

Living as Family

Situating the mundane within the Transformed

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“Bless this marriage and grant to your servants a tranquil life, long years, mature judgment, love for each other in the bond of peace, long-lasting prosperity, grace on their children, a crown of everlasting glory.”

Wedding Service, Prayer of the Crowning

“But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

Joshua 24:15

Introduction

The pressures, distraction, and stresses of family life challenge us as we live as family the way God intended

Through family life we learn about ourselves, our world, love, life, and God. As family, we do this primarily by living life.

The Orthodox Call of Family – Living as Family

A. We gain an Orthodox understanding of the calling of family by looking at the Orthodox calling of marriage.

- ✓ Through marriage we experience the _____, become _____ as a couple, and produce children.
- ✓ God created us to be in union with _____, to partake of His _____.
- ✓ Marriage is a journey of _____ who God created us to be, becoming citizens of _____.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

Ephesians 2:19

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Matthew 6:33

Within marriage we are given a means of transforming our human desires into divine love.

B. As Orthodox, we believe that this transformation happens sacramentally, mysteriously, within the Body of Christ, the Church.

“Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another--to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.”

Romans 7:4-5

Living as family means...

incorporating the practices of the church into the life of the home.

incorporating the values of the kingdom of God into the life of the family.

understanding family interactions as part of our journey of salvation.

Incorporating the practices of the church into family life.

- ✓ What happens in the home is what we consider _____ life.
- ✓ The life and practices of the church are _____, and _____, and _____.
- ✓ Limiting these practices to church on Sunday teaches our children that what happens in _____ is _____ to what happens in real life.

All families have rituals and these rituals shape the identity of the family. Bringing these practices into our families shapes our identities as families of God.

To incorporate these practices requires a guide, a spiritual father or mother to teach, encourage, assist, and pray for us.

Incorporating the values of the kingdom of God.

- ✓ Living as family does not happen _____.

“...Let us commit ourselves, each other, and all our lives to Christ our God.”

Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

- ✓ Rather than living according to the values of _____, we are called to live according to the values of the _____.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Romans 12:2

We learn about the values and virtues of the Kingdom of God from the Word of God, the scriptures, as well as the writings of the fathers and mothers of the Church.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit,

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,

For they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,

For they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

For they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful,

For they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,

For they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,

For they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:3-12

Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

1 Cor. 13:4-8

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23

We incorporate the values of the Kingdom of God by...

- the way we live our lives.
- the way we relate to our children
- the way we instruct our children

- A. We incorporate the values of the kingdom of God first and foremost by living as husband and wife according to these values.

Instill in us also, reverence for your blessed commandments, so that having conquered sinful desires, we may pursue a spiritual life, both thinking and doing all things that are pleasing to you.

Prayer before the reading of the Gospel, Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

- ✓ Children learn more from what we _____, than from what we _____.
- ✓ How we live our lives communicates what we _____ and teaches our children what to _____.
- ✓ There are no such things as _____ parents, only repentant _____.

Ask for forgiveness when you fail to live up to the virtues of the Kingdom of God.

He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.

Proverbs 28:13

Talk more to God about your children than to your children about God.

Conversations with Children, Sister Magdalene

- B. We incorporate the values of the Kingdom of God by how we relate to our children.

- ✓ _____, don't react.

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

Colossians 3:12-13

- ✓ Get _____ not furious.
- ✓ _____ your child's struggle.
- ✓ Think _____.

C. We incorporate the values of the Kingdom of God by how we instruct our children.

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

Proverbs 22:6

- ✓ Frame the daily struggles of family life in terms of the _____ and the _____ of the Kingdom of God.
- ✓ Use moments every day to _____ children about this struggle.
- ✓ Teach the _____ of obedience

Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

Colossians 3:20

- ✓ Teach the joy of _____ and _____.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Psalms 32:1

Conclusion

Living as family means setting our own lives, as parents on the path to salvation; setting our own lives in the life of the church.