Theme: "Is This Home Necessary?"

Text: | Timothy 5:4 -- "if any..have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety nome, and to requite their parents; for that is good and acceptable before God."

Proposition: For a christian a necessary home one in which is developed respect and love for individuals and for God, and in which is achieved an optimistic outlook of faith toward life after death.

Date written: May 6. 1960.

Dates and places preached:

may 12, 1963 - montrose, coco. 11am

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In aduction; som 1. About a year ago (in early 1959), the western world was shocked to learn of a massive, government-enforced breaking up of families in of the largestof the earth's nations. This social upheaval was and is the establishment in China of massive communes, in which people no longer live together as families. Men are in ge domitories for men only. Women are in simibuildings for women only. Once a week men may visit their wives or women friends. Children are cared for and trained in large groups, with only occasional visits by their parents if they knew them in pre-communal times. The system was first tried in the area of rural village life, where in China family ties traditionally have been strong. Resentment and resistance to the innovation was so strong that for a while it med that the communists had made a serious mistake which might cost them their hold on the land. More recent reports inform us that the hope seems vain that the system of family-destroying communes be abandoned and communism rejected in China. Instead, in the last few weeks word comes from China that the communas system is being established on a large scale in the cities, and that Within a be living outside of family groups. This

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ive change in basic living for a mighty people is coming about as part of China's determination to become the world's leading industrial and military nation, in a matter of a decade or so, as compared the years it took to develop industrialization ersewhere in the world.

2. We might exclaim in horror at China's force struction of the family system. We might say to people won't stand for it, that it won't work, that it is immorate and godless. The fact remains that communal living is being used as the basic pattern of life in one of the world's largest and greatest countries. The poor communication which we of the United States have with Red China prevents us from knowing a great many of the details, so we can not make comparisions accurately between communal life and family living, but can be ceneralize.

The patter on of a home is based around the leve of a man for one woman, so that they marry and establish a separate dwelling place for themselves and their children. This is the pattern we as christians believe in and think God approves. This pattern of home life is that which is being and and a large segment of the world today. This pattern of the home should be a powerful,

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ntive to those of us who believe the home to be sacred to examine carefully the basis for our belief. We need to ask and to study honestly the question, "Is home lifenecessary to human welfare? approach the question here by thinking about a tew types of homes which demonstrate some of the functions of home, as we normally think of them. As we think of each type or function of home the case of our sermon topic might pop up in our ands, "Is this home necessary?"

1. Homes which obviously are not necessary.

I. An intriguing story of the Old Testament is that of Joseph, a beloved son who by his jeal—ous brothers was sold into slavery. He was bought by a man named Potiphar, who made him a household servant. Joseph was a tall and handsome young man, who very soon became an object of desire to Potiphar's wife. One day when Potiphar was away his unfaithful wife tempted Joseph, but he rejected her. In anger she wied to her humband when he rurned, so that Joseph was accused of the woong intention and cast into prison. Potiphar's home was one in which lived an unfaithful partner to the marriage. Her unfaithfulness caused anger and marry to herself, suspicion in her husband, and ustice to an innocent man. Is this home nec-

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or very some uncome an object of desiration in a site. The site of

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better that that home had never existed. A home where exists infidelity of one or both partners is an unnecessary one, to say the least. Jesus himped for recognized infidelity, or adultery, as the one justifiable grounds for divorce. However, humans are not all bad, as they are not all good, so it may be that one who through weakness slips infidelity on occasion can effectively retirm love for his partner and have a betherthan-ever home. The basic fact of christianity is that we can be forgiven and have a new and good life. It is constant and intentional infidelity which we mean when we say that a home of infidelity is unnecessary and intolerable.

2. We return to the story of Joseph for our lustration of another type of home. We look now the earlier life of Joseph, when he was a youth still in his father's household. Joseph was the youngest of Jacob's sons, child of Jacob's old as, and Jacob loved Joseph more than all of his erchildren. One sign of this special favor was Jacob's giving to Joseph a coat of many colors, a rare thing in a day when drab and colorless clothing were normal. This coat became a symbol to the per brothers of their father's favoritism for Joseph, so that around it crystallized a strong

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A RONG HATRED OF THEIR YOUNG brother. Joseph. did not help matters any, by taking full advantage of his father's special favoritism and protection. He aggravated his brothers seriously by interpreg his dreams to them as signs that they should serve him. He told them once of a dream in which eleven sheaves of grain, representing the eleven brothers, bowed to a twelth sheath of grain, which interpreted as being himself. Another time he d them of a dream in which the sun, the moon, and eleven stars, representing his parents and his family, made obedience signs to a star which was Mer him. Even his father rebuked him for this one, Because of the junist and unwise favoritism shown by Jacob to Joseph, and because of Joseph's overbearing pride and spitefulness, the brothers became extremely jealous of Joseph and were hateful to him. Finally when they were all away from home day they took an opportunity to seize him. The brothers debated if they should kill him. A group of slave traders came by just then, so they sold him instead. He was taken to Egypt and sold. Joseph's boyhood home might be termed a home of jealousy; strong, passionate, hating jealousies. Only the chance of a passing group of slave traders kept the jealousy from resulting in murder. Oc-

plousies resulting in even greater violence, so

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whole families are destroyed. Is a home of jealousy desirable? Is this home necesary? Of course not! An honest attempt to show love equality to all the children in the home, and an earnest fort to set a good example in all things, will serve parents well in preventing a home from becoming an unnecessary home of jealousy.

3. We turn to another part of the Old Testathe little-known book of Habakkuk, for a thought about a third type of home. Habakkuk reveals the prophet as having deep*x concern about the vidence which the warriors of Chaldea are visiting on his people, and that it seems that God has forsaken him and his people. He begins a watch on a city tower, determined to stay there until he receives a message from God. The message comes as a vision, in which God referred to the Pring transgressor in these terms: "He transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gatherunto him all nations, and keepeth unto him all people: ". We would spotlight the two adjacent phrases of this Scripture: "he is a proud man. neither keepeth at home." The Scripture is pointto excessive pride as being the driving motive a cruel, warring, unjst, drunken, acquisitive

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essor.

- a. Pride, learned and developed at home, causes such a man to go out from his home to do all sorts of damage to others, on both large and small scales. We could spend lots of time today pointing to modern-day pride developed at home which causes all sorts of damage.
 - b. We Yankees might look at the southern white man's home-grown pride that he is superior to the black man, and say that here is an illustration. It's safe to look at others' sins, not half so uncomfortable as to think of our own. Let's turn a bit closer home, however.
- c. How about the pride that some of us get in our reputations? A person once told me that is reputation was bettern than mine. I would—not argue with him a bit on that point. I would say that if we act primarily to protect our reputation we are living defensively as a rule, tonstructively. Too much emphasis on ones own social, financial or religious standing indicates undue pride (or may be, perhaps, a sign of lack of self-confidence!?). I have nown many families whose chief drive seemed to be respected, not to serve. But respect

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d. We find excessive home-grown pride in our institutions at times too. Those which should be service institutions, like the church, are sometimes more motivated by pride than by a desire to serve people. "Wive got the biggest budget, the finest building, the most members, the oldest organization, the least debt, the smoothest preacher," and so on, we may say. We may have, too, but even if all these should be true, pride and the things we accomplish when driven by it, makes poor achievement for an institution that would do the work of the max meek and humble Christ.

e. To the question, "Is this home necessary," about either a family or a church home
in which too much pride exists, we would have

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reply, "No, it is not necessary."

4. Most of us would think of home as being at Least a necessary place for the satisfaction of e needs of the body, such as the need for food. or shelter, or for other physical attention. In Chapter II the New Testament's I Corinthians has an instance in which the apostle Paul dealt th a church problem by pointing to the home. The problem was that a lot of deadbeats were coming to the church observance of the Lord's Supper because they were hungery. The Lord's meal was then being observed as a real meal, provided for the people and the service by the deacons. These offenders to whom Paul referred came early so that they could grab the best food. They usually left too little for anybody else, or at least ate all the best food. About this Paul wrote, "Wherefore brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. Andif any man hunger, let him eat at home." Referring to home as a bodily Ling station, we might ask, "Is this home nessary?" Then we remember military life, college life, restaurants, or Red China's communes, and we know the answer: "one can eat about anywhere. To share fellowship and love at home over e table is wonderful, but the home cannot be rustifed simply as a place to meet bodily need."

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production ways to care for the body, you see, than in individual, small-unit homes.

examples from the Bible might be given of homes that could be called "unnecessary." These could come, too, from community or insitutional life, pm your own observation or experience. We must remember that no one of these or other objectionable traits is the only characteristic of any home. We must realize that some of the traits we have mentioned or might mention are good when they exist to a limited degree. We might have been over-simplyfying a bit to stress the truths with which we deal. Let's switch our attention now to some different home characteristics, and think

II. Homes which are necessary.

I. Home is a place of refuge and safety. The ry of one of the plagues which the Lord visited on Egypt when Moses was trying to free the people of Israel illustrates this. The particular plague was a terrific hail storm. Moses told the people Israel to go home, where they would be safe

om the storm. The safety in a real home is

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so much the physical safety as the safety and security of knowing the folks there love you, no matter what. Is this type of home necessary? It is to the human spirit. As we mature and grow der, we find that our faith provides this type of security in the assurance of God's love. A communal system can never give the personal, enrichening, secure love which a monogamous home at a best can provide.

- 2. A home is a place where people are treated with respect for them as individuals, where each adult and each child counts. We all need this respect, to have a place where intervals of time are made possible when our mental and spiritual defenses can be relaxed because we know folks ther aren't attacking our personalities.
- James is a place of happiness. There is the famous wartime story of the newly-married young man with a I-A classification who gave his local deaft board religious reasons for not drafting. His reason was straight from the Bible, wher in Deuteronomy 24:5 is written, "When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but shall be free at home one year, and shall eneer up his wife which he hath taken." The Re-

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hell be free atabams one year, and find

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d Standard Version of the Bible more accurated translates it "he shall stay at home for a year and be happy with the wife whom he has taken." Happiness is hard to comeby. Most people would be that a good home provides life's happiest experiences. Is this type home necessary? It is if individual worth and happiness has values, which we believe they do. You don't find many pop people in large-scale group living projects, you?

4. Home is a place in which the love of God is most effectively taught. Point to a home in which the parents earnestly and industriously seek to lead in the practice of private and public worship of God, and the chances are extremely high that the children grow up with a deep religious conviction too. If regular worship at church priority with Dady over painting the house or going fishing, you can almost bet safely that Junior will give worship the same priority when he grows up. Are homes necessary in which Christ considered the head of the household? ***** They are for most of us, wif we are to experience the saving power of Jesus. Most of our homes don't measure up in this regard as much as we woul But most of us at least make some effort have godly homes. The communal system, on the

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1 Timothy 5:1-5

is based on a philosphy which says that there is no God!

Joys so great that the best we can say about eternal life is to describe it as a home. Is such a home necessary? We often speak of "heaven" as "our eternal home." As the goal of living aven is a powerful incentive to good. An earth-home which demonstrates love and cooperativeness well maxxxx just some of the time is a realistic view of the substance of eternity, if we are to believe our Bibles.

Conclusion:

2. As a verse from today!s Scripture states at widows, so might well be stated about home: "if any.. have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good before

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1 Timothy 5:1-5 Homes in which such standards prevail are necessary in at least some numbers if man is to continue as man -- a being of mortal flesh but who is, of all living beings, immortal and eternal mind and in spirit.

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