

# **YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR WORK**

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Sometimes it is difficult for many to manage their work life with their marriage. Sometimes they give more of their time to their work to the detriment of their family life. Today, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find time to spend with the family. So many are becoming strangers to their own children, they don't have time to spend with them. Before the children wake up, they have gone to work, by the time they come back, the children have slept. At weekend, there are so many people to see, many meetings to attend, and many things to do, that will not allow the man to have time for his children. It is a problem that needs to be addressed.

At the other hand, the wife is crying that the husband is not having enough time for her. There are things to discuss, issues to tackle and places to visit together, work will not allow that to be. The question now is what should come first, work or family life? Work is needed to provide for the family. If in the process of working one loses his family, what then is the benefit of working? These are the issues before us, and we are going to be looking at this in this chapter.

## **THE PROBLEM**

A wife cried out, "He doesn't have time for me at all." Another said, "He is married to his job". Another said, "I don't know him anymore". Another said, "He comes back every day tired that we can't even play. What can I do?" One man said, "We both work. We leave our children for the neighbours to take care of them when they come back from school, and it is affecting their character, and I don't know what to do because we need to work." One man once said to my hearing, "I will never take up a job that will make me look like a stranger to my children." He said, "I don't want the situation were one day my children will say to my wife, 'who is this uncle?'" The children are not left out in the complaints because their parents have no time to answer their questions and help them with their studies and home work.

I could go on and on about the complaints of husbands, wives and children about the effect of work on their lives, yet, we must work to keep meeting the needs of the family. There has to be a balance.

## **ABOUT THE FAMILY**

- 1.** The family was created by God as a place for love, training and development.
- 2.** The family requires the investment of time to function effectively.
- 3.** The family is a place of encouragement, counseling and discipline. The parents in the home must be there to provide all these to their children.
- 4.** Nobody can train your children like you would.
- 5.** You will give account to God about the children he gave you to take care of for him.
- 6.** You have a responsibility to be with your children and help them to develop to maturity in God, in life and in their career.
- 7.** Your spouse needs you more than any other person in the world.

8. Love demands time to function. Your attention is needed. Your inability to create time for fellowship with your spouse and family will create a vacuum.
9. When a spouse is not always around, it creates the room for adultery as the lonely spouse opens up to someone who is willing to fill the vacuum in his or her life.
10. It is not possible to be married to your job and be married to your wife or your husband. You have to choose who you really want.
11. It is the duty of every married person to protect his or her marriage. Protect your spouse by being there for him or her.
12. Love is all about fun, joy and togetherness. All these require time and commitment.
13. Making money is important, but keeping your family together and making your home a happy one is more important.
14. Spending time with your family strengthens the bond of unity and togetherness in the family.

### **ABOUT WORK**

1. Work is important to the survival of the family.
2. Without work a man will become very lazy and unable to care for his family.
3. Work is the will of God for man, while idleness is hated by God.
4. Work is to be planned in such a way that it does not affect family life in a negative way.
5. Work can never take the place of your marriage.
6. Man is expected to choose the kind of work that will give him time to be with his family, especially at weekends.
7. A married man or woman should not do the jobs that only singles can do.
8. When applying for a job or selecting a job, always remember you are married and you need time for your family.
9. Your priority after God is your spouse, then your children before any other thing. Don't break the order. What ever you do, keep this in mind.
10. Your work was not meant to take the place of your marriage.
11. Create time for your family no matter the nature of your work. This will keep the enemy away from your marriage and your children's life.
12. Don't let the pursuit to get to the top separate you from your spouse. When you do get to the top, you need your spouse to celebrate with you and not a stranger.
13. Work can never take the place of love in your life. You need to be loved and to love.
14. In times of distress, you need someone to always be there for you. Your work cannot do that for you. Only your spouse and children can do that for you. You need them, they need you.
15. Hanging out with your friends after work eats up the valuable time that you should have spent with your family.
16. What ever time that is left after work should not be wasted outside, but spent with the family more than with friends.
17. As you work for money, work for the success of your marriage and family.

Work, but find time for your family. Never forget the fact that you are the one that determines the success or failure of your marriage. Your family is in your hands and not in the hands of another. How you make your bed is how you lie on it. Marriage requires time to be spent together. That is why in the old testament, any man that marries a new wife is expected to stay away from war or any other national duty so that he can be with his wife and make her happy (Deuteronomy 24:5). Work with this truth in mind, and you will keep your marriage and family together.

Do not allow ambition to get to the top, topple your marriage. Do not allow desire for greatness to distress your marriage. Manage your life, time, marriage, children, and work life well to the glory of God and the survival of your family. Put your family before your work and all will always be well.

Eli the priest lost his life and two children because he did not have enough time with them to train them properly and discipline them as is expected of him. They did disgraceful things against God. They slept with women at the temple and despised the sacrifices brought to God by taking portions not according to prescription.

Samuel who took over from Eli was so busy with the work of God that he lost touch with his children. Probably he thought that his wife will do his job as the father. The result was that all Israel rejected his sons because their character was different from that of Samuel their father. He was upset when they told him that. If he had spent more time, he would have been able to guide and help them develop the way they should.

Please take time to attend to your children and spouse. No matter the nature of your job, create time for your family. If it can happen to God's High Priest, it can happen to you if you become careless. If it can happen to the mighty Prophet of God like Samuel whose word did not fail to come to pass, then you need to give your family attention. All their sacrifices and labour for God did not stop the devil from afflicting their children with evil character. You may wonder why God did not help them and their children. You must understand that God will never do what you are expected to do in life. Play your part as a married person and the Lord will bless your efforts with success.

God will judge all of us as far as our handling of our marriages and family are concerned. He judged Eli, and found him wanting. He killed him and cursed his lineage. Make no mistake about it, you will give account of the marriage and family God has given you.

**Remember this:**

- Work is important because without it the family cannot be provided for.
- Your marriage is more important than your work and must be given enough attention.
- You alone can play your God given role in the life of your children; your spouse can never play it successfully like you will. Make sure the training of your children is balanced by being there for them.
- Your spouse needs you and that's why he or she married you. Don't let your work take your spouse's place.

- Always bear in mind that you will stand to account to God for the marriage and family He gave you.