

THE FAMILY

Article 18

(chapter 21 in workbook)

Article 18: The Family

“God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

“Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

“The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family.

“A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

“Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.”

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus
20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1
Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128;
139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22;
12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-
14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-
12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32;
18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32;
1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4;
Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy
1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

**The Foundational
(but not final) Institution**

Modern Assumption:

Traditional family is a product of
human evolution

Modern Result:

Random restructuring of “family”
leading to chaos

Biblical Revelation:

Marriage was instituted by God even before the fall of man.

Marriage is a major building block for the right ordering of civilization.

Marriage Rules:

- One man and one woman for life
- Fidelity and mutuality (Heb. 13:4)
- Serves as a metaphor of Christ and His church (Eph. 5:22-33)
- Sexuality is a good gift for the marriage relationship

Marriage Works:

- When the husband leads like Jesus
- When the wife follows and helps like the church
- Both are seeking to glorify God by fulfilling their task in order to show the world a powerful illustration of the gospel

A Blessing and Heritage

- “Children are not an imposition on the marriage” (p. 171).
- We believe that parents are “to teach their children spiritual and moral values” (*BF&M*, cf. Eph. 6:4).
- We believe that parents teach children “through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline” (*BF&M*).

Purpose:

“God gave us marriage and family for our happiness and our health, but He also created them as structures of accountability so that we can live holy lives, demonstrating His character, love, and wisdom as we fulfill all the responsibilities and roles assigned to marriage and the family” (p. 172).