



Encouragement for the Family:
The House Wisdom Built
March 12, 2017

Proverbs teaches that where there is no vision, the people perish (Prov 29:18). This simple bit of wisdom can apply across many areas of life. Without vision there is no guidance and even worse, no picture of the end result. A person in this predicament finds themselves floating at sea like a ship without a rudder. So, it's safe to say that we find joy when there are guidelines to follow. There is satisfaction to be found when our labors look similar to the end result we set out to achieve.

Our relationship with God is the same. God sets a vision for the Christian home and by his grace we do our best to align with it. Our joy is in our attempts to live for the King and the blessings that result.

Scripture Backdrop:

By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches. (Pr 24:3-4)

Solomon paints a beautiful picture of what a home could look like when godly wisdom is rightly applied to the home. Wisdom and her siblings knowledge and understanding, when rightly applied lead to the building, establishing and filling of the home. Since the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, let's examine scripture to see what the Lord's vision is for the family.

Lord, let us be encouraged by the vision you have created for the family and grant us strength to press forward in our pursuit to be the bride you have called us to be!

A Quick Prerequisite:

Before we look at God's vision for the family and home, let's first confirm in scripture that the Lord, in his infinite wisdom, is the author of the family and not man. If we cannot accept that God is the author of family, we cannot accept the vision found in scripture. However, if we see God as the author of family, our immediate response is to submit to the vision he has provided.

Is the Lord Author of the Family?

Certainly! From the very beginning... God created the first family and it wasn't Adam's idea! Adam did not have to search for Eve, create vows to live by and declare the union. It was the Lord's doing!

*Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and***

flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (Ge 2:18–24)

Jesus, while addressing a trick question regarding divorce sheds light on how marriage and family are formed.

*But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. **What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.**” (Mk 10:6–9)*

We even see the Lord using the family to symbolize his relationship with the Church:

- The relationship between husband and wife symbolizes the relationship between Christ and his Church. The husband is the head of his wife and wife submitted to her own husband just as Christ is head of his Church and the Church is submitted to Christ (Eph 5:22-24).
- The relationship between parents and children symbolize the relationship between Christ and his Church. Parents hold authority over their children and children are submitted to their parents just as Christ has authority over his Church and the Church is submitted to Christ.

We’ll explore more from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians later, but for now, the biggest point here is that God created and authored your family. Therefore, whatever vision he gives for family should be followed in earnest by his children.

God’s Vision for the Husband

But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. (1 Co 11:3)

For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. (Eph 5:23)

The “head of the wife” is not a title husbands flippantly wear but a sobering descriptor of a husband who has been given a very high standard. He is head of his wife like Christ is head of the church. Like Christ, this husband will move heaven and earth to care for her and even sacrifice his own body and die for her.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” (Eph 5:25–31)

But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Ti 5:8)

The husband’s primary ministry is found in the work of Christ toward the Church: lead, teach, provide, and protect (prophet, priest, provider, protector).

God's Vision for the Wife

*Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."
(Ge 2:18)*

It was the Lord who said that Adam needed a helper. It should also be noted that the need for a helper was in the midst of the Garden of Eden! In perfection, Adam was created and in perfection Eve, his helper, was created. The result was that "she would do him good, and not harm all the days of her life." (Prov 31:12)

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. (Eph 5:22–24)

Unfortunately, the wisdom of God's role for both husband and wife has been perverted—particularly the notion of submission. Submit does not mean the wife becomes a slave to her husband that he may "lord over," abuse, or show lack of love toward her. Remember, the husband's role is to love, lead, teach, provide, protect, and care for his wife. So to submit as a wife means to come under his love, leadership, teaching, provision, protection and care!

*My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. (Pr 6:20)
The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. (Pr 29:15)
She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy. (Pr 31:20)*

If blessed with children, the wife's vision also includes teaching and disciplining her children. The call to open her home for charity is also seen in God's vision for her.

Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. (Titus 2:3–5)

"Working at home," "keepers of the home," manager of a household. These words are hard to say in American culture particularly because this godly role has been rejected. Yet, God's vision for wives remains.

The wife's primary ministry is to care for the home, extend the home in charity, nurture, teach and discipline her children (if called to be a mother) and have peace under the protection and provision of her husband.

God's Vision for the Children

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. (Ex 20:12)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." (Eph 6:1–3)

We see this repeated in scripture (Deut 5:16, Mt 19:19, Mk 10:19, Lk 18:20). Honor implies a respect, reverence and obedience to parents—even to the point of caring for their needs when older.

And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. (Lk 2:48–52)

Even the Lord Jesus was required to submit to his parents! Submitting to parents is the first step towards submitting to the Lord and navigating relationships outside the home.

The role of children in the family is simple: Children should honor, obey and submit to their parents. In doing so, children will reap the promise of a life of wisdom.

God's Overall Vision for the Family

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Ge 1:27–28)

And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. (Ge 9:1) And you [Noah and his sons], be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it." (Ge 9:7)

God's original intention for the family was for his chosen people to fill and subdue the earth (multigenerational faithfulness). As Christians, we teach the Gospel to our children and our children's children.

Wherever you are on the family spectrum, there is joy in knowing that your God has given you a goal to strive for. May the Lord increase your knowledge, wisdom and understanding of his will. May he grant you the strength to embrace the vision of home and family. May your homes be strengthened, and your rooms be filled with all precious and pleasant riches!