

# Keys-For-The-Home

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Date: 20 March 2022

[0:00] Keys for the home. Talking about marriage and family. Marriage is God's idea. people these days are trying to redefine families and marriage, but really you can't.

! It's God's definition that matters. He's the author of marriage and the family, right from the beginning, from the garden. He designed marriage and he gave us the blueprint. And he's given us clear instructions on how the family unit best works in his word. Clear instructions in the Bible, his word. The families of today, they face many problems, don't they? Problems in marriages, problems in raising children. It's human life. It's sadly the life at times that gets tested and families get torn.

Here's what's written on a bottle of medicine. For best results, follow the instructions of maker. And that applies to marriage too, doesn't it? He's the maker of marriage.

[1:03] He's the one who makes it work. And that's good advice for the relief of a common cold or such things, a simple physical problem. But we'll do well to follow the maker's instructions for the family too.

God's word offers us some instructions on how to make life and family work, how to make marriages work, foundations, answers for families, some keys for a happy home.

Paul talks to believers in Ephesians 5, where we're going to spend most of our time, Ephesians 5 from verse 21. And Paul gives us keys, if you like, keys for the home.

And they're found, if you like, in key words, various key words. The first key is submit. Addressing the wives, but really, actually, both husband and wife, there's an application of the word submit. And we see that in Ephesians 5, 21. As it leads off, it tells submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. There's a mutual submission.

[2:10] There's a submitting to one another. That's fellowship. That's family. There's a mutual submission. And then it reads on verse 22. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord.

So God's ordained families. He's ordained an order, a leadership within the home. And notice here, there's a mutual submission, a harmony. That's what God wants, a harmony.

That would be like a symphony, an orchestra playing in that wonderful unison. And submission has the idea that a husband and wife ought to put each other first.

There's that sense of, the sense of this word submitting. It's coming under. There's a putting ahead of oneself. A putting another first. And so the husband is to put the wife first.

The wife is to put the husband first. And submission has the idea of this wonderful unity here. This wonderful fear of God that is under that fear of God.

[3:10] That is in the fear of God. There's examples we could cite, for example, of Joshua in the word of God. Joshua took the lead in his family. And I love the declaration of faith that Joshua made for himself and his own family.

And in part it says here, Joshua 24, verse 15. The context there is how he's speaking to the gathered throng about whether they serve the Lord or serve the gods, as it were, of the fathers of the false gods of the Amorites and such.

And he says this, Choose you this day whom you will serve. And it reads on, But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

He's saying that as for me and my household, as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord. Is that something you can say? Is that something you can declare? As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

God helping us. That the Lord Jesus is at the very centre of your family, your home. God's design is that there's a spiritual leadership in the family here. And the Lord's given authority for the husband,

an authority, and really with that a responsibility for the husband.

[4:27] The father has an important role in the home. Here before God. An obligation. Let the father lead. Fathers, husbands, be a good role model.

It's incumbent on us. It's a great responsibility, isn't it? Can you say amen, fathers, here today? It's a great responsibility that we be a good role model under God.

And as the saying goes, the apple never falls far from the tree. So that's really a saying that the husband, the father, has got a very important role modelling role.

So let the father and the husband be that healthy tree. That the fruit will be good in that family. We read here that the husband is the head of the home.

We'll go back to Ephesians 5 again. Verse 23. It reads, Now that doesn't mean that the wife is inferior to the husband.

[5:39] Don't make that mistake. Just as Christ isn't inferior to the father, they are equal. And we see that demonstrated in 1 Corinthians 11 verse 3.

Where it speaks of the father and Christ. That there's an equality of persons. The father, the son, the Holy Spirit. They're co-equal as the triune God.

But there is a subordination of roles. So it's about the roles here. That the husband, the father, has a role to play. And the wife is subordinate in that sense of the role is subordinate.

And submit is a loving word. It's a word that is loving. There's an equality of persons but a subordination of roles. Submit is a loving word.

It means respond to your own husband as unto the Lord. It's a duty to the Lord. So wives, there's a call there to you. To, under God, as a duty to the Lord, to be subject.

[6:48] As it reads, verse 24. Therefore, as the church is subject to the Christ. As the church is subject unto Christ.

So let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. It's about the right order. When the order is right, the home is right. Like Noah, we are living today in the midst of an ungodly world.

Noah is a great example of a godly man standing for Christ, for truth, for right in an ungodly world. And Noah was able to stand firm against the evil of his day as the head of a godly home and lead his family.

We see the whole family were engaged in the building of that ark together. And God gave them safety and blessing as they obeyed God. And don't we need to be, as Noah, in such a time we live today?

We need godly homes. God-blessed families that hold together. Stand strong in these evil times.

Friends, we need that. We need that. And I know, sadly, some homes get broken and irreparable.

[7:57] But God helping us, we can stand strong. And be a testimony, God helping us, whatever our situation as it stands. And the word submit is a key word here.

Another key word is reverence. We read on Ephesians 5, 33, the key word, the keys for the home. This key word is reverence here.

Ephesians 5, 33. It speaks about fear, of honour, of regard, of respect, of obeying the will of. And when God chose Abraham, the Lord commanded him on his family life.

Here's another example of a godly home. Genesis 18, verse 19. Of Abraham, God says, I know him. That he will command his children and his household after him.

And they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment. And it reads on that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

[9:01] And God told Abraham he was going to be blessed. And so Abraham was a leader. He was given reverence in his family. The children followed Abraham's lead. Man, be a man of God in your home.

Be that godly man. Be like Abraham. He commanded his children and his household, his family, after him. And the children followed Abraham's lead. And Abraham's wife, Sarah, likewise, she demonstrated reverence in following her husband.

We read of Sarah, another godly witness. Women take heed of Sarah's example. It says in 1 Peter 3, verse 5. For after this manner in the old time, the holy women also who trusted in God adorned themselves.

Speaking about that outward adorn, that inward adorning, that meekness, that quiet spirit. That these holy women, they trusted in God. They adorned themselves with that meekness, with that right spirit.

And it says being in subjection unto their own husbands. And it reads on of Sarah. Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord. His daughters ye are as long as ye do well.

[10:11] And I'm not afraid with any amazement. So, women folk, you're to address your husband as Lord. Well, there's that example there. I'm not saying literally so.

But treat him as someone worthy of your reverence, of respect, of regard. It's rightful. In Jeremiah, we read of Jonadab, the son of Rechab.

He was used of God. He set a godly example for disobedient Israel. The Rechabites followed Jonadab in obeying their father, observing his command to dwell in tents, to abstain from drinking wine.

And despite the temptation that they had, they refused to yield. There was a reverence for Jonadab as the husband, the father. So, Jonadab had a reverence from his family.

They listened to Jonadab and they followed his lead. On the other side of the coin, we see Job's wife. It's holding, curse God and die.

[11:11] I don't think she was very reverent to her husband, saying, oh, you know, just curse God and give up. Give it all over and go to your grave. And full of cursing and death.

David's wife, Michal, despised David in her heart. When David was praising God, Michal gave him a dirty look and sort of mocked him and scowled at him.

She wasn't showing David reverence. But she despised him in her heart, it says. And then we've got Lot's wife. Remember, Lot's wife, we're told. There's all these examples and warnings to us, isn't there?

Think of Lot's wife. Of course, she was not reverent. She didn't obey the command of God or the testimony of her husband. And these are all examples to us.

That we do well to heed these examples and take warning from their example. Another key word is love. Addressing the husbands now. The word says love.

[12:13] Now, it's agape love. Which is that sense of that self-sacrificing love. That undeserved love. The same love that took Christ our Lord to the cross.

That love that is beyond our own self-will. It's a love from the very heart. And this love that the husband is called to is a strong, devoted, unselfish, unconditional love.

As shown by our Lord. True Christian love. Hear about this love in Ephesians 5 again. In verse 25, it reads, Husbands, love your wives.

Even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. Wow. Think of that. How do you expand and elaborate on that?

How do you contemplate and how do you grasp that? That we husbands, we ought to love our wives like that. Like that.

[13:12] The love of Christ for his beloved church. Ephesians 5.26, it reads on, That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water. By the word that he might present it unto himself.

A glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. But that it should be holy and without blemish. God loves the church, doesn't he? He loves you and me.

He loves the assembly, the congregation of his saints. They're gathering together of his body on earth in the form of the body of Christ, the church. And it reads on, verse 28, So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies.

He that loveth his wife loveth himself. Now I don't know if you're looking at yourself in the mirror, gentlemen. And you look at how buff and strong your body is in the mirror.

And you love your body. But you should love your wife as your own body. And you'll hopefully look after your body. Keep it trim. Taught and terrific like mine. But we should love our wife so, shouldn't we?

[14:14] That sense of, if we care about ourselves and our own well-being, we should so care about our love, our wife, as ourself. And it reads on,

verse 29, For no man ever yet hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.

For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. So we are to sow love. There's a kind of love here. And, of course, 1 Corinthians 13 expands upon it that it's a love that seeketh not her own.

It's not a selfish love. It's a caring love. It's a self-giving love. And it tells us of this love that it never ends, this love of 1 Corinthians 13. It never ends.

It's forever. And so love, love even as Christ loved, in that same manner, selfless, he gave himself for her. And he presented her, his church, glorious.

It means to hold in honour. This church is glorious in his sight. It's honoured by our Lord. And the husband, it says, is told to nourish and to cherish. Think of that, to nourish and cherish.

[15:19] As you would nourish and cherish, look after your own body, it speaks of the tender affection that the husband should give to his wife. And Paul writes further along the same lines here of Colossians 3.19.

Again, husbands, love your wives. Be not bitter against them. So husbands, do you hold your wife in honour? No unkind word. No embarrassment.

No cutting remarks. Think of what makes a marriage work. But don't be bitter. If there's hard things that have happened, don't hold them. Don't hold grudges.

Don't hold bitterness. Don't have forgiveness, rather. Think of the grace. It takes a lot of grace, doesn't it? And it's been said that happy marriages are the union of two good forgivers.

Forgive one another. Husbands, forgive your wife. Wives, forgive your husbands. If those unkind things, maybe those grouchy words, those words you said in anger, unthinking words, forgive.

[16:26] Verse 31. For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they too shall be one flesh.

Marriages. It's a heavenly concept. It's a heavenly concept. It's a heavenly concept. Someone said, even if marriages are made in heaven, man is to be responsible for the maintenance.

So there's a sense where God ordains marriage, but we've got to make it work. Us humans have got to work in harmony with God and love one another.

There's a woman who was browsing in a bookstore one day and discovered on the shelf there was an ornament there, a little figurine of a man and a woman, and their heads were lovingly tilted towards one another, and the title of the figurine said happy 10th anniversary on the inscription. But it had a bit of damage. It said there was a tag there that it was damaged. And when she read closer, it said, wife is coming unglued.

[17:33] The wife was coming unglued from this figure, this figurine. And that happens in marriages. And it's a sad thing, really, it is a sad thing, when a husband and wife become unglued.

But God helping, there can be a glue, like a super glue, a God-given glue that you can hold together through thick and thin. There's one time, and I've told this one before, of a golden anniversary party, an elderly couple, and the husband wanted to tell his wife how much she meant to him.

But she was hard of hearing and often misunderstood what he said. And there's many family members there. And he said, my dear wife, after 50 years, I found you tried and true. And she said, eh?

After 50 years, I found you tried and true. And she moaned and shot back and said, well, I'll tell you something, after 50 years, I'm tired of you too. Now, that can happen.

Marriages can be tested, can't they? We can sometimes get tired and tested and tried. And friends, but God will help a marriage work. He can help a marriage work.

[18:44] God gives you the grace. A wedding has been defined as a ceremony where a man loses complete control of himself. You know, that's what happens, men, when you get married. So make sure you're going to put your heart into it.

It's been said there's three rings for every marriage. The engagement ring, wedding ring, and suffering. Some marriages have got to weather some storms.

There's some storms that you can marriage. Marriage will help as you hold together, as your families hold together, you can weather those storms together. God will help you. God will give you the grace to go the extra mile for one another.

And the Lord pictures a marriage of a husband and wife, again, a symbolic of the relationship between the Lord and the church. And that's a precious bond, isn't it? The Lord and his church. It reads on, verse 32, It's a great mystery. I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself.

[19:47] And the wife see that she reverence her husband. So here in Ephesians 5, it's teaching about the family, and it's noteworthy that it addresses the men three times more than the women.

So it's a call to the men to rise up in particular. And a good example of a man, a godly man, is Mary's husband, Joseph.

And of course, the Lord's earthly father, in that sense that he took the role of father, as an adoptive father, if you like. And we see of Joseph, it reads about how he heard from God.

He was receptive to God. He was a just man, it says. He was righteous. He took great care of his wife. Through that travel to Egypt, he made sure he cared for his wife.

And he handled the crisis of times with dignity, with character. And it says that even he was, as a father figure, he taught the Lord Jesus also.

[20:50] And so there's lots of characteristics about Joseph in that setting. And so husbands were exhorted to protect our family. And sometimes it's the little things that hurt families.

There's a story about the space shuttle discovery. It was grounded some while back, not because of technical difficulties or a lack of government funding, but because of woodpeckers.

Some woodpeckers found the insulating foam on the shuttle's external fuel tank, and they really loved this material and packed away. But this foam was critical for the shuttle's performance because without this foam around the fuel tank, that ice would form and fill with this super cold...

And so the fuel tank would freeze up and it could damage the spacecraft during liftoff. So the shuttle was grounded just because of something that the woodpeckers had done.

And it's the same with marriages. It can be the little niggly things more often damaging than the big things, like unfaithfulness or abuse or abandonment.

[22:00] It could be things like criticism or a lack of respect or taking each other for granted and that pecking away that can damage a marriage. So husband and wife stick together.

Another key word is obey. And it's addressing the children now in Ephesians 6 verse 1. Youngsters, children, it says, Obey your parents.

Obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. So this word obey, it means literally listen, understand, listen under them, stand under them.

In other words, come under their authority. It's got the idea of a subordinate, listening to one in authority, as you would have, for example, as a soldier, would listen to his commander, as a student, to his teacher.

So it's a military term, like a soldier obeying orders. And so youngsters, children, and look, we're all children, aren't we? We've all got parents.

[23:02] In a way, it's saying listen to your parents. Do what your parents are saying. Listen carefully. You know, whatever it is, in the Lord, do what's right. Hand your parents. And we know the Bible tells us in 2 Timothy 3, of the last times, one of the characteristics will be disobedient to parents.

You know, there's a needful, rightful deferment to your parents in that giving regard to them. Obey your parents in the Lord.

So it's what's right in his sight. Obey your parents. And likewise, Colossians 3, verse 20, along the lines again, Obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.

So obedience, it can mean restrictions and correction. Now, parents correct because they love their children. Amen? It's love that drives them to direct, to guide.

It's right. It's right. It's a righteous thing. It's a proper thing for the harmony of the home, for the good of the child, for God's glory, that there's that rightful relation to the parent in authority.

[24:13] Hannah is an example of a godly mother. We read about Hannah and she was mother to Samuel. She dedicated Samuel to the service of God in the temple.

And Hannah had a persistent faith of her own and a heart willing even to surrender everything to the Lord and seek his will for her children. Right now, we've got a massive epidemic of delinquency and rebellion.

We see there's a lawlessness in our world. People aren't leading, parents aren't leading and children aren't listening. And so, no wonder there's a rebellion to anything that smacks of authority. We've got a generation that has been taught they don't need to obey. You know, the teacher tells you something and you decide whether you obey or not. That's not right. You should obey your teacher.

You should obey your parents. And that's why society is becoming more and more lawless and disorderly. Obedience is a good thing. It helps us to get things right. It helps us to be in right order.

[25:14] And it's vital. Another key word is honour. Back to Ephesians again. Now verse, chapter 6, verse 2. It reads, honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise.

Honour your father and mother. Wow. Why don't we do that? There's a sense of reverence, of awe, of respect, to love, to obey, esteem your parents, value them.

You know, love them, take care of them. While they're still alive, while you've still got a parent living, care about them. Care for them. Bring them honour in how you live. Of the godly mother, it says, Proverbs 31, and we could read the whole chapter, really, to get the whole picture there of this godly mother, the godly woman, and women aspire to be a Proverbs 31 woman, God helping you. Proverbs 31, verse 28. It says, There's a promise here too, to this honouring your father and mother, the first commandment with promise.

Of course, in Exodus 20, verse 12, as part of the Ten Commandments, we're told of the promise attached. As Ephesians 6, verse 3 says, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth.

[26:36] When we honour our father and our mother, there's a direct link with God's blessings, a lengthening of life. Show that regard.

You might not always agree with your mum or dad, but it says we should honour them. Amen.

That's what we should do. And it goes on in Exodus 21, where a child cursed his parents, they were stoned.

A rebellious attitude causes many of a teenager's problems. And I'm not saying, parents, we should stone our children. But you wonder sometimes.

But when there's a right order and an honour and obedience in the home, then it'll be right. It'll be sweeter. Family life will be sweeter. And we read on another key, another key for the home.

For fathers now, bring them up. Bring them up. Verse 4. And ye fathers, it says, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up. Bring them up. In the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

[27:37] Saying fathers, don't provoke your children. As it reads, likewise in Colossians 3, 21, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. So fathers, don't discourage your children.

Do the opposite. Amen. Encourage them. Encourage them. The word says, bring them up. In other words, raise them to maturity. Rear them. Nourish them.

Nurture them. Emotionally and spiritually. Set a good example. Another Bible example, well, this is a bad example here, is Eli. Eli was a father who failed to set a good example.

1 Samuel 3 from 11 through 14, he did not rebuke his sons when they sinned. There's a time for rebuke. Fathers, lead.

Bring your children up. Lift them up. Lift them higher. Pray for them. It's true, as someone has said, do not handicap your children by making their lives easy.

[28:37] You don't want to make this necessarily easy for them. So that they'll learn how to struggle. They'll learn how to support themselves. They'll learn how to work and make a living and make a life.

Don't cushion them and make their lives too pampered. It's about bringing them up. Show them how to live. Set the example. Bring them to that maturity. There's a lack of godly fathers.

Men, work at it. Work at it. It's a sad truth that the trouble with being a parent is that by the time we're experienced, we're unemployed. Because the children have grown up and left home, we've got all that wisdom but it's too late.

So, you know, young parents, try to learn fast and try to take this in. Take it in. Make it work. Another key word is nurture. Where we see the husband, the father, is to bring them up in the nurture and admonition.

In other words, training. It's about directing, correcting. Someone has said this, train up a child in the way he should go, then go that way thyself. Now, you might say, you know, to your children, you know, whatever it be, don't smoke.

[29:49] But if you're smoking, well, that's not going to be, there's a clash there, isn't there? You know, if you want to tell your children something, don't be guilty of it yourself. You know, whether it's swearing, whether it's cursing, whether it's acting up, you know, they're looking to you.

They read you. They look at you more than what you say. Amen? It's your life that matters more than your lips. So, go that way thyself and then they'll hopefully come along with you.

The word nurture has the meaning also of discipline and it tells us whom the Lord loves, he chastens. And parenting involves setting limits of developing character through discipline.

When there's a lack of discipline, a child can get selfish and insecure. When there's no boundaries, a child will just go nuts and there's no stopping them.

They need to know the boundaries. We know that parenting is quite a task. There's another quote here, if evolution is true, how come mothers still have only two hands?

[30:53] It's almost like you need more hands. It's a tough job being a mum, being a dad. You've got to be about it. Timothy was a young leader who Paul trusted and believed in so much and Paul commended Timothy's mum and grandmother in 2 Timothy 1 verse 5.

He acknowledged the influence of Timothy's grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice. He acknowledged Timothy's sincere faith and said it dwelt first in them.

So, it's a picture for us as mums, as dads, as grandmothers, as grandfathers, that our faith would be such that it's contagious. Now, of course, we can't, just because you're saved doesn't mean your children will get saved or that by virtue of you being saved that they are saved.

They've got to make their own trust in Christ. they've got to come to their own personal faith. You can't kind of have a faith that you, that you kind of receive by virtue of being in a Christian home, Christian family.

Yeah, it's got to be your personal faith. But there was that sense where Timothy was influenced by his mother and his grandmother. So, as parents, as grandparents, let's pray for that same contagious faith that you, mums, dads, grannies, granddads, nannas, pops, you will be an example such that your faith will be seen and can be contagious in the sense that the youngsters will want that same faith.

[32:33] They'll come to trust him for themselves. So, work at that. Work at that nurture of your children and also another key word is admonition. Again, Ephesians 6 verse 4, bring them up, it says, and the nurture and admonition.

Admonition of the Lord. Admonish means to instruct. It means to encourage. It means literally putting in mind. So, as parents, we provide a counsel of teaching, of instruction, of exaltation. So, what are we saying when our children come to us? Are they seeing that we care about them? Are we seeing that we want to nurture them? Are we seeing that we want to admonish them? In other words, instruct and teach them, train them. Now, it's a sad fact that parents sometimes miss the opportunity. Young parents especially. Please, young parents especially, think of this. Hundreds of children were surveyed one day and they were asked what were the three things that fathers said the most to them when the children went to their father. What's the three things your dad says the most to you and these are the three things.

[33:41] I'm too tired took first place. We don't have enough money was second. Third, keep quiet. That's kind of sad, isn't it?

Fathers, isn't that sad? I'm too tired. We don't have enough money. Keep quiet. Is that bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Parents, you've got such a, this small window while they're still at home. The youngsters, your little ones, your boys and girls at home. It's that small window, precious, precious window of time.

Encourage your children. Don't provoke them to anger by unreasonable commands. It's been said when the child gets up to mischief, the father needs correction. You know, what's the father doing? If the children are misbehaving, fathers, wake up and do something. So we have these keys to the home. Friends today, I hope you've been encouraged and not discouraged today.

[34:41] Think of these keys to the home. We've gone through these key words, if you like, submit, reverence. Is there that order in the home? That due authority?

That loving authority? Love, obey, love one another. Have that rightful respect and regard, honour. Bring them up.

Your children, bring them up. Raise them up. Pray for them. Be a minister to them. Be a servant to them. Be an example to them in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord.

So honour the Lord. Honour the Lord in your home. Let it be, I'm going to commit to these keys, these key words in my home. God helping me. Amen? Let's pray.

Lord, we thank you that you are the author, the designer, the finisher, the creator, the foundation of a home. These keys, these words, Lord, we know they're the words you want us to put into action.

[35:42] Lord, help us to have this heart to honour you in our homes. Lord, that you would be lifted up. Help us, help us, Lord, to be godly mums and dads, godly husbands and fathers, Lord, and where the home's broken, we'll make the best of it, we'll do what we can with what we have to give that regard to you, to be as you would lead us to be, that testimony to our family.

Lord, help us, we pray. Pray for young people maybe setting out to get married when we think of that huge responsibility ahead. Lord, for the responsibility that we all have under you, Lord, for the younger generation to be a godly witness to them.

Lord, give us grace to put your love into action. Lord, not in an overbearing, provoking to wrath, not a mean and nasty kind of authoritarian way, but as you would put it in a godly order that is to your praise, Lord, where you are uplifted and honoured in every heart, in every life.

Lord, we pray if any have yet to trust you, they'll make that the starting point, to make you Lord of their own life and so you can be the Lord, the head, the true head of the home and then that authority under that headship of Christ as the head of the home.

Lord, that you would be glorified, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you.