to do his own selfish thing - demanding his own selfish due - and making life as ~~much of a hell~~ miserable as he can for everyone else. When you talk about the break-up of family life today, this is at the bottom of it.

Love cannot be hoarded up. You can't put it in a bank for a rainy day. You can't save it until "Father's Day" or "Children's Day" or until next "Mother's Day." To be love at all, it has to share and to be shared day in and day out. To be love at all, it has to give and to serve day in and day out.

How much love is there in your home? To get right down to brass tacks, are you more interested in loving or in being loved? LOVE BEGETS LOVE, but how much have you contributed to that precess? Love is not just something that you read about, or something that you just talk about. Love has to be demonstrated every day - 24 hours a day. Love has to be real in the living room, at the kitchen sink, in the bedroom, or out in the yard!

One of the greatest things about the love of God in Christ is that He accepts us as we are. That's love! If that is love, how much of it do you have in your home? How much of it do you show in your home?

There is plenty of room for love in most of our homes. Life being what it is, just about everybody has some anxiety or other - something that worries him at

the moment or keeps on worrying him. Father is unsure of his ability to cope wi the pressures of business. Mother fears that she is not going to be able to kee up with father or with her children. A boy withdraws under the shadow of a brighter brother or sister. Grandmother feels useless in her advancing years.

Do the members of ~~the~~ your family band together to support one another in LOVE? Does each one know, without being told, that he is important - that the others care - that home is a haven to which he can always return for comfort and healin and forgiveness? Does each one know that he belongs?

Love is a two way street! It is not only taking but giving. That is the way it is in God's family. People "COUNT OTHERS BETTER THAN THEMSELVES." That i what the Great God did for us in Christ. He counted us better than Himself. His Son even BECAME OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH - DEATH ON A CROSS!

Parents need the love of their children, just as surely as children need the love and understanding of their parents. Too many parents are all wrapped up in themselves. They do not listen to their children. They don't want to listen. They would just as soon let them grow like weeds.... Too many children want to be babies for the rest of their lives. Life is not a matter of saying constantly: Iron my dress - Buy my books - Take me to the library - Pick me up at school - And overlook my laziness.

Parents and children must learn to think of each other. Each member of the family must learn from Jesus Christ to give, to help, to love.. As I say, they learn that from JESUS CHRIST who CAME NOT TO BE SERVED BUT TO SERVE, AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE AS A RANSOM for us all - who BECAME OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH, EVEN DEATH ON A CROSS.

When you start living and loving and forgiving that way - WHAT A HOME YOU CA HAVE - WHAT A LIFE YOU CAN HAVE - FAMILY LIFE, with GOD and with EACH OTHER. Every day will then be extended into Mother's Day, and Father's Day, and Children Day, and Family Day - where you and Christ and the members of your family will have the "~~SAME MIND~~, THE SAME LOVE, BEING IN FULL ACCORD AND OF ONE MIND." Amen.