

# Marriage & Family – Doing Life Right



By Rob Pue

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In my work as a Christian newspaper publisher, radio commentator at TV host, I often have people contact me requesting prayer and counseling. Most all who come for prayer and counsel are Christians. They come in various stages of spiritual maturity. Some are baby Christians, some have been following the Lord for years, and the vast majority of requests I get are for those in troubled marriages and families. So today, I'd like to talk about marriage and family, and I hope and pray you'll hear and understand what I have to say and put my advice into action.

It's no secret that the enemy of our souls has been working hard to destroy the natural family – one man, united in the bonds of Holy Matrimony to one woman, both faithful to one another and raising Godly children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Today, God's natural design for the family is under intense assault on every level. Satan uses a "divide and conquer" strategy to destroy the family, by getting us to focus on *ourselves*, rather than on serving those we love.

This is not how God would have us to live. Marriage between one man and one woman is His perfect plan for us, one of the first, most basic and essential things we learn about in the very first chapter of the Bible. In Genesis 1 we read, "*God created man in His own image. In the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them*

and God said unto them, 'Be fruitful and multiply.'" There we have it: God's design for marriage and family. Couldn't be simpler. And God's plans are always perfect. Yet we think we know better.

By the way, the word "Matrimony" literally means "Motherhood." Not so long ago, people understood this. It's God's perfect design that only in the bonds of Holy Matrimony should a woman become a mother. You see, any male and female can fornicate, and sadly, in today's permissive, Godless culture, more often than not, precious innocent children created in the image of God, are viewed as "accidents," "inconveniences," born as the result of unbridled sexual lust between two unmarried, uncommitted people...or worse yet, murdered in the womb.

Now compare *that* to the security of an intact, Godly home with a devoted Mother and Father, who have given themselves, one to another, and entered into the sacred bonds of Holy Matrimony, where the "D" word is not even in their vocabulary; where they build their lives together and their homes, and their *families* on the Word of God. A home where Jesus is not only welcome but earnestly sought after! We have more dysfunctional families today than ever before because we have chosen to turn from God and ignore all the precious wisdom He has imparted to us in His Holy Word, the Bible.

Families are in turmoil today. Innocent children are being lured away from goodness and truth by the lies, deceptions and wickedness they're surrounded by in public schools, on social media, through TV shows and movies, in the hideous noise that masquerades as popular "music" today – and all of it is filled with sexual perversion, obscenity, horror and filth. An hour a week in church, or two hours a week at an entertainment-based church youth group cannot compete for the hearts, minds and souls of our children, when the children are immersed in vile lies, deception and sexual perversion non-stop, every day, all day.

And so we have a generation of the most confused, depressed and hopeless kids we've ever seen in America. Often as the children are lured away into the LGBTQP+ cult, into "transgenderism," violence, self-abuse and drug use, the parents are at a loss as to what to do. After all, they take them to church every week. They send them to youth group every week. Isn't that enough? Of course it's not. Absolutely not. They face enormous peer pressure in our culture daily. They face unimaginable temptations as the enemy lures them away from God with perverted enticements at every turn. They just want to "fit in," they just want to be accepted – and the one thing that will assure they're not accepted by their peers is to be a Godly, righteous young person, knowing right from wrong and standing steadfastly on the side of that which is right.

So how do we mend all these dysfunctional families? How do we train up a child in the way he should go, so that when he's old he won't depart from it? We must be real Christ-followers and Bible students all our lives ourselves. It begins with us. Parents must model true Christianity in their homes as the children watch and learn what true Christianity is. As Titus 2 tells us, *"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present age."*

But sadly, in the vast majority of homes today, there's little to no regard for the grace of God, or the salvation He brings. There's no understanding – much less seeking and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and instead, live soberly, righteously and Godly, in this present age. No, today, even professing Christians go out of their way to *engage* in ungodliness and worldly lusts and find ways to justify that behavior in their minds.

But, Christianity isn't just something we "do" once a week.

It's more than a fish symbol on the back of your car. It's more than a pizza party at a youth group meeting. It's real and genuine – and kids today are starving for that which is true, real and genuine. Knowing that *what you know is real* is the solid rock foundation of unshakable security and certainty. Precisely what's lacking in the lives of our young people now.

Make no mistake, if you live soberly, righteously and Godly, you *will* be counter cultural. Your family, friends and neighbors will think you're fanatics. Your children will not be welcomed into the various popular cliques at school, either – but that's a good thing, because you'll be preparing them for the spiritual warfare that will assail them all their lives. And as *you* do battle daily in the spiritual realm, keeping your hearts and minds on Christ Jesus, your children will learn to do the same all of *their* lives. Yeah, you'll be a “peculiar people,” alright. But isn't that what God's Word tells us to be?

And, if you live this way, goodness and mercy will *follow you* all the days of your life. Don't misunderstand here. Scripture doesn't promise you'll be healthy or wealthy or that no evil will ever cause you any sorrow or grief. Most assuredly, you *will* be mocked and ridiculed for His name's sake. You'll be targeted by the enemy, tested and sifted. But the Scripture says that “goodness and mercy will *follow you*.” This means that as you walk through life in this world, you'll spread goodness and mercy *behind you*, as you go. It follows you. *You* must *go* first, living soberly, righteously and Godly lives. And then, goodness and mercy follow behind you. And then, those who may see you as an oddball at first, will soon come to realize that they desperately need what you have.

So, you live a God-honoring, Christ-centered life, and then look behind you as you go, and you'll see the goodness and mercy of God that you leave in your wake. Trust me, this will

impact more people than you realize, not the least of which are going to be your own children...and *their* children.

Now, I've talked about how to have a Godly family. But your marriage comes first. In order to have a Godly family the way God designed, a man and woman must first become one in marriage. Our Creator is awesome and amazing, the way He knits us together in our mothers' wombs, the way He knows all about us before we're ever born. I believe He creates individual men with specific individual women in mind. In other words, He created me just for my wife; He created my wife, just for me. What an amazing gift from our most gracious, loving Father, God.

When we first meet our spouse, we're enamored with them. We're infatuated. We're "in love." As young men, we pursue our wives to impress them and win their hearts and their favor. We seek their acceptance, their approval and love. Unfortunately, after marriage, so many couples let the cares of this world disrupt and even destroy their marriages. We allow resentment to enter in, rather than God's Holy Spirit.

I understand that people get tired, and this can lead to fatigue, boredom, laziness and complacency. I suppose it's much easier to spend time in the evening watching some inane sitcom on TV or playing on your phone or computer. This is how it is for so many today. Then, after wasting the evening in these ways, night after night, you just go to bed, sleeping with your back to your loved ones. The spark that was once there flickers out due to neglect, and the marriage slowly dies. I've seen it over and over again.

And as your once-exciting, beautiful marriage becomes "old" and "routine," many seek to renew that old romantic "spark" – but with a new partner. I've seen this over and over again too. Today, many go into marriage believing in the idea of "50/50" ... they believe the burdens and chores that are a necessary part of everyday life should be split equally. So

each one feels they should put in 50% of the effort, expecting the other half from their spouse.

This does not work. Just try it in school. Do you know what 50% will get you on a test? An "F" – a failing grade. Putting 50% of your effort into your marriage means you have failed. You see, a good and Godly marriage means you always strive for 100%. You both do, as you work to serve one another. And therein lies the key to it all: *serve one another.*

Speaking as a husband, father and grandfather, I've learned that our job as men is to be the leader and the minister in the household. And in case you're not aware, the definition of "minister" is "servant." Jesus told us we must be the servant of all. We're not to be so petty as to keep track of how much our spouse is doing. Instead, we make sure we're putting in *our* 100%, and as we do that, we lead – by example. Give your wife 100% of your love, time and attention and you'll soon find that your wife will be doing the same for you. Your marriage will not just remain strong, but you'll grow closer together as the two of you become one – not just physically, but spiritually as well. Not to mention the fact that you'll be modeling Godly marriage for your children to see.

Proverbs 18 tells us that *"he who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord."* Proverbs 31 reminds us that our wives are more precious than jewels. Guys, don't take your wife for granted. Instead, go out of your way to intentionally serve her on a regular basis. Be a gentleman. Protect her, provide for her, make her life easier and give her the security of the assurance of your love. Pray with each other and for each other. Instead of wasting time on vain and useless things, invest your time in truly loving the wife God has given you. She's the greatest blessing you will ever receive in this world. Do the dishes, wash the laundry, take care of the yard. Beyond the manual labor and chores,

bless her with a foot massage, rub her tired, sore back. Kiss her and express your love often. Treasure her. Let her know she's your number one priority.

1 Peter 3 tells us to show honor to our wives and if we don't, our prayers will be hindered. In other words, if truly loving our precious wives is not a priority for us, God's not going to be too interested in hearing our prayers. Our duties as men are: God first, our wives second and our families third. Because if God is first in our lives, we'll naturally be grateful for the wonderful wife He's given us and treat her accordingly, and together, we'll raise up Godly children for the glory of God. This is how you do life right. This is God's way. If you're unhappy in your marriage and family, it's time to get your priorities in order. It's time to deny your *self* interests and start serving, honoring and adoring your wife.

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