Volume 102, Number 6

8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, TX 78748

June 2016

### WHY STRONG FAMILIES ARE IMPORTANT

Ben Moseley

It is clear from the beginning of scripture that God designed the home. It is one of God's institutional foundations. The Bible affirms God's plan, which was established universally for all times, even in our modern culture (Matt. 19:8-9).

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; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And 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. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Gen 2:21-25)

This was God's plan from the beginning and He has not changed it. Who can improve upon God's perfect plan for the home? How could anybody dare to tamper with it? Of course, we are all aware that in the last forty or so years, there has been a gradual assault on God's original intention for the home. But in reality, the hope of our nation requires well-ordered homes. The hope of America is found in the sanctity of the home. Family life is an indicator of how strong and stable any nation is. When family life breaks down, the nation will eventually collapse. The author Gibbons stated that one of the reasons Rome fell was a rapid increase of divorce and an undermining of the sanctity of the home. There is a growing contempt toward the traditional family,

and it is directed against what the Bible teaches about it. Thus, we see the root of the problem, which is a rejection of the Bible teaching on this subject. I grew up watching Ozzie and Harriet and Leave It To Beaver, which represented a traditional biblical view of the family. We are told that these home styles are a relic of the past. We are told in a scornful way that it is a non-realistic standard for today's home. Dr. James Dobson and Gary L. Bauer were correct when they said, "along with sneering references to Norman Rockwell's America, the cultural elite frequently reminds us that the model of the traditional family-homemaker mother and breadwinner father is virtually extinct, and they are obviously glad it is

continued on page 7

#### **Strengthening Families**

Why Strong Families are Important
Ben Moseley1
A Solid, Spiritual Foundation
Cody Westbrook2
How to Create a Distinctly Christian Family
Glenn Colley3
Husbands, Be Husbands
Jon McCormack4
Wives, Be Wives
Luanne Rogers4
Training Our Children
Matthew Gibson5
Serve the Lord Together
Michael Bonner6



#### A SOLID, SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

depends upon its foundation. If the foundation is not solid, whatever is built is destined for failure because it lacks strength and the ability to endure the internal and external forces that challenge its integrity. The same can be said about the family. Just as every building has some kind of foundation, so too does every family. The foundation may be weak or strong; it may be temporary or permanent; it may be able to withstand the challenges it faces, or it may not. Our homes are extremely important for so many reasons, and we know that the Devil is relentless in his attack against them. So it is of the utmost importance that our homes are strong and true. This is possible only if they are built upon the right foundation.

David said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Ps. 127:1). I can build my house upon humanism, materialism, selfishness, greed, or any kind of worldliness, but it will not stand. Sooner or later the Devil will challenge its stability. A sudden and unexpected death, a financial or medical crisis, the negative influence of popular media, and so many other things are common tools that the Devil uses to try and break families. The only foundation that will stand steadfast and true through these attacks is God. He must be the architect and the builder of my home. He must be the solid rock (1 Sam. 2:2) upon which my family rests.

With Jehovah as its foundation, my home will be able to stand strong in the face of internal challenges. The foundation of a structure determines its strength. Over time houses shift and, if the foundation is weak, the house will crack and could eventually collapse. God tells us that our homes are to be characterized by love and respect for one another (1 Cor. 13). We are to season our speech with salt (Col. 4:6); we are to be angry but sin not (Eph. 4:26); we must do to others as we would have them do unto us (Matt. 7:12). All of these biblical

injunctions, and so many others, have wonderful application to how family members interact with one another. A home founded upon God and His word will abide by these principles, and will not allow internal disagreements or anything else cause their home to crumble.

Building our homes on the proper foundation will also help to strengthen them against external forces. In Matthew 7:24-27 Jesus told the story of two houses; one was built upon the sand and the other built upon a rock. When the storms came and the waves crashed upon the houses, the one with the weak foundation crumbled while the house built upon the solid foundation stood firm. Our families will be faced with all kinds of external challenges. Sometimes the Devil uses friends or co-workers to try and cause a gap between spouses. Children may pick up bad habits or false ideas from teachers or peers that can be potentially devastating to a home. The family must put on the whole armor of God together (Eph. 6:11), and be ready to fight the storms of life that will pound upon its walls (Phil. 1:27). This can only be a reality if we first build our homes on the proper foundation.

God calls for Christians to be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58). Our faith is to be rock-solid; founded upon the firm foundation of our God and His word. Our homes should be the same. In 1834 Edward Mote wrote the words that we so often sing, "On Christ the solid rock I stand; all other ground is sinking sand." If we can borrow Mr. Mote's sentiments, may it be said of all of us, "On Christ the solid rock my family stands, all other ground is sinking sand."

**CW** 

#### **CHRISTIAN WORKER**

(UPS 109-700)

Third-Class Postage Paid at Manchaca, Texas Published on a Non-Profit basis by the

Southwest church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Rd., Austin, TX 78748 christianworker.us E-mail: office@swcofc.org

Cody Westbrook ----- Editor Editorial Address: 8900 Manchaca Rd., Austin, TX 78748

## How to Create a Distinctly Christian Family

Glenn Colley

ccording to the word of God, you and I don't have enough human ingenuity to build a successful home. Psalm 127, written centuries ago, is still true. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." Here are five things the Lord can use to build a great family for you.

#### 1. Two Married Parents

True marriage hasn't crashed and crumbled in the last few years in America. The culture relative to marriage has disintegrated. True marriage will always be honored in Scripture as an institution that remains pure and strong. In God's church there are many devoted single parents who pray that their children will grow and marry so that their grandchildren will be reared in a wholesome environment—with all the emotional and spiritual benefits of having both a mother and a father present and involved. A boy needs a father to train him how to be a strong, sanctified man who is honest, who owns his mistakes and corrects them, who respects the values of the Scripture. A girl needs a father to affirm her and hold the honor line in her character; a man who understands that outward beauty will always be worth far less than inward beauty (1 Pet. 3:1-4). There's no getting around the fact that a devoted single Christian parent can successfully form her/his child into a Christian. It's just much harder.

## 2. Two Married Parents who Seriously Want a Christian Home

Many parents say they want a solid, Christian home, but fewer are willing to make the commitments necessary to succeed. It means being faithful to Bible class and worship. It means controlling entertainment choices to exclude anything of which Christ would disapprove. It means maintaining family scruples of morality and honesty and prayer and commitment to our Lord, which utterly define the identity of the family. It means involving the entire family in spiritual family projects to care for widows, orphans, the sick, and the helpless. It means creating an atmosphere in which the things of Jesus are discussed without hesitation throughout the day in the home. It means holding each other accountable (Eph. 5:21).

#### 3. Two Married Parents who Consider Child Discipline a Joint Effort

Ignoring bad behavior in our children is a recipe for creating adults who refuse to control themselves, and who will live unhappy, unproductive lives...lives, which will one day, be detrimental in influence on our grand-children. Some parents prefer to postpone the correction of bad behavior (temper tantrums, refusal to obey parents, disrespect to adults, lying, bad attitudes, etc.) until their children are teenagers and the core issues are bigger—to sort of put their more serious child-rearing "on credit" until later. They will regret this. The prime time for training children is when they are young and pliable in their hearts (Prov. 19:26; Prov. 29:15).

# 4. Two Married Parents who Are Rock-solid in their Determination to Keep Satan out of their House

The road Satan travels into the living rooms and bedrooms of our homes is the road of mass media. Be perfectly honest and ask yourself how much of television and movies today is counterproductive to parents rearing their children to love and serve the Lord. Parents must simply stop being cavalier toward family entertainment, imitating their worldly counterparts. Online devices can be beneficial in your children's education but, with a couple of keystrokes, they can unleash a tidal wave of mind-corrupting filth. Top 40 music lyrics are cloaked in genres which parents have a hard time understanding, so they end up turning a deaf ear to soul-poisoning values which steal their children's hearts away. Want to build a Christian home and instill healthy values of righteousness in your children? Put on your spiritual glasses and take another look at your family's entire entertainment practices. Then radically remove any garbage you find.

## 5. Two Married Parents who Have a Plan for Educating their Children in the Word of God

Begin tonight having sit-down family Bible time with your kids. Announce that it will be every night. Vary what you do each night: verse studies, games to learn the Bible, singing, rehearsing Bible stories, encouragement-note writing, writing missionary notes, ethical problem-solving, etc. Be creative, and make this nightly event a habit. Dad should be the leader but, if Dad cannot or will not, Mom should do it (c.f. 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15). Your children will one day do the same with your grandchildren and, believe me, you'll be glad you did it (Prov. 22:6).

**CW** 

#### HUSBANDS, BE HUSBANDS

Jon McCormack

n the sixth day of this world God brought forth the crown of His creation, man and woman. He created them in two very distinct ways. Adam was formed from the dust of the ground while Eve was fashioned from Adam's rib (Gen. 2:7, 22). This difference in creation was not the end of the distinction between the sexes. Men and women are different, and we should be able to unapologetically state this fact. Failure to see and understand this vital truth has caused numerous problems for our society. God, in both nature, and His Word, has clearly defined the roles of men and women. In fact, God detests the blurring of the lines between the sexes. The inspired Moses wrote, "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God" (Deut. 22:5). In short, God is telling women to act like women and men to act like men. There is currently a war raging against the Biblical pattern for the sexes. Sadly, a casualty in this war has been the Biblical husband. What then, are the marks of a Biblical husband? Consider these three qualifications.

#### **He Loves**

Jesus is the greatest husband to ever walk this earth. Paul commanded the Philippian brethren, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). We need to husbands like Jesus. He adores His bride. The proof of such is seen by the blood that He shed for her. To be a Biblical husband is to follow His example of love (Eph. 5:25). A husband's love is not merely expressed in words. Though saying "I love you" is great to hear, and should be said often, genuine love is expressed in action. Sure, you are willing to die for her, but are you willing to live for her too? Loving her is serving her. Yes, you are her head, but the Savior showed us that true love was having a servant's heart (John 13:15). Sometimes the most simple of actions can express an abundance of love to your wife. Be there for her to change those light bulbs when they expire. Take the trash out when it is needed. When company is coming over set aside time in your schedule to be available to help her clean. Take the kids out of the house once in a while to allow her some alone time. The simple things we do might just turn out to be the most loving.

#### He Leads

Husbands and wives are taught, "For the husband is

the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the avior of the body" (Eph. 5:25). The most loving thing a husband can do is lead his wife in the paths of righteousness. Too often the wife becomes the spiritual leader in the home. Men, she already has a full plate (Titus 2:4-5). Be the leader that God wants you to be. Pray often with your wife. Be the one to make it clear that we will not be missing Bible class, worship, or any spiritual activities, for that matter. Set aside time every day to have a devotional with her. If such is awkward for you then let it be awkward. The more you act like a Biblical husband the easier it gets. If your home is such where the wife leads, then you need to lovingly take back the leadership role that God has intended for you.

#### He Learns

A Biblical husband is a learning husband. Peter commanded, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge..." (1 Pet. 3:7). In order to be a godly husband we must get to know our wives. As stated before, women and men are different. Not only is their body chemistry different but also the way they think. Your wife, in many ways, does not think like you do. You must strive to understand her. Without love this is impossible. Without love, a man will become lazy and determine that it is impossible to know how to deal with his wife. But a loving husband is up to the challenge. He wants to know more about his wife's needs, and so he learns.

Men, we can be Biblical husbands. Our marriage depends upon it, and God demands it.

**CW** 

#### WIVES, BE WIVES

Luann Rogers

Since at least the 1970's, the feminist movement has criticized and tried to erase the traditional, biblical image of "a wife" from the public's consciousness. In the 1971 premier issue of MS Magazine, author Judy Syfers penned a tongue-in-cheek article titled "Why I Want a Wife", poking fun at all the things a wife does. She concludes by asking,"... who wouldn't want a wife?" The secular world mocks and laughs at the role God has given wives, and many Christian women have accepted as legitimate this culture of ridicule. Even the word "wife" seems outdated: instead, you hear terms like "significant other" or "life partner", thus removing

any hint of the God-given role for a woman married to a man.

Even though our culture changes (and has changed throughout time), the role God gave the wife has not changed. What does God say a wife is?

- "A help meet for her husband" a companion comparable to him (Gen. 2:18-20)
- "Crown of her husband" (Prov. 12:4)
- "A good thing" (Prov. 18:22)
- "The weaker vessel" (1 Peter 3:7)
- "A companion" (Mal. 2:14)

#### A wife is NOT:

- A man
- A husband's mother
- A doormat
- A slave
- A trophy
- Someone to be taken lightly by her husband (Eph. 5:25)

Sister, if you do not want to be a wife, do not become one (you <u>do</u> have a choice!). If you want to be a wife, BE a wife!

Any organization, especially the home, must have an assignment of duties and leadership to keep things running smoothly. It is important for each member to fulfill their given role or the organization (home) winds up in chaos. Without a leader in place; either a power struggle ensues, or nothing gets done or decided: Either way, chaos results.

God gave distinctly different roles to husbands and wives. When we change or alter those roles, the family structure is weakened and confusion and conflict reign. Each member has equal value (Gal. 3:38), but different roles. Being a good and godly wife does not depend on having a good and godly husband (consider Abigail in 1 Samuel 25.)

To BE a wife who pleases God and your husband, do the following—

#### Submit to your husband (Eph. 5:22)

This instruction is ridiculed and misunderstood by the world. The world reads this as, "Husbands MAKE your wives submit", but this command is addressed to the wife (not the husband): she voluntarily places herself under his leadership. Submission is a way of life for all faithful Christians, man or woman; it is not "for women only." Both are told to "submit to God" (James 4:7), "to the elders" (Heb. 13:17), to "older people" (I Pet. 5:5)," and to "government rulers" (I Pet. 2:13). Even Christ

submitted to the Father (Phil. 2:8; I Cor. 15:28).

#### Respect your husband (Eph. 5:33).

Respect is the key to a man's heart and is commanded by God. In her book "<u>For Women Only</u>," Shaunti Feldhahn reports the results of having surveyed hundreds of men and identifies five key needs men have regarding respect. You should respect:

- 1. His judgment
- 2. His abilities
- 3. Him, in communication
- 4. Him, in public
- 5. Him, in your assumptions

#### Love your husband (Titus 2:4)

Applying Philippians 2:3-4 will help you show him your love. Be content with him and put his needs above yours. Discontentment is Satan's greatest tool for destroying homes and happy marriages.

#### Be Faithful and Trustworthy (Prov. 31:11).

Adultery has become an accepted practice in our society. To guard against this temptation, keep your relationships with other men in check and be grateful for a faithful husband. 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 explains our responsibility regarding our own husband's needs. Adultery will destroy your soul (Pro. 6:32) and keep you out of the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21).

Do him good and not evil (Prov. 31:12)

Take care of your household (Titus 2:5)

#### Be kind and forgiving toward him (Eph. 4:32)

If we stand in the place God has given us as wives, our homes will be stronger and happier. We will enable our husbands to be the leaders they are commanded to be, and we will please God.

**CW** 

#### TRAINING OUR CHILDREN

Matthew Gibson

he world's smallest school is the home. Proverbs 1:8-9 states, "My son hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother. For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck." Children mimic and memorize their parent's attitudes and actions. Moses stated in Deuteronomy 6:3-9 that the Israelites were to teach their children diligently the commandments of God. Paul speaks of Timothy being trained in the Scriptures

(2 Tim. 3:15). A child is going to be raised in knowing Christ or Baal, righteousness or unrighteousness, light or darkness (2 Cor. 6:14ff).

A child is governed by rule before he is governed by principle. Paul said in 1 Cor. 13:11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Our parents gave us rules to follow we did not understand. For example, we had to be in the house before dark. As children, we may not have understood the principle involved, but we understood the rule. All of our lives have been influenced by what we have been taught and trained (Prov. 22:6). God's wisdom says to give a child what he needs, and when the child is older, he will know what is needed (Gen. 18:19; Prov. 6:20-23).

How should I raise my children? The peerless answer is for us to live the Bible, and teach it to our children. What can and should a child learn from parents?

- To make God, Christ, and the Church the main priorities of life (Exod. 20; Matt. 22:37-40; 6:33; 7:5; 1 John 5:3-5; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2:17).
- To make Bible reading a daily habit (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Tim. 4:13-14; 1Cor. 3:1-4).
- To be careful of the company he/she keeps (1 Cor. 15:33; Amos 3:3).
- To be pure in mind, heart, and life is worth more than material possessions (Matt. 16:24-26).
- That becoming a faithful, fervent Christian is the most important attitude and action in life (1 John. 2:14).

There are three words every parent needs to always remember and live in raising their children: love, consistency, and discipline. If any one of these three are not met in our thoughts, words, and deeds, it causes an imbalance in our lives and destroys the effort and work we have invested in our children. Notice, none of these three words indicate perfection (without sin).

- Love Love God the most, your spouse second, and your children the third. Always maintain this order. Why? If you love your children more than God then you will defend and enable them in their wrong doings.
- Consistency Our light must not flicker and work must never end (Matt. 5:14-16; 1 Cor. 15:58).
   Anxiety in children elevates whenever their normal schedule is interrupted. We know this is going to happen. Consistent parents help their children to overcome in these situations, which

- prepares them for the bumps in this life.
- Discipline Just about every parent is an expert *disciplinarian*. How do I know this? Try discussing your ideas with them or correct their child in a way that opposes their ideas, and watch what happens. Parents need to incorporate instructive and corrective discipline. The Bible calls for spanking, PERIOD! (Prov. 22:15; 23:13-14).

Children are the fruit of the home, and one can really know what the home is like by watching how the children act and behave (Matt. 7:18; Ps. 127:4; Eph. 3:17). Children are to obey and honor their parents (Eph. 6:1-3). Little ones are very special people, and the utmost care should be given to them. I dearly love my sons and would fight to the death for them. That is exactly what we are doing and training them to do against the wretched devil. May we raise our children to love the Lord, and in doing this great task; let us use the Bible as our only substance, stability, and source (2 Pet. 1:3).

**CW** 

#### SERVE THE LORD TOGETHER

Mike Bonner

hat a blessing and benefit to be servants (especially the family) of the Most High God. What a blessing and treasure it is to serve God with your spouse and children or even your mother and father in the Lord. Just the idea alone should strengthen our faith and give us the resolve to do the will of God from the heart. We must strengthen our families, for if we can do this, then the local congregation will be enriched, encouraged, excited, and empowered to serve one another, and all with whom it comes in contact. Therefore, serving the Lord together will foster a strong family structure. It will guard against the failure of the family, and it will instruct us on how to endure the sufferings of life through obedient service to our local congregation and fellow man (Matt. 22.37-40).

Serving the Lord together requires godly men and fathers in the home. We need more men bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6.1-4). The family must see the man of the home (if he's in the home) serving the Lord in any capacity he can. He must be like Abraham, for the Lord knew

**CW** 

he would command his house (Gen. 18.19). The family must be encouraged through example and education (Deut. 6.1-6) to see the beauty and necessity of being in the lives of others to the glory of God (Matt. 5.13-16). Furthermore, we must have more mothers who are willing to extend the hand of service and sacrifice in the sight of their children. Children must see their mothers serving the Lord as well. This is vitally important, because we're aware of the children spending more time with the mother, than the father.

Can you imagine the balance of a child who is being taught how to think in the home as it relates to serving the Lord and their fellowman? See, children have to be taught that serving their fellow church members or even strangers, is what the Lord desires and it is character building as well (Matt. 25.31-46). When the family visits a shut-in or someone in the hospital, or even a work of service, such as yard or house work, so much can be gleaned from that and will make a lasting impression upon all involved (Acts 10.38). How about fellowships and devotionals in the home with members of the church? As Paul told Timothy to be an example (make an imprint) on the lives of the brethren, so will our children be blessed to be a part of a family who hosts great spiritual events such as these. Consider the blessing of children seeing their parents fulfill what Paul told the Ephesian elders, "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20.35).

Just a few observations worthy of our consideration: Consistently communicating with the family about the work of the Lord and the benefit of sharing, caring, and spending time with those of a like precious faith, is pertinent to spiritual development. We must put a stop to spending the majority of our time with things that are futile and of limited value (Rom.12.1-2). Things such as extra-curricular activities (sports; concerts; plays; etc) must be put in there proper perspective, so we do not get lost or lose focus on the main thing, that is, pleasing the Lord and serving our fellowman as a family. The family must keep in the forefront of its mind, that the work of the Lord and the stability of the family is vitally important to the well being of the local congregation, and church at large.

In conclusion, let us do our part in studying the word of God together. Keep in mind, the family that prays earnestly together, will most likely stay together through the ups and downs of life. Leaders in the home must remind the family, "the way *UP* is *DOWN*" meaning, service is key to success (Matt. 20.27). Those who stare

continued from page 1

gone". Today, in our politically correct nation, we are told that we should accept same sex marriages and homosexuality. The biblical home is being destroyed.

What can the righteous do (Ps. 11:3)? The answer to this question lies in another divine institution, the church. There is only so much we can do politically. We can try to vote into political office men or women who have a respect for God, but that is becoming a diminishing number. Those of us who still believe in a traditional home must lend an influence for the benefit of the church. It is important that homes in the Lord's church awaken to our responsibilities. How can the home lend its influence to the profit of the church? Brother Wendell Winkler had some good suggestions that I would like to mention:

- By instilling wholesome basic attitudes toward authority
- By teaching and practicing disciple
- By establishing and maintaining the proper priorities
- By developing the proper attitudes toward those who fill special capacities in the Lord's church
- By developing a love and respect for the local church
- By cultivating an appreciation for worship
- By establishing high moral standards
- By motivating and training our children for service in the kingdom of God<sup>2</sup>

We are facing the same situation today that the early church had to face. They lived under an empire in decline, and we live under a government in decline. As the disciples in Acts 4:29 stated, may we always obey God rather than man when there is a conflict between man's law and God's law.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. James Dobson and Gary L. Bauer, *Children at Risk: The Battle for the Hearts and Minds of Our Kids* (Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing, 1990), 110.

Wendell Winkler, *If the Foundations Be Destroyed*, *What Can the Righteous Do?* Florida School of Preaching Lectureship (Pulaski, Tennessee: Sain Publications, 1997), 73-84.



# Southwest School of Bible Studies

## **FACULTY**

Rick Brumback
director

**Andy Baker** 

Clay Bond

**Dewayne Bryant** 

**Kyle Holt** 

**Wayne Jones** 

Alfonso Macias

swsbs.edu

John Moore

Southwest graduates serve as preachers, authors, campus directors, missionaries, and school leaders on five continents. Whatever your passion, with strong academics and hands-on training, our collegiate program will empower you to serve Christ and His church.

- Two year full-time program for men and women
- Well-respected Bible faculty
- Verse-by-verse study of the entire Bible
- Training in expository preaching
- No tuition
- Living expense assistance available
- Studies in Biblical languages



"To know Jesus and...

make Him known"

Southwest church of Christ Christian Worker 8900 Manchaca Road Austin, TX 78748 Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Manchaca, Texas
Permit No. 85