

FAMILY

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THEIR CHILDREN. THEY ARE THEIR
CHILDREN’S PRIMARY STEWARDS,
TEACHERS, AND DISCIPLES.”***

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DESIGNED *BY* GOD

Family is more than a cultural institution. It is part of God's design for human flourishing—a place where love is practiced, truth is taught, faith is passed from one generation to the next, and children are nurtured toward maturity. Before there were governments, schools, or communities, there was family. In the opening chapters of Scripture, God creates humanity male and female and establishes marriage:

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” — Genesis 2:24

Jesus later points His listeners back to this created order when teaching about marriage (Matthew 19:4–6). Marriage and family are not human inventions that society is free to redefine. They begin with God.

GOD'S DESIGN *FOR* MARRIAGE

Genesis presents marriage as the covenant union of a man and a woman who become “one flesh.” Within this relationship, husband and wife are called to faithfulness, sacrificial love, mutual care, and commitment.

Ephesians 5:21–33 describes marriage in even deeper terms, pointing to the relationship between Christ and His Church.

Marriage therefore carries meaning beyond companionship. It provides a foundation for family, creates a place for husbands and wives to love and serve one another, and establishes the relationship into which children are ordinarily born and nurtured.

Scripture does not pretend families are perfect. They aren't. From Genesis onward, the Bible records jealousy, infertility, betrayal, sibling rivalry, parental failure, grief, and broken relationships. Yet human brokenness does not erase God's good design. Instead, it reminds us how desperately families need His grace.

PARENTS *AS THE* PRIMARY DISCIPLERS

One of Scripture's clearest teachings about family concerns the responsibility entrusted to parents. God tells Israel: **“And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children.”**

— Deuteronomy 6:6–7

Notice where this discipleship occurs: At home. Along the road. At bedtime. In the morning.

Faith formation was never intended to be confined to a weekly gathering or delegated entirely to another institution. God's design places parents in the central role of teaching and forming their children.

Proverbs similarly instructs parents to train their children (Proverbs 22:6), while Ephesians 6:4 calls fathers to bring their children up "with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord." Churches have an important role. Teachers can be tremendous partners. Communities can support families. But none of these replaces the responsibility God entrusted to parents.

Parents are not incidental participants in the upbringing of their children. They are their children's primary stewards, teachers, and disciplers.

CHILDREN *ARE A GIFT NOT* A POSSESSION

Parental authority is itself accountable to God.
Psalm 127:3 tells us: “Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from him.”

Children ultimately belong to God. Parents therefore receive both authority and responsibility. They are called to protect their children, provide for them, teach them truth, discipline them with love, and prepare them for maturity.

This means biblical parental rights should never be separated from biblical parental responsibility. The Christian argument for parental authority isn't simply: “These are my children.” It is deeper: “God has entrusted these children to my care, and I am accountable to Him for how I steward that responsibility.”

That understanding transforms parental authority from a demand for control into a sacred stewardship.

PASSING FAITH *FROM* GENERATION *TO* GENERATION

God's design for family stretches beyond one generation. Psalm 78:5-7 describes God's people teaching His commands to their children so that the next generation would know them and, in turn, teach them to their own children. We see this beautifully in Paul's words to Timothy: **"I remember your genuine faith, for you share the faith that first filled your grandmother Lois and your mother, Eunice."**
— 2 Timothy 1:5

Grandparents matter. Mothers matter. Fathers matter.

The faithfulness of one generation can leave a spiritual inheritance for generations that follow. A healthy society should therefore recognize the tremendous good accomplished when families are strengthened rather than displaced.

FAMILY *AND THE* HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

Scripture's vision of family also reaches beyond the biological household.

Jesus welcomed children. The early Church cared for widows. Believers opened their homes to one another. Christians are repeatedly described as brothers and sisters, and the Church itself is called “God’s family” (1 Timothy 3:15).

This matters. Some believers are single. Some cannot have children. Some have experienced divorce, abandonment, or the death of a spouse. Some come from deeply broken families.

God’s design for family should never become a measuring stick for someone’s value. Instead, the Church should be a place where God’s design is celebrated, broken families find support and restoration, marriages are strengthened, parents are equipped, children are welcomed, and those without traditional family structures experience genuine belonging in the family of God.

We uphold God’s design while extending God’s grace.

WHY THIS MATTERS TODAY

Questions about family now intersect with some of the most significant cultural and public-policy

debates of our time. Marriage. Education. Parental rights. Medical decision-making. School curricula. Children's privacy. Government authority. Religious upbringing. Once again, Christians should resist beginning with political talking points. We begin with Scripture.

- **Who has God entrusted with primary responsibility for children?**
- **What authority belongs to parents?**
- **What responsibilities accompany that authority?**
- **What is the appropriate role of government, schools, churches, and communities in supporting families?**

Government has legitimate authority and important responsibilities. Schools can serve families. Churches should equip them. Communities should support them. But institutions flourish when they respect rather than replace the family. Public policy should therefore be considered not merely by asking what government can do, but whether doing it strengthens or weakens the responsibilities God has entrusted to families.

Strong communities are built upon families that are free and equipped to fulfill their God-given responsibilities.

THINK BIBLICALLY

When considering a cultural issue, proposed law, candidate, or public-policy debate affecting families, ask:

- **Does this respect God's design for marriage and family?**
- **Does this recognize parents as the primary stewards of their children?**
- **Does it help parents fulfill their responsibilities—or unnecessarily transfer those responsibilities to government or another institution?**
- **Does it respect parents' responsibility to direct the education, medical care, and spiritual formation of their children?**
- **Does this protect children and promote their genuine flourishing?**
- **Does it strengthen relationships between parents and children—or create unnecessary barriers between them?**
- **Are vulnerable families being supported with compassion while their dignity and responsibility are preserved?**

These questions help us move beyond slogans and ask a better question: **Does this strengthen God's design for family or work against it?**

ENGAGE FAITHFULLY

Defending family begins long before contacting a legislator.

Strengthen your own family. Make your home a place where truth is taught, forgiveness and love are practiced, and Christ is honored.

Disciple your children. Don't surrender to the Church, school, or culture a responsibility God has entrusted to you.

Support other families. Encourage marriages, mentor younger parents, care for single parents, welcome children, honor grandparents, and walk alongside families experiencing hardship.

Know what your children are being taught. Be an active participant in their education and formation.

Understand public policy. Pay attention when legislation affects marriage, children, education, parental authority, or family life.

Vote thoughtfully. Consider whether candidates and policies will strengthen families, respect parental responsibility, and protect children. Political engagement is only one piece.

The strongest argument for the family is a family faithfully living God's design.

BEYOND SUNDAY: *FAMILY*

We cannot say we value family biblically only when legislation threatens it.

We live that conviction around dinner tables. In marriages that choose faithfulness. In exhausted parents who continue discipling their children. In grandparents who faithfully tell another generation about God's goodness. In churches that surround struggling families rather than shame them. In communities that protect children while honoring the responsibility of parents. And yes, in citizens who advocate for laws that allow families to fulfill the responsibilities God has entrusted to them.

When families flourish, communities are strengthened. And when Christians carry God's design for family beyond Sunday, we show the world that family is more than something worth defending.

It is something worth faithfully building.

***KNOW THE WORD. THINK BIBLICALLY.
ENGAGE FAITHFULLY.***