

GOD'S GIFT OF A GOOD, GODLY FAMILY

Genesis 2:18,21-24; Proverbs 19:14; Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:28-33

The truth about the family is a foundational teaching in God's word. At the beginning, God created only Adam. **"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him"**. He made the woman, a companion that would be suitable for the man. He instituted marriage and brought the man and woman together. The marriage union requires a man to leave his parents and **"cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh"**. Christ also emphasised this truth when He was asked about marriage. He said, **"What ...God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"**. Religious and cultural practices that contradict this fundamental injunction are unscriptural.

1. HIS PREEMINENT PURPOSE FOR A GOOD, HELPFUL FAMILY

Genesis 2:18; Proverbs 18:22; 19:14

To get the best in our marriage and family, our purpose must align with God's. When we make God's purpose preeminent in our family, it gives us the help, strength and progress that the Lord intended when He instituted marriage. The purposes of marriage identified from the word of God include:

(i) Purposeful Partnership

Genesis 2:18; 1 Corinthians 11:8-12

God established the marriage union between a husband and a wife so that they could be of help to each other.

(ii) Perpetual Purity

1 Corinthians 7:2,9; Malachi 2:15

The Lord wants the church, community and world to be pure and righteous. Therefore, He commands **"every man [to] have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband"** to **"avoid fornication"** and adultery. Those who refuse to get married should understand that **"it is better to marry than to burn"**.

(iii) Prevailing Power

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Matthew 18:18,19

Always, **"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour"**. If there is any challenge or situation that can overwhelm a partner, the **"two[of them] shall withstand"** it. Marriage allows couples to think and plan together. When they agree together in all they do, it helps and gives them prevailing power in prayer.

(iv) Pertinent Protection

Genesis 20:16; 1 Peter 3:7

God's plan is to protect us through the institution of marriage. Through it, He gives us pertinent, present and perpetual protection.

(v) Precious Procreation

Genesis 1:27,28; 1 Timothy 5:14

At creation, the Lord blessed the man and woman, and proclaimed that they should be **"fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth..."** This is procreation, which means the process of creation. Marriage, therefore, is designed to continue the process of creation, reproducing children who would carry on with our legacy.

(vi) Parental Provision

1 Timothy 5:8; Proverbs 22:6

When children come into the world, they are helpless and cannot provide for themselves. It is parents' responsibility to feed, clothe, shelter, train, fellowship with and bring them up in the way they should go. Thus, would-be couples must ensure they get married to someone who has the same idea, understanding and doctrine concerning child training.

(vii) **Participatory Pilgrimage**

Hebrews 11:7-13,23,27; 1 Peter 2:11; 3:1,7

As pilgrims, walking alone sometimes could be frustrating. But if we walk with a partner, when one gets tired, there is encouragement from the other person.

2. PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR A GODLY, HAPPY FAMILY

Proverbs 24:27; Luke 14:28-30

We need personal preparation to build a godly, happy family. We shall consider three things here.

(i). **Proper Relationship with the Lord**

2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Matthew 12:49,50; 2 Corinthians 5:17; John 17:6,14-16; 1 John 1:5-7

God communes with those who have proper spiritual relationship with Him. Those who are not yet saved should repent because it is part of preparation for marriage. God promises to be a Father to us if we make Christ our Redeemer and Saviour. The proof of our relationship with the Lord is the transformation of our lives.

(ii). **Prayerful Request from the Lord**

Proverbs 19:14; Jeremiah 29:11-13; Matthew 7:7-11; Proverbs 18:22; James 4:2-4; Ezekiel 14:6-10; 1 John 3:20-22; 5:14,15

A prudent, wise, uplifting, good, supportive and happy wife, who would make you progress in the direction God has earmarked for you, is from the Lord. To have such a wife, you must remove every idol from your heart and make your request known to Him in prayer.

(iii). **Protective Righteousness before the Lord**

Proverbs 11:4-6; 12:28; Isaiah 54:17; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 14:16-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:21,22; 1 John 2:15-17

Righteousness is the believer's protection. It protects from attacks, evil people and choices. We must "**Abstain from all appearance of evil**" and do all things to the glory of God.

3. PROGRESSIVE PARTNERSHIP IN A GROWING, HEALTHY FAMILY

Ephesians 4:15,16; Romans 14:19

Marriage is God's gift through which we make progress in every area of life. It should also make our passion, devotion and love for the work of God to increase. We shall consider three things under this sub topic.

(i). **Righteous Fellowship in a Gracious Home**

Ephesians 5:1-5,22-25,28-33; 1 Peter 3:1-13; 1 Corinthians 13:1-7; Philippians 2:3-5,14-16; 4:4-8; John 15:12,13

Righteousness in the family should make us to walk in love. To walk in love means we are transparent to our spouses in all things. It is being practical, sacrificial and selfless. We must "**walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us**". In a family where there is no vainglory or strife, and where each person esteems the other "**better than themselves**", the righteousness that keeps us in fellowship will be present.

(ii). **Refreshing Fulfilment of Growing Helpfulness**

Genesis 2:18; 2 Samuel 10:11; Proverbs 31:10-12,26; Ecclesiastes 4:9,10; Job 26:2,3; Romans 16:3,4; Acts 18:27

God instituted marriage so we can help and keep each other company because loneliness is a problem. Thinking, living and doing everything alone is not good. At times, we need someone by our side to go through life with us; someone who can lift or lighten our heavy burden. Certainly, we need help; but not the kind we can get from neighbours, relatives, a child or parents. However, this help must be reciprocal.

(iii). **Rapturable Faithfulness for a Glorious Heaven**

1 Corinthians 15:19; Luke 20:34-36; Matthew 24:36-42; Luke 21:34-36; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52; 1 John 3:1-3; Revelation 19:7-9

One of the reasons we marry is to help each other to run the Christian race successfully and make it to heaven. If all that marriage does for us is to have a good life only in this world, then **“we are of all men most miserable”**. We must ensure we continue to encourage each other to be obedient to the word of God and endure till the end. As we desire to have a good, godly and gracious marriage on earth, so should we hope to have a good passage to glory when the trumpet sounds to be part of the Lord’s Bride at His marriage supper.

GHS: 22, 46 & 172