

Love in the Parent/Child Relationship

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When two whole, strong and spiritually committed individuals acknowledge their love for each other and join their lives together, the foundation for a loving godly home is laid. Embedded in and erected upon this foundation are essential principles which become the pillars that support any successful home and exemplify parental love. After creating the first couple God then set the standard and process by which families would be formed and how they would function from that time forward. *“And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. 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”* (Genesis 2:20-24). The sacredness of this relationship is reemphasized by the Lord Himself in Matthew 19:3-12. Parental love is evident when it is demonstrated by the imbodiment and the practice of the God-given principles that produce and protect the home. Those principles include: Lordship, leadership, and legacy.

I. LORDSHIP

- A. If the Lord does not occupy first place in the life of the parents, that home will not have the strong, stable support it needs.
 - 1. *“He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me”* (Matthew 10:37-40).
- B. The only way we can truly demonstrate that Jesus is the Lord of our lives is by doing what He has commanded us to do (Luke 6:46).
 - 1. In order to erect the Lordship pillar to support our home parents must “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” and refuse to allow their allegiance to be divided (Matt. 6:33; 24; 12:30).

II. LEADERSHIP

- A. There has to be strong role models to support, guide, sustain and protect the home if it is to be what God designed it to be.
 - 1. Parents are expected to be the pillars of the home that lift each member of the family up so they can see God’s will and purpose for their lives (Deut. 6:1-7; Prov. 22:6).
- B. Fathers in particular have the responsibility to bring up their children in “the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4).
 - 1. Such fathers will lead their family in serving the Lord and demonstrate the leadership roles necessary in the home and in the church. (Gen. 18:19; Joshua 24:15; 1 Tim. 3:1-15; Titus 1:5-9; 2:1-8; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

III. LEGACY

- A. Our legacy is the gift we bequeath or leave behind for those who will follow us. God has always intended for His instructions to be embedded in each present generation and instilled in each new generation.
 - 1. That process is most effective in the environment of the home (Deut. 6:1-25; Joshua 24:15; cf. Judges 2:6-10).
- B. A New Testament example of the power of spiritual legacy in the home is the gift of faith Timothy received from his mother and grandmother (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-17).
 - 1. Timothy in turn was called upon to bequeath (commit) to faithful men the things he had been taught (2 Tim. 2:2; 4:1-4).

CONCLUSION:

The badge of discipleship is love. *“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another”* (John 13:34-35). Every Christ-like parent will be an example of love in his/her family (Eph. 5:21-33; 1 Tim. 5:8; Heb. 12:5-11; Eph. 6:1-4). Parental love is truly an indispensable ingredient for a happy home. It is the first and great commandment and provides the environment for physical, emotional, social, and spiritual growth (Matt. 22:37-40; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; John 14:15; 1 John 5:1-5; Luke 2:51-52; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18).

Tragic are the consequences if parents fail to love their children enough to demonstrate Lordship, leadership, and fail to leave the proper spiritual legacy. The results will be a generation those does not know the Lord nor the great things which he has done (Judges 2:6-10; 17:6; 21:25; Joshua 24:15).