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# Family Foundations

## *Introduction*

There are three stages to God's restoration process:

- the individual,
- the family, and
- the Church.

The individual is the basic building block of the family and the family is the basic building block of the Church.

God made the first family when He created Adam and Eve. He has always had a blueprint for the family and how it is to function. This is important because the family relationships are prophetic in the sense that they reflect spiritual truth relating to Christ and His Church. For us to function properly as a part of the Church, we must function properly within the family according to God's blueprints.

We know God as Father and understand that He has a purpose for His family. He expresses His paternal nature through the proper functioning of the family relationships. It is our responsibility to align our lives with His purposes, which includes structuring our families according to His plan and not the World's system.

## *The First Family*

God not only established the first family, He also built a home or habitat for them that we call Paradise, the Garden of Eden. It was there that God established the basic principles of how a family functions.

### Genesis 2:7-8 NASB

(7) Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

(8) The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.

### Genesis 2:15 NASB

(15) Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

### Genesis 2:18 NASB

(18) Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."

#### Genesis 2:21-24 NASB

(21) So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place.

(22) The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.

(23) The man 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."

(24) For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

God created man and put him in the garden that He had planted for man to keep it. God then made a helper that was suitable, i.e. appropriate, for him. This helper was made from the rib taken from Adam's side not the foot or the head. This signifies that the woman is to be a full partner standing with him.

When a man marries he leaves his family and is joined to his wife, thus creating or establishing a new family. When the man and woman are joined they become, literally, one flesh, i.e., joined together they are one unit (one personage) in God's eyes. The root word that is translated "marriage" means "merger". Two personalities become one personality before the Lord.

This first family was a trinity reflecting the image of God, who is also a trinity. As the two became one, the third person in the union was God. This is still applicable today. When two people join together, the third person in the marriage is the Lord. That is the way that the original family was designed to function. Any family that tries to function without the Lord is missing a crucial piece of its structure and will never fully achieve the purpose that the Lord intended for the family.

The first family also had a command from God that is passed on to succeeding generations.

#### Genesis 1:28 NASB

(28) God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

God's expectations of the first family was that they reproduce and fill the earth. As they did this they were to subdue and rule. This is God's intent today, also. However, He expects us to subdue by His power and rule by His authority.

### *One Flesh*

We speak of "two becoming one", but, in today's society no one seems to take this seriously. Becoming one is not a partnership. Neither is it a fifty-fifty relationship between two individuals;

but, rather the annihilation of two individual personalities and the creation of a new personality. Marriage is greater than just “union”; there must be “unity”. We can be in union physically or even soulishly with our likes and dislikes and still not be in unity as the Lord intended. Unity is a spiritual function and only be entered into and maintained from a spiritual perspective. This is the same unity that binds us and the Lord together as the Body of Christ. Our marriage commitment portrays our commitment to Christ and to His Body.

Paul spoke of the husband-wife relationship as a real-world, physical example of the relationship between Christ and the Church. He even said that it was a great mystery, which means that it was a hidden secret that is not known to everyone but only to those who are “initiated” or instructed in the mystery.

### Ephesians 5:31-32 NASB

(31) FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.

(32) This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

How does one understand the relationship between Christ and His Church? By understanding the relationship between a husband and wife. We can't comprehend how “...there are many members, but one body” (I Cor. 12:20) if we don't understand how two become one flesh in marriage. Neither do we know how to participate in the Body as a member if we don't know how to function correctly in a family.

This isn't theory but reality; however, it is a mystery to those who are “un-instructed”. That is one reasons that the reality of the Body of Christ functioning as one is not understood today because the “instruction” that we should be receiving through marriage has been so corrupted by the worlds standards and practices.

## *The Mystery*

The husband relates to the wife in the same manner that Christ relates to the Church and the wife relates to the husband in the same manner that the Church relates to Christ.

### Ephesians 5:23-24 NASB

(23) For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body.

(24) But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.

This means that scriptural understanding of how husbands and wives function is applicable to our understanding of how the Lord functions with His Body and vice-versa.

<b><i>CHRIST</i></b>	<b><i>CHURCH</i></b>
Husband	Wife
Head	Body
Lover	Beloved
Sanctifier (Word)	Sanctified by word
Provides	Receives
Initiates	Responds

### ***Family Structure and Order***

God has always had His structure and order for the family. It is important that we implement His order if we want the family to function properly. The problem we have today is that too much of the understanding concerning families and how they function is coming from the ungodly and is based on worldly thinking and practices. This is soundly condemned by the scriptures. The Psalms begin with a clear admonishing about the results of listening to the counsel of the ungodly as contrasted with that of the righteous. The counsel of the ungodly is like chaff in the wind that blows first one way and then another and in the end will perish with them.

#### **Psalms 1:1-6 NASB**

- (1) How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!
- (2) But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.
- (3) He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.
- (4) The wicked are not so, But they are like chaff which the wind drives away.
- (5) Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
- (6) For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the wicked will perish.

It is important that we establish the basis for our understanding because everyone and his brother wants to tell you how your family should function and how husbands and wives should relate to each other. The bookstores are full of books about it. The magazines are full of articles about it. The television stations air shows about it. And there are many seminars, speakers, workshops, retreats, etc. that promise to help you achieve a successful marriage. Almost all of these present a world view that is contrary to the Bible and provide information that has little or no practical value if you desire a family patterned after God's blueprints.

Marriage counsel needs to come from the righteous not the worldly and especially not the wicked. It is our responsibility to search out the righteous counsel of the Lord.

God gives us his *order* for the family and it is based on *authority* and *responsibility*.

### 1 Corinthians 11:3 NASB

(3) But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.

This is the order:

- Head of all things—God—the Head of Christ
- The Lord of the family—Christ—the Head of the husband
- Chief authority over the children—Husband—the head of the wife
- Secondary authority over the children—Wife—the helper of the husband
- Colossians 3:20—Children—obedient to parents

Order has nothing to do with value or function or importance. It has to do with God's plan and purpose and the process of fulfilling it. His order means that He places us in our positions and we are responsible for functioning where He has placed us and in the manner that He intends.

The survival and well-being of the family is absolutely dependent on the observance of God's order for the family. Changing the order only produces problems—the cure is a return to God's original order.

It is important that we understand why God has established this order. Part of it was a consequence of eating the forbidden fruit. Since this is the case, we can expect that after the resurrection our relationship will be different just like the Church and Christ's relationship will be different in the millennium and after.

### Genesis 3:16-19 NASB

(16) To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you."

(17) Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life.

(18) "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field;

(19) By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."

The consequences of sin for the woman included increased pain during childbirth. This pain is enough that a woman could not to want to ever do that again; so, the Lord put a desire (longing, craving) for her husband. That is why the pain of childbirth is not long remembered after it is over.

The last consequence for the woman was that her husband would rule (reign, have dominion) over her. This is the same type and character of ruling that Christ has over the Church.

The sin consequences for the man included a curse that was put on the land. This curse hinders the land from producing as easily and abundantly as it did before the fall and also causes it to bring forth unwanted things that weren't planted. It is now necessary for the man to increase his work and struggle in labor in order to provide for his family. By this word from God, provision has now become the man's responsibility, whereas, previously, provision came from God through the abundance of His creation.

Now, let us look at how this is applied in the New Testament.

### Ephesians 5:22-33 NASB

- (22) Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord.
- (23) For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body.
- (24) But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.
- (25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,
- (26) so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,
- (27) that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.
- (28) So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;
- (29) for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church,
- (30) because we are members of His body.
- (31) FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.
- (32) This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.
- (33) Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband.

Wives are to submit or be subject to their own husband not to someone else's husband. This is important. There are groups where the idea is that women are to submit to men; but that is not what this scripture says. The wife is to submit to her own husband because he is the one who is responsible to God for her. The means that the wife is subject to her husband and not the elders or ministers.

Men are to love their wives just like Christ loves the Church. Since the two have become one, it is the same as loving himself. Just as Christ gave his life for us, husbands are to give their life as an expression of love for their wife. Her response to this love is that she respects (reverences, honors) her husband.

The husband also sanctifies or sets apart his wife by cleansing her with the word. It is the husband's responsibility to minister the word to his wife in such a way that she cleaned and set apart for her work in the Lord. This doesn't replace the wife's responsibility for her own relationship with the Lord for worship or fellowship with him. The husband's job is to help his wife come to maturity and fulfillment in the full expression of the life of the Lord in her.

### ***Placement and Function***

As we have seen, God created the family with a structure and order. In fulfilling that order He placed the husband as the head of the woman (family) and He placed the woman as the husband's helper and as the body of which he is head. Proper placement insures proper function. We can't find full expression of our function in the Lord until we have recognized our proper placement. This is as true for the family as it is true for the Body of Christ. The husband has to *function* as the head and the wife has to *function* as the body. Again, this has nothing to do with value or importance but with the sovereign purpose of God.

If the husband and wife mix up their functions with each other, it produces disorder and confusion and will eventually present emotional and marital difficulties. This is one of the major problems with the American family today. There has been a blurring of the roles and functions of husband and wife.

The feminists have contributed greatly to the family problem by sowing discontent in the wives. The attitude and spirit behind the feminists can be traced back to Lucifer. He is the original source of discontentment.

#### Isaiah 14:13-14 NASB

(13) "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north.

(14) 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

Lucifer was not satisfied with who he was (his identity), with where he was (his placement) and with what he was doing (his function). Even though his identity, placement and function were established by God, he wanted something different for himself. He felt under valued, under utilized and under recognized. This discontent contributed to his downfall.

Satan now instills this same discontent in husbands and wives, especially the wives, telling them that they are under valued, under utilized, and under recognized. He tells the wife that she is her own person and that she is wasting herself as a wife and mother, she needs to get out into the world and achieve recognition for her talents and abilities. Besides, she is as capable as any man (maybe even better, the devil whispers), so, there is no reason for her to be in any kind of submission to her husband. Who does he think he is to tell her what to do?

As the roles and functions of husbands and wives blur or reverse, there comes a general

masculization of women and a general feminization of men as a whole. Those of us who are of an earlier generation can see this by just looking at the people in a large public place. This gender function confusion leads to an increase in homosexuality and sexual dysfunction in the population.

## ***Rights and Responsibilities***

It is in the family relationship that we learn everything that we need to know about rights and responsibilities. The practice of relationship in the home provides the opportunity for the Lord to change our heart attitudes into those that are needed for relationships in the larger Body of Christ.

### **Colossians 3:3 NASB**

(3) For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

The dead have not rights. To come into the unity of marriage requires the practical expression of dying to ourselves. We have given ourselves to another and that must be worked out in our daily married life.

## **Husbands**

Men have to learn how to be husbands. We should have learned this as we were growing up by observing the relationship between our father and mother. However, in many cases, our parent's relationships weren't the best examples that we could have. Now, we have to learn "on the job". We do this by learning and applying how Jesus, as husband, relates to His Bride.

### **Ephesians 5:25 NASB**

(25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

### **Ephesians 5:28-29 NASB**

(28) So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;

(29) for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church,

### **Ephesians 5:33 NASB**

(33) Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband.

### **Colossians 3:19 NASB**

(19) Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.

The first and foremost responsibility of the husband is that he love his wife. This is the God kind of love. He lays down his life for his beloved. He puts her needs ahead of his own needs. He nourishes her and cherishes her. His desire is that she fully express all that the Lord has put in her and walk in all that He has prepared for her.

**Ephesians 5:23 NASB**

(23) For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body.

The husband's demonstration of his love for his wife is the way that he sacrifices for her. The husband must go the way of the cross, allowing the Lord to deal with his self-life so that he can bring the help, strength, and authority to his family that it needs.

The second requirement of a husband is that he live with his wife in an understanding manner—not just as a woman but as also a fellow heir of the grace of God.

**1 Peter 3:7 NASB**

(7) You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

If the husband begins to treat his wife with disrespect and not honoring her as a joint heir of Christ, it will cause his prayers to be hindered. In other words, his attitude toward his wife affects the answers to his prayers.

The third responsibility of the husband is sanctifying his wife. She must be *holy* and *wholly* the Lord's.

**Ephesians 5:25-27 NASB**

(25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

(26) so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

(27) that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

By washing her with the Word, he helps her to be *holy*. He is concerned that she have the opportunity to grow and develop in faith so that she becomes all that God wants her to become. He intercedes for her, blesses her, and makes sure that she has some alone time with the Lord.

He also helps her become *wholly* the Lord's—she becomes a fully developed person, not like someone else's wife but what God created her to be intellectually, emotionally, culturally, sexually, domestically, and every other way.

The fourth responsibility of the husband is to guard and protect his wife. There are four basic areas of attack from which the wife should be protected.

1. Economic want—in committing herself to him, she should be set free from basic anxiety in this area.

2. Physical and emotional attack—this includes emotional attack from the children. A mother should never have to fight for respect from the children. The father and husband should enforce respect from the children. He should lead by example expressing an attitude of total respect, regard, and esteem toward the mother.
3. Over-extending herself—it is in her nature to give and to help. He needs to help her learn when and how to say no.
4. Spiritual attack—the husband is a spiritual covering for his wife so that her unique gifts are not subject to misuse and deception.

Earlier in this study, we said that the husband functions as the head and the wife functions as the body and these functions are of the same type as Christ and the church.

### Ephesians 5:23 NASB

(23) For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body.

The head gives direction and leadership. The world system tells us that headship=superiority and that submission=inferiority. This is not true in the Lord. Jesus told us that with us it was not to be like the Gentiles who lord it over one another but that we must be servants to all.

The purpose of headship is to discover and express the will of God in the family—not to inflict the husband's will upon the family. For this to function properly, the husband has to be in submission to his own head, Christ Jesus. The husband cannot function in proper headship without being in proper submission to Jesus as his head.

For the husband to speak for God, he must give up his own will. If he does this he approaches his wife with a different spirit. She is not someone to steamroll over to get his way; but, instead, she is someone who helps him get the mind of Christ. He needs to listen to her carefully as she may be a channel of revelation.

As head, the husband is responsible to discern the Lord's will for the family. He does this the best way that he can, which includes listening to his wife, weighing her counsel, misgivings, insight, and judgment. The husband doesn't have the last word, he simply gets to speak it. Christ has the last word if the family is in proper order.

### Wives

The key aspect of the wife's relationship to her husband is one of being subject to or in submission to him. This usually raises hackles among the women because they have been taught an incorrect understanding about the meaning of submission.

### Ephesians 5:22 NASB

(22) Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

### Ephesians 5:24 NASB

(24) But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.

**Ephesians 5:33 NASB**

(33) Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband.

**Colossians 3:18 NASB**

(18) Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

First, submission is to the woman's own husband, not to men in general. Understanding this alone will solve a lot of problems in the Church.

Second, submission is not the same as obedience. One can be disobedient and still be submissive in spirit. For example, a wife is not required to be obedient to her husband in clear violation of the Lord's commands in a particular matter; whereas, a submissive spirit is still required by the Lord. Obedience is an act that results from conscious decision. Submission is an attitude of the spirit.

Third, submission is not service. The wife has no more requirement to be a servant than the husband does for we are all required to become servants of the Lord and each other.

**1 Peter 3:1-6 NASB**

(1) In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any *of them* are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,

(2) as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.

(3) Your adornment must not be *merely* external--braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses;

(4) but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

(5) For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands;

(6) just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

The wife is to have a gentle and quiet spirit. This will result in chaste and respectful behavior. This type of behavior along with a submissive spirit will cause even husbands who are disobedient to the Lord to be changed.

Being subject to her husband means that the wife is under her husband's authority. This is important because the scripture tells us that she ought to have authority on her head because of the angels.

**1 Corinthians 11:10 NASB**

(10) Therefore the woman ought to have *a symbol of* authority on her head, because of the angels.

There would be no reason for concern about God's angels; therefore, this must be referring to the fallen angels. When the family is in proper order, protection flows from Christ through the relationships. If the wife doesn't “stand under” (the meaning of “be subject”), she is out from under the authority that has been placed over her by the Lord. This leaves her open to deception from the fallen angels.

## ***Children***

The parents together have responsibility before God for the children and should expect the children to be obedient.

### **Ephesians 6:1-4 NASB**

- (1) Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
- (2) HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise),
- (3) SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.
- (4) Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

The husband and father is primarily responsible for the discipline and instruction of the Lord. In dealing with this it is very easy to become frustrated and instead of correcting end up provoking them filling them with anger toward you.

## ***Sex in Marriage***

God established sex as part of the family when, in Genesis, He told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply. When you read the Song of Solomon you can see that God has a wholesome view of sex. The physical union and oneness should reflect the spiritual oneness of the husband and wife. Because when a man and woman marry they become one there is a oneness manifested in the full person, spirit, soul, and body, of the new creation that the two have become. The physical side of this is important but not as important as the spiritual oneness.

Paul gives us a practical discussion of sex in First Corinthians.

### **1 Corinthians 7:2-5 NASB**

- (2) But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband.
- (3) The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.
- (4) The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*; and likewise

also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*.

(5) Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

The husband's body and the wife's body are meant for each other. This eliminates temptation for immorality. Neither should deprive the other of sex unless it is just a temporary agreement in order to devote themselves to prayer. Otherwise, the enemy will tempt you in the area of your self control.

The world sees sex as a matter of getting satisfaction and enjoyment. This is a perversion of God's intention. God designed sex to be an expression of giving ourselves one to another. It is the laying down of our wants and desires for our partner's well-being.

Understanding this would eliminate most sexual hang-ups. As we begin to apply this simple principle of laying down our lives, we see that our role in sex is one of giving and ministering one to the other. It is a function of the total personality for the fulfillment of spiritual purposes, not just a function of the body.

Only a Christian can know the ultimate, true meaning of love, and only a Christian can know the fullest meaning of sex, because it has a definite relationship to Almighty God. The sexual relationship is a sacrament, which is a symbol instituted by God. Sexual union is a symbol given by God that illustrates the union of the believer with God Himself. Only a Christian couple has this aspect of sex where the love of a husband and wife is lifted as an act of worship to God.

There are five primary purposes of the sexual relationship in marriage:

1. Spiritual—unity, the blending of two personalities in total communion;
2. Social—each accepts the other as completely as he accepts himself;
3. Psychological—sense of fulfillment and security. There is security in giving and receiving love, in being needed and in filling need;
4. Procreation—Genesis 1:28;
5. Biological—1 Corinthians 1:9, sex in marriage is the legitimate avenue for satisfaction of the sexual drive.