

# GOD' PLAN

FOR OUR

# FAMILY

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## AN INTRODUCTION

When our families have been destroyed the church of our Lord will also be gone. The church is built upon strong families. I understand that the Church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ as the chief cornerstone. However, it is made up of families all over the world. A church filled with strong Christian families will be a powerful church all over the world.

In both the Old Testament and New Testament our God has laid down commands and principles which are to obtain in our Family in every place in the world. Families which apply these commands and principles in their daily-family life are those who have found happiness, a joy for living, a reason for living. These are the families who know that the essence of our lives is to serve our God and to serve our fellowman.

God in the Old Testament commanded the Fathers to teach His commands and precepts to their children each day when they arose, when they walked in the fields and when they retired after a tiresome day. To also teach their grandchildren. Jesus said that "Know the truth - and the truth shall make you free. God's Word is the truth we should know. Parents today are equally bound to train their children to love God, to love the Bible - as their most precious thing they own, to become "scholars" being able to give an answer to anyone who ask them a reason for the hope which lies within them. Unhappily, the Bible lies neglected on the tables-desks of too many Christian homes. America-our World are biblical illiterates. God must weep.

Historians write that America is going down the sewer-drain pipe filth in print-television-slick publications-books-music-art now infiltrating every aspect of American society. It is a awful time for children to be reared. The card-deck is stacked against them.

All of this can be turned around by finding and applying God's plan for our families and families around the world. It is not too late. Parents - please protect your lovely children. Always be there for them - Tell them to come back home wherever they roam. Shalom

## THE RELIGION OF JESUS AND THE FAMILY

### INTRODUCTION:

1. True wealth of nations is not in weapons, economic stability, political system.
2. The true wealth is found in its homes - the basic cell of society.

### I. THE PURPOSE AND NATURE OF MARRIAGE UNDER GOD'S PLAN:

- A. It is of Divine Origin.
- B. In form it is Monogamic.
- C. In nature it is Indissoluble.
- D. In obligations it is Mutual.
- E. In spirit it is Religious.

### II. WHAT IS THE PLACE THAT MAN IS TO FILL WITHIN THE FAMILY UNIT?

- A. Man is to be the responsible head of the family.
  1. Gen. 3:16: "... Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."
  2. I Cor. 11:3: "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."
  3. Eph. 5:22-23: "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body."
    - a. He cannot rightly shift this responsibility to his wife or others.
- B. He is to love and cherish his wife.
  1. Eph. 5:25, 28, 33: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it. ... So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ...Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

2. I Pet. 3:7: “Likewise you husbands, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- a. Poem: Prayer of Any Husband:

Lord, may there be no moment in her life  
When she regrets that she became my wife,  
And keep her dear eyes just a trifle blind  
To my defects - and to my failing, kind!  
Help me to do the utmost that I can  
To prove myself, her measure of a man.  
But, if I often fail, as mortals may,  
Grant that she never sees my feet of clay.  
And let her make allowance - now and then  
That we are only grown-up boys, we men,  
So, loving all our children, she will see,  
Sometimes, a remnant of the child in me.  
Since years must bring to all, their load of care  
Let us, together, every burden bear,  
And when Death beckons one its path along-  
May not the two of us be parted long!  
(Mazie V. Carruthers)

- C. He is to provide for his household materially.

1. I Tim. 5:8: “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”
2. II Cor. 12:14: “...For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.”
  - a. He has the responsibility to earn and to share with his family.

- (I) This would alleviate heavy rolls of aid to dependent children.

- D. He is to train his children in the admonition and nurture of the Lord.

1. Prov. 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

2. Eph. 6:4: “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”
3. Gen. 18:19: God speaking of Abraham said, “For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.”
4. A good boy is no accident - He needs the example of a Godly father.

### A FATHER’S PRAYER

Dear God, my little boy of three  
 Has said his nightly prayer to Thee;  
 Before his eyes were closed in sleep  
 He asked that Thou his soul would keep.

And I, still kneeling at his bed,  
 My hand upon his tousled head,  
 Do ask, with deep humility,  
 That Thou, dear Lord, remember me.

Make me, kind Lord, a worthy dad,  
 That I may lead this little lad  
 In pathways ever fair and bright,  
 That I may keep his steps aright.

O God, his trust must never be  
 Destroyed, or even marred by me;  
 Let Christ in all my actions shine,  
 To guide this little lamb of Thine.

So for the simple things he prayed  
 With childish voice so unafraid,  
 I, trembling, ask the same from Thee;  
 Dear Lord, kind Lord, remember me!

--- Anonymous.

### **III. WHAT IS THE WOMAN’S PLACE WITHIN THE FAMILY?**

- A. They are to be keepers of the home.

1. I Tim. 5:14: “Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.”
2. Titus 2:4-5: “That they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”
3. This part of woman’s work in the family has badly fallen into disrepute.
  - a. Quotation from Alonzo Welch: “By some it is deemed a degrading occupation not becoming to women of culture and sophistication; others look upon it as a chief impediment to their ambition to pursue a career. Hence, we are, to a large extent, rearing a generation of motherless children ... The mother who brings up children is as much a servant of God as the preacher that stands in the pulpit ... Godly women, like all other Christian servants, can become the greatest of all and be crowned in eternal glory as a reward for their faithful service.”

B. She is to be a companion to her husband.

1. Gen. 2:18,24: “And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’ ... Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”
2. Man therefore when alone is incomplete:
  - a. Even in the dismal aftermath of the fall - they had each other.
    - (I) We can imagine Eve saying to Adam: “Well, we made a mess of our lives, we lost our home and the curse of God is upon us, but we do have each other.”

“The world was all before them, where to choose  
 Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:  
 They hand in hand with wandring steps and slow,  
 Through Eden took their solitary way.”

(Milton: *Paradise Lost*)

C. She is to be a mother to her children.

1. Adam named his wife Eve - Meaning Life. It is only right that the source of life should be entrusted in taking care of that life.
2. No other task has such a profound effect upon society.

(QUOTE WELCH): “The care of life is the greatest occupation in the world. The mothers who administer this care do more to determine the source of civilization than any other influence in society. Children are the plastic clay in their hands whose impressionable minds receive the information and ideals that will shape their adulthood. She must feed, clothe, love, teach, guide, wipe noses, tie shoes and kiss bumped heads in order to fulfill her role. If she lives her child and sympathizes with his problems, he will be loving and compassionate, but if she neglects him, he will become insecure and resentful. If she drinks, swears and disparages religion, she will most likely be the mother of criminals. On the other hand, if she loves God and magnifies the ministry as an honorable calling in spite of its hardships, she will probably be the mother of gospel preachers. A simple wish warmed by a mother’s breath can disband armies, revive dead churches and give new life to a declining civilization.”

3. Mother is the first teacher - impressions she makes last for a lifetime.

D. God’s picture of the kind of mothers this world needs is found in Prov. 31:10-31:

“Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeks wool and flax, and willingly works with her hands. She is like the merchant ships, she brings her food from afar. She also rises while it is yet night, and provides food for her household, and a portion for her maidservants. She considers a field and buys it; from her profits she plants a vineyard. She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms. She perceives that her merchandise is good, and her lamp does not go out by night. She stretches out her hands to the distaff, and her hand holds the spindle. She extends her hand to the poor, yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with scarlet. She makes tapestry for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. Her husband is

known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies sashes for the merchants. Strength and honor are her clothing; she shall rejoice in time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness. She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: 'Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all.'"

#### IV. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE FAMILY AS JESUS WOULD HAVE IT?

- A. Christian homes reproduce themselves in the children who go out from them.
  - 1. One of life's greatest blessings is to see one's own home in their children's home.
  
- B. It is a bulwark of stability in a world of change.
  - 1. Moored to an unchanging God, Christ Gospel, Hope - its faith will hold.
  
- C. It gives meaning and purpose to life.
  - 1. Its members consider their relationship to the world and their fellowman.
    - a. Illustration: Two brick masons building a hotel in Cincinnati.
  
- D. It places the correct emphasis on service.
  - 1. Leopold of Belgium built a castle for wife picked up in Paris (Thousands died).
  - 2. David Livingstone also went to Africa - to serve, not to destroy.
    - (I) They buried his heart in Africa and his body in Westminster Abbey.
  
- E. Ingratitude sometimes creeps into even Christian homes.
  - 1. Jesus and the Ten Lepers.
  - 2. Parents sacrifice to clothe, provide shelter - need to take aside to say "Thanks."

- a. They are neglected and sent off to Old Folks' Homes  
- "No room for you."

V. **THERE IS A GREAT NECESSITY TO RECOVER THE SOLEMNITY OF FAMILY LIFE AS JESUS TAUGHT IT.**

- A. Withering away of family - We accuse Plato, Marx, and Lenin as advocating it.
- B. Yet, Americans are unconsciously permitting family life to wither away.
  - 1. When our homes are gone - Then our great nation shall perish.

## LOVE: PARENTS LOVE YOUR CHILDREN

### INTRODUCTION:

#### 1. The Apostle Paul Gives the Best Definition of Love:

“I may speak in tongues of men or of angels, but if I am without love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal. I may have the gift of prophesy, and know every hidden truth; I may have faith strong enough to move mountains; but if I have no love, I am nothing. I may dole out all I possess, or even give my body to be burnt, but if I have no love, I am none the better. 1< 3”

“Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, nor quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men’s sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance. Love will never come to an end. (NEB - I Cor. 13:1-8)

“Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous, or conceited, or proud, love is not ill-mannered, or selfish, or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up: its faith, hope and patience never fail. Love is eternal. (TEV)

“Love ... does not pursue selfish advantage ... It does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people ... Love knows no limits to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that still stands when all else has fallen. (Phillips)

#### 2. The Home and the Church Stand or Fall Together.

We cannot build up strong homes without, at the same time, building up the church. If the home is strong, the church is going to be strong because the church is a product of our homes. This makes parenthood even more important.

### I. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS A PARENT WILL DO IF HE TRULY LOVES HIS CHILDREN:

A. Firstly: He will provide a decent home life for his children.

1. He will see to it that the family lives in a decent community.
2. He will provide opportunity for formal training to fit his children to make a living.

B. Secondly: He will set the right example before his children.

1. Jack Gray has written of a father's influence:

“A father's influence is a wonderful thing. Yet there is many a father in our land today, who though he loves his children as he loves nothing else on earth, is not giving them that one thing that is more important than anything else in the world. Most fathers love their children enough to work on hours in order that they may have ample food and clothing and other necessities of life. The typical father would be willing to give his right arm, if necessary, to save the life of his child. Yet, he is so busy earning a living, so busy keeping up with the affairs of the world, so busy reading the evening paper and keeping up with the sports page that he never gets around to giving his children religious training. Think of the tragedy of letting those strategic years slip by. We will not always have our children in our homes where we can influence them. They are with us for a little while and then they are gone.”

2. Daddy, Your Son is Surely Watching You.

A careful man I want to be  
A little fellow follows me;  
I do not dare to go astray,  
For fear he'll go the self-same way.

I cannot once escape his eyes;  
Whate'er he sees me do, he tries;  
Like me he says he's going to be -  
This little fellow who follows me.  
I must remember as I go  
Through summer's sun and winter's snow,  
For that little chap who follows me.

C. Thirdly, Parents have the responsibility for the discipline of their children.

1. Prov. 13:24: “He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines his promptly.”
2. Prov. 23:13-14: “Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell.”
3. Prov. 29:15: “The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.”

4. God held Eli Responsible for the Wickedness of his sons.

- a. I Sam. 3:11-13: “Then the Lord said to Samuel: “Behold, I will do something in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.”

D. Fourthly, Parents have the responsibility to install a valid set of values.

1. The Bible must be taught and respected in front of them.

- a. Deut. 4:5-6:9: “Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ ... Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren.”
- b. Deut. 6:6-9: “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart; you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”
- c. Deut. 11:18-21: “Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your

gates, that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth.”

- d. Eph. 6:4: “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”
- e. Col. 3:21: “Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

Note: It is here that Christian families have failed the most.

- f. II Tim. 1:5: To Timothy, my beloved son: “when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.”
2. Parents must stress the Place of Responsible Citizenship in the lives of their children. (Social Conscience)
  3. The place they are to fill Within the Church Community needs to be pointed out from an early age.
  4. We must hope that the Family Circle will not be broken in heaven.
    - a. We have so little time to mold our children into Christ-Likeness.

I took a piece of plastic clay  
And gently fashioned it one day;  
And as my fingers pressed it still  
It moved and yielded to my will.

I came again when days were past;  
That bit of clay was hard at last.  
The form I gave it still it bore,  
But I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay  
And gently formed it day by day;  
And moulded with my power and art  
A young child’s soft and yielding heart.

I came again when days were gone;  
It was a man I looked upon.  
He still that early impress wore,  
And I could change it never more.

b. Can you imagine your children:

Coming into the living room at night seeing father buried in the evening paper, and going over to sit on the arm of his father's chair? Can you imagine him putting his arm around his father's neck and saying, "Dad, I want to thank you for everything you have done for me. I want to thank you for my clothes, for my food, for my bicycle, and for everything. But, Dad, what have you ever done to help me get to heaven?" What could you say if your son asked you that? What would your answer be to your daughters?

Some men are robbing their children of the most important thing they can give their children and that is the memory of growing up in a home the father and mother were Christians in the finest sense of that word. No one else can give our children this example which they can cherish.

c. Socrates:

"Fellow citizens, why do ye turn and scrape every stone to gather wealth and take so little care of your children to whom one day you must relinquish it all?"

d. Prov. 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

"If after the child leaves the family circle he is unable to adjust to the realities of life, most likely the parents in the home are at least partly responsible for his failure."

e. Dr. James B. ~~W~~ has well said:

"The infant begins to differentiate between mother and father. A baby boy quickly commences the identification process. He puts on his father's hat - and feels very proud of

doing it. He plays with his father's fishing tackle. And soon he will actually be going fishing with his dad. As the years go by, father is the model for his growth and development. Indeed, it may be said that whether the child grows up to be a man depends on what he has learned from his father. He certainly won't learn to be a man from his mother."

## II. WE SHALL CONTINUE TO LOVE OUR CHILDREN EVEN WHEN THEY HAVE FAILED IN LIFE.

- A. The father of the Prodigal Son.
- B. David still loved Absalom. (Describe what Absalom did and how he died.)

When told of Absalom's death, the Scriptures tell us:

"And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the date, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!'"

- C. Rudyard Kipling could write of his mother's love:

"If I were hanged on the highest hill,  
Mother o' mine, O Mother o' mine!  
I know whose love would follow me still,  
Mother o' mine, O Mother o' mine.

- D. Homes should be that place to go for Shelter and Understanding when the storm comes.

- 1. Parents, can you <sup>WE</sup> truthfully say that you love your children?
  - a. Is your home life as you know that God would have it?
  - b. Do you put the Bible first in your home?
  - c. Are you faithful in Bible study attendance and church worship? Do your children understand that you put these things before all other things?
  - d. Are all of our children on the way to heaven?

If we cannot love each other at home - we probably can't love outside.

- (1) If we cannot have true love for each other within our own homes, it is highly unlikely that we can love anyone outside of it.

Parents need to attend worship together.  
They divide the children.

## LOVE: HUSBANDS AND WIVES

TEXT: Eph. 5:22-33:

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 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. So husbands ought to love their own 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 the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”

(New King James)

### **I. IF A MAN TRULY LOVES HIS WIFE, HE WILL ABIDE BY CERTAIN PRINCIPLES:**

- A. He will put her first - (Leave father and mother and cleave to his wife.)
- B. He will love her as he loves himself.
- C. He will love her as Christ loved the Church.
- D. He will be true to his marriage vows.
  - 1. For better - For worse.
  - 2. For richer - For poorer.
  - 3. In sickness - In health.
  - 4. To love and to cherish until death us do part.
- E. He will not be constantly broadcasting her faults to others - Even his children.
- F. He will share his money. (Not yours or mine - but ours).

G. He will forgive and forget.

Here is a good quotation from O. J. Russell:

“Both the Bible and Webster agree that forgiveness involves forgetting. It is one thing to forgive a person; another thing to forget. Someone has said that “A woman is always ready to forgive and forget - but it should be added that they never forget what they forgive.” .... To illustrate: A husband is forgiven but the card is filed. Then when anything is provoked, the card is pulled. A husband sinned heinously against his wife, but every day for twenty-five years she nagged him with this forgiveness. Which is the most guilty?

H. He will love her more dearly when her hair has turned to silver.

“Grow old with me, the best is yet to be,  
The last of life for which the first is made.”  
(Robert Browning)

I. He will command - Not demand - her respect by his speech, his demeanor - his goals.

J. He will recognize that he and his wife are partners:

1. Partners in purpose.
2. Partners in preparation.
3. Partners in promise.

II. **EVERY WIFE SHOULD STRIVE TO FILL SOLOMON'S PORTRAIT OF A WORTHY WOMAN.**

Prov. 31:10-31: “Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeks wool and flax, and willingly works with her hands. She is like the merchant ships, she brings her food from afar. She also rises while it is yet night, and provides food for her household, and a portion for her maidservants. She considers a field and buys it; from her profits she plants a vineyard. She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms. She perceives that her merchandise is good, and her lamp does not go out by night. She stretches out her hands to the distaff, and her hand holds the spindle. She extends her hand to the poor, yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with scarlet. She makes tapestry for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. Her husband is known in the gates,

when he sits among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies sashes for the merchants. Strength and honor are her clothing; she shall rejoice in time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness. She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: "Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all." Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates."

Note: I'd like to go on record right now and affirm that my own dear wife fits this portrait more than any other woman I know.

1. The Greatest Gift a Husband and Wife Can Give to Their Children is to Love Each Other and Provide a Christian Home for Them.

"Home is where the heart is"  
In dwelling great and small  
And there is many a stately mansion  
That isn't home at all;  
And a cottage lighted with love-light  
Is the dearest home of all.

Should you go first and I remain  
    To walk the road alone,  
I'll live in memory's garden dear,  
    With happy days we've known.  
In spring I'll watch for roses red  
    When fades the lilac blue,  
In early fall when brown leaves call  
    I'll catch a glimpse of you.

Should you go first and I remain  
    To finish with the scroll,  
No length'ning shadows shall creep in  
    To make this life seem droll.  
We've known so much of happiness,  
    We've had our cup of joy  
And memory is one gift of God  
    That death cannot destroy.

Should you go first and I remain  
    For battles to be fought,  
Each thing you've touched along the way  
    Will be a hallowed spot.  
I'll hear your voice, I'll see your smile,  
    Though blindly I may grope.  
The memory of your helping hand  
    Will buoy me on with hope.

Should you go first and I remain  
    One thing I'd have you do;  
Walk slowly down that long, lone path,  
    For soon I'll follow you. ..  
I'll want to know each step you take  
    That I may walk the same.  
For someday, down that lonely road,  
    You'll hear me call your name.

## LOVE: CHILDREN FOR THEIR PARENTS

Exodus 20:1-12: “And God spoke all these words, saying: ‘I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me. ... Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.’”

### INTRODUCTION:

A. Numerous passages from the Old Testament show that God expected children to respect and honor their parents.

1. Exodus 21:15: “And he who strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.”
2. Lev. 20:9: “For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood shall be upon him.”
3. Deut. 27:16: “‘Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’”
4. Prov. 20:20: “Whoever curses his father or his mother, his lamp will be put out in deep darkness.”
5. Deut. 21:18-21: “If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, and the gate of his city. And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones; so you shall put away the evil person from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear.”
  - a. The whole community was affected.
6. Young people, listen to the words of advice from Proverbs:

1:8: “My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother.”

6:20-22: “My son, keep your father’s command, and do not forsake the law of your mother. Bind them continually upon your heart; tie them around your neck. When you roam,

they will lead you; when you sleep, they will keep you; and when you awake, they will speak with you.

10:1, 5: “A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is the grief of his mother. ... He who gathers in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame.”

13:1: “A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.”

15:5: “A fool despises his father’s instruction, but he who receives reproof is prudent.”

17:1, 6: “Better is a dry morsel with quietness, than a house full of feasting with strife. ...Children’s children are the crown of old men, and the glory of children is their father.”

17:25: “A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her who bore him.”

23:22: “Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old.”

These commandments and many more cohesed the Jewish family closer together than any other people under the sun.

**I. THE NEW TESTAMENT IS EQUALLY PLAIN THAT CHILDREN ARE TO HONOR AND OBEY PARENTS.**

- A. Eph. 6:1-3: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”
- B. Col. 3:20: “Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.”
- C. Our Lord set the proper example for children today to follow in this matter.
  - 1. Luke 2:51-52: “Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”

2. Even in the hour of His death, Jesus still honored His mother.
  - a. John 19:26-27: “When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold your son!’ Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold your mother!’ And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.”

**II. CHILDREN SHOULD HONOR AND OBEY THEIR PARENTS FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS:**

- A. Because parents know more than their children.
- B. Because God has given parents the right and the obligation to discipline children.
- C. Because the principle is for the experienced to teach and guide the inexperienced.
  1. It is a fact that the journeyman is more capable than the apprentice.
    - a. This is true of any relationship:

Father - child  
Teacher - student  
Supervisor - trainee
- D. Because honoring one’s parents makes it easier to honor and obey God.

**III. WE CAN HONOR OUR PARENTS BY:**

- A. Seeking and taking their advice.
- B. Speaking kindly to them and about them.
- C. Setting the right example in our lives before others.
  1. Nothing brings more honor to a parent than to have others speak well of their children. On the other hand, nothing can bring more shame and heartbreak than to see one’s children going wrong.
- D. Becoming a true Christian and remaining faithful and active in the Church.

- E. Selecting another faithful Christian for a marriage partner and having a happy home.
- F. Parents should see that their children are not ashamed of them.

**IV. THIS HONOR INVOLVES OUR TAKING CARE OF OUR AGED PARENTS.**

- A. I Tim. 5:3-8: “Honor widows who are really widows. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. ... But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”
- B. Matt. 15:4-9: “For God commanded, saying ‘Honor your father and your mother’ and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, ‘Whatever profit you might have received from me has been dedicated to the temple’ -- ‘is released from honoring his father or mother.’ ‘Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: ‘These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’”

## OUR MOST VALUABLE POSSESSION

(Eph. 6:4)

### INTRODUCTION:

1. The real wealth of any nation is not found in its tanks, planes, bombs, political system, economic policies or fiscal soundness. The real wealth of any nation lies in its homes - the basic cell of society. When our homes are gone, our proud nation will sink into the ashes of a forgotten past.
2. Man's greatest responsibility lies in the rearing of his children in the way that God wants them to go.

### I. PARENTS NEED TO UNDERSTAND THEIR CHILDREN PHYSICALLY.

1. Children are living, changing organisms.
2. No two children are alike - not even twins.
3. Parents need to understand growth norms, mental sets, and the different stages all children go through on their way up to adulthood. Every parent should spend some money and time in reading some standard books on child psychology.

### II. REARING CHILDREN OFFERS ONE OF LIFE'S GREATEST RESPONSIBILITIES.

1. A child has the right to some things:
  - A. An education as far as possible.
  - B. A stable, and comfortable home life.
  - C. The right examples of father and mother before him.
  - D. A schooling in the word of God.
  - E. An opportunity to face life upon a relative equality.
2. Rearing children gives real meaning to life:
  - A. Man and not things is the answer to our world's problems.
  - B. The solution to the world's ills are centered in the youth of today.
  - C. None of us can foretell the potentiality of our children:  
Examples: (1) Life of Martin Luther  
(2) Life of John Wesley  
(3) Life of Alexander Campbell  
  
(a) None of their mothers had the ability to see how greatly each of these men affected the religious world.

### III. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PRINCIPLES I SHOULD INSTILL IN MY CHILDREN:

1. To learn to play the game of life fair and square.
2. To seek for "Truth" before arriving at decisions.
3. To never bend a principle for any man for any price.

Examples: Racial prejudice  
Capital - Labor relations  
Religious convictions

4. To judge a fellow for what he is - and not for what he has.
5. That work is honorable and laziness is to be abhorred.
6. To seek the finer things in life and not the lewd and debased and vulgar.
7. To seek a Christian partner when he is ready to marry.
8. To observe the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.
  - A. Our children must learn that our religion bridges national boundaries, national prejudices, etc. We must show them an appreciation of the value of a soul anywhere on earth.
9. To know that the essence of life is to serve and not to be served.
10. To know that the end in life is to reach Heaven with the Redeemed of the Ages.
  - A. We should teach our children the Bible diligently early in life.
  - B. We should insist that it become the most important part of his life.
  - C. We should want to make him a Bible scholar - that he might aid others.
  - D. Above all: I would persuade him to become a Christian.

IV. OF COURSE, AS PARENTS WE MUST SET THE RIGHT EXAMPLE FOR OUR CHILDREN.

1. The first book your child reads is your life.
2. Do not neglect your most valuable possessions - You will surely suffer remorse in later life if you do.

An old man going a lone highway  
Came at the evening cold and gray  
To a chasm vast and wide and steep  
With waters rolling cold and deep.

The old man crossed in the twilight dim  
For that sullen stream had no fear for him  
But he turned when safe on the other side  
And built a bridge to span that tide.

Old man, said a fellow traveller near,  
Why do you waste your strength building here  
Your journey will end with the ending day  
And you ne'er again will pass this way.

The builder lifted his old gray head  
Friend, in the path I've come, he said  
There followeth after me today  
A youth whose feet must pass this way  
This chasm that has been as nought to me  
To that youth may a pitfall be  
Friend, I am building this bridge for him.

CONCLUSION:

1. If we build strong congregations in our generation, our children will be able to build stronger ones in theirs.
2. If we can build a bridge across the sullen stream of racial prejudice, our children will be able to fashion a new society.
3. If we can build a bridge of human understanding and mutual appreciation among the world's diverse populations - perhaps our children's children will enjoy an era of peace.
4. If we will build our bridge of family love upon the pillars of God's eternal love - then our family circle will not be broken at the Judgment Day.

NOTE: Life's days pass swiftly and our children are soon gone from home. Let us resolve to make every day count to its fullest.

WHEN THE LAST CHILD LEAVES

The last one cleaned his bedroom out;  
He left today at five.  
There was not much to talk about;  
His car backed down the drive.

This is the first night they all sleep  
Behind some other door.  
This is the first night these rooms keep  
Our children safe no more.

They never were our own to hold;  
We had them for that time  
When they could not yet handle cold  
And needed help to climb.

You loved them, Lord, before the day  
They came into our sight.  
You love them more than words can say --  
Please love them well tonight.

--Robert M. Stanley