Though the following info is somewhat dated, it is still relevant today. The research that follows was done by **Professor Nick Stinnett**, who was chairman of the **Department of Human Development and Family at the University of Nebraska**.

In the research, they discovered after talking to more than 24,000 family members that the following were marks of a strong family. These were not necessarily Christian homes. Families were asked such questions as “How do you handle conflict?” and “How do you communicate?”

**1) People in strong families deeply care for each other.** They let each other know this and they are not afraid to express this in their lives.

**2) Commitment.** Members of strong families are committed to each other. They commit time and energy into family activities and do not let their work or other priorities take too much time away from family interaction. This is immediate family that we are talking about here.

**3) Positive communication.** Successful families are often task-oriented in their communication, identifying problems and discussing how to solve them together. They also spend time talking with and listening to one another to stay connected.

**4) Enjoyable time together.** One study of 1,500 school children were asked, “What do you think makes a happy family” Few replied that money, cars or other things made a family happy. The kids said that a happy family does things together, a family that genuinely enjoys the times they share with each other. Let me add this does not mean you have to spend tons of money to have fun. Do things outside together. Read books. Go for walks. Just do stuff.

**5) Spiritual well-being.** This covers various thoughts such as as sense of optimism, hope, and religious faith. Others talk of their love for their families with a reverence or in ethical terms. Within the person there is a center that promotes sharing, love and compassion. That is found in its best form in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

**6) Successful management of stress and crisis.** They handle stress differently than troubled families. They know how to prevent trouble before it happens and how to work together to meet challenges when they occurs. And may I add that people are not walking on egg shells around each other. Some people’s way of managing stress puts undo and unfair pressure on those around them.