

Marriage and the family is a divine institution that was established in the Garden of Eden. It is a sacred tie that connects each family member with a closeness like no other institution on earth. God is the author of marriage and the family. He alone possesses the ingredients for the success, protection, well-being, and salvation of each family member. Marriage and the family is one of the divine institutions that is under the constant attack of the enemy. This is evidenced by the general deterioration of the home and the breakdown of the family unit in our society. Therefore, it is important for families to allow Christ to be the foundation and centerpiece of the home. The atmosphere of the Christian home should radiate with love, and it should operate harmoniously. Families should cultivate and maintain an environment of love, spirituality, unity, trust, and open lines of communication. The Christian home should be like a little heaven on earth. Indeed, it should be a powerful witness of God's love and saving grace in this dark and evil world. Let's study and gain richer insights into What God Says About..."Marriage and the Family."

THE FIRST MARRIAGE

1. According to Genesis 2:18, what did God make for the man?

"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him _____ _____ _____ for him." *Genesis 2:18*

2. Who did God create from the rib of the man?

21"And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he _____ _____, and brought her unto the man. 23And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and

flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." *Genesis 2:23*

3. God instructs the man to leave his father and mother and cleave unto whom? How does God describe the close union of the husband and wife?

[24]"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto _____ _____: and _____ _____ _____ _____ _____. [25]And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." *Genesis 2:24, 25*

4. Who was the first married couple in the Bible?

"And _____ called his wife's name _____; because she was the mother of all living." *Genesis 3:20*

Note: *According to scripture, the first married couple in the Bible was Adam and Eve, the first man and woman who were created. Marriage between a man and a woman is a divine institution that perfectly harmonizes with God's will. Any attempt to redefine, distort, or denigrate marriage from its original intent is contrary to the scriptures. In fact, Jesus demonstrated that He regards marriage to be a divine institution by attending and performing His first miracle in Cana of Galilee at the marriage feast (John 2:1-11). Therefore, God's blessing still rests upon the divine institution of marriage, according to the scriptures.*

5. According to Jesus, who is not to put asunder or pull apart what God has joined together?

"Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not _____ put asunder." *Matthew 19:6*

CHILDREN—A BLESSING FROM THE LORD

6. What did God instruct Adam and Eve to do after He created them in His own image?

[27]"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. [28]And God blessed them, and God said unto them, _____ _____, and _____, and _____ _____ _____, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon earth." *Genesis 1:27, 28*

7. Children are what from the Lord? The offspring is considered his what?

[3]"Lo, children are _____ _____ of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his _____. [4]As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. [5]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." *Psalm 127:3-5*

Note: *Children are a gift and blessing from the Lord. They help expand the family and provide an opportunity for their parents to educate and prepare them for the heavenly home. A home with children helps parents to better understand their relationship and dependence upon God. It also helps to banish selfishness from their hearts and teaches them to sacrifice and give of themselves in order to provide for the needs of their children.*

8. Grandchildren are considered what of the aged?

"Children's children are _____ _____ of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers." *Proverbs 17:6*

Note: *It has been said that the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren are like none other within the family unit. This special relationship is unique, and it often brings happiness and joy.*

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME

Note: *The family unit, which is the fabric of society, is under the constant assault of the enemy. Satan delights in dividing homes and disrupting peace and harmony in the home. Hence, it is important for Christian homes to combat Satan's assaults through the establishment of spiritual leadership in the home. This occurs when families prayerfully and intentionally put forth diligent efforts to ensure that Christ is the foundation and center of their home. As the family altar is established and maintained, the stronger and closer the family knit will become and the greater their witness will be throughout society.*

9. Who followed Abraham's example and kept the way of the Lord?

"For I know him, that he will command _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ 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*

Note: *In Genesis 18:19, God declared that He knew the character of Abraham as it pertained to his influence within his home. Although Abraham made mistakes at times, the overall tenor of his life exerted a positive spiritual influence within his home. Indeed, Abraham understood the importance of exercising spiritual leadership in his home.*

10. Joshua confidently declared that who will serve the Lord?

"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 _____ _____ _____ _____ we will serve the LORD." *Joshua 24:15*

Note: *Families today should be as intentional as Joshua in setting the spiritual tone and exercising spiritual leadership within the home.*

11. Who feared or reverenced God along with Cornelius?

[1]"There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, [2]A devout man, and one that feared God with _____ _____ _____, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway." *Acts 10:1, 2*

Note: *Cornelius, the centurion of the Italian band, along with his family were God-fearing. They readily received Peter into their home and accepted his message from the Lord. As a result, Cornelius, his relatives, and neighbors received the Holy Ghost just as the disciples did on the Day of Pentecost. Cornelius and his family were spiritually enriched as a result of him exercising spiritual leadership in his home.*

INSTRUCT CHILDREN IN THE WAY OF THE LORD

12. How were the Israelites commanded to teach the words of truth to their children?

[6]"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: [7]And thou shalt teach them _____ 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." *Deuteronomy 6:6, 7*

Note: *The children of Israel were to diligently teach their children the word of the Lord ensuring that they would obey the Lord when they entered the Canaan Land, the land promised to their Fathers.*

13. According to Isaiah 54:13, who was to be taught of the Lord?

"And _____ _____ _____ shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children." *Isaiah 54:13*

14. Christian parents are to train their children in what specific way?

"Train up a child in _____ _____ _____ _____ _____: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." *Proverbs 22:6*

Note: *When Christian parents properly train their children in the way of the Lord, the training will not depart from them. Although the child may wander or err, the instilled training will not depart from them. God will bring the truth to their minds in an attempt to lead them to repentance and guide their feet back on the right path.*

15. According to the apostle Paul, fathers or parents are to rear their children in the nurture and admonition of whom?

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of _____ _____." *Ephesians 6:4*

COUNSEL FOR HUSBANDS AND WIVES

16. According to scripture, husbands are to love their wives even as Christ loved what spiritual entity? What did Christ do to demonstrate His love for the church?

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved _____ _____, and _____ _____ _____ _____." *Ephesians 5:25*

Note: *The scriptures instruct husbands to love their wives as Christ loved and gave himself for the church. When a husband demonstrates this type of tender love toward his wife, it will greatly impact his marriage relationship with his wife. Furthermore, it will transform the atmosphere of the home and leave a deep and abiding impression upon the entire family.*

17. What scriptural phrase is used to indicate how a wife is to relate to her caring and God-fearing husband? What is a husband to demonstrate toward his precious wife?

[18]"Wives, _____ _____ unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. [19]Husbands, _____ your wives, and be not bitter against them." *Colossians 3:18, 19*

Note: *Men and women are created equal, and both have equal value in God's sight. However, God calls husbands to be the spiritual leader in their marriage and family. A Christian man will not seek to control or subordinate his wife in any way. When he tenderly loves his wife as Christ loves the church, his wife will love, respect, and appreciate him and will voluntarily submit to his spiritual leadership in the Lord.*

18. According to Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, what is not quickly broken?

[9]"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. [10]For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. [11]Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? [12]And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and _____ _____ _____ is not quickly broken." *Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*

Note: *The text indicates that a threefold cord is not quickly broken. From the perspective of marriage, Christ is the One who keeps the husband and wife knotted closely together in love. When Christ is invited in and allowed to do so, the threefold cord cannot be quickly broken.*

19. How is marriage to be considered? How is the marriage bed to be kept?

"Marriage is _____ in all, and _____ _____ _____: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." *Hebrews 13:4*

Note: *Marriage is to be honored and respected by all. Indeed, it is precious in God's sight, and it is to be viewed as precious in the sight of humanity as well. Marriage is a sacred institution established by God for the joy, pleasure, and happiness of a husband and wife. The marriage bed is to be kept pure. Indeed, God will judge those who violate the marriage vow and defile the marriage bed.*

20. Husbands and wives should maintain intimacy with each other except for a time when they mutually agree to what? What should they do when this brief period ends?

[3]"Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. [4]The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. [5]Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to _____ _____ _____; and _____ _____ _____, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." *1 Corinthians 7:3-5*

Note: *The counsel given by the apostle Paul is wise counsel for husbands and wives. They should do all within their power to keep the lines of communication open and maintain intimacy. If the married couple withhold from each other, it should only be with mutual consent for a brief period of time for the purpose of fasting and prayer. Otherwise, the couple will be exposed to Satan's temptation to exhibit a lack of self-restraint.*

21. According to the apostle Paul, Christians should not allow the sun to go down upon what? They should not give place to whom?

[26]"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon _____ _____: [27]Neither give place to _____ _____." *Ephesians 4:26, 27*

Note: *The counsel given in Ephesians 4:26 and 27 can be applied to Christian married couples as well. They should do all within their power to resolve anger toward each other before going to bed. If they diligently heed this wise counsel, they prevent Satan from having an opportunity to put a wedge between them and further draw them apart.*

FATHER—PROVIDER OF THE HOME

Note: *The husband and father has the God-given responsibility to provide financial stability to his home. If he neglects his responsibility, he loses the respect of his wife and children and worst of all, according to scripture, he has denied the Christian faith.*

22. One who does not provide for himself and for his family has denied what? He is considered to be worse than whom?

"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied _____ _____, and is worse than _____ _____." *1 Timothy 5:8*

23. According to scripture, if one refuses to work, what should he not be allowed to do?

"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, _____ _____ _____ _____." *2 Thessalonians 3:10*

MOTHER—QUEEN OF THE HOME

Note: *The wife and mother is the queen of the home and should be regarded and treated as such. The Christian husband and children will appreciate and value her presence and uplifting influence in the home.*

24. What are husbands instructed to give unto their wife?

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving _____ 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*

25. According to Proverbs 31, the children of a virtuous woman call her what? How does her husband relate to her?

"Her children arise up, and call her _____; her husband also, and _____ _____ _____." *Proverbs 31:28*

CHILDREN—HONOR YOUR PARENTS

Note: *God expects children to honor and obey their parents in the Lord. Just as parents must give an account for the training of their children, children must also give an account for how they treat their parents and relate to the godly training instilled in them.*

26. According to the fifth commandment, whom are children to honor?

"Honour _____ _____ and _____ _____: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee." *Exodus 20:12*

27. According to the apostle Paul, why should children obey their parents in the Lord?

[1]"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for _____ _____ _____. [2]Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; [3]That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." *Ephesians 6:1-3*

SUMMARY

Marriage and the family is a divine institution that was established in the Garden of Eden. It is a sacred tie that connects each family member with a closeness like no other institution on earth. Families should put forth diligent efforts to ensure that Christ is the foundation and center of their home. Regarding spiritual leadership, parents should instruct their children in the way of the Lord. Husbands and wives should keep the lines of communication open and maintain intimacy. The Christian father, mother, and children have distinctive roles in the home that should not be neglected. The faithfulness of each will result in a blessing to society.

28. Dear friend, are you willing to do all within your power to fulfill your God-given responsibility in your home? _____

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