



# The Abundant Life Series

- Lesson 9: The Christian Family -

## The Christian Family

Before God ever instituted a church or government, He instituted the \_\_\_\_\_ unit in the Garden of Eden.

And before there was ever a church or government, Satan was trying to cause \_\_\_\_\_ within the family and tear it apart.

Even today, the family is the \_\_\_\_\_ that the devil tries to destroy the most. He knows that a church is only as strong as the families that make it up.

It is very clear then that all we have to do to see our homes destroyed is to \_\_\_\_\_. Gods' Word, however, gives us clear instruction on protecting and keeping our homes from the attacks of this world that would try to tear us apart.

## God's Divine \_\_\_\_\_

There is a definite order in scripture for the home. If a home is to be as God designed it, then His order must be followed.

1. Jesus Christ - The head of the husband; the Lord of the family.
2. Husband - The head of the wife; chief authority over the children.
3. Wife - The "helpmeet" to the husband; secondary authority over the children.
4. Children - Respectfully obedient to parents; authority over no one.

Many people immediately think negative when the word "**authority**" is used. The word simply means " \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_."

If any of this divine order for the family is misplaced, \_\_\_\_\_ and strife will result.

All of us probably know of a home where the children's will is priority and in such situations, not only is it unpleasant to be around the family, but eventually the children will \_\_\_\_\_ against any teaching that the parents try to convey. EVERY problem within the family unit will ALWAYS stem from someone not following the order given by God.

## The \_\_\_\_\_ Responsibilities

1. **Ephesians 5:22-24, 33**, *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23, For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24, Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing... 33, Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*
2. **1 Peter 3:1-6**, *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 of the wives; 2, While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. 3, Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4, 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. 5, 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: 6, 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, NIV**, *Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, 2, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 3, Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. 4, Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. 5, For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, 6, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.*

**The duties of the wife can be summed up in two words:**

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ - "to yield humble and intelligent obedience to an ordained authority." Submission is one of the most powerful and beautiful concepts in the New Testament. God does not hate women as some people think. He has commanded for them to be submissive to Him and their husbands because in doing so they will be blessed, fulfilled, productive, and spiritual. The choice to submit is the wife's decision that God has given to her. If she submits, He will bless her, if she chooses the opposite, then confusion and hurt will result.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ - "to defer to, to respect outwardly and inwardly." The Greek word for "reverence" in Ephesians 5:33 is the same word translated as "fear" in I Peter 3:2. The wife is to defer to her husband's ultimate decision and do so with body language that does not convey the opposite. Both Paul and Peter relate that the outward manifestation of the wife -- how she acts, dresses, and speaks -- are the most important sign of submission, reverence, or the lack thereof. A woman must refrain from "cutting down her husband to others" and constantly griping and complaining. Instead she should put on the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" which to God is worth much.

God created women and men as distinctly \_\_\_\_\_ for a particular purpose: they are to complement each other and "complete" each other. Adam was not complete until he had Eve by his side, and vice versa.

1. Our society pushes a " \_\_\_\_\_ of the sexes" in dress, actions, roles, and almost every other way. The scriptures teach the exact opposite, that there is to be a distinct difference in the sexes in every way. God created the female to be more emotional and more empathetic than the male. God created the male to be more logical and more objective than the female. They are to work together to complete the marriage union and each other.
2. Submission on the wife's part does not mean that she is not able to partake of the \_\_\_\_\_ process, and if her husband fulfills his role as God planned, she will be able to complement the husband's responsibility. What submission means is that once all input has been received, and a final decision has to be made, that the wife goes along with and obeys whatever her husband decides. She does so through respect for him, and lifts him and his decision up.
3. She does not \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ vent her displeasure in an effort to tear him down or criticize him, but she wears a "meek and quiet spirit." This does not mean that a woman cannot hold a leadership position in a church, in fact, throughout scripture we find women in leadership roles, even in the Apostolic churches. What it means is that the woman is to be the quiet input, not the complaining nag, within the marriage relationship.

Look back at **I Peter 3:1 NIV**, *Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives.*

It gives definite \_\_\_\_\_ for when a husband is not in church. The wife will only win him by her "chaste conversation" or "lifestyle of submission." If your husband is not in church, then you must submit in every area that you can and refuse to respond to him with revenge or spite. By treating him with reverence even if he really does not deserve it, you can win him.

Sometimes the wife cannot submit in a particular area because the husband's command \_\_\_\_\_ God's commandments in scripture. If the husband demands that the woman wear ungodly clothing, go to sinful places, or act in such a way that contradicts scripture, then the wife does not have to submit in that area. She should submit in every other area, however, and the only reason that she does not have to submit in a particular area is when the husband has gone against his head, Jesus Christ.

## The \_\_\_\_\_ Responsibilities

**1 Peter 3:7**, *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.*

**Ephesians 5:25-33**, *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26, That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27, 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. 28, So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29, For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30, For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32, This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33, Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*

**A husband's scriptural responsibilities to his wife can be also summed up in two words: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ - in the Greek agape, which means "unselfish, sacrificial love." Three times in Ephesians chapter 5, the man is commanded to "love" his wife, and he is to love her as Jesus Christ loves the church. Instead of blaming and pointing out the faults and sins of humanity, Jesus Christ came and selflessly died so that we could have eternal life and have things right with him. The husband is to love his wife in such a manner. Notice the following points about that kind of love.

**To love his wife as Christ loves the church means that the husband must . . .**

- a. be willing to continually \_\_\_\_\_ despite repeat failures and wrongdoing.
- b. not \_\_\_\_\_ them when they have made a stupid mistake.
- c. not \_\_\_\_\_ them because of the emotional differences of females.
- d. stay \_\_\_\_\_ even when you don't "feel like it."
- e. be \_\_\_\_\_ and respond to their needs even when you don't feel affectionate.
- f. be \_\_\_\_\_ to choose the best course in the long run despite what the other person may desire at the time.
- g. show by \_\_\_\_\_ how to live, act, and worship.
- h. be as faithful to the \_\_\_\_\_ in our lives as Jesus Christ was when He walked this earth.
- i. be willing to \_\_\_\_\_ our fleshly desires in order to have a better relationship.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ - "to deem and treat as precious." Wives are not the personal servants who are to slave over the personal whims of the husband. Submission does not mean that they have to jump at the husband's every beck and call. Some men treat their wives as precious as a maid girl whom they have hired to clean their house, and they get back very little submission and reverence. To quote one Christian counselor: "if there is a submission problem in the home, it can almost always be traced back to the man." Simply put, if the husband will truly love his wife as Christ loved the church and be the example that he should be, most women will have no problem with submitting to such a Godly example.

a. The husband must take care to treat his wife as something worth a \_\_\_\_\_. Colossians 3:19 commands husbands to *"be not bitter against them"* talking about their wives. A man who constantly criticizes his wife and puts her down will be rewarded with a lack of submission and reverence from her.

**I Peter 3:7**, *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.*

Peter warns that the husband's \_\_\_\_\_ will be hindered if he does not treat his wife tenderly and honor her as a "joint-heir of the grace of life."

b. This is an important \_\_\_\_\_ to understand: The authority over you will react to you and treat you the way that you treat those under you.



C. If the husband treats the woman with \_\_\_\_\_, then his communication with his head, Jesus Christ is hindered.

The husband must show the wife how to \_\_\_\_\_ through their example of submitting to Jesus Christ.

Likewise the wife must show the \_\_\_\_\_ how to properly submit by her example of submitting to her husband.

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### Responsibilities

They are very simple: \_\_\_\_\_ your parents, whether you like it or not.

**Ephesians 6:1-4**, *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 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. 4, And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

All children will \_\_\_\_\_ the limits of the authority set over them. They are simply seeing if the parents will stand firm and whether or not they are dependable. If a child learns that the parent does not mean what they say, then eventually they will not trust the parent in any area.

Children are to \_\_\_\_\_ their parents just as husbands are to honor their wives. There will be times that the child will not understand the discipline, but the parents must not waver, because they are actually earning the child's respect by "sticking to it."



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## responsibilities

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

The fathers must especially realize their role in bringing up the children. The scriptures tell us to "train up a child." That is, you must \_\_\_\_\_ your children how to act and not to act, by not only your words but also your actions.

Children who have good role models as parents who are trying to draw closer to God and who are willing to spend time in "training" them will grow up to serve God and have peaceful homes and \_\_\_\_\_relationships themselves.

The \_\_\_\_\_ does not determine the course of the family or its actions. When they are allowed to dictate the family according to their desires, chaos is the result.

There will be times when the parents make a \_\_\_\_\_ in correcting the child. In those times, the parents should go to the child and apologize and admit their mistakes and ask for forgiveness. Even a mistake can be an important tool to teach your children how to respond when they mess up and how to forgive.

God honors \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, even if it is from a parent to a child or vice versa.

True discipline of children should involve two factors:

1. Appropriate \_\_\_\_\_ for the offence.
2. The child asking \_\_\_\_\_ to the parent, those who were wronged, and to God.

Many times parents forget to teach their children the importance of \_\_\_\_\_ when corrected and they just assign a punishment without the children expressing their repentance.

A child who is not repentant, should receive a harsher punishment for the offence than if they are genuinely \_\_\_\_\_ for what they have done and express those feelings.

Many of the problems with raising children seen today are evidenced by the modern opinion that raising kids is "\_\_\_\_\_ work." In scripture, the father is commanded to take an active role in teaching and training the child:

**Deuteronomy 6:6-7**, *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7, 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.*

In Ephesians 6:4, it is the \_\_\_\_\_ who are commanded to not "provoke a child to anger." In other words, "raise your children to follow a path of submission and love for God."

**Proverbs 6:20-23**, *My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: 21, Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. 22, When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. 23, For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:*

Notice that the commandment of the father is the "\_\_\_\_\_" and the law of the mother is the "\_\_\_\_\_."

The lamp is the source of the light, and the light proceeds from the lamp just as the lamp has sent it out.

The father is to be the source of the general commandment and the mother is to be the light that reaches out and actually touches the day to day lives of the children.

**Deuteronomy 7:26**, *Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.*

We must \_\_\_\_\_ our families and our homes from things that God hates and stands against. This scripture not only applies to physical things being brought into our houses, but attitudes and actions that we bring into our family structure.

We must do things \_\_\_\_\_ way in our homes, because if we do not, then we will be cursed. Satan will attack and do everything that he can to break down our family units because he wants us to be cursed by God. But if we will set up and conduct our families according to God's divine order and plan, then we can stand strong and experience God's blessings and power in our home for the rest of our life!

For Parents or Prospective Parents:

# Rules and Principles

Loren A. Yadon

Rules focus on actions;  
Principles deal with motives.  
Rules make decisions for you;  
Principles make you think for yourself.  
Rules are rigid;  
Principles are flexible.  
Rules refer to the "what;"  
Principles tell of the "why."  
Rules work in limited contexts;  
Principles are universal.  
Rules set minimum behavior;  
Principles give you a way of life.  
Rules focus on control;  
Principles highlight character.  
Rules ultimately produce hypocrisy;  
Principles encourage consistency.  
Rules ultimately create dependency;  
Principles develop trust.  
Rules perpetuate immaturity;  
Principles develop maturity.  
Rules bring bondage;  
Principles bring liberty.

It is necessary to have rules to protect the immature. While establishing reasonable rules for children, let us be teaching them principles so they can grow beyond our temporary control. Laws can only "baby sit" until the child matures and becomes a person of faith, accepting the responsibility for their own conduct (Galatians 3:23-4:7). Mature people can only develop their full potential living by principles.

**God's ultimate intention is for mature sons and daughters!  
Therefore teach principles!**