

Faith, Family, and Freedom - the Cultural Mandate

“Fight For Your Family”

Nehemiah 4:14 NIV

It all has to start with our faith in Jesus Christ, our walk with God, our relationship with God on an individual level. There can be no family or freedom in a nation if we aren't men and women who have individually and personally submitted ourselves to the lordship of Jesus Christ and who live and walk by faith, not by sight. Family is the glue and the bridge between faith and freedom. Family is the building block of a healthy society because God designed it that way. According to God's Word, his purposes, his assignments, and his blessings, flow to and through families.

Genesis chapter 1:26-28, 31 NKJV

“ Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’... Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.”

What sets humanity apart from all the rest of creation is that we bear the image of God. We bear his likeness. He put a mark on us as people to say there's something about us that's designed to be a reflection of who God is - his character and his nature. God created us and then immediately gave us an assignment. He gave us a purpose. He gave us a calling to have dominion, to lead out, to express his image, to show who he is, and to govern the earth based on who God is and who his character is.

Where do the blessings of God come? He doesn't bring them primarily to individuals. He brings them to families united under his design and who are aligned according to his purpose and his assignment. And God says, *“I will bless them. I will bless the family.”* There is a special blessing that comes upon families.

We see more detail when he created Adam, the first man, and he puts him in charge and gives him an assignment. Adam started naming animals and then *"The Lord God said, it is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. And while the man slept, the Lord God took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the opening. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man."*

God brought to Adam the perfectly designed helper, and Adam broke out into singing and dancing, and said, *"This one is bone from my bone and flesh of my flesh."* That was the first worship song, praising Jesus for the amazing woman he brought to him. This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife and the two are united into one. Right here, the first family and the first marriage is born. And it is very good. And we see that God continues to love and bless and promote family throughout the Scriptures.

Genesis 12:3 ESV

"I will bless those who bless you [Abraham], and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

God made a covenant with Abraham and used his faith to bless the world and the nations. Why? Because God's blessings flow through families which are his vessel to multiply his image, his character, and his work on the earth. As soon as the first marriage happened and immediately after the first family was formed, Satan showed up. Why? Because Satan *hates* the family and because God *loves* the family. He could have showed up way before this. Satan said, *"I'm going to wait till this family thing happens because that's where the real danger is."*

First there was a wedding, then war broke out in the spiritual realm against this "dangerous" family unit that God created. Even Satan could see it from the very beginning and said, *"This is going to be my undoing. Through all the families of the earth, God is going to bless generations."* Satan didn't attack until after the first wedding because Satan hates family. The fabric of society and nations is the nuclear biblical family. It's the fabric of society and the fabric of a nation.

It's no accident that the greatest cultural battles fought today are aimed at the destruction of the nuclear family at every turn. In the last sixty years, we've seen a ramping-up of the onslaught against the nuclear family in America. In 1969, there was a court decision that made divorce possible through so-called "no fault." When no-fault divorce was established, divorce exploded in the nation and marriages began coming apart left and right.

Next, we began to redefine what marriage is. We said, *"Well, maybe marriage doesn't need to be between a man and a woman. Maybe it wasn't male and female. Maybe marriage could be a man and a man, or a man and three women, or a man and a giraffe. Let's redefine this thing because who's to say what it is, right?"* And next we became confused on what gender is. *"It's just a social construct, right? It doesn't have anything to do with biological sex or anything like that. It's how you feel, and if you feel like a man, then you're a man. If you feel like you're a woman, you're a woman. Basically we're the same anyway and none of it really matters. We decide, right?"*

And then it goes on from there. *"If there's not really men and there's not really women and there's not really genders and there's not really a purpose to this thing, then you know what? Well, there's not really husbands and wives, they're basically the same, right? So, there's no real roles or distinctions or differences, right? We're just two equals competing for the same territory."* We see the progression here as the family is destroyed bit by bit, piece by piece, as the Church sits back and God's people sit back and are quiet and not engaged in the culture, and the enemy decimates the very vessel and vehicle by which God blesses the world.

As the Church, we have to begin to wake up and repent first and begin to speak out again what God says, not what *culture* is saying. The demonic, marxist, godless, secular death-cult has convinced us that children aren't a *blessing* - they're a *curse* to be sacrificed on the altar of personal fulfillment and self-worship as our families crumble and society decays because we've rejected God. The leading cause of death in the world, in America especially, is not Covid - it's abortion. When Roe v. Wade was overturned, 200,000 less abortions happened in the first year. And yet, when that happened, 95% of churches said absolutely nothing about it. We were unwilling to speak to something that's so obviously the heart of God.

This is why we found ourselves where we are as a nation. And this is why we have to wake up, stand up, speak up, get back to the truth of God's Word and decide, *do we trust and believe God or not? And if so, are we going to live it? Are we going to speak it in love? Are we going to be unashamed? Are we willing for it to cost us something?* It's cost some key people something to stand for Jesus Christ lately. Will we allow it to cost us something? We have the transgender celebration of physical mutilation and we call it affirmation. We say, *"Hey, I want to affirm you by encouraging you to deface and graffiti, mutilate, and destroy the image of God that he created in you."*

Ultimately, this is defacing God's design as a reflection of our hearts and a celebration of our rebellion against his authority and his goodness. We're rebelling against his role as Author, Creator, and as the One who gives us purpose, who assigns our destiny, and tells us who we are. We say, *"No, God, you don't get to tell me who I am. I'm going to determine it even if I have to deface myself to do it."* Satan hates people because we bear the image of God, and he really hates *biblical nuclear* families because they demonstrate the relationship between Jesus and his Church. That's what Scripture says.

When a husband and a wife rightly relate to one another as head and helper the way God designed, he says it's designed to be an illustration and a picture of Jesus relating to his Church that's supposed to preach the gospel to the world - and Satan wants to destroy the *gospel*. He wants to defame *Jesus*. He wants to get back at God, and he does that through the ones that God loves, which are his people and the families that he brings together.

Nehemiah 4:14 NIV

"Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes."

The Jewish people were brought back into their homeland after seventy years of captivity. They were rebuilding the walls around Jerusalem, when this nefarious character Sanballat showed up with an army ready to attack them and stop them from doing God's work. They didn't stop building the wall, but they split up the duties and responsibilities of their family so that some were building and some were watching. Because they organized their families around achieving the purposes of God together, Sanballat didn't even attack, he just backed up and left.

That is a picture of what happens in the spiritual realm when families unite - when they stand together and pray for one another - when they have a sword of the Spirit in one hand and the assignment that God's given them as a family in the other hand, and they're working together, not to complete *their* goals and their purposes, but God's purposes. We have to *fight* for it. A strong relationship with God from two individuals will hold a marriage together and make it strong - and a strong *marriage* will hold kids together. And then strong kids will hold a society and a *nation* together.

Ephesians 6:1-3 ESV

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise), that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."

God's given us a clue here. He says, one of the key elements to longevity and the prosperity of a nation is children who have had a heritage of faith passed on to them, who have learned to honor and obey their parents and the Lord. He says that will produce the longevity of a nation. He says we will live long in the land when we make that our priority. The key is not to just have a family or have a marriage or even loosely base it around faith and some godly ideas. Christ has to be the center of our family and our marriage. The *nucleus* of the nuclear family must be Jesus Christ.

Jesus must be the center point and the nucleus around which our marriage and our entire family revolves. Nothing takes his place. Nothing takes preeminence or priority over him being central in all things if we want to succeed and do this God's way. That means sports can't become God in our family. Our kids' education and their performance and their future and their scholarship can't take center stage and begin to supersede church and God and their relationship with God and their discipleship so that we just make really smart people who hate God. When God is not at the center, somebody else takes that position, and dysfunction, death, destruction, and pain follow suit. We need a family pact making Jesus center.

John 12:32 NKJV

"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."

What's the application of this for us? When we lift him up in our life and in our heart, he'll begin to draw people to himself in and through us. When we begin to exalt Jesus as the centerpiece and the focal point of our family, he will begin to draw all people to himself through our family as we exalt Christ and the gospel together. And when families begin to do that and a nation begins to exalt Jesus and lift him up, the nation will begin to draw people to the gospel and to Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:22-33 NKJV

"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself...For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

Many studies prove that among Christian couples who actually attend church regularly, repeatedly, and habitually, and that practice their faith *together*, the divorce rate goes from 50% to 15%. There's a 70% decrease in divorce just from that one decision. We have to decide which type of people we are. Are we people of the *world* or people of the Word? Which direction will we set? - because as goes the head, so goes the body, and so goes the family. 71% of inmates and 80% of rapists come from fatherless homes. 90% of all homeless and runaway children come from fatherless homes. 60% of all youth suicides come from fatherless homes. Kids without fathers present and active are 500% more likely to live in poverty and to commit crime. They're 900% more likely to drop out of school. They're 2,000% more likely to end up in prison. This is what happens when you cut off a head.

1 Peter 3:7 NLT

"In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered."

Husbands, treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are physically, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should *"so your prayers will not be hindered."* God's saying, *"Hey man, if you don't want to listen to your wives, I'm not going to listen to you. If you don't want to love and serve and lay down your your life for your wife, don't be surprised when you feel distant and disconnected from me because I'm going to cut you off until you change that. Don't let your prayers be hindered by your stubbornness, your sin, and your rebellion."* Men, repent, love, serve, and lead your wife, and watch the heavens open and see God begin to speak to you again!

Prayer

Father, in Jesus name, we honor You today. Lord, we take the hard truth that confronts our flesh and our sin and we welcome it knowing that it's healing. Father, if it's to be, it starts with me. Lord, we repent and we want to love and lead and serve our spouses and our families. God, we pray that You would heal our families and marriages - God, that You'd heal relationships with kids and destinies and visions. Lord, open up the heavens and speak again to men and to husbands, and may the Church, Your people, lead the way for a hurt and a lost world in showing the image of Jesus Christ and the gospel through our families. God, we submit ourselves to You by faith in Jesus name. Amen.