

Faithful Families in a Broken World

(Article 18: Family)

Article 18: Family¹ - "God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

"The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

"Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents."

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; Psalms 127; Psalms 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

1. The Family: God's Foundational Institution for Society

- God ordained the family as the first and foundational institution of human society (**Genesis 2:23-24**).
- The family is composed of persons related by marriage, blood, or adoption.
- The family serves as a microcosm of society: as the family goes, so goes the culture, church, and nation.
- *Psalm 127:1: "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it."*
- *Genesis 1:28: "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it."*

2. Marriage: A Covenant Between One Man and One Woman

- Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime (**Hebrews 13:4**).
- Marriage reflects the relationship between Christ and His Church (**Ephesians 5:25-27**).

¹ From the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*, <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000>.

- Marriage is a sacred gift from God for:
 1. Relational companionship ([Genesis 2:18](#)).
 2. Sexual expression according to biblical standards ([1 Corinthians 7:2](#)).
 3. Procreation of the human race ([Genesis 1:28](#)).
 4. A witness of covenant love ([Malachi 2:14-16](#)).

3. Roles Within the Family Reflect God's Design

- **Husbands** are called to:
 - Love their wives sacrificially as Christ loved the church ([Ephesians 5:25](#); [1 Peter 3:7](#)).
 - Provide for ([1 Timothy 5:8](#); [Exodus 21:10](#)), protect ([1 Corinthians 16:13](#); [Nehemiah 4:14](#)), and lead ([Joshua 24:15](#); [Ephesians 5:22-24](#)) their families spiritually.
- **Wives** are called to:
 - Submit graciously to their husbands' servant leadership ([Ephesians 5:22-24](#); [Colossians 3:18](#)).
 - Respect and support their husbands in managing the household ([Genesis 2:18](#); [1 Timothy 5:14](#); [Titus 2:3-4](#)).
- **Parents** are called to:
 - Teach their children spiritual and moral values ([Proverbs 22:6](#)).
 - Model godly living through consistent lifestyle and loving discipline ([Ephesians 6:4](#)).
- **Children** are called to:
 - Honor and obey their parents in the Lord ([Exodus 20:12](#); [Ephesians 6:1-3](#)).

4. Children Are a Blessing and a Heritage from the Lord

- From conception, children are a gift and heritage from God ([Psalm 127:3](#)).
- Parents are called to raise their children in the training and instruction of the Lord ([Ephesians 6:4](#)).
- The family is where children first witness God's design for relationships, love, and submission.
- *Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."*
- *Ephesians 6:1-4: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."*

Practical Applications:

1. Cultivate Christ-Centered Relationships in the Family

- Husbands, love sacrificially and lead spiritually.
- Wives, support and respect your husband's leadership.
- Parents, model the gospel for your children in daily life.

2. Recognize the Family as a Witness to the Gospel

- Your marriage and family relationships should reflect God's love and grace.
- Demonstrate forgiveness, patience, and service to one another as a testimony to a watching world.

3. Seek the Holy Spirit's Empowerment

- Marriage and parenting require supernatural grace and strength.
- Pray daily for the Holy Spirit to guide your family and shape you into the image of Christ.

The family is not just a social construct; it is a divine institution created by God to reflect His glory, model His grace, and proclaim His gospel. By embracing God's design for marriage and family, we can experience the joy and fulfillment He intended. Christians should commit to upholding God's ideal for the family, teaching it to our children, and modeling it to a broken world.