

Back to God's Plan for the Home

by Bryan Gibson

“O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jeremiah 10:23). Man can't build a strong home—plenty have tried and they've all failed. “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it” (Psalms 127:1). It's time we went back to God's plan for the home, and here's what that means—at least in part.

It means getting back to the divinely inspired Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16-17), to the heavenly wisdom found within its pages. “Through **wisdom** a house is built, and by **understanding** it is established; by **knowledge** the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches” (Proverbs 24:3-4). The knowledge, wisdom, and understanding we gain from God's word—that's how we build strong homes.

It means getting back to using Christ as our model—the model of a leader (Isaiah 40:10-11); the model of love (1 John 3:16-18; Ephesians 5:25); the model of submission (Philippians 2:5-8); the model of holiness (1 Peter 1:15-16); the model of endurance, self-control, forgiveness, humility, and every other heavenly virtue. Follow His footsteps (1 Peter 2:21), and strong Christians and strong families will be the result.

It means getting back to one man for one woman for life. God instituted marriage, and He did so by joining one woman to one man (Genesis 2:22-24). And He decreed they stay together. “Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:6). “A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives” (1 Corinthians 7:39). “A wife is not to depart from her husband...a husband is not to divorce his wife” (1 Corinthians 7:10-11). God only grants one exception to this—one single cause for divorce: “...whoever divorces his wife, **except for sexual immorality**, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries who is divorced commits adultery” (Matthew 19:9).

It means getting back to the roles God assigned each person in the family. Last time we checked, the Bible still says that the husband is head of the wife, and that he is the spiritual leader of the family (Ephesians 5:22-33; 6:4; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 3:4-5; 1 Peter 3:7). It still says that the wife must be in submission to her husband, and that her most important work is found in bringing up her children (Ephesians 5:22, 33; 1 Timothy 2:15; 5:14; Titus 2:3-5). And it still says that children must reverently obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20; 1 Timothy 3:4).

It means getting back to an emphasis on eternity (Matthew 6:19-23)—when everyone in the family is taught to “seek first the kingdom” (Matthew 6:33); when the pursuit of righteousness becomes more important than the pursuit of things (1 Timothy 6:6-12); when the things we do have are used to store up a “good foundation for the time to come” (1 Timothy 6:17-19); when children are brought “up in the training and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4); when everyone makes time for the work of the Lord (1 Corinthians

15:58); when pleasing God means more than pleasing man (1 Thessalonians 2:4); when eternal joy is chosen over momentary happiness (1 Peter 1:6-9).