

Family

10/05

“The family unit is the only eternal organization.” (Eldred G. Smith, *Ensign*, November 1974, pg. 26)

Family Defined

(BD 670)

01 – “The first man and woman—Adam and Eve—were a family...The frequent genealogical lists in scripture give evidence of the importance that is placed on family.” Type and Shadow of ‘the family proclamation’ - 3 Nephi 3:13-14

The First Family

(Moses 4:22-25, 13; Moses 5:1-12)

Word Definitions: (Hugh Nibley, *Old Testament and Related Studies*, pg. 87-90)

“*Multiply*”: [Hebrew] (Rabah), [Greek] (Plethynomia) **Not to add or increase, but to repeat over and over again.**

“*Sorrow*”: [Hebrew] (Aisab), [Greek] (Astsav) **Not to be sorry, but to labor, to toil, to sweat, or to do something hard.**

“*Labor*”: (Lype) **Bodily or mental strain, discomfort or affliction.**

NOTE - Adam and Eve commit the same offence and thus given the same punishment. Observation of the text shows that there was no ‘*curse*’ upon Adam or Eve but only upon the earth, and ‘the earth was cursed *for thy sake*’. The apron of fig leaves which covers the procreative powers becomes a profound symbol; a fig is full of seeds and its leaves are green, thus the aprons covering suggest the raising of a numerous seed unto eternal life. ...

Adam and Eve become a pattern for us all in the ‘5 Steps in Gaining Family Salvation’ –

(Notice the words used to suggest unity in all they did: ‘they’, ‘them’, ‘their’, etc.)

1. Work Hard Together (Moses 5:1)
2. Be Fruitful, Multiple and Replenish (Moses 5:2)
3. Family Prayer → Family Revelation (Moses 5:4)
4. Obedience to Commandments (Moses 5:5-8)
5. Taught their children the gospel (Moses 5:12)

02 – “The laws of God are immutable, and from this explanation we learn that the same punishment always follows the same offense, according to the laws of God who is eternal and endless, hence it is called, endless punishment, and eternal punishment, because it is the punishment which God has fixed according to unchangeable law.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2: 228)

03 – “So this earth life is set up according to true principles, and these conditions that followed the transgression were not, in the usual sense, penalties that were inflicted upon us. All these that I have named to you that seem to be sad inflictions of punishment, sorrow, and trouble are in the end not that. They are blessings. We have attained a knowledge of good and evil, the power to prize the sweet, to become agents unto ourselves, the power to obtain redemption and eternal life. These things had their origin in this transgression. The Lord has set the earth up so we have to labor if we are going to live, which preserves us from the curse of idleness and indolence; and though the Lord condemns us to death—mortal death—it is one of the greatest blessings that comes to us here because it is the doorway to immortality, and we can never attain immortality without dying.

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So these are all real blessings. We come to the earth with all these conditions arranged as they are so that we have to struggle constantly against evil, struggle to preserve our lives, struggle for everything of true value—that is the thing for us to understand—this is the course of life that is most desirable, and for our good. We have no need to find fault with these conditions. The Lord has ordained them all for our welfare and happiness. **The truth as I understand and feel about it is simply that circumstances placed Adam in a position where by a technical transgression he could come into mortal life, moving out of immortality into these earth conditions for his blessing, for the blessing of the race,** without which no immortality and eternal life and exaltation could ever come.” (George Q. Morris, *CR*, April 1958, pg. 39)

Restatement and Reemphasizing of Roles

(1 Timothy 2:11-15)

04 – “To deliberately refrain from assuming martial or parental obligation is to fail the most important test of this mortal probation.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *DNTC*, 3:236)

05 – “If I were asked to name the world’s greatest need, I should say unhesitatingly wise mothers and...exemplary fathers” (David O McKay, *Richard L. Evans Quote Book*, pg. 20)

06 – “Priesthood and motherhood are the perfect partnership!” (Neal A. Maxwell, *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*, pg. 218)

***Adam - Men* (Matthew 25:21; Jacob 1:19; Jacob 2:2; D&C 103:7-11)**

07 – “If you do not magnify your calling, God will hold you responsible for those you might have saved, had you done your duty.” “And who of us can afford to be responsible for the delay of eternal life of a human soul.” (John Taylor, *CR*, July 7, 1878; John Taylor; Thomas S. Monson, *Ensign*, May 1990, pg. 48)

08 – “The privilege of holding the priesthood, which is the power and authority to act in God’s name, is a great blessing and privilege and one that carries with it equally great obligations and responsibilities.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, November 1986, pg. 45)

09 – “It is true that not every man is a natural missionary, and there are those who shrink from the responsibility of raising their voices in proclamation of the Gospel, and yet this is an obligation that we owe to this fallen world. The elders in the very beginning had been commanded to serve the Lord with all their ‘heart, might, mind and strength,’ for the field is white and ready for the harvest. A penalty was to be inflicted upon those who failed and they were not to stand blameless at the last day. The preaching of the Gospel was to be a means to them by which they were not to perish, but bring salvation to their souls. There are many who have been sent forth who have had a fear of man, yet the Lord has promised to support them in their labors if they will trust in him.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 1:204)

10 – “In our preexistent state, in the day of the great council, we made a certain agreement with the Almighty. The Lord proposed a plan, conceived by him. We accepted it. Since the plan is intended for all men, we become parties to the salvation of every person under that plan. We agreed, right then and there, to be not only saviors for ourselves but measurably, saviours for the whole human family. We went into a partnership with the Lord. The working out of the plan became then not merely the Father’s work, and the Savior’s work, but also our work. The least of us, the humblest, is in partnership with the Almighty in achieving the purpose of the eternal plan of salvation.” (John A. Widtsoe, *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, October 1934; *Melchizedek Priesthood Personal Study Guide –A Course of Study for Priesthood Quorums*, 1967:87)

11 – “Only those who have walked through life with love and respect and appreciation for their companion and children will receive from our eternal judge these words.” (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, May 2002, pg. 54)

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Eve - Women (Hymn #309; 1 Timothy 2:15; D&C 132:63)

12 – “We say the prime role for a woman is to become a wife and a mother.” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Speeches - BYU* 1973, pg. 93)

13 – “Motherhood is near to divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by mankind.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, November 1993, pg. 23)

14 – “God trusts women so much that He lets them bear and care for His spirit children.” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1978, pg. 10)

15 – “You remember Mother Eve’s promise; she and her daughters would be saved in child bearing. Saved! I thought that meant protected so they would go through delivery of their babies unscathed. I’m not so sure that that’s what it means now, but I know that if mothers will do their part, even though it costs their lives, then their eternal reward in our Father’s celestial world will be certain.” (Harold B. Lee, *Ye are the Light of the World*, pg. 317)

16 – “God has laid upon men and women very sacred obligations with respect to motherhood, and they are obligations that cannot be disregarded without invoking divine displeasure. In I Timothy 2:13-15, we are told that ‘Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.’ Can she be saved without child-bearing? She indeed takes an awful risk if she willfully disregards what is a pronounced requirement of God. How shall she plead her innocence when she is not innocent? How shall she excuse her guilt when it is fastened upon her?” (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, pg.288)

17 – “Motherhood consists of three principal attributes or qualities: namely, (1) the power to bear, (2) the ability to rear, (3) the gift to love.

Some women there are who possess only the first, and who, therefore, are unworthy the name of mother. Selfishly, passionately, they have expressed themselves, as others of their kind, on the low plane of physical life, scorning the responsibility to sacrifice for and to rear their offspring choking the fountain of love by selfish and willful neglect of their children.” (David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals*, pg. 453)

18 – “When the real history of mankind is fully disclosed, will it feature the echoes of gunfire or the shaping sound of lullabies? The great armistices made by military men or the peacemaking of women in homes and in neighborhoods? Will what happened in cradles and kitchens prove to be more controlling than what happened in congresses? When the surf of the centuries has made the great pyramids so much sand, the everlasting family will still be standing, because it is a celestial institution, formed outside telestial time. The women of God know this.” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1978, pg. 11)

19 – E. T. Sullivan: “When God wants a great work done in the world or a great wrong righted, He goes about it in a very unusual way. He doesn’t stir up His earthquakes or send forth His thunderbolts. Instead, He has a helpless baby born, perhaps in a simple home out of some obscure mother. And then God puts the idea into the mother’s heart, and she puts it into the baby’s mind, and then God waits. The greatest forces in the world are not earthquakes and thunderbolts. The greatest forces in the world are babies. And greater than the babies are the mothers who give them life and mold their thoughts and set their highest ideals. The hand that rocks the cradle is truly the hand that rules the world.” (*Church News*, October 7, 1978, pg. 10)

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20 – “Remember always that the most important of the Lords work you and I will do will be within the walls of our homes” (Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places*, pg. 255)

21 – “No other success can compensate for failure in the home.” (David O. McKay, *CR*, April 1964, pg. 5)

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22 – “There is nothing in this world as important as the creation and perfection of family units.” (Bruce R. McConkie, Improvement Era, June 1970, pg. 43-44)

Commandments Concerning Children

(D&C 68:25-30;D&C 93:40-50)

23 – “Sometimes I think that we fear too much to link all of our teaching to the foundation of gospel truths. Too often, perhaps, we teach children to obey a law or a principle because our family expects that obedience. They might observe another truth in order to please a neighbor or a bishop, and another for yet some other reason. **When we teach an eternal truth to our children and don’t explain it in the context of a firm testimony of the Savior, we miss the power of the example of the greatest teacher the world has ever known.**” (Jack H Goaslind, *Ensign*, November 1995, pg. 10)

24 – “Gospel scholarship is a primary, not a secondary responsibility. **It is the obligation of parents to see that sacred ordinances are performed after the children have been properly taught. It is not the prerogative of parents to permit their children to grow up and choose for themselves. It is their duty and obligation to train them when they are young...**” (Ezra Taft Benson, *TETB*, pg. 496)

25 – “Knowing it would be so, the Lord warned that ‘inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes, ... that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost, ... the sin be upon the heads of the parents.

For this shall be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion....

And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord.’ (D&C 68:25-28).

This shield of faith is not manufactured on an assembly line, only handmade in a cottage industry. Therefore our leaders press members to understand that what is most worth doing must be done at home. Some still do not see that too many out-of-home activities, however well intended, leave too little time to make and fit on the shield of faith at home.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, May 1995, pg. 9)

26 – “...there are parents who say: **We will let our children grow to manhood and womanhood and choose for themselves. In taking this attitude parents fail in the discharging of a parental responsibility.** Parents and teachers are God's fellow workers. **The Father of all mankind expects parents, as his representatives, to assist him in shaping and guiding human lives and immortal souls.** That is the highest assignment which the Lord can bestow upon man.” (David O. Mckay, *CR*, April 1955, pg. 27)

27 – “Brethren, a recent study conducted by the Church has forcefully confirmed statistically what we have been told again and again. **That is, if loving, inspired instruction and example are not provided at home, then our related efforts for success in and around Church programs are severely limited. It is increasingly clear that we must teach the gospel to our families personally, live those teachings in our homes, or run the risk of discovering too late that a Primary teacher or priesthood adviser or seminary instructor could not do for our children what we would not do for them.**” (Jeffrey R. Holland, *Ensign*, May 1983, pg. 36)

28 – “...There is only one standard of moral decency. **Any film, television show, music, or printed material unfit for youth, is also unfit for parents.**” (J. Richard Clarke, *Ensign*, May 1991, pg. 42)

29 – “A word to adults and parents.... **when we violate any commandment, however small, our youth may choose to violate a commandment later on in life perhaps 10 times or 100 times worse and justify it on the basis of the small commandment we broke.**” (Vaughn J. Featherstone, *Ensign*, November 1999, pg. 14)

30 – “... what in you is merely casualness about Christianity may, in your children, become hostility; for what you have not defended, your children may reject angrily. ...” (Neal A. Maxwell; Bruce C. Hafen, *Ensign*, February 1982, pg. 10)

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31 – “Not one child in a hundred would go astray, if the home environment, example and training, were in harmony with the gospel of Christ.” (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, pg. 302)

32 – “Parents struggle and agonize over rebellious children; those wicked influences will be overruled.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, May 1992, pg. 68)

8 Things for an Eight Year Old - (A. Theodore Tuttle, *Ensign*, November 1979, pg. 28; Harold B. Lee, *CR*, October 1952, pg. 17)

1. Doctrine of Repentance
2. Faith in Christ
3. Baptism
4. The Gift of the Holy Ghost
5. To Pray
6. To Walk Uprightly
7. Keep the Sabbath Day Holy
8. To Labor

Frequently Quoted Facts

33 – “While governmental leaders delay emphasizing the moral and social value of the family, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have moved forward and announced the Lord’s response: an accelerated pace to temple building that unites families for time and all eternity.” (Susan Easton Black, *Ensign*, December 1999, pg.35)

34 – “Family home evening provides important training. Immorality, drug addiction, general moral and spiritual deterioration seem to be increasing, and the world is in turmoil. But the Lord has offered an old program in new dress, and it gives promise to return the world to sane living, to true family life, to family interdependence. It is to return the father to his rightful place at the head of the family, to bring mother home from social life and employment, the children from near-total fun and frolic. The home teaching program with its crowning activity, the family home evening, will neutralize the ill effects if people will only apply the remedy.” (Spencer W. Kimball, *TSWK*, pg. 345)

35 – “Take time to have a meaningful weekly home evening. With your husband presiding, participate in a spiritual and an uplifting home evening each week. Have your children actively involved. Teach them correct principles. Make this one of your great family traditions. Remember the marvelous promise made by President Joseph F. Smith when home evenings were first introduced to the Church: ‘If the Saints obey this counsel, we promise that great blessings will result. Love at home and obedience to parents will increase. Faith will be developed in the hearts of the youth of Israel, and they will gain power to combat the evil influences and temptations which beset them.’ (First Presidency, April 27, 1915, *Improvement Era*, 18:733-34) This wonderful promise is still in effect today.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *TETB*, pg. 516)

36 – “Scripture reading is important, but family scripture reading is vital. Reading the Book of Mormon together as a family will especially bring increased spirituality into your home and will give both parents and children the power to resist temptation and to have the Holy Ghost as their constant companion. I promise you that the Book of Mormon will change the lives of your family.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *TETB*, pg. 517)

ADAM AND EVE:

The Model for God’s Eternal Commandments

FOUR GREAT COMMANDMENTS:

1. “And gave unto them [Adam and Eve] commandments that they should love and serve him, the only living and true God, and that he should be the only being whom they should worship.” (D&C 20:19)

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2. “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Moses 2:28)
3. “Subdue it [earth], and have dominion over [all]” (Moses 2:28)
4. “I, the Lord God, command... man” – Be Obedient – (Moses 3:15-16)

= = = 1- GOD 2- FAMILIES 3- EARTH 4- OBEDIENCE = = =

ADAM & EVE:

D & C 20:19
Moses 2:28 -- Moses 5:2 (56 children)
Moses 2:28 -- Moses 3:20, 4:26
Moses 3:15-16 -- Moses 5:5-8

OUR INSTRUCTION:

D & C 59:5
D & C 42:22; D&C 132:63
D & C 104:17-18
D & C 130:20-21

SATAN'S ATTACK UPON THE WORLD:

- (1) Worship and serve the creature more than the Creator (Romans 1:25), Every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol (D&C1:16)
- (2) No marriage/immorality (Alma 39:3-5), Promiscuity (Romans 1:24-27), No/Limited children (JST Matthew 24:41), Abortion (D&C 59:6)
- (3) Control/Power (D&C 121:34-40), Improper possession (D&C 49:20; Jacob 2:18-19)
- (4) No/Little sin, Only if caught (D&C 1:31; Alma 13:12)(2 Nephi 28:7-8; D&C 10:22-27; 2 Nephi 28:19-22)

GODHOOD:

James 2:5; Mosiah 15:5-7
D & C 131:1-4; 132:19-22
Moses 1-2, 7:36
D & C 82:10

ADAM AND EVE: The Model for God's Eternal Commandments

ADDITIONAL NOTES

SATAN'S ATTACK UPON THE WORLD:

37 – “It is the doctrines they attack... If our members are ignorant of the doctrines, we are in danger, notwithstanding efficient programs and buildings.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, March 1985, pg. 9) These doctrinal onslaughts fall in the following attacks: 1) Family, 2) Leaders, 3) Divine Doctrines (Russell M. Nelson, *Ensign*, May 1989, pg. 69)

(5) **Godhead:** First Doctrine Under Attack at the Great Apostasy and the First Doctrine Restored at the first Vision.

38 – “True and saving worship is found only among those who know the truth about God and the Godhead and who understand the true relationship men should have with each member of that Eternal Presidency.

It follows that the devil would rather spread false doctrine about God and the Godhead, and induce false feelings with reference to any one of them, than almost any other thing he could do. The creeds of Christendom

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illustrate perfectly what Lucifer wants so-called Christian people to believe about Deity in order to be damned.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Sermons and Writings of Bruce R. McConkie*, pg. 58)

(6) **Family:**

39 – “Let me say again that **the family is the main target of evil’s attack** and must therefore be the main point of our protection and defense. As I said once before, when you stop and think about it from a diabolically tactical point of view, fighting the family makes sense to Satan. When he wants to disrupt the work of the Lord, he doesn’t poison the world’s peanut butter supply, thus bring the Church’s missionary system to its collective knees. He doesn’t send a plague of laryngitis to afflict the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. He doesn’t legislate against green Jell-O and casseroles. When evil wants to strike out and disrupt the essence of God’s work, it attacks the family. It does so by attempting to disregard the law chastity, to confuse gender, to desensitize violence, to make crude and blasphemous language the norm, and to make immoral and deviant behavior seem like the rule rather than the exception.” (M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign*, November 2003, pg. 18)

40 – “‘Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart and shall cleave unto her and none else.’ (D&C 42:22)

And, when the Lord says all thy heart it allows for no sharing nor dividing nor depriving. And, to the woman it is paraphrased: ‘Thou shalt love thy husband with all thy heart and shall cleave unto him and none else.’ **The words none else eliminate everyone and everything. The spouse then becomes preeminent in the life of the husband or wife, and neither social life nor occupational life nor political life nor any other interest nor person nor thing shall ever take precedence over the companion spouse.** We sometimes find women who absorb and hover over the children at the expense of the husband, sometimes even estranging them from him. The Lord says to them: ‘. . . Thou shalt cleave unto him and none else.’

Marriage presupposes total allegiance and total fidelity. Each spouse takes the partner with the understanding that he or she gives self totally to the spouse: all the heart, strength, loyalty, honor, and affection with all dignity. Any divergence is sin—any sharing the heart is transgression.” (Spencer W. Kimball, *CR*, October 1962, pg. 57) **41** – “The time would come when none but the women of the Latter-day saints would be willing to bear children.” (Joseph Smith; Lillie Freeze, *Young Women’s Journal*, 2:81/*Church News*, May 10 1980)

42 – “We know that every spirit assigned to this earth will come, whether through us or someone else. There are couples in the Church who think they are getting along just fine with their limited families but who will someday suffer the pains of remorse when they meet the spirits that might have been part of their posterity. The first commandment given to man was to multiply and replenish the earth with children (Genesis 1:28). **That commandment has never been altered, modified, or cancelled. The Lord did not say to multiply and replenish the earth if it is convenient, or if you are wealthy, or after you have gotten your schooling, or when there is peace on earth, or until you have four children.**

...Young mothers and fathers, with all my heart I counsel you not to postpone having your children, being co-creators with our Father in Heaven. Do not use the reasoning of the world, such as, “We will wait until we can better afford having children, until we are more secure, until John has completed his education, until he has a better paying job, until we have a larger home, until we have obtained a few of the material conveniences,” and on and on. This is the reasoning of the world and is not pleasing in the sight of God.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *TETB*, pg. 542-543)

43 – “Scripture declares that the “life of the flesh is in the blood.” (Lev. 17:11.) Abortion sheds that innocent blood.

Another excuse some use to justify abortion relates to population control. Many in developing nations unknowingly ascribe their lack of prosperity to overpopulation. While they grovel in ignorance of God and his commandments, they may worship objects of their own creation (or nothing at all), while unsuccessfully attempting to limit their population by the rampant practice of abortion. They live in squalor, oblivious to the divine teaching—stated in the scriptures not once, but thirty-four times—that people will prosper in the land only if they obey the commandments of God.” (Russell M. Nelson, *Ensign*, May 1985, pg. 13)

44 – “I thank the Father that His Only Begotten Son did not say in defiant protest at Calvary, ‘My body is my own!’ I stand in admiration of women today who resist the fashion of abortion, by refusing to make the sacred womb a tomb!” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1978, pg. 10)

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45 – ‘You were not created to be the same as men. Your natural attributes, affections, and personalities are entirely different from a man’s. They consist of faithfulness, benevolence, kindness, and charity. They give you the personality of a woman. They also balance the more aggressive and competitive nature of a man.

The business world is competitive and sometimes ruthless. We do not doubt that women have both the brainpower and skills—and in some instances superior abilities—to compete with men. But by competing they must, of necessity, become aggressive and competitive. Thus their godly attributes are diminished and they acquire a quality of sameness with man. **The conventional wisdom of the day would have you be equal with men. We say, we would not have you descend to that level.** More often than not the demand for equality means the destruction of the inspired arrangement that God has decreed for man, woman, and the family. Equality should not be confused with equivalence.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, pg. 548)

46 – “Whom do they worship? Certainly not the Lord of heaven and earth, for we serve whom we love and give first consideration to the object of our affection and desires. Young married couples who postpone parenthood until their degrees are attained might be shocked if their expressed preference were labeled idolatry. Their rationalization gives them degrees at the expense of children. Is it a justifiable exchange? Whom do they love and worship—themselves or God? Other couples, recognizing that life is not intended primarily for comforts, ease, and luxuries, complete their educations while they move forward with full lives, having their children and giving Church and community service.” (Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, pg.40-42)

(7) **Earth:**

47 – “The more important wealth is, the less important it is how one gets it.” (Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, pg. 357)

48 – “The trial of prosperity. We are to be tried in all things, and sooner or later we must be tested by prosperity and plenty. **Many people who remained faithful Latter-day Saints while they were poor may be unable to stand when they are rich.** Riches has a very corrupting effect upon the human heart, and it requires a very pure people to be as honest, virtuous, humble and upright when surrounded by luxury and wealth as when they are in poor and destitute circumstances.” (George Q. Cannon, *Gospel Truth: Discourses and Writings of President George Q. Cannon*, pg. 525)

49 – “When it comes to overcoming being greedy, selfish, and overly indulgent, we all need a lot more help. In his candid manner, President Brigham Young said: ‘The worst fear ... I have about this people is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and His people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church, and go to hell... **My greater fear ... is that they cannot stand wealth.**’

Our prosperity brings some real challenges because many are getting rich, more of us are waxing fat, and as a result of greed, selfishness, and overindulgence, we could lose the Spirit and literally kick ourselves out of the Church.” (Joe J. Christensen, *Ensign*, May 1999, pg. 9)

(8) **Obedience:**

50 – “No successful sinner.” (Marvin J. Ashton, *Ensign*, November 1990, pg. 21)

51 – “While boulders surely block our way, loose gravel slows discipleship too. Even a small stone can become a stumbling block.” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1995, 66-67)

52 – “The great test of life is obedience to God.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, April 1988, pg. 4)

53 – “We are too much disposed to believe and act like the world, not rendering that submission and humble obedience to the righteousness of God.... Many are disposed through their own wickedness ‘to do as I damned please,’ and they are damned. (Brigham Young, *JD*, 11:253-254)

THE FAMILY
A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD
THE FIRST PRESIDENCY AND COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

We, THE FIRST PRESIDENCY and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church Of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children.

ALL HUMAN BEINGS – male and female – are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.

IN THE PREMORTAL REALM, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshiped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize his or her divine destiny as an heir of eternal life. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT that God gave to Adam and Eve pertained to their potential for parenthood as husband and wife. We declare that God's commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.

WE DECLARE the means by which mortal life is created to be divinely appointed. We affirm the sanctity of life and of its importance in God's eternal plan.

HUSBAND AND WIFE have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. "Children are an heritage of the Lord" (Psalms 127:3). Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love

and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to teach them to love and serve one another, to observe the commandments of God and to be law-abiding citizens wherever they live. Husbands and wives – mothers and father – will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations.

THE FAMILY is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer; repentance, forgiveness, respect; love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities. By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation. Extended families should lend support when needed.

WE WARN that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.

WE CALL UPON responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society.

September 23, 1995

The Family - A Proclamation To The World

Facts and Figures

More than 1 million cases of child abuse or neglect were confirmed in 1993.

Between 3.3 million and 10 million children are exposed to domestic violence each year.

An estimated 464,000 children were in foster family homes, group homes, and residential treatment centers on a single day in 1993.

An estimated 7.7 million children in the United States suffer from serious emotional disorders.

Nearly 4.1 million American children are growing up in neighborhoods in which at least 40 percent of the population is poor.

One-third of all homosexual men in the US are HIV positive, or are dead from AIDS by age 30.

The homosexual life style is dangerous: homosexual men--

- life expectancy is reduced by more than 30 years
- much higher incidence of suicide, hepatitis, cancer
- average of 80 sexual partners during lifetime (28% have more than 1000 or more partners)

Of 156 male couples, not one was able to maintain sexual fidelity for more than 5 years. Homosexual relationships are not 'til death do us part,' far less for time and all eternity.

If attempts to legalize same-sex marriages succeed, the public nature of marriage, which currently distinguishes it from all other relationships, would irrevocably be changed.

The number of divorces in America has increased nearly 200% in the last 30 years; only about 50% of U.S. marriages are first marriages.

Births to unmarried women in the U.S. have increased by more than 400% in the last three decades. Over 1.2 million babies (31% of all births) were born outside of marriage in 1993.

Sexual Activity Among Teenagers:

Age - 12 - 13 - 14 - 15 - 16 - 17 - 18 - 19
% - 09 - 16 - 23 - 30 - 42 - 59 - 71 - 82

Sexual Activity and Dating:

Age - 12 - 13 - 14 - 15 - 16 - 17
% - 90 - 80 - 70 - 60 - 20 - 12

The present illegitimacy ratio is not only unprecedented in the past two centuries; it is unprecedented, so far as we know...

The scale of marital breakdowns in the West since 1960 has no historical precedent... There has been nothing like it for the last 2,000 years, and probably longer.

Nearly 1 in 4 pregnancies now ends in abortion; approx. 1.6 million abortions in 1990 and approx. 28 million since the 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision. About half of U.S. women will have an abortion at some point in their lives.

The number of abortions undergone by unmarried teenagers is now approx.

the same as the number of live births; in many inner-city settings there are more babies aborted than carried to term.

If current trends continue, less than half of all children born today will live continuously with their own mother and father throughout childhood. Most American children will spend several years in a single mother family--an increasing number of children will experience family breakups two or even three times during childhood.

Children from single parent families are:

- six times as likely to be poor
- two to three times as likely as children in two parent homes to have emotional and behavioral problems
- more likely to drop out of high school, get pregnant as a teenager, abuse drugs, and get in trouble with the law
- much more likely to be physically and sexually abused

The American family is not simply changing; it is getting weaker... family decline drives some of our most urgent social problems... the heart of the family problem lies in the steady breakup of the two-parent home.

The rate of violent crime in America has increased by more than 400% in the last three decades. The rate is higher than in any other industrialized country.

The fastest growing portion of the criminal population is our nation's youth. Young people 15-19 years old comprise 12% of U.S. population but account for over 22% of violent crime.

More than 70% of all juveniles in state reform institutions come from fatherless homes.

More than half of children in families disrupted by divorce or illegitimacy have not seen their father at all in the past year.

Fatherlessness is the engine driving our most urgent social problems, from crime to adolescent pregnancy to child abuse to domestic violence against women.