"God's Formula for a Blessed Christian Family"

Colossians 3:18-21

INTRODUCTION: Any society is only as strong as the families that make it up. To the degree a home is as God designed it to be, is the degree to which a family is blessed.

God's Original Design: Genesis 2:18-25

- God created Eve FOR Adam…
  to express the Roles He desires for the Husband & Wife (v.18-20)
  - Eve was Created to be Adam's Companion (v.18a)
    ("It is not good that the man should be alone")
  - Eve was Created to be Adam's Completer (v.18b-20)
    ("I will make him an help meet for him")
- God created Eve FROM Adam…
  to express the Oneness (unity) He desires between Husband & Wife (v.21-25)

The basic, foundational principles to family unity, happiness, and prosperity are found in Colossians 3:18-21. ***Follow God's secret (formula, prescription) to have the most "perfect" family possible in this life!**

4 Key Formulas for a fulfilled, united, and successful family:

I. The Wife's SUBMISSION (v. 18)

All of life is structured around a "chain of responsibility" (cp. Mt. 8:10).
Three basic divinely established institutions to provide structure (order) and safety (protection) to society:
1) The Home (I Cor. 7:2ff; Eph. 5:22-6:4)
2) The Government (Rom. 13:2)
3) The Church (Heb. 13:7, 17, 24)

These institutions involve submission and authority.
"Submit" - hupotasso - to place yourself under someone's authority.

Submission does NOT refer to the wife as being inferior in essence, but simply as have a different role or function.

Submission is misunderstood today.
God ordained that Husbands lovingly serve their wives (by providing for them, protecting them, directing them). And wives are to let them. This is the essence of submission.

A Biblical Definition of a wife's "Submission"
"Allow your husband to serve you
with the role & responsibilities God gave him"

II. The Husband's LOVE (v. 19)

The word "love" is the Koine Greek word "agapao." This is a special love.

The love that husbands are to have toward their wives is:

1. A spiritual love - By this I mean it does not come naturally.
2. Unconditional love - The kind of love God expects the husband to have is not dependent upon the worthiness of the wife.
3. Volitional love (a willing love) - a choice; a decision; an act of the will.
4. Continual love - the present tense imperative emphasizes the constant year by year, day by day, minute by minute nature of the love.
5. Gracious love - it's a love that gives (Jn. 3:16; hence it is often translated "charity" - I Cor. 13); and forgives (I Pet. 4:8).

III. The Child's OBEDIENCE (v. 20)

Such obedience is to be:

1. Cheerful -
   "Obey" = hupokouo" - lit. to listen with a submissive heart. Hence, to hear what your parents say and do it.
   (Attitude is just as important as action)

2. Continual (present imperative)
   Young men, as long as you are under their roof, you are obligated to obey them; young ladies, as long as you are under your parents' authority (until you get married), you are obligated to obey them.

3. Respectful - "your parents"
   Respect their God-given position over you. Even if you are bigger than . . . smarter than . . . or stronger than. . . you are to obey them because they are your parents.

4. Total - "in all things" (KJV)
   Obedience is not to be partial, but total (God does not qualify the obedience). However, the only exception is if your parents ask you to sin (to directly violate a Scriptural principle - cp. Acts 4:19-20, 5:29).

NOTE: God did not say "obey for this is popular" (II Tim. 3:2) or "for this is easy" (indeed it is often difficult) or "for they are worthy" (many are not).
Rather, He said, "for this is well pleasing."
The reason for obedience is simple. It pleases God. It is right! (Eph. 6:1)

Obedience is good for you!

It will not only provide a better and longer life, but it will also:

1) Teach you patience (to learn to trust and wait on God)
2) Equip you with self-control
3) Get you ready for a career that will demand respect for authority
4) Get you ready for life, which will not always be "fair" or "just"
5) You will reap in your children what you sowed as a child

IV. The Father's ENCOURAGEMENT (v. 21)

The importance of FATHER!

"Provoke" - to push your children; or harshly irritate them; to stir them up in a bad sense
"Discouraged" (from "a thumeo") which literally means to be without heat. A cold spirit.

Ways Parents provoke their children to anger:

1. Unbiblical discipline
2. Neglect (making them feel unwanted, a bother, not worthy of your time; so they turn to drugs, alcohol, immorality)
3. Favoritism (Ex: Isaac favored Esau over Jacob; Rebekah preferred Jacob over Esau)
4. Discouragement - "You never do anything right!" - A failure to commend and praise positive character.
5. Unfaithful to promises - You build up their hopes (by promising something), then dash them (through neglect, etc.)

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