

Principles from Proverbs: The Family, Part 3

Focus on the Husband's Role

Introduction: Having considered general principles relating to God's blessing on the home, our third lesson will become more specific by focusing on the role of the man in the home. Since God has placed the leadership of the home squarely upon the shoulders of the man, it is vital that Christian men understand and obey principles from Proverbs written specifically to them.

I. Characteristics of a Good Husband

A. Morally Pure and Faithful to His Wife

→Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own and not a strangers' with thee. (Proverbs 5:15-17)

1. The ancient near eastern culture frequently used the metaphor of a cistern or well to describe marital intimacy. Both the cistern and well were located at one's home. The teaching is simple: marital intimacy is reserved exclusively for a man and his wife.
2. I Corinthians 7:4-5 teaches the mutual ownership of the physical relationship in marriage. Neither partner is to "defraud" the other by withholding himself/herself from physical intimacy.
3. The exclusive nature of marital intimacy prohibits the inclusion of all outsiders. Extramarital affairs, of course, violate marital intimacy. In addition, pornography violates marital intimacy by introducing sexual images from outside of the marriage.
4. The words "fountains...in the streets" refer to the children produced in marriage. Again, the exclusive nature of marital intimacy is emphasized by forbidding sexual unions with "strangers," resulting in bastard children.

B. Intimate with His Wife

→Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love. (Proverbs 5:18, 19)

1. Men are to maintain an ongoing intimate physical relationship with their wives, finding sexual satisfaction in the wife alone.
2. Men should view their wives as beautiful, even with age. (Abstaining from pornography helps a man to appreciate the beauty of his wife.)

C. Complementary to His Wife

→**Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. (Proverbs 31:28)**

1. Men should take the time to express verbal appreciation for their wives. Since men tend to be less verbal than women, this may take conscience effort.
2. Affirmation encourages ongoing success! Praise your wife!

II. Characteristics of a Good Father

A. His Children Take Pride in Him

→**Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers. (Proverbs 17:6)**

1. Children may not express their pride in their fathers verbally, but it is absolutely vital that a father be a hero in his children's eyes.
2. Fathers set an example that is usually emulated by their children. Both consciously and sub-consciously, fathers teach a pattern for living.
3. Children whose fathers have failed and shamed them suffer immeasurably from insecurity and low self-esteem.

B. He Provides for His Descendants

→**House and riches are the inheritance of fathers; and a prudent wife is from the Lord. (Proverbs 19:14)**

→**A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children... (Proverbs 13:22a)**

1. A good father provides for the needs of his wife and children. In a nutshell, the father's responsibility is two-fold: to provide and to protect. Provision includes not only material necessities, but also emotional and spiritual needs as well.
2. A good father, then, must also be a good planner—setting aside money and investments for the future blessing of his children. Two types of inheritance are specifically mentioned:
 - a. **House**—real estate was vital to the family structure in Israel. Even though modern occupations are not so frequently tied to land, leaving a house represents security for the family.
 - b. **Riches**—an inheritance should include financial security as well as property. Wise men carry adequate life insurance to insure the security of their families.