



An un denominational publication devoted to the teachings of Jesus and His apostles and dedicated to those who seek the truth.

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Being a Spiritual Family



As Creator of the family, God desires every home to be godly. But being a spiritual family has to be worked on daily. The culture we live in discourages spiritual growth.

Psalm 1:1-3 says: “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mock-

ers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.” These verses contain principles for spiritual homes.

GUARDED DIRECTION. The Psalmist uses words like “walk” “stand” and “sit” to stress the need to stay away from wicked influences.

GUARDED HEARTS. Note how the Psalmist affirms: “His delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night.” Deuteronomy 6:4-9 speaks of talking about God’s Word when you “lie down and when you rise up.”

GUARDED TRUST. Just like a “tree planted by streams of water,” homes that trust in God’s promises will be “oaks of righteousness” (Isaiah 61:3).

GUARDED ROOTS. Trees that have shallow root systems fall easily in strong winds. But trees with roots that sink deep into the earth are enabled to withstand much stronger winds. The depth of our families spiritual roots will only be as strong as the faith, hope and love of the parents.

Here are proven spiritual disciplines that help every man and woman be a spiritual follower of Christ: Prayer, Bible Study, Worship, Giving/Service, Fellowship and Sharing One’s Faith. If our families will apply these healthy biblical practices we will bring spiritual health to our homes.

— Timothy Tarbet, Minister
Church of Christ, New Milford, Connecticut

A Husband Is a Loving Leader



One of the many roles of the husband in today's home is to provide good and effective leadership. This is absolutely essential for motivation, direction, accomplishment & the genuine overall success of the home. Without this effective leadership, it won't be long before confusion & disorder will erode the very fabric of the home.

Those husbands who are the most successful as God's leaders in their homes use their loving influence to inspire, motivate & encourage their family members. Their success will largely depend upon their ability to demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22, 23 "...love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness & self-control."

SENSITIVITY TO NEEDS. God's leader in the home is one who uses gentleness & tenderness, coupled with his firm ideals as to how his family should function. His antenna is keenly attuned to all family members and their needs. He has the ability to sense the scene, get the bigger picture and to read between the lines. He will weave wisdom and understanding into his leadership. Those in his family that respond to such loving leadership do so because they know he genuinely cares about them personally.

AFFECTION FOR EVERYONE. He demonstrates a warm, loving relationship with all that are in his family, especially his wife. If a situation called for it, he would lay down his life for any one of them. These feelings of love must come through loud & clear.

AUTHENTICITY. A godly husband exudes a transparent life with nothing to hide. He practices what he preaches. He is approachable, accessible, authentic & affectionate.

AFFIRMATION. He is able to exhort and encourage, "...as a father would his own children." (I Thessalonians 2:11). This spiritual leader/husband gives reassuring encouragement, the "you can do it" confidence to help his family believe in themselves and give their very best at all times.

— Ron Cameron
Church of Christ, La Salle, Niagara Falls, New York

A Christian Wife

Having been a child of the 1950's, I have had the opportunity to experience the changing role of women during an interesting time.



Every day my mother would clean up my sister and me, put us in dresses and have us waiting at the door to welcome my father when he came home from work. Then as an adult, I saw women “greet” their husbands at the door, with child on hip and exclaim, “It’s about time you got here, now take this kid and get your own dinner.”

Societies are always changing because people change. Part of that change is a change in values and what is important. Without an anchor, women can feel tossed about from one popular opinion to another, struggling to find identity and purpose.

The Christian woman looks to a loving Creator who gives her identity and purpose, and offers an anchor that will never move or be affected by society’s mood swings. She takes seriously Jesus’ instructions in Mark 12:30, “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength.” Loving God completely, keeps her submitting to God’s plan for her as a wife and mother.

I learned many lessons from my mother about being a Christian wife:

- God is our first love, and He wants us to love and respect our husbands.
- We are to love our children, but make it clear our husbands comes first.
- We are to be a part of God’s family and enjoy its fellowship, but remember to nurture and feed the friendship with our best friend, our husbands.
- Remember God gave man the primary leadership role in the family. God gave him the instincts to lead and a wife to help him and give him balance. The husband of a godly wife “safely trusts her” (Proverbs 31:11).

— **Sharon Gardner**, Minister’s wife
Church of Christ, Quechee, Vermont

Keep Love Alive In Marriage

Love has to be worked on, just like a gardener with his garden. Although he has planted the seeds, he still has to pull weeds, fertilize and water it. That is the same with a healthy, loving relationship. When love becomes a high priority in a marriage, it is taken care of and nurtured daily.



MAKE TIME. You need to designate quality time with your loved one. Don't take for granted that he/she will always be there when you want them. It might require finding a baby-sitter, or juggling the time with another activity that might take precedence. Make time for each other.

Here are a few things you can do at home together: Physical intimacy – might put some soft music in the background; make an ice cream sundae, and have fun talking with your loved one. Play a board game or card game. Use these times to tell him/her how special they are to you (how intelligent, how thoughtful, how loving, how caring).

Romance is the opportunity to show your loved one how special he/she is to you. Here are some ideas to spice up your romance: Do small acts of kindness – give him/her flowers, or a little gift, or write a poem, etc. Say “Thank you” and “I Love You” often. Be considerate of his/her feelings. Take walks together – anywhere. Share jokes at mealtime. Laughter is a great way to share one's love. Hug and kiss often.

COMMUNICATE. If your spouse doesn't do things for you, then show him/her by gently pointing out what you like. If you like flowers for your birthday, and you haven't gotten flowers, then let them know, particularly when he/she asks you what you would like. If he had a bad day at the office, and comes home snapping at the children and being tense, the last thing to do is to take it personally. Invite him to relax, as dinner is prepared, then after he's eaten, ask him how his day was. Be a responsive listener.

— **Patty Apostolides**, Black Love and Marriage.com. Used by permission.

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Christ for Today, P.O.Box 755, New Milford, CT 06776. Tel: 860-799-7988

Parenting In Proverbs



There are many philosophies on how parents should raise their children. However, the only guide for parenting that comes with flawless wisdom is the Word of God. Consider verses in the book of Proverbs.

Proverbs 22:6 says, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” What makes this verse challenging is that children are not born naturally compliant and always willing to listen. We all have a desire to “misbehave.” “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child” (Proverbs 22:15). Parents need to be active in raising their children from the very moment they are born.

It takes patience and wisdom to be a good parent. Just because something worked for one child doesn’t mean it is going to work for the next one. Proverbs 20:11 says, “Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.” A parent’s task is to find out how each child has been made by God and to shape the training of the child so that it is in keeping with that child’s unique personality.

The Bible says loving your children means that you discipline them according to who they are and what they have done. If we leave children to their own devices, they will go in a direction other than the one we desire. Proverbs 29:15 says, “A child left to himself brings his mother to shame.” Parenting takes balanced discipline, never abusive, but rather fair and balanced, affirming the child’s self worth. “A merry heart does good like a medicine: but a broken spirit dries the bones” (Proverbs 17:22).

A sound and loving household cannot be maintained by human effort alone. Psalm 127:1 says, “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.” Let us invest our lives in raising our children in the Lord.

— **Ron Saracino**, Minister
Church of Christ, Trumbull, Connecticut



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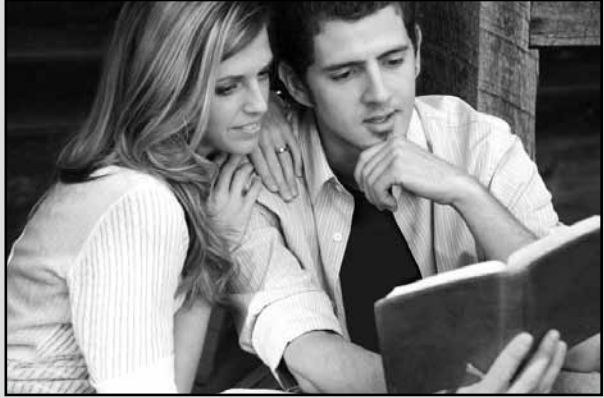
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What The Bible Says...

Marriage

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."....Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,'

for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. (Genesis 2:18-24)



Intimacy In Marriage

Since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband.... The husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. (1 Corinthians 7:2-5)

Husbands & Wives

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, His body... Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and give Himself up for her... Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies.... Each one of you must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband." (Ephesians 5:22-32)

Divorce

"Haven't you read," He replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one. Therefore what God has joined together let man not separate.... I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery." (Matthew 19:4-9)

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