



Outer Growth - Family 2

Hear this word that the LORD hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying,

Amos 3:1

Fight - Acts 5:39, Jeremiah 1:19

Arguments - Proverbs 17:14, Matthew 18:15, Romans 12:17,

Misunderstandings - Proverbs 18:13

Issues - Proverbs 4:23

Lies - Proverbs 14:25

Yelling - Proverbs 29:22

Everyone who has grown up within the family will be familiar with each other. Regardless of the role, all parties will become accustomed to one another. God brought the family together for a purpose. To live in harmony and to reproduce and continue, and so forth. However, some families will pattern their lives in a godly way, while other households remain ungodly. Despite all this, each family is accountable and will experience conflicts, intense confrontations, arguments, misunderstandings, failures, and other life issues within the family. How the family handles them will be the difference between a persevering household and a failing one. Family members may encounter altercations, verbal or physical, which can be mentally detrimental. A fight is typically harsh words exchanged that could lead to a scuffle. However, for a believer, it is quite different. For God is love, and those who serve Him must live according to His Word. Still, as in Matthew twenty-four, verse twelve, "And because

iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

For a believer within a family of non-believers, it can be a disadvantage and, at times, seem difficult. Sometimes, these fights are over things that are meaningless and not worth fighting about. However, the devil will use these situations to create the opportunity for the believer to sin and not be in contact with God. In Luke twelve, verse fifty-three, "The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law." The only way for believers to overcome is through prayer because the Lord fights our battles, not us.

Being in a family will have its share of arguments. How does an argument get started? A disagreement. Again, most verbal battles can become overwhelming, especially when a person attempts to hurt the other. The problem with arguments is that no one listens and only shares feelings until a comment hurts the heart, escalating into something more dramatic.

On the other hand, a believer should handle matters as in Matthew eighteen, verses fifteen through seventeen. It is often necessary for a third person or group of people to listen to opposing sides to help resolve conflict. Otherwise, both sides will keep going at each other until someone gets the worst end of it. However, if there is no resolution, both opposing parties will have to go their separate ways. Contention happened in Acts fifteen, verses thirty-six to forty, with Barnabas going one way and Paul going another.

Misunderstandings can be fatal to any family, especially those who have no clarity on the matter yet. Misunderstanding is the failure to understand correctly before proceeding to reply or give feedback. An example is the Israelites leaving Egypt with the servant of God, Moses. They sang the song of Moses, celebrating in Exodus fifteen, verses one through six. However, not knowing what God has in store for them going into the wilderness, the Israelites began to murmur in verse three, "And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the

LORD in the land of Egypt when we sat by the flesh pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

Initially, the chosen people of God did not understand that the Lord had a plan for them. They instantly expect Him to pull them out of Egypt and automatically into ease of paradise and pleasure. The same goes for family. Initially, one family member might explain something to another that might not be understood. However, if they are still talking about it, give them a chance to clarify before responding. Therefore, it will save a lot of time and potential turmoil from happening.

Each family will encounter various issues based on desire and decision-making, which may or will affect the other members as a whole. However, some of them will not be easy to absorb or overcome. For believers, it is significant to address all matters to Him for guidance. There is a phrase, "Don't worry about anything, but pray over everything." There was an issue between the family of Abraham and Lot in Genesis thirteen. Both had cattle and caretakers, and contention began to happen among them. In verse eight, "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we *be* brethren." Abraham suggested they separate in the bottom of verse nine, "if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Not all issues will work out the way we planned.

A Family will encounter dishonesty. However, it depends on who it is coming from and the cause of it. "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape, as in Proverbs nineteen, verse five. When a family member lies to another about something to cover themselves or another, it creates division. There is an old saying, "United we stand, divided we fall." Lying within a family can cause that.

An unfaithful spouse will use lies to cover their adultery. Unfortunately, children will tell a fib to cover their mistakes, especially if it will hurt mom and dad. An example in the Old Testament of how lies can affect a family starts

with Isaac and Rebekah and their sons Jacob and Esau. A family pursued God's blessing in an unrighteous way, with Isaac's preference for Esau, while deceptive manipulation by Rebekah and Jacob took dominance over the spiritual good of God's covenant. The result of lying in this family causes Rebekah to suffer greatly for her deceitful scheme that caused Jacob to flee: she never saw her son again, as in Genesis twenty-seven, verse forty-three, and chapter twenty-eight, verse five.

Unrighteous yelling within a family can do more harm than good. It can cause the rest of the members to live in fear than in love. The one that is shouting is usually the one doing something wrong. Yelling is often associated with anger and harsh words toward the receiver. Proverbs twenty-two, verse twenty-four, states, "Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go."

Family adversity is not easy. All will have to endure various challenges. However, love, particularly God's love, covers a multitude of sins. Each family member must continue to live and work together as a whole to overcome whatever they face. For believers, God must be the center of a family, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, as in Hebrews thirteen, verse five.