

Introduction:

God is originator of the family. He intended the family to be a positive, healthy, and loving relationship. **Genesis 2.18-25** Some families do not function the way God intended. All families have “issues” and problems but some create their own problems. One man said he thought he came from a dysfunctional family but he found out they were only Irish. Remember watching the Carol Burnett Show with a skit of a family playing a board game. They were angry and abusive to the point of it being funny and sad at the same time. Unfortunately, some families do function improperly and no one is laughing. In this lesson I want to look at four ways a family might be “dysfunctional.”

I) When There Is A Lack of Love

A) Some families are good at showing love while others are not.

1. Children need to know their parents love them, even when they mess up, Prodigal Son,

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.” ’ Luke 15:18-19f

2. Husbands and wives need to express their love for one another,

28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. Ephesians 5:28

4 that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, Titus 2:4

B) Families that do not love

1. Hold grudges when there is a “perceived” problem

2. Lack the proper instruction and patience
 - a. Parents without love for their children will either
 - i) not discipline their children

(8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Hebrews 12:8),
 - or ii) discipline in anger

(4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4)
3. When a family member does wrong there is to be reaction but that reaction should be motivated by a concern and love nor that member.
 - a. God loves us even when we sin and redeemed us with His Son,

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

II) Undue Emphasis On Blame and Shame

- A) **Some members love remembering all the wrong committed (Do you remember all the wrongs? Get historical)**
 1. The book “Mommy Dearest” is an example of a child recounting all the wrongs by her mother
 2. Children, your parents are not perfect, husbands and wives you did not marry the perfect person.
- B) **Does your family seek to find a scapegoat?**
 1. Watch out for “You’re no good” or “You are always causing

problem”, etc.

2. Fact is some people do create more problems, one child may be rebellious than another, and parents may say the wrong thing.

C) Healthy families seek to solve the problem and give aid to each other

1. The Bible emphasis is not on blaming but on redemption,

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

2. Part of getting over a problem is repentance and forgiveness,

1 Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! 2 It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. 3 Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. 4 And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.” Luke 17:1-4

III) Living In Denial

A) Some families refuse to see a very real problem

1. A member being an alcoholic, a workaholic, having a drug addiction, physical or verbal abuse, etc.
2. Children living in rebellion, immoral behavior
 - a. Be careful of excusing everything by saying they are just going through a phase or its really my fault

- b. Must hold family members accountable for what they are doing

B) Healthy families firmly and compassionately face their problems

1. Biblical principle in **13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. James 2:13**

2. God does not deny the problem but provides a solution for it,
for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Romans 3:23-26

7 "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered;

8 Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin."
Romans 4:7-8

IV) Perfectionism

A) A family will be dysfunctional when one of its members expects everything to be perfect

1. While we should strive to be perfect we should admit our faults
2. Trying to be the "perfect" family can be a terrible burden. (Martha Stewart)

B) Jesus came to set us free from the burden of sin

1. He forgives us and we have to be willing to forgive each other.

V) **Application To Our Spiritual Family (The Local Congregation)**

A) **A congregation is dysfunctional when there is a lack of love among its members**

1. Such love is expressed differently but there must be love
2. Members need to know they are loved even when they mess up (Pray for one another, confess)
3. We are to love even when we may not like what the person is doing, ***Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. John 13:1***
4. Signs of a lack of love: grudges, lack of discipline, or discipline out of anger
5. Signs of love: deep concern, willingness to forgive

B) **A congregation is dysfunctional when there is an undue emphasis on blaming**

1. Common scapegoats – the preacher, elders, deacons, or one particular member
2. None of us are perfect, and we all have room to grow

C) **A local congregation is dysfunctional when it lives in denial**

1. When a problem exist it must be faced,
4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 1 Corinthians 5:4-5
2. False teachers must be stopped,

10 For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. Titus 1:10-11

D) A congregation is dysfunctional when it quits trying to improve

1. We are not perfect because we do not have the perfect preacher, nor perfect members.
2. Our focus is on growing, admitting our faults, repenting, and growing more.

Conclusion:

If you are not a Christian you have a dysfunctional relationship with your spiritual Father. It does not have to be that way. God has acted and through His grace you can come home with Him.