

## **FAMILY AT RISK**

A Family at Risk is one that is exposed to specific hazards and dangers to wellbeing from within the family. Last week we talked about the attack upon the institutions of marriage and family by divorce.

- Single parent families have doubled in number since 1970 and are on a steady yearly increase.
- It is estimated that over the last 25 years twenty seven million (27,000,000) children have been dramatically affected emotionally, financially, and spiritually by divorce.
- Roughly 70% of those remarrying are parents creating or expanding a stepfamily situation.

**The American family is at an epidemic level. 21<sup>st</sup> century American children are more at risk from inside than from outside the family unit.**

**Today's lesson will study how the World's Belief System (OMCD) can attack the very core of the divine institution of Family and develop a subculture of Families at Risk.**

### **1. There is a subculture of Families at Risk in America today.**

It is at epidemic proportions and largely invisible without any national news coverage or voice of conscience from the Church.

However there is one segment of every community that understands this epidemic subculture of the Families at Risk problem in America. It is the **local school system** that deals with it everyday. America's school children are the walking wounded of this subculture.

Every year **we minister** to these hurting walking wounded at our three camps and detention and rehab centers. Some of these children are now walking wounded parents in their 30's and 40's. They are at poverty standards, emotionally scarred, abused and battered with feeling of worthlessness, looking for help from a spiritual mature church that is able to help them break this vicious cycle in their lives.

**HOW CAN WE GET CHRISTIANITY COLLECTIVELY TO UNDERSTAND THE SIZE OF THE PROBLEM AND OUR STRATEGIC MINISTRY TO OFFER REAL HOPE IN JESUS CHRIST!**

“The family is both the most loving and supportive of human groups and also by far the most physically violent group or institution except for the police or military during war.” (Family Today, vol.2, article 6)

### **2. “America has a higher level of internal violence than perhaps any other advanced industrial nation in the world.” (Family today, vol.2, article 43)**

- 60% of children fatalities occur under the age of seven.
- 74% of skull fractures or brain damage of children is from abuse.
- 18% of monthly emergency room treatment is related to child abuse.
- Every 6 hours a victim of child abuse dies (1500 annually).
- 3 out of 4 of them will be under the age of four.
- 63% of abusers were abused. It becomes a vicious cycle that must be broken.

This is **not** child abuse. **It is a crime against American children.** It must stop and it must stop with YOU! “In 2003, 906,000 were convicted of child abuse out of nearly 3,000,000 reported cases.” (National Child Abuse Statistics, 2006)

### 3. Isaac and Rebekah were one of the all time love stories of the Bible (Gen.24).

Isaac was a spiritually mature Believer when he married Rebekah at the **age of 40** (Gen.25:20). Isaac knew that Rebekah was God sent to his life – “Then Isaac brought her into his mother’s Sarah’s tent, and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her; thus Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.” (Gen.24:67)

When he learned that she was barren as the messianic Seed carrier (Gen.3:15), he prayed for her (Gen.25:21-23). At the **age of 60**, God gave her twin nations (Gen.25:26). They knew that these sons were God sent to them (Gen.25:22-23). By the way, they were still passionate lovers in their marriage (Gen.26:8-9).

This sounds like the ideal family. You might ask, “what happened that we are using them as an example of a Family at Risk?”

**HERE IT IS:** “When **the boys grew up**, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a peaceful man, living in tents. Now Isaac loved Esau, **because** he has a taste for game; **but Rebekah loved Jacob**.” (Gen.25:27-28)

### 4. The World’s Belief System, Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus (OMCD) was one of the major factors in putting this Family at Risk

“Esau loved Esau but Rebekah loved Jacob.” (Gen.27:28) “Parents account for 80% of child abuse.” (Child Abuse and Neglect)

This is a loving couple and a believing family on its way to becoming a Family at Risk.

By the time Esau and Jacob were **40 and Isaac was 100**, this family was in big trouble and unwilling to do anything about it. By the way, Isaac lived to an age of 180 years (Gen.35:28-29).

**Allow me to show you OMCD ‘thinking’ working in two parents against each and the Plan of God (Eph.4:22-24; Rom.12:2).**

**Esau** despised his spiritual birthrights and sold them for a bowl of soup (Gen.25:33-34). Then he married a Hittite woman against his parent’s and God’s will (Gen.26:34-35; 28:8-9).

**Isaac’s** choice of Esau over Jacob was so blatant that it hurt Rebekah and Jacob and polarized them against Isaac and Esau.

**Rebekah** believes that her favored son is more worthy of the family blessing like the birthright and she is not waiting on God (Gen.27:2). She has convinced herself that it is all right to cut Esau completely out of the family will (Gen.27:5-6, 10).

**Jacob** is coached by his mother to lie and deceive his father and brother for the family blessing (Gen.28:4/ patriarch to Abrahamic covenant). [At this point, Rebekah disappeared from the plan of God until her gravesite is mentioned in Gen.49:31.]

**This episode blew this family completely apart with a split-up that lasted for the next 80 years filled with great emotional pain for all of them.** Isaac and Rebekah will leave behind two dysfunctional sons and two more Families at Risk. If you attended Al’s teachings last month, you learned that Jacob and Rachel was also a “Family at Risk”. It was a spin-off of Isaac and Rebekah’s Family at Risk. **It wasn’t until Joseph that this cycle was broken.**