

# The Christian Arsenal

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## BE WISE ABOUT FAMILY

Today we're going to look at several verses in the book of **Proverbs** that have to do with family. Solomon had a lot to tell us about family. Solomon made a lot of mistakes in his own family and sometimes we can learn an enormous amount from folks who can tell you from experience **what they should and should not have done.**

Solomon had many wives and many concubines. You and I cannot identify at all with the way Solomon lived. He ruled the land of Israel. He was the wisest man who ever lived. He was also very, very rich.

Somewhere along the way, **his riches became much more important to him than his wisdom.**

Somewhere along the way, **his flesh became much more important to him than his spirit.** Somewhere along the way, Solomon **disregarded the wisdom the Lord had given to him and embraced the wisdom of this world...**

But, that does not lessen the truths we find in the book of **Proverbs**. The Holy Spirit inspired this book and if all believers would pattern their lives after these truths we would be much **happier, much healthier** and much **holier!**

So, let's look at the passages before us today with a sense of discovering the way to build a family. This is certainly not an exhaustive teaching on the family, but it certainly is a great foundation. **It teaches us the basics we should know.**

The only problem is that many of us have already been there and done that and have already made a lot of mistakes that are difficult if impossible to correct!

But, it's never too late to learn! We all have the opportunity to share with others...our children, our grandchildren, mentoring and counseling situations. And the things we share about marriage and family and children should be based on the Word of God!

We said several weeks ago that **wisdom is the theme of this book**. Solomon urges us to **seek** the wisdom of God and to **live** by the wisdom of God.

**Proverbs 24** tells us that it is by wisdom that a house is built and through understanding it is established. And I want us to think on these truths today.

How does wisdom build a house?

How does understanding establish a house?

What kind of wisdom and understanding builds and establishes a home?

I love a pretty home. I love for things to "go together" and to be inviting and comfortable for those who live there and visit there.

But, I want to tell you...a home is built, not with expensive art, paint, window coverings, fine furnishings, throw pillows and carpet...**a home is built with wisdom and understanding.**

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Wisdom is the ability to take the knowledge about God concerning life and apply it in a practical and successful way to our homes. Wisdom for you and me is a knowledge of the will of God that enables us to live a life that is pleasing to Him.

**And I want to tell you...we can know this book from cover to cover...but if all that knowledge and understanding of this book doesn't translate and transfer into our homes and families, it is useless to us and really puts us in a more dangerous situation.**

**God holds us accountable for what we know. Are we implementing our knowledge and understanding of Him and His Word into our family life?**

And would you agree with me when I say that it is within the context of our families and our homes that we have the biggest problem? I mean, if we're going stray away from the teachings of God's Word and say things we shouldn't we usually do this with members of our family.

**Proverbs 16:21** tells us that the wise in heart will be called discerning and sweetness of speech increases learning. **Proverbs 16:23** tells us the heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds persuasiveness (or learning) to his lips.

Haven't you been with folks, even uneducated people, who just seem to speak **wisdom and discernment** every time they open their mouths?

And haven't you been with other folks, even educated people, who speak **foolishness and nonsense** every time they say something?

I believe the difference is the discernment they have in **spiritual** things. The phrase "wise in heart" found in **Proverbs 16** suggests to us a wisdom that isn't found in book learning, but a wisdom that God imparts to His children.

God wants the wisdom He imparts to our heart to reach our mouth. And I believe if we would ever learn this truth, our homes would be a much sweeter place for all our family.

The wise person weighs the facts of a situation and thinks before he speaks. He doesn't just blurt out the first words that come to his mind, regardless of whether they are right or wrong. He allows the wisdom that God has imparted to his heart to rule his tongue.

And how wonderful if we all had known these things and practiced these things at the very beginning of our marriage...at the very beginning of the building and the establishing of our homes. **But, let's learn them now! And let's teach them to others...**

**Proverbs 20:7** speaks of a righteous man who walks in integrity and the blessing this is to his sons.

We see this principle all the way through Scripture. We see how the blessing of the righteous father was extended many times to the sons and we see how the unrighteousness in a family was passed down as well.

Righteousness is always a blessing to the children of the righteous. The children may not **recognize it or acknowledge it or live in the light of it**. But, that doesn't nullify the blessing.

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God blessed Israel. God called Israel to be His own possession, but many times Israel didn't live in the light of that blessing. Did that nullify God's blessing? Has God had His hand on Israel all these years? Of course, He has. And He's not through with them yet!

**Proverbs 18:22** and **12:4** and **14:1** and **19:14** and **31:10** speak of **the wife**.

The first thing Solomon addresses in **18:22** is the **"finding of a wife."**

Marriage wasn't **man's** idea. Marriage was **God's** idea.

After God created the world and all its wonders, and after God put Adam in the garden, God said that everything was very good.

Then, God saw that Adam was lonely and God said that it was not good for Adam to be alone.

God put Adam to sleep and when Adam awoke, he had Eve!  
God created Eve to meet the needs of Adam.

Marriage was designed by God to be a sacred institution.

And God has a lot to say about the role that wives play in marriage.

**Proverbs 18:22** says **"he who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD."**

Finding a wife isn't the same as finding a woman. Solomon knew a lot about finding women. His position and his wealth and wisdom drew women to him like magnets...but I doubt out of all his 600 "wives" and 300 concubines that he really had a **godly husband/wife relationship** with any of them.

EXAMPLE: Song of Solomon...

More is said about the wife specifically in the book of **Proverbs** than the husband. But, I believe all the teaching we see on wisdom is applicable to both the husband and the wife, but to the husband first. It is the man who is the initiator. It is the wife who is the responder. And I want to tell you, **it's much easier for a wife to respond to a wise man than to a foolish man.**

And contrary to what our modern society says...God's Word says it is the man who "finds a wife" not the woman who "finds a husband."

Another reason the wife is talked about so much is that the bride is a picture of the church. Paul calls the church in the book of **Ephesians** the "bride of Christ."

So, Solomon tells us that the man who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD.

But, he goes on to tell us that an excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who shames him is as rotteness in his bones.

Think about the Peninnah and Hannah. They were wives of Elkanah. Peninnah had children. Hannah longed for children. Peninnah also had a mean spirit and a sharp tongue. She never stopped reminding Hannah of her barrenness.

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Hannah did not respond in kind! Hannah prayed to the Lord! And when God finally gave her a son, Hannah gave him back to God!

Peninnah brought Elkanah rotteness to his bones. But, Hannah was a crown to Elkanah.

Then, remember Jezebel? What an ungodly influence Jezebel was on Ahab! Ahab was a weak man. He might have been a godly man if he had had a godly wife... The Bible has nothing good to say about Jezebel, and through the horrible deeds she did, she truly was rotteness to Ahab's bones.

Remember Herod's wife? She influenced Herod to kill John the Baptist...something he really hadn't planned to do. She was rotteness to Herod's bones.

Remember Lot's wife? Wouldn't Lot have been so much better off if she hadn't been so in love with Sodom and Gomorrah that she looked back? Lot wouldn't have committed incest with his two daughters. The Ammonites and the Moabites wouldn't have been around to give Israel such grief. **Lot's wife may have been a pillar of salt, but she was also rotteness to Lot's bones.** And the last one I'll mention is Mrs. Job. It's interesting that Satan took away from Job everything that he leaned upon **except his wife, which means that Satan knew she wasn't very much help to him.** The thing we all probably remember most about her is that she told her husband to **"curse God and die."**

**Proverbs 14:1** tells us that the wise woman builds her house, but the foolish tears it down with her own hands.

I can't help but be reminded of the way the Holy Spirit emphasizes the mothers of the kings in Scripture. Over and over in the books of the **Chronicles** the mothers of the kings are mentioned.

Why? Because the mothers of the kings had great influence on their lives. Some influenced their sons for good and some influenced them for evil. One king's mother even killed her own son and grandchildren so she could be queen. Now, that's a sure way to tear down your house!!

**I believe the Lord will hold mothers very accountable for the influence they have on their children.**

I pray we are all wise and building up our houses. I pray that we are not foolish and tearing them down. What a grave responsibility God has given mothers! For some of us, the time has long since past that we can shape the lives of our own **little** children...but we can give them godly counsel now and we can certainly do all we can to be involved in the lives of our children's children.

**Proverbs 19:14** tells us that house and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD.

Inheritances come to us from family. But, a wise and prudent wife is a gift from the Lord.

How I pray that when my husband looks at me, he sees a prudent wife and he also sees me as a gift from the Lord.

I hope he's not like the man I heard about...

**This old bachelor who had never met a woman whom he wanted**

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to marry because he thought they all talked too much.

He finally found a woman who was very quiet and also had never been married and he fell in love with her and asked her to marry him.

The minute she accepted the proposal, she started talking. She talked about where they would go and how they would fix their house and on and on and on.

Suddenly after an hour or so she realized that she was doing all the talking and that he was quiet. "Why don't you say something?" she asked.

He answered, "I've said too much already."

**Proverbs 21:19** tells us that it is better to live in a desert land, than with a contentious and vexing woman.

I read this week: **"To keep your marriage brimming  
with love in the loving cup,  
Whenever you're wrong, admit it,  
whenever you're right, shut up!"**

I think that's a good poem and even better advice!

**Proverbs 31:10** implies that an excellent wife is hard to find...and that her worth is far above jewels.

Now, I know in this room there are those of us who are single...some are widowed, and some are divorced and some are single out of choice. There are those of us who are remarried having lost our first husband to death or divorce. And there are also those of us who have been married for many years.

God has a word for **all of us**. All of us should conduct our lives in a manner that is pleasing to Him and is obedient to His Word. All of us should strive to know His Word so well, that in any given situation we would immediately know what His will is.

All believers make up the bride of Christ. And we should be conducting ourselves in a way that brings the Lord Jesus honor and blessing and glory.

Before we get through today, let's think about the children of a marriage.

Solomon tells us that we should discipline our children. He also tells us that a child who gets his own way is a shame to his mother. In some families it is the father who is the primary disciplinarian and in other families it is the mother.

I've counseled with several young mothers to be in one accord with their husbands when it comes to discipline. It's so like mothers to be overprotective. We're with the children most of the time, and if we were honest we would say that discipline from their fathers, even if deserved, is sometimes resented by us.

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The best thing a mother and a father can do for their children is to present a unified front!

Disobedience when a child is very small is sometimes "cute."  
But, when that same child gets to be a teenager, that disobedience ceases to be cute and can be dangerous.

**I heard James Dobson say one time that we should put children in a barrel and feed them through a knothole. . . and when they become teenagers we should cover up the knothole.**

Of course Dr. Dobson was joking...I **think!** By the way, I highly recommend his book **BRINGING UP BOYS!!**

Parents have responsibilities to their children and children have responsibilities to their parents. God's Word tells us that we are to honor our father and our mother. God's Word also tells us that we are not to provoke our children to wrath and anger.

We began today's lesson with **Proverbs 24:3** which says, "*By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established.*" **Proverbs 24:4** says, "*And by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.*"

I don't believe this means material riches. Again, I don't believe this means the finest of décor or the most luxurious carpet or the most exquisite accessories or the most finely appointed kitchen.

I believe God's Word is speaking of the riches that can be found in a home where love is found. **Proverbs 15:17** speaks of a dish of vegetables where love is as being better than a big steak where there is hatred.

All we have to do is look at the entertainment industry...the so-called "beautiful people" and we see that they have the finest that money can buy, but they have also been in marriage after marriage and they have lived in home after home where there is nothing but contention and hatred and bitterness.

One of my favorite movies that I like to watch during the Christmas season is **A CHRISTMAS CAROL**. I love to see the old British version with Reginald Owens as Ebenezer Scrooge. And I also love to watch the more recent version with George C. Scott.

What a contrast in the way Ebenezer Scrooge lived his life and the way Bob Cratchit lived his...

Would we rather visit the home of poor Bob Cratchit, where there was love and laughter and the fear of the Lord? Or would we rather visit the haunted house of a man who possessed great treasure but who was scared to death he was going to turn loose of a penny?

How many of you have ever eaten in a fine home where there is hatred and a table laden with wonderful food? And how many of you have ever eaten in a humble home where the food was very simple but where love abounded? Which made you feel more comfortable and happy? Of course...the one where love was evident.

God has called you and me to make the most of where we are. If we have a husband and children, then He has given us ways to be wise enough to bring Him glory in that situation.

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Whatever our circumstances...whether married or unmarried, with children and grandchildren or without, God has a way for you and me to walk a holy walk before Him...and it's our responsibility to find that way and walk it.

**"By wisdom a house is built and through understanding it is established; by knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures."**