The Importance of Family Life
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The family unit patterned after godly principles is one of the most significant elements of a society. It consists of a husband and wife (bound by vows of lifetime fidelity and commitment in marriage) and their children. It exists as a nurturing and binding agent among individuals in a family circle. It also contributes a sense of stability and identity as life flows from one generation to another.

The composition and order of the family unit find their sacred origin in the Bible. God instituted the family when He said to Adam, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him” (Genesis 2:18). God took a rib from Adam and made a woman; and Adam declared, “. . . This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh . . .” (Genesis 2:23).

Over the centuries, the concept of the godly family has survived. It has provided spiritual and emotional nourishment through all of life’s varying phases and experiences. Strong families are central to societal durability and are of great benefit, both to the church and to the nation.

The family relationship is rooted in love: “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us . . .” (Ephesians 5:1-2). Such love flourishes when family members submit to one another (Ephesians 5:21) and “follow after the things which make for peace . . .” (Romans 14:19).

According to the Word, the father is the head of the house and has the ultimate responsibility for the spiritual and physical well-being of the entire family, “the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church . . .” (Ephesians 5:23). Such an obligation is quite sobering because the husband is not to lord over his family. Rather, the Word teaches, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;” (Ephesians 5:25). In this context, the father is reminded not to provoke his children to anger “lest they be discouraged” (Colossians 3:21).

In God’s order of creation, the head of the woman is the man (1 Corinthians 11:3). Wives are to submit themselves unto their husbands “as unto the Lord” (Ephesians 5:22). “Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing” (Ephesians 5:24).

Children are given specific instructions in the Word: “obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth” (Ephesians 6:1-3). As parents love each other and submit themselves unto Christ, this serves as a great example to children who will hopefully follow such a godly pattern.

Scripturally, fathers and mothers have distinctive roles to fulfill. As the family’s head, the father has responsibilities to provide the financial, physical, and spiritual needs of his wife and family. He personifies the male gender (masculinity) reflected in physical and spiritual strength as well as leadership (1 Kings 2:2; 1 Corinthians 16:13). He also is to be kindly sensitive to the emotional needs of his family (1 Peter 3:7). He is the major breadwinner and provider (1 Timothy 5:8). Among a father’s many important duties are the offering of prayer before meals and the reading of Scriptures in his family’s presence.
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Likewise, the mother has a biblical role to fulfill as a “keeper at home” (Titus 2:5) and one who is readily available to love and nurture her dear children. Her God-given feminine gifts are for the purpose of lovingly ministering to the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of her children. As her offspring grow from babyhood through adolescence and thence into adulthood, a mother’s visible example of godliness and Christian nurturing is continually needed in the home.

The primary goal of a converted husband and wife is the raising of their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). Their heartfelt desire is the conversion of their children and they should kindly remind their children of their eventual spiritual responsibility. Christian parents demonstrate their love for God and for the church through willing obedience to these spiritual authorities. When parents convey attitudes of submission to those whom God has placed over them, they can more fully expect their children to be obedient to them.

Parents must recognize that Satan is working with a steady diligence to undermine the home. Broken marriages abound, and children are the greatest victims. Both the exodus of mothers from the home into the work force and the excessive preoccupation of fathers with earthly gain have contributed to the instability of families and marriages. Many parents neglect their responsibility toward their children during their crucial formative years.

Godly parents should make every effort to keep their homes holy and shielded from worldly influences. The nurturing of spiritual values and communication are severely undermined by the vast majority of television programming, by decadent movies, and by morally destructive videos which can be rented and watched at home. Christian parents have a solemn obligation to protect their children from these morally degrading influences. Sensitivity to their anxieties and problems will help to maintain open communication between parents and children.

Opportunities abound to promote the scriptural patterns of sound family life, godly order, and respect. Christ-like love and a wall of defense against evil will provide the kind of home on this earth which will help precious souls prepare to spend eternity in Heaven.

Originally published in “Light from the Word” in the Silver Lining.

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