**God’s Family Man**

*Joshua 24:15*

**Introduction**

1. Our society is filled with broken homes, and children abandoned or forgotten by their father. God’s word reveals how important the husband and father are to the health of the home.
2. The entertainment industry long ago implemented a plan to undercut the nuclear family through its programs.
   1. Single parent homes are made the norm, along with perverted homes (homosexuality).
   2. The classic family structure in these portrayals is carefully constructed with certain personality traits within the husband and father – lazy, absent minded, dull, stupid, clumsy, pushover – the mother and children make fun of him and disrespect him.
   3. No doubt this media, and the everyday example of ungodliness in homes surrounding us has had an effect.
3. Sometimes in reaction to these perversions which are obvious to us we turn more “conservative” ideologies about the home. In doing so, we still miss the point, and grasp at fleeting, vain matters.
4. What does God’s family man look like? Joshua is an example of one.
5. He is Personally Committed (“As for me”)
6. Joshua’s Commitment
   1. Joshua is closely linked to Moses – **Exodus 24:13; 33:11; Numbers 11:28** – his assistant, or servant. (“Moses’ right-hand man”)
      1. With Moses when he ascended mount Sinai – **Exodus 24:13**
      2. With Moses when he went out to the tent of meeting where Moses spoke with God face to face – **Exodus 33:11**
      3. Zealous for Moses – **Numbers 11:27-29** – zeal would be more appropriately directed toward the Law and God in growth.
   2. Naturally, then, the word of God is ever before Joshua:
      1. Moses’ tenure – **Exodus 17:14** (first mention of Joshua – after defeating Amalek in Rephidim); **Deuteronomy 31:14-15, 19, 24-25, 30** (shortly before his death, when God inaugurated Joshua, and Moses wrote down the law of God then spoke it to the people)
      2. As with Moses, the word of God is essential to his success in leading God’s people.
   3. **Yet, Joshua had to make a personal choice of commitment** – it was not as though proximity to the Law was enough (as demonstrated with the nation):
      1. Moses’ encouragement to Joshua – **Deuteronomy 1:38; 3:28; 31:7-8**
      2. God to Joshua after the death of Moses – **Joshua 1:6-9** (surely these details are implicit in the other instances, but more fully stated here)
      3. Joshua was not just consistently linked with Moses and the word but encouraged to faithfully apply it to himself – this required personal commitment.
   4. **Joshua 24:15** – at the end of Joshua's life, not the beginning – ***“as for me”* is not an empty statement but represents a perpetuation of a lifetime commitment to the very end.** (**cf. Joshua 24:18-20** – not that they couldn’t at all, but that they couldn’t without the kind of full, inward commitment which Joshua possessed himself in direct appeal to the grace of God.)
7. Personal Commitment is Foundational to Spiritual Leadership in the Home
   1. Attempts at spiritual leadership without personal commitment of faith have failed from the start – **Romans 2:17-24** – seeking to lead others in a way you have not followed yourself is mere hypocrisy and kills any pious thought about that way.
   2. **1 Timothy 4:16** – must first take heed to self.
   3. Ezra’s outstanding spiritual leadership among the remnant returned to Jerusalem came from self-preparation – **Ezra 7:6, 9-10** (Introducing Ezra and his ministry after the completion of the temple)
   4. Being a faithful Christian is the foundation upon which being a good husband and father is built – **John 15:5** – without Christ can do nothing.
8. He is Committed to Leadership (“and my house”)
9. Joshua’s Leadership
   1. Defeated Amalek – **Exodus 17:13**
   2. Joshua’s presence with Moses when descending Sinai and hearing and seeing the people’s sin, and presence with Moses at the tent of meeting suggests Joshua’s stance with Moses against the people in their sin – **Exodus 32:17-18; 33:7, 11** (Moses pitched tent far away from camp to meet with God)
   3. Chosen as a spy, and stands out among the spies showing faith in God – **Numbers 14:1-9**
   4. Chosen to succeed Moses, and the book bearing his name chronicles his leadership in taking the Promised Land – **Deuteronomy 3:28**
   5. It is evident from the very beginning of what we read about Joshua to the time of his role after the passing of Moses that God had selected him specifically. Joshua had demonstrated, not only personal faith, but the responsibility, integrity, and commitment necessary in leading others – **Genesis 18:19** (like with Abraham)
   6. **His national leadership presupposes his commitment to the leadership of his home** – ***“and my house”*** demonstrates this – something the people could have observed themselves.
      1. **The admonition and challenge to the people in these specific words manifests the nearest responsibility to him (and them – respective families), and a basic expression of faith – leading one’s own family in the way of the Lord.**
      2. HIS house – not another’s responsibility – **Joshua 7:14-18, 24** (break down of the fabric of nation when Achan is exposed) – clan/tribe, family (extended), household, man by man – ***“he and all that he has” (v. 15), “Achan…his sons, his daughters…”***
10. Spiritual Leadership in the Home Results from Conscious Effort
    1. Spiritual leadership in the home is accomplished in obtaining and applying godly wisdom – **Proverbs 24:3-4** – wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, not as an end in itself, but as the means to the end of a household faithfully serving God in all its parts.
       1. This requires presence, interest, and engagement.
       2. You cannot build, establish, and fill the house you are never around (whether physically, or regarding activity).
    2. Elders and deacons are to rule their houses well (shows them to be qualified for their position) – **1 Timothy 3:4, 12**
       1. Headship of wife included – **Ephesians 5:23, 25** – exercised in love.
       2. **Rule** – *proistēmi* – “to be over, to superintend, preside over” (THAYER)
          1. Authority, leadership.
          2. **Verb – it is not simply accomplished by being a husband/father, but by active oversight of and sincere concern for the spiritual welfare of the family.**
          3. Not merely citing God’s word but encouraging and enforcing application.
       3. Though Eli did not actively participate with his sons in their ungodly deeds, his negligence as a father made him guilty – **1 Samuel 2:22-25, 29; 3:12-13** – he spoke words, but did not accomplish restraining them in that merely.
          1. **“The history of his sons’ insubordination no doubt went back to their youth, when it should have been possible to discipline them.” (Baldwin, Tyndale Commentaries)**
    3. ***“as for me and my house”*** – manifests understanding of responsibility for the direction of those in your house, and commitment to not only leading by example, but when the example and direction is not followed, admonishing/rebuking/disciplining.
       1. **Deuteronomy 6:6-9** – not sitting around and waiting for them to figure it out, but actively making sure they do through teaching, and training.
       2. **Ephesians 6:4** – training and admonition.
       3. **God’s family man does not bury his head in the sand to avoid resentment from his children but trusts in God enough to secure their respect through the firm hand of loving leadership.**
11. He is Precise in His Commitment (“we will serve the Lord”)
12. Joshua’s Commitment to the Lord
    1. Historical separation – **Joshua 24:2-3** – Abram was a pagan with an idolatrous background but separated from such by God’s command. (Abraham followed by faith – **Hebrews 11:8-10**)
    2. Historical favor/deliverance – **Joshua 24:6-13**
       1. **(vv. 6-7)** – Exodus from oppression in Egypt.
       2. **(v. 8)** – victory over Amorites east of the Jordan.
       3. **(vv. 9-10)** – cursing turned to blessing – Balak, king of Moab, and Balaam the prophet.
       4. **(vv. 11-12)** – deliverance of the people of Canaan as promised.
       5. **(v. 13)** – blessing of fruitful land without the work.
    3. Future options (temptations) – **Joshua 24:14-15**
       1. **Lord** – *yhwh* – the proper name of the one and only true God Israel serves.
       2. **Sincerity** – *ṯâmîym* – complete, whole, entire, sound (BDB)
       3. **Truth** – according to God’s will.
       4. **(v. 15)** – gods from the past, or gods in the land you have just possessed.
    4. Joshua’s resolve, and encouragement to the people – (**v. 15**) – very precise in his commitment – only the Lord will we serve!
13. Spiritual Leadership in the Home Requires a Specific and Exclusive Choice Which Dictates All Other Choices
    1. ***“choose for yourselves”***
       1. **Choice** – an act of selecting or making a decision when faced with two or more possibilities (New Oxford American Dictionary)
       2. **Implied in the very concept of “choice” is the positive selection of a respective thing to the EXCLUSION of all other things.**
       3. **IF YOU TRULY MAKE THE CHOICE TO SERVE THE LORD, THEN YOU NECESSARILY EXLUDE EVERYTHING ELSE – ANYTHING THAT WOULD COME BETWEEN YOU AND THE LORD IS EXCLUDED.**
    2. **Deuteronomy 6:4-5** – this leaves no room for anything else.
       1. **(vv. 13-14)** – excludes all other gods, and everything there is to do with them.
    3. God’s family man chooses God for his family over all else:
       1. Assembly – **Hebrews 10:25** – no other activity can keep us from coming, not even from gospel meetings!
       2. Spiritual edification – **Ephesians 5:8-10** – does this come before the secular?
       3. Holiness – **1 Peter 1:15-16; Romans 12:2** – not yielding to children’s urges to fit in but enforcing holiness.
          1. Entertainment, company, dress, activities (school, etc.), etc.
       4. Career – **Colossians 3:5** – God’s family man does not lose himself to covetousness, getting lost in his career and chasing riches to the detriment of his family’s spiritual focus (**cf. 1 Timothy 6:6-7**).
          1. Also, he does not promote covetousness and materialism in his family by encouraging his children to pursue secular work to the neglect of spiritual focus.
       5. **Colossians 3:17** – whatever the family does, the head of the home leads them in the authority of Christ, and only to God’s glory.

**Conclusion**

1. We must be guarded against the perversions of the home that are being portrayed in society as virtuous and good.
2. The only answer to being a good husband and father is in the will of God.
3. God’s family man is a committed, faithful Christian, a committed spiritual leader in the home, and enforces the specific decision to serve the Lord consistently, firmly, and lovingly.