

A HAPPY HOME !

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A Happy Home

One of the greatest blessings on earth is to have a happy family who love God and love you! I have a happy home. My wife, Vicki, is loyal, affectionate, and such a blessing to me! At this moment she is teaching ladies from about eight countries how to love and help their husbands.¹ She practices what she preaches—she is a good lover! She loves and helps me in a lot of ways! Also I enjoy her company throughout the day.

My children all love me, and all of them seem to be following Jesus. They respect me and obey me. They frequently come to kiss me when I leave in the morning or when they go to bed.

We often play games together at home and at the park. There's a lot of laughter at our table. We all enjoy it when one of us reads to the family. We have a lot of fun on trips as we travel around the country for my preaching.

There are some *family* blessings you can expect if you fear God, if you walk in His ways:

¹ I'm hearing reports from the women who are following these principles that they and their husbands are happier and both are enjoying sexual pleasure more.

Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in His ways.

For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord....

Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children... (Ps. 128:1-4, 6).

Do you see what God promises the one who fears Him and walks in His ways? He will be blessed, he will be happy, and it will be well with him! His wife will be blessed, and his children will be blessed. The blessing will even extend to his grandchildren!

Then it is crucial that we *walk in His ways*! What are His ways? We know His ways from His Word. We walk in His ways when we obey His written commandments.

Here are some more promises about the home for those who fear God.

The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish (Pr. 14:11).

Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in His commandments.

His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Wealth and riches shall be in his house (Ps. 112:1-3).

This is a promise for even more than a happy family! I want my children to do great things for God's kingdom! This is a promise for that! I intend to fear God and to delight greatly in His commands! If I do so, my descendants will be mighty on the earth. God said we will even have wealth and riches.

So let's see what God says about how to have a happy home. What are God's ways about finding a mate, about marriage, about sex, and about children.

God's Way about Marriage

Marriage is from God. In the beginning God said that it is not good for a man to be alone, so He made woman to be a help, fit for the man. Marriage is a wonderful gift from God!

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him (Genesis 2:18).

Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD (Proverbs 18:22).

Consider the data: Married men—regardless of age, sex, race, income or education—consistently have been found to be healthier than men who are single, divorced or widowed. ...Evidence is mounting dramatically that the quality of a marriage is strongly related to health. In fact, a man who has a secure marriage and who continues to be sexually active lives longer, succumbs to illness less often and heals from wounds and surgery faster.²

Marriage is good. It is a gift from God. Can you imagine Adam's thrill and excitement at that first wedding!

² Gail Sheehy, *Parade*, June 18, 2006.

Big weddings are really nice and make wonderful celebrations and memories. However, when people think that a wedding has to be very expensive, the result is that those who cannot afford such fancy weddings sometimes feel they cannot marry and often live in sexual sin. With prayer, ingenuity, and some helpful friends, you can have an inexpensive wedding that is still beautiful, happy, and memorable.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh (Gen. 2:24).

God commands that at marriage:

- A man must leave his father and his mother. That would avoid a lot of in-law problems, wouldn't it!
- He must cleave to his wife. Jesus showed us this statement means that marriage is permanent.³
- They shall be one flesh. They are to enjoy sexual love.

³ Matthew 19:6

God's Way for Finding a Mate

Does God have any instructions on finding a mate? He does. God brought a wife to the first man. Then, the longest chapter in Genesis is devoted to how God guided Abraham's servant in getting a wife for Isaac. An entire Bible book, Ruth, is largely devoted to how Ruth got a godly husband.

House and riches are the inheritance of fathers:
and a prudent wife is from the Lord (Pr. 19:14).

Proverbs 31 shows what this virtuous woman is like: trustworthy, ambitious, diligent, kind—one who fears God. The trait most emphasized is diligence or hard work.

The Word of God gives us an example of how to obtain this kind of woman—pray. God clearly guided Abraham's servant to the girl He had chosen for Isaac, in answer to prayer (Gen. 24). It turns out she was kind, hard working, a virgin, and beautiful!

I asked God to guide me to the one of His choice. He did. If you need guidance about anything, you certainly need it on the choice of a life partner! We can ask for clear guidance.

Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path... (Psalm 27:11).

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths (Proverbs 3:6).

I am confident that God guided me to Vicki, the best woman in the world for me. Also He gave me the desire of my heart.

Delight thyself also in the LORD; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart (Psalm 37:4).

I believed that if I would delight in the Lord and seek first His kingdom, He would give me what I needed.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:33).

I found a thing of beauty along the path of duty.

The Bible not only tells us what kind of woman would be worthy to marry, but it is also clear on what kind of man or woman to avoid:

Sinners:

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners (Ps. 1:1).

An angry person:

Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go (Prov. 22:24).

Those who won't work:

Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly [that is, they don't work; see vs.11] (2 Thes. 3:6).

A man is not ready for marriage if he is not established in his work and able to provide for a family. "Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house" (Prov. 24:27).

Heavy drinkers and gluttons:

Be not among winebibbers; among gluttonous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags (Prov. 23:20,21).

Those who cause divisions and offences:

Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by

good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (Rom. 16:17,18).

Those who call themselves Christians, yet continue in flagrant sin:

But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat (1 Cor. 5:11).

The Bible forbids marriage to unbelievers.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? ...Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord... (2 Cor. 6:14, 17).

How can you tell if someone is unsaved? Ask him if he's a Christian? That's pretty dumb! Plenty of guys will say they're saved in order to marry the girl they want. The way to see if someone is a Christian is to see if he or she is submitted the Lord.

And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him (1 John 2:3,4).

Someone has said that if you marry a child of the devil, you will have problems with your father in law—the devil. You will. There are a lot of unhappy

marriages because someone did not obey God's Word to avoid a drinker, or a lazy, angry, or divisive person!

What about the person who is already married to an unbeliever? Stay with your spouse.

If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him (1 Cor. 7:12,13).

Here's a simple principle: go with people who help you; avoid those who hinder your walk with God. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13:20).

God's Way about Sex

All the wonder, beauty, and ecstasy of sex came from God. God designed our bodies and gave us our sexual desires. Satan is not the one who made women so beautiful and charming. Sex is a wonderful gift from God. Satan has stolen one of God's nicest gifts, and exploits it as one of the most dangerous temptations.

Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge (Heb. 13:4).

Sexual union is only for marriage. It is a gift, but it is not optional. The Word of God insists that neither the husband nor the wife can withhold sex from the other. Whoever wants it is entitled to it.

The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control (1 Cor. 7:4,5 NAS).

Nor can a husband and wife agree not to have sex anymore. Notice what three conditions must be met before sex is withheld:

1. The husband and wife must agree.
2. It must be for a limited time.
3. It must be for the purpose of mutual prayer.

Because of the danger of sexual temptation, the Word of God commands the man to enjoy his own wife: “Let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love” (Prov. 5:19).

Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun (Eccl. 9:9).

God's Way about Being Single

There is a special place in God's kingdom for single people who can serve God intensely. When the disciples heard Jesus' teaching on divorce, they said, "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry."

But He said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it (Matt. 19:11,12).

Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. ...If they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn [with passion](1 Cor. 7:7,9).

Those who have the gift of being single and have devoted themselves to the kingdom of God can concentrate on pleasing God and can attend on the Lord without distraction (1 Cor. 7:32-35).

The church has profited greatly by single men and women who have been able to serve God in a way

married people cannot. It is wrong to be contemptuous of unmarried Christians who serve God faithfully, or to treat them as though they are deprived or to try to set them up with the first available person that comes along! Marriage is better for some. Singleness is better for some.

It is also dangerous and wrong to exalt celibacy so as to impose it on others.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats... (1 Tim. 4:1-3).

When a church rules that its pastors or priests or dedicated women may not marry, they are lying and promoting a doctrine of demons. It is no wonder that so many that have been bound by this unscriptural rule have fallen into so many sexual sins! Actually a pastor is *required* to “be blameless, the husband of one wife” (1 Tim. 3:2).

God's Way about Having Children

God's Word shows us that children are a *blessing*.

Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is His reward.

As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate (Ps. 127:3-5).

We see that children are:

- An inheritance from God
- A reward
- Like arrows in the hand of a warrior. (Whether we like it or not, we are in a deadly spiritual battle. Having many well trained children who serve God can be a big advantage in expanding Christ's kingdom and repulsing Satan's kingdom.)
- If you have a lot of children, a quiver full, you are blessed.

Obededom had eight sons "for God blessed him" (1 Chron. 26:5). "And God gave Heman fourteen sons and three daughters" who all served God (1 Chron. 25:5,6).

That's what I want—my children to really serve God, to seek first His kingdom, to be His disciples. And I intend to train them to do it! Jesus said, “Go and make disciples.” A good place to start is making disciples of our own children!

God's Way for Training Children

If God said to be fruitful and multiply, and if children are a blessing, then why are children such a burden and a hassle?! They're not, if they are properly corrected.

Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul (Pr. 29:17).

Instead, of such a stressful burden, children can *give rest* rather than take your rest. They can be a delight instead of a drain! However, they must be trained, and they can be trained.

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Pr. 22:6).

Children can be trained to live right so that they will not depart from the right way. A man with disobedient children is not qualified to be a pastor. He should have "faithful children not accused of riot or unruly" (Titus 1:6).

For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? (1 Tim. 3:5).

Even deacons must rule their children and their own houses well (1 Tim. 3:12). Ruling our children well can be done, and if our kids turn out bad it is *our own*

shame: “a companion of riotous men shameth his father” (Pr. 28:7).

Just today my wife, Vicki, took our children and a friend, Lizelle, to a nearby tidal pool at the beach. She commented on how cute a three-year-old boy was. The mother said, “You wouldn’t think he was cute if you had to deal with his temper tantrums.”

Vicki answered, “Oh, I know how to deal with temper tantrums.”

“What would you do?” the curious mom replied.

“I use a spoon,” Vicki answered.

“I *don’t* smack,” she said as she turned away.

They talked a little more, but a few minutes later, the little guy started walking toward the deep end of the tidal pool wall. His mom called him to come back, but he just giggled and kept on, endangering his life.

Vicki leaned toward Lizelle and said, “And *that* is why I ‘smack’. Exhibit one.”

The little darling soon proceeded to kick his mom in the stomach at which Vicki commented to Lizelle, “Exhibit 2.”

Our own kids came along about then, splashing. Vicki told them to not splash the still-dry people, and they quickly moved away.

“Exhibit 3!” she smiled at Lizelle.

To train our children properly, we must first get God’s Word into our own hearts; then we teach God’s Word to our children. Whatever is in the heart comes out of the mouth in our conversation. We’ll talk about God’s ways, not just in the formal teaching sessions, but throughout the day.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up (Deut. 6:6,7).

The command is to teach them *diligently*. We have no right to give up that responsibility and hope the Sunday school or the Christian school will do what we are commanded to do. If they help, fine, but it is still my responsibility to diligently teach my own children to obey the Word of God.

The young pastor, Timothy, came to genuine faith, apparently through his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois (2 Tim. 1:5).

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 3:15).

Jesus told Peter that if he loved Jesus, he would feed Christ's sheep. If he loved Him more, he would feed His lambs. We must take the time to lovingly teach our little ones the Word of God. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

The Great Commission is to teach them to *obey* all that Christ has commanded (Matt. 28:20). There's a lot

of difference between teaching them what the Bible says and teaching them to *obey* what it says! Teaching them to consistently obey will require discipline. The Word of God is specific on a kind of discipline we are to use: the rod.

Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell (Pr. 23:13,14).

Even a lot of unsaved people can see that as spanking has been taken from homes and from schools, there has been a sharp rise in violence and lawlessness. But it is inexcusable when people claiming to be Christians oppose Biblical discipline. They are ignorant of God's Word and/or rebellious against it. They vehemently oppose spanking, charging that it equals abuse. They think they're smarter than God. They think they are more loving than the One who gave Himself to give us eternal life.

He that spareth his rod hateth his son, but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes [early] (Pr. 13:24).

So the ones who *don't* use the rod hate their children! "Let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4). What worse abuse is there than letting a child go his own sinful way and to die prematurely and go to hell? "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell."

The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame (Proverbs 29:15).

How forceful should the discipline be? Hear the Word of the Lord. “Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools” (Proverbs 19:29). The discipline should at times leave stripes—on purpose. *Prepared means done on purpose.*

The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly [innermost parts] (Proverbs 20:30).

When the discipline makes blue marks and stripes, it reaches the innermost part, the heart.

Setting a good example is important, but it is not enough. Living a godly life does not insure godly children. David is repeatedly called a man after God’s own heart. He wrote most of the Psalms, showing his close walk with God. Yet in the area of disciplining his children, he failed. Two of his sons, Absalom and Adonijah, died prematurely for their pride and rebellion. David did not displease his son Adonijah at any time (1 Kings 1:6). (My dad was not afraid to displease me!)

God reproved Eli for not restraining his wicked sons. Eli’s failure to discipline his sons brought not just a curse on those two wicked men, but a *permanent curse on Eli’s descendants* (1 Sam. 2:22-34 & 3:11-14)!

On the other hand, parents who beat their children, yet live wicked lives themselves, cannot expect their discipline to work. “He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail” (Pr. 22:8).

Another key to the success or failure of our children (or ourselves) is our choice of companions. “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed” (Pr. 13:20). Bad companions corrupt good morals (1 Cor. 15:33). As a father, I must provide godly companionship for my children and shield them from bad companions. I don’t send my children to a school where they will be in the midst of bad companions. God holds me accountable for how they turn out.

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief... (Heb. 13:17).

The way we live will bring blessings or troubles on our children and descendents. We were all born into a mixture of good and bad situations brought on by our ancestors. Many people are wealthy because their forbears were hardworking and thrifty. Many were led to salvation because their parents were godly and taught them the Word of God. Many children have inherited troubles because their parents were drunkards.

David's sins of adultery and murder resulted in short range and long range disasters for his family—even though he was forgiven. Notice how Nathan the prophet confronted him:

Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house... the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die (2 Sam. 12:9,10,14).

Then King Rehoboam lost most of his kingdom, largely because of his father Solomon's sin. But Rehoboam kept some of the kingdom because of his grandfather David's godliness. So our choices affect our condition, and they affect those who follow us. Hosea says repeatedly that curses come on the children because of the sin of the parents:

1. "I will bereave them" of children.
2. "Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts."
3. "I will slay even the beloved fruit of their womb" (Hos. 9:12,14,16).

God says He visits "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me" (Ex. 20:5). On the other hand, godly living will bring blessings on our descendants.

The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him (Pr. 20:7).

The seed of the righteous shall be delivered (Pr. 11:21).

What man is he that feareth the Lord? ...His seed shall inherit the earth (Ps. 25:12,13).

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread... his seed is blessed (Ps. 37:25,26).

I was impressed as a young man, when I heard Robertson McQuilkin, our Bible College president, say he had never seen his dad commit a sin!⁴ I was impressed then; I am more impressed now. His dad, Robert C. McQuilkin, had not only taught victorious living, he had lived it. No wonder his children grew up to serve God as missionaries and accomplish great things for God's kingdom!

Another factor that affects whether or not our children serve God is whether we have seen God's mighty working. Twice the Bible says that after Joshua died, Israel served the Lord all the days of the elders who had seen all the great works of the Lord (Joshua 24:31 and Judges 22:7). My children will be more apt to

⁴ The dad died when Robertson, the son, was in his twenties, so it was not a case of the dad dying when the son was a small child and too young to notice any faults in his father.

serve God if I have *seen* God's mighty works myself. I can tell them what I have *seen*, not just what I have heard about. I don't want to miss seeing the mighty works of God because of my unbelief.

And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief (Matt. 13:58).

Here is a good prayer for us to pray: "Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children" (Ps. 90:16).

When I was growing up, my brothers and sisters and I not only heard our parents talk about great works in Bible times, we heard them talk about God's mighty works for them—healings, wonderful provision of their needs, and other answers to prayer. We also saw these things ourselves. It wasn't hard for us to believe that God would take care of us. Since my children have seen wonderful works in answer to prayer,⁵ it will be easier for them and their children to live for God.

One of the main things I pray for is that my children will love God and serve Him! That's one of the things I want most in life!

Along with the teaching, training, discipline, and godly example there must be **fervent prayer**. Our children turning out right is the result of answered prayer:

⁵ See *Answers to Prayer for Our Family*, Paul Young, Publications of Paul Young.

Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children [that is *strangers to God's kingdom*], whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood: That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace (Psalm 144:11,12).

You see, sons and daughters turning out right is the result of God's ridding us of our demonic enemies in answer to prayer. This passage is a pattern prayer we should pray.

I pray Psalm 67:1 & 2 often for our family:

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations.

I want God's blessings on us so that my wife and children and I can all serve God effectively and be a blessing to the nations!

God's Way for Children

Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord (Col. 3:20).

Children, 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).

So God makes two promises if you honor your parents:

1. It will be well with you, and
2. You will live long on the earth.

Let's consider some ways to honor parents:

1. **Obey quickly and cheerfully.** My dad taught us that slow obedience is disobedience. Obeying with a bad attitude is not honoring to parents either.
2. **Help them even if they don't make you do it.** Don't be so lazy and selfish that you don't help around the house and keep things clean! A lot of kids don't know the difference between the word *mom* and the word *slave*!

3. **Give them something nice.** You could make them something, buy them something, or pick them some flowers from your neighbor's garden. **J**
4. **Don't talk back or complain.**
5. **Don't talk bad about them... even if it's true.**
In some extreme cases the pastor or the police may need to be told, but generally you don't need to blab your parents' faults. Noah's son Ham brought a curse on his descendants when he pointed out the nakedness of his drunken father. His brothers honored their father by covering up his shameful condition. If Dad does something wrong or if Mom does something stupid, here's a good rule: *Keep your big mouth shut!*
6. **Don't raise your voice or tell them what to do.**
They may have to raise their voice at you; it's not your place to raise your voice at them! They tell you what to do. You don't tell them what to do!
7. **Pray for them.**
8. **Thank them.** Our parents have done hundreds of nice things for us, and it's a low down, immoral thing to be ungrateful. When is the last time you wrote a letter thanking your parents for all the things you could think of that they have done for you?

9. **Brag about them.** Hey, guys, my dad lifted 1450 pounds with a leg lift when he was in college! Yes, and there are things you can brag about your dad and your mom, too.

10. **Take care of them, especially when they are old.** Jesus taught us in Matthew 15 and Mark 7 that honoring parents includes providing for them.

You use to scream and holler and wake up Mom and Dad. One of them (probably Mom) would come see what the problem was. You had made a big stinking mess. She cleaned you up and went back to bed. After a while you made another big uproar. She got up again. You had made another big stinking mess! Now don't be shocked. You've done that hundreds of times. Yes, and there may come a time when Dad and Mom cannot take care of themselves so well. Then whose job is it to take care of your mom and your dad? Yours.

Here are some ways to honor your parents. If you'll pay attention and honor your parents, you'll live longer and things will go better for you. God promised.

Here's another way to honor your parents for good measure. **If they're tired, let them sleep!**

Sometimes we've played this game with teens or younger children at church or at camp: like a spelling bee, have each person in line tell a different way to honor parents or things to avoid that would dishonor them. The winner is the last one standing. It can be fun, funny, and helpful.

God's Way for Wives

Unto the woman He said, ...Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee (Genesis 3:16).

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.... Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing (Ephesians 5:22-24).

Wives are commanded to submit to their husbands even as the church is subject to Christ—in everything. This command simplifies life for the wife: just do what your husband says, and you know you are pleasing God. Children are also commanded to obey their parents “in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord” (Col. 3:20).

Are there any limits to obeying your husband, or is it in *everything*? The Word of God says *everything*. There can be no limits unless God Himself sets them. The Word of God gives a few examples of disobeying the authority when obeying would mean disobeying God. It was right to disobey Nebuchadnezzar when he said to worship the image. It was right to pray when King Darius said not to pray. The Jewish leaders said, “Don’t preach.” Jesus said, “Preach.” The apostles said, “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

Justifiable disobedience to authority is not very common in the Bible, and it's not very common in life. There are plenty of times when the ruler, the husband, or the parent is ungodly. Still obey. There are plenty of times when they make stupid rules. Still obey. There are plenty of times when the rules are unnecessary. But God commanded wives and children to obey.

But I'd be a hypocrite if I demanded that my children obey in everything (as I should) if I did not obey the authorities over me. The mother is a hypocrite to expect her children to obey her when she herself disobeys her husband.

Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's [or child's] eye (Matthew 7:5).

What about a woman married to an unbeliever? Does she have to obey him? Yes. That is the best way to win him.

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation [behavior] of the wives;

While they behold your chaste conversation [behavior] coupled with fear.

Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement (1 Peter 3:1-6).

And the wife see that she reverence her husband (Ephesians 5:33).

A wife can ask herself:

- Does my attitude show reverence?
- Is my spirit meek and quiet?

Notice how important a woman's attitude is in the home. The Word of God says it three times:

It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house (Proverbs 21:9).

It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman (Proverbs 21:19).

It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house (Proverbs 25:24).

No wonder some guys are off hunting in the wilderness so often, or off with the boys. It does not say, “It *seems* better to be in the wilderness” if the woman is contentious and angry. “It is better...”

Women need to be taught how to love their husbands and love their children. There are certain aspects of loving their husbands or their children that they don’t know intuitively.

The aged women likewise... [exhort] that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed (Titus 2:3).

My wife has been a good lover since our honeymoon, but she has learned from other godly women how to be a better lover! I’m enjoying it! Now she is sharing what she has learned with other younger women and helping their marriages. We’re getting testimonies from men and women who are enjoying marriage more because of what she has shared with these women!

Roles

Should husbands and wives divide the chores at home equally, or does the wife have the role of house keeper? The Word of God is clear that the roles of men and women are different. Wives are to be *keepers at home*, also translated *workers at home, homekeepers, home makers*. They are to guide the house (1 Tim. 5:14).

Is it demeaning for a woman to serve and obey? No. In fact, Jesus, by His example, *exalted* obedience and lowly service. Though He was equal to the Father, He obeyed the Father. Besides, He said,

Whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many (Mark 10:43-45).

Tribute to a Wife

As an evangelist I am sometimes honored by kind, appreciative people. Vicki, my wife, is not in the limelight. She is often at home caring for the children, serving, and making a happy, interesting home for the children and for me. She is an inspiration to other women for her down-to-earth, fun attitude and for enjoying life. Jesus said, "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward" (Matt. 10:41). My wife, Vicki, has received this evangelist in quite a full sense! I think she'll get an evangelist's reward!

From My Wife

Vicki writing: There are a lot of perks to following God's way. The husband is commanded to love his wife, but we make it a lot easier for our guys when we are loveable. Being loveable comes naturally for cute babies and blushing brides, but takes work as we get older. Simply following the Bible takes the guess work out of what makes us loveable to our men. Paul has listed out many of the verses the Bible has on this already. In Titus 2 it says what the older women are to teach the younger. I would not simply wait around for the older women to grab me by the collar to try to teach me; I would ask questions of any godly women I get the opportunity to spend time with, read books written by godly women, pray for wisdom (It's a

promise! James 1:5), and just watch to see what I can learn, continually seeking to be a better wife.

Some older women who have been a help to me through their books are Elizabeth Elliott, Debi Pearl, and Elizabeth George. The book *Intended for Pleasure* by Dr. Ed Wheat was the biggest help to us in learning the intricacies of intimacy.

It is so nice when the home is well ordered, the way God intended. The man is honored and secure in his leadership, the wife is at peace as the 2nd in command in her domain, and the children are a joy instead of people to be avoided. I want my husband to love me, and cherish me, not to argue with me and avoid me. I find that when I obey God's commands, all is well. When I fall into temptation to grumpiness or selfishness, the entire home can be disrupted.

Talk's cheap! I meet ladies sometimes who talk very spiritually, using the Lord's name in every conversation with me, yet they are not obeying the Lord in the way He has ordered the home. I'm not impressed. Actions speak louder than words.

I'm thankful for our happy home. When we had a great grief, we turned to each other for comfort and help through the grief. We were thankful that our little daughter Cherish who died had lived in a happy home where she was safe and loved for her whole life.

God's Way for Husbands

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered (1 Peter 3:7).

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word,

That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

Notice that if you love your wife, you are loving yourself. The better you are to her, the better wife she will probably be to you! The man who is thoughtful and kind to his wife will find she responds better and satisfies him more!

For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church....

Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself... (Ephesians 5:25-33).

What does it mean to love our wives as ourselves?

- I want to eat the foods I like; I provide her the food she likes.
- I don't like to be disturbed when I'm resting; I let her sleep when she's tired.
- I like nice clothes; I provide her with nice clothes.
- I like a comfortable home; I get her one.
- I don't want her to tell her family about unfavorable things in my family; I don't mention unfavorable stuff about her family to my family.
- I like her to praise me; I praise her.
- I want her to be proud of me; I'm proud of her.
- I like some time off to read and rest; I try to protect her time off to read or rest.
- I like to get gifts; I give her gifts.
- I like to be appreciated; I think of what she does and express appreciation.
- I want to be respected; I respect her.
- I don't like to be deceived; I should not deceive her.
- I don't like to be kept waiting; I should not keep her waiting.
- I like her to smile at me; I should smile at her.
- I like her to play games that I like with me; I should play games with her that she likes.

- I like her to be excited with my goals and projects; I should try to be excited with her projects.
- I don't like to be made fun of; I should not make fun of her.
- I would like her to be faithful to me in her thoughts; I should always be faithful to her in my thoughts.
- I would hate it if she broke her word to me; I should never break my word to her.
- I worry if she's gone longer than I expect (we live in a high crime area); I should call and let her know if I'm going to be gone longer than expected.
- I appreciate it when people listen and care about what I say; I should listen when she speaks.
- I like it when people feel for me when I hurt; I should hurt when she hurts.
- I am annoyed when people have rude manners; I should be careful not to annoy her.
- I like to do fun things; I should do fun things with her and let her do things that are fun to her.
- If I were the wife I would not want my husband to be bossy. I would want him to be gentle and thoughtful. This principle also applies to parents ruling their children.

Of course this list is by no means complete. We should continually be thinking, *Is this the way I want to be treated?*

What does it mean to love our wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it?

- Christ loves us in spite of many faults He sees in us.
- He is longsuffering with us.
- He gave up His own honor for us.
- He gave up His ease for us.
- He gave up His life for us.
- He served in a lowly manner, as when He washed the disciples' feet.
- You must know the Bible well enough so that you can teach her and protect her from deception.

Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression (1 Timothy 2:11-14).

Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church (1 Corinthians 14:34,35).⁶

⁶ Are these commands from the Lord or just the Apostle Paul's opinion? The Holy Spirit answers that question

- Take the leadership. “The head of the woman is the man” (1 Cor. 11:3). Of course you must be submitted to Christ yourself, or you are a hypocrite if you try to tell your wife what to do. “The head of every man is Christ” (1 Cor. 11:3). “Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's [or wife's] eye” (Matt. 7:5).

When Eve was tempted, Adam was there and understood the situation. She did not; she was deceived. But Adam failed to intervene and thus rescue his wife from sin. So God said to the wife, “He shall rule over thee” (Gen. 3:16).

God has designated me to be the leader. I must figure out what needs to be done and see that our family does it. I have made certain rules. My wife and children know that certain things are not allowed to be

just two verses down: “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 14:37). But are these commands for us or just for the Corinthian church? The second verse in the book answers that question; it tells who the book is addressed to: “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, **with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours** (1 Corinthians 1:2).

read, watched, or worn in our family. I must give account for how they turn out; their responsibility is to obey.

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account (Hebrews 13:17).

What does it not mean to love our wives as Christ loved the church?

- He did not give up His authority.
- He did not give up His responsibility to correct or rebuke, severely, if necessary.

Love can be summed up as obeying God's commands: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when love God, and keep His commandments" (1 John 5:2). "And this is love, that we walk after His commandments" (2 John 6). So we're doing the best thing for our wives when we carefully obey God's commandments. Of course, it will not always be recognized as love, but it is.

God's Way for Fathers

A father provides for his family.

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel (1 Tim. 5:8).

But being a father is a lot more than providing. God holds fathers particularly accountable, "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me" (Ex. 20:5). Daniel and Nehemiah confessed not only their own sins and the sins of their nation, but also the sins of their fathers. The word *father* is found over 1600 times in the Bible! (*Mother* is found about 330 times.)

God was pleased with Abraham as a father; look what He said:

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him (Genesis 18:19).

Notice what Joshua, as an old man, said to the men, the leaders of Israel:

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: **but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD** (Joshua 24:15).

Joshua was man enough to decide that, no matter others did, he would serve the Lord! But there is more: he was man enough to say, “As for me **and my house, we will serve the Lord!**” He did not say, “I’ll serve the Lord, but you never know what the wife and kids will do.” He said, “As for me and my house, **we will serve the Lord!**”

A father has the responsibility to *rule* his house. Before a man is qualified to be a pastor or even a deacon he must successfully rule his own house.

...One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) ...Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well (1 Tim. 3:4,5, 12).

Fathers, in particular, have the responsibility to discipline the children.

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).

The word translated *nurture* is a severe word that means *discipline* or *chastening*. Remember, “He that spareth the rod, hateth his son.”

Have Fun with Your Kids

However, if you're smart, you will lead in such a way that the kids *want* to follow. They will like you and want to be with you. You'll be fun! You know you liked to have fun when you were a child. You still do. Help your children have fun. Do fun things with them. Love your neighbor as yourself.

Dads, turn your hearts toward your children! Which is more important to you, your job, advancement, TV, pleasure, entertainment, or your children? Malachi prophesied that before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, a prophet would come to prepare people for the coming of the Lord.

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers... (Malachi 4:6).

Do your kids *like* you and want to be like you, to serve the Lord like you do? Or do they perceive Christianity as negative, boring, and something to escape as soon as they get a chance?

God's Way for Each Person

There are not a whole lot of commands in the Bible specifically about the home, but practically all of the commands in the Bible will promote a happy home. The better Christian you are, the better husband you will be. The more obedient to Christ you are, the better wife you will be. The more the whole family obeys the Bible, the happier the family will be. Let me point out some commands that will promote a happy home.

- **Love your neighbor as yourself.** Our closest neighbors are in our home. We should continually be thinking: *Is this the way I would want to be treated?*
- **Forgive.** Forgiving others is so important that Jesus repeatedly said that if we do not forgive others who have wronged us, God will not forgive us (Matt. 6:15; 18:35; Mark 11:26).
- **Rejoice always.** Our moods affect others. We are wronging others when we fail to rejoice always. Bad moods spread, good moods, too.
- **Lie not one to another.**
- **If someone has something against you, make it right.** Jesus taught us that He does not even want our gifts if we haven't made things right

with those we have wronged (Matt. 5:23,24). Have you wronged someone? Do you owe anything? Do you need to apologize? Do it quickly.

- **Humble yourselves.** A lot of conflict and tension in marriages and families would be avoided by obeying this important command! “Only by pride cometh contention” (Prov. 13:10).
- **Be content with such things as ye have.** Debt puts a strain on the marriage!
- **Pray for each other.**
- **Put off anger, wrath, and malice.**
- **Be kind to each other.**
- **Recompense to no one evil for evil.**
- **Be courteous.**
- **Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.**
- **Be thankful.** Giving thanks is one of the most emphasized commands in the Bible. It is also one of the most important ingredients of a happy home!

- **Let all things be done decently and in order.** Keeping the house orderly is a constant discipline. All these commands must be taught by example and continual training.
- **Be diligent, not lazy.** People who work hard have more. “He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich” (Proverbs 10:4) .
- **Don’t complain.** Complaining is such a serious sin that God dealt severely with it, burning to death those who complained about their food. Later, when they complained, it was fiery serpents.

Someone said, “I’m not complaining; I’m just being honest and telling how I feel.” That is exactly what complaining is, and bad attitudes spread like a plague. Complaining shows an evil, discontented heart. Parents need to guard against it in themselves and in their children!

- **Pray for what you need.** Almost every day I pray for family unity and for the happiness of my wife and children. I often pray that I’ll be a good father and husband.

God's Way to Individual Happiness

Of course, the first step in having a happy family is to be happy yourself—whether you are the father, the mother, the son, or the daughter. You can be happy. How?

1. **Realize the blessings you already have and thank God for them.** This is a huge step toward happiness.
2. **Praise God.** Begin each day praising and thanking God. “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise” (Ps. 100:4). If you remind yourself each day of God’s greatness and mercy, you will be a happier person.
3. **Fear God** and see that you are obeying His commands. “Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in His ways. ...Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee” (Ps. 128:1,2).
4. **Recognize that all things are working together for good** (Rom. 8:28). Our family has had to depend on this fact. We had a terrible grief in our family. Our youngest daughter, Cherish, recently died suddenly after a short illness. It was shocking! We still cry often, but we knew from the beginning that God was in control.

Now we have begun to see good coming from this tragedy. I think we're a little more thoughtful of each other and closer as a family now. Vicki and I are looking forward to heaven much more now. I think my pain has helped me reach others better and to pray more fervently. I'm confident many others have been touched and have entered God's Kingdom because of the death of our little sweetie. Other Christians have been challenged to serve God more fully. Besides, Cherish is safe and happy in heaven!

5. **Turn to God for happiness.** Here's a good, Scriptural prayer to pray: "O satisfy us early with Thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days" (Ps. 90:14). That prayer has been working for me for many years!
6. **Pray, and get what you want and need.** "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24). We like to see our kids happy, and one way we can make them happy is give them nice things that they ask for. God likes to see His children happy, and one way He makes us happy is to answer our prayers. So ask and receive that your joy may be full!
7. **Wash the feet of those around you.** After Jesus washed His disciples' feet, He told them to do the same. Then He said, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (John

13:17). I think there are two things involved here.

Do lowly things for others, such as change the baby, clean up after someone, or clean up a mess in the yard. There are plenty of times to do this at home! It will make for a happier family!

Washing feet also reminds me that though we have been bathed—forgiven once for all—we still need to confess our sins day by day, like getting only our feet washed. How do we wash *others'* feet? “If any man see his brother sin... he shall ask, and He shall give him life for them...” (1 John 5:16). There are plenty of opportunities for this kind of foot washing in the home!

8. **Set your hope on God's Kingdom.** Even if we lose everything on earth, we have a heavenly kingdom that is eternal.
9. **Get the rest you need.** “It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep” (Psalm 127:2). Often Christians are irritable and depressed because they are so *tired*. If you're having a hard time, come to Jesus; He'll give you rest (Matt. 11:28).

We may think we have to always get up early and stay up late, but the Word of God says it is vain, useless.

You yourself can be happy in a situation far from perfect—even if you are a son or daughter in a family with severe problems and sin.

God's Way about Divorce

An awful, growing enemy of happy homes is divorce, even in the church! There are many views on divorce and remarriage. Let's look at what the Lord says.

It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery (Matthew 5:31,32).

The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting Him, and saying unto Him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

And He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

They say unto Him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery (Matthew 19:4-9).

And the Pharisees came to Him, and asked Him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.

And He saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery (Mark 10:11,12).

Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever

marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery (Luke 16:18).

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man (Romans 7:2,3).

And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:

But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife (1 Corinthians 7:10,11).

Notice what Jesus said:

If a man divorces his wife and marries another woman he commits adultery (Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18).

If a woman divorces her husband and marries another man she commits adultery (Mark 10:12).

Whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Luke 16:18).

A woman shall be called an adulteress if she marries another man while her husband is still alive (Rom. 7:3).

Notice what Jesus did not say:

Jesus did not say that a man who *is divorced* and then remarries commits adultery. He did say that if a man or woman divorces and remarries, they commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.⁷ “Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar” (Prov. 30:6).

Jesus did make an exception in Matthew 5 for divorce and in chapter 19 for divorce and remarriage. The exception is in the case of “fornication.” What does this exception allow: Many teach that if either party has committed adultery, the other person is free

⁷ But if God said that whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery, wouldn't that also condemn whoever marries a divorced man? No. It is common to include women and children when you use the word *man* meaning *mankind*, but when you use the word *woman*, it does not include men and children. Furthermore, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, God makes distinctions between men and women. Sometimes when God brought judgment on a group all the males were killed but the females were spared (1Kg. 14:10; 21:21; 2 Kg. 9:8). Men who made regrettable vows had no way out. Women had an escape; their fathers or husbands could release them of their vows (Num. 30). See also 1 Cor. 14:34,35 and 1 Tim. 2:11-14 for other distinctions God makes.

to divorce and to remarry. If that view is held, how can Matthew be reconciled with Mark and Luke when Matthew gives an exception, but Mark and Luke both say that *whosoever* divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery?

I think the best answer is that Matthew is talking about a betrothed woman committing fornication before marriage. In that case the man could divorce her. To the Jews—Matthew has a more Jewish flavor—two are considered husband and wife after betrothal (see Matt. 1:18,19). So if a betrothed woman committed fornication, the man, “her husband” could put her away. That is what Joseph considered doing to Mary. Mark and Luke have a more Gentile flavor. To Gentiles you are not husband and wife if you are only betrothed. Mark and Luke do not give any cause for divorce and remarriage. With this view there is no contradiction. Then there would be no grounds to divorce and remarry once your marriage has been consummated—in Matthew, Mark, or Luke.

What I am sure of, is that it is right to proclaim that whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery. I am also sure that it is right to preach that whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. Jesus said it that way, repeatedly.

Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery (Mark 10:11,12).

Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery (Luke 16:18).

What do you do if you have already disobeyed the Lord? The first step is to confess your sin. Confess means to call it what God calls it, sin, adultery. Confess your sin to those you have wronged: God, the person you committed adultery with, the one you divorced, and your children.

God's Way about Other Enemies of the Home

PORNOGRAPHY

Marriages are lost, homes destroyed, and good ministries ruined because men have secretly allowed the curse of pornography into their lives. "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after" (1 Timothy 5:24). You cannot keep the results of sin secret. "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23).

But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

How serious is this sin of continuing in looking and lusting? It's a question of whether or not you go to hell!

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that

thy whole body should be cast into hell (Matthew 5:29,30).

The first step in sexual sin is looking, then touching. Do whatever it takes to get rid of this sin. Destroying magazines or videos or your computer is mild compared to pulling your eye out! Cutting your eye out would be terrible—but not compared to hell!

FORNICATION AND ADULTERY

Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge (Hebrews 13:4).

The place for a man to fight adultery is at the looking stage and in the mind. “Lust not after her beauty in thine heart” (Prov. 6:25). When Joseph in Egypt was tempted to adultery he ran away from the temptation!

We need to face the fact that “neither fornicators... nor adulterers... shall inherit the kingdom of God” and “whoremongers [the sexually immoral]... shall have their part in the lake of fire” (Rev. 21:8).

Because of the extreme danger in this area, a father must insist that his wife and daughters dress modestly. He must rule. That is why we avoid short skirts, shorts, low cut blouses, tight clothes, bare midriffs, see through clothes, and mixed swimming. Many Christian girls and women are continually

seducing males into mental fornication and adultery by their immodesty. They are not even ashamed; they are in style. “Be not conformed to this world” (Rom. 12:2).

ALCOHOL

A huge enemy of the home is alcohol. A lot of kids don't have nice things because Dad wastes his money on liquor. He's a nice guy—except when he's drunk! There are arguments and fights. He's a pretty good worker, except that he cannot keep a job because of repeated drunkenness. Or, she's a nice lady, except when she's drunk; then she's a complete fool. Alcohol promotes sexual sins. Not to mention the thousands murdered by someone under the influence, or thousands more killed by drunk drivers, or thousands more who die every year from alcohol related diseases.

Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes?

They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

So where should we draw the line? The same place God does. Just like adultery, you draw the line of defense at *not looking at it*.

Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth

itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder (Proverbs 23:29-32).

Be not among winebibbers... (Proverbs 23:20).

COVETOUSNESS

Covetousness is another enemy of a happy home. Mom and Dad are more interested in an expensive house than in a happy home. They have to make payments on the new cars, and don't have time to disciple their children. Money is more important than the marriage. "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house" (Pr. 15:27).

And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows (1 Tim. 6:6-10).

UNBELIEF AND DISOBEDIENCE

Actually, a happy home is not the primary goal. Let's seek *first* God's kingdom. In some cases there will be dissension *because* we are seeking to please the Lord Jesus, and some in the family refuse the authority of the Lord.

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me (Matt. 10:34-37).

PRIDE

When we have obeyed God and He blesses our homes more than other homes, we must beware of pride. "The Lord will destroy the house of the proud" (Pr. 15:25).

SIN ruined the first family, and it will ruin any family. Obedience will bring blessing.

Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; **that walketh in His ways.**

For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord... (Ps. 128:1-4).

We have looked at a summary of God's ways, especially pertaining to the family. Let's set out to walk in His ways and get these blessings on our families that He promises!

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