

THE THREE KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL FAMILY BIBLICAL FAMILY SERIES

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Genesis 1:26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 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.”

INTRO: The family institution is the most important institution that God established on the earth (Genesis 1:26-28). Unfortunately, we live on a broken planet because of sin. God’s blessing on the family (Genesis 1:28) has been lost because of sin. Sin is the most destructive force in our world. It has impacted us personally and every institution that God has created, especially the family institution. Every problem in society can be traced to a crisis that is in the family institution. From abortion to the legalization of same-sex marriage to all the LGBTQ issues that we are dealing with, it is because of the demise of the family. It is no wonder the enemy has attacked the family institution through immorality, abortion, adultery, divorce, legalizing same-sex marriage, kidnapping, and trafficking humans, especially children. Today many people, including many believers in Jesus, believe that the biblical family model is obsolete and no longer relevant.

But because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, God is in the process of making all things new (Revelation 21:5)—beginning with us as individuals (2 Corinthians 5:17) to ultimately a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1). God is restoring the truths and institutions that were lost in the Garden. **Luke 19:10 “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save THAT which was lost.”** From the very beginning of Genesis, God has given us His mandate to have dominion over the earth under His loving guidance and rulership. We call it **“The Law of First Mention.”** In our text we find the three keys to a successful family.

PURPOSE STATEMENT: I want to share three truths that will strengthen the Christian family. 1) It begins with restoring your love relationship with God. 2)

Renewing and reaffirming your marriage covenant. 3) Reactivating your authority to defend the family.

I. RESTORE YOUR LOVE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

A. Genesis 1:26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.”

1. God created us in His image and likeness so that we could have fellowship with the Triune Being.
2. I want to submit that the words “Let Us” and “Our image” are in the plural because the Godhead is a profound mystery, but it seems that He wants to reveal to us that they are a family. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (wife/mother). And He created the family; “male and female He created them.”
3. We see that God is in the Garden in a manifest way.
4. The intimacy and love relationship with God was broken when man rebelled against God in the Garden
5. **Genesis 3:8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.**
6. The hedge of protection was lost because of sin. God put man out of the Garden, which is a picture of being separated from God’s presence because of man’s sins.
7. **Genesis 3:23 Therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.**
8. We must first restore the intimacy and love relationship that was lost in the Garden in order to see our family become a success.

B. THE FIRST STEP TO A SUCCESSFUL FAMILY IS COMING UNDER THE LOVING LORDSHIP OF JESUS

1. **Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned... 17 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.**
2. **Romans 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**

C. FOR THOSE WHO KNOW JESUS, WE MUST REPEATEDLY RETURN TO OUR FIRST LOVE

1. Revelation 2:4 “But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. 5 Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first.”
2. Matthew 22:36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” 37 And He said to him, “**YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’** 38 This is the great and foremost commandment. 39 The second is like it, ‘**YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’** 40 On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”
3. **THE TRIANGLE ILLUSTRATION:** God is at the top. You and your family are on the opposite side of the triangle. As you draw near to God, you will draw near to each other

II. REAFFIRM THE MARRIAGE COVENANT

A. Genesis 1:27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

1. **Genesis 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**
2. The marriage covenant is the most powerful covenant you can make. It is unto death.
3. There are other covenants in life that require total commitment. Like the military. Once you join the army, it may get bloody and the battle may be fierce, but you cannot desert the army, or you will be court martialed. So too in a marriage you will go through your share of battles, but you can’t get out.
4. Billy Graham’s wife, Ruth Graham, was asked by the press if she ever thought of divorcing Billy because he was gone all the time. She said, “Never. Murder, yes, but never divorce.”
5. Divorce is not even in our vocabulary. In 42-plus years, when Sue and I have had our “intense fellowship,” we have never ever threatened to divorce one another.
6. All marriages go through a “winter season,” the dark night of the soul.
7. Psalm 30:5 says that weeping may last through the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning.
8. So, in marriage, God’s will is for the covenant to be made for life. By the way, if you have been divorced, I am not here to condemn you but to speak the truth in love to you. Here is what the Bible says about divorce.
9. **Malachi 2:16 “For I hate divorce,” says the LORD, the God of Israel.**
10. Are there biblical grounds for divorce? Yes.

B. BIBLICAL GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE

1. **Adultery: Matthew 19:3** *Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?”* 4 And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, 5 and said, ‘FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH’? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.” 7 They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND *her* AWAY?” 8 He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. 9 And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”
2. **Abandonment: 1 Corinthians 7:10** But to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord, that the wife should not leave her husband 11 (but if she does leave, she must remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife... 15 Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace.
3. **Physical Abuse: Romans 13:1** Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. 3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; 4 for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

III. REACTIVATE YOUR AUTHORITY TO DEFEND THE FAMILY

- A. **Genesis 1:28** 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.”
 1. “Subdue” it. The Hebrew word is *kavash*, to subdue the enemy. Satan was in the Garden. To subdue evil is to use your God-given authority through the government mountain to defend the institution of the family.
 2. **Both the family and the government’s primary calling is to protect the family and citizens from evil.** By doing so, it is to protect the people of a given nation.

- B. **“Rule over”** – again, governmental words. God wanted His people to co-rule with Him from the beginning—by defeating Satan and his demonic cohorts and establishing God’s Kingdom on earth. The battle for our family and for our government begins with prayer.
- 1 Timothy 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.**
 - 2. We must put actions to our prayers. Whatever legal actions that you can take to defend the family institution, you have to do it.**
 - The mama bears in San Francisco and in Virginia. Where are the fathers?
 - The government has labelled these people who protest at school boards as “domestic terrorists.”
 - This idea of separation of church and state is not biblical but Greek philosophy.** It is Platonic thinking. Plato taught dualism.
 - Parents are responsible to teach and train their children, not the state and not the church.**
 - When parents are not engaged in training their children, it can lead to children rebelling against authority when they get older. 80% of the men incarcerated is the result of growing up without a father.
 - Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.**
 - Genesis 18:17 The LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, 18 seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I have chosen him, so that he may *command* his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.” Education**

CONCLUSION: It all begins with your relationship with Jesus. Will you give your heart to Him? It is like buttoning your shirt. When you get the first button right, everything else becomes aligned. But I am also going to ask all the married couples to reaffirm your marriage covenant to your spouse. Finally as your pastor, I am giving you a charge that you must engage in prayer and the government mountain to defend the institution of the biblical family model.