

In Partnership with the Lord

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The restored gospel of Jesus Christ proclaims the principle of full partnership between woman and man, both in mortal life and in the eternities.

Section I (Elisha)

Within the first few months of our marriage, my dear wife expressed her desire to study music. Intending to please her, I decided to orchestrate a big, heartfelt surprise for my sweetheart. I went to a musical instrument store and bought her a piano as a gift. I excitedly put the purchase receipt in a box with a beautiful bow and gave it to her, expecting an effusive reaction of gratitude for her extremely loving and attentive husband.

When she opened that little box and saw its contents, she lovingly looked at me and said, “Oh, my dear, you are wonderful! But let me ask you a question: Is this a gift or a debt?” After counseling together about the surprise, we decided to cancel the purchase. We were living on a student budget, as is the case with many young newlyweds. This experience helped me recognize the importance of the principle of full partnership in a marital relationship and how its application could help my wife and me to be of one heart and one mind.¹

The restored gospel of Jesus Christ proclaims the principle of full partnership between woman and man, both in mortal life and in the eternities. Although each possesses specific attributes and divinely appointed responsibilities, woman and man fill equally relevant and essential roles in God’s plan of happiness for His children.² This was evident from the very beginning when the Lord declared “that it was not good that the man should be alone; wherefore [He would] make an help meet for him.”³

In the Lord’s plan, a “help meet” was a companion who would walk shoulder to shoulder with Adam in full partnership.⁴ In fact, Eve was a heavenly blessing in Adam’s life. Through her divine nature and spiritual attributes, she inspired Adam to work in partnership with her to achieve God’s plan of happiness for all mankind.⁵

Let us consider two fundamental principles that strengthen the partnership between man and woman. The first principle is we are all alike unto God.⁶ According to gospel doctrine, the difference between woman and man does not override the eternal promises that God has for His sons and daughters. One has no greater possibilities for celestial glory than the other in the eternities.⁷ The Savior Himself invites all of us, God’s children, “to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him.”⁸ Therefore, in this context, we are all considered equal before Him.

When spouses understand and incorporate this principle, they do not position themselves as president or vice president of their family. There is no superiority or inferiority in the marriage

relationship, and neither walks ahead of or behind the other. They walk side by side, as equals, the divine offspring of God. They become one in thought, desire, and purpose with our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ,⁹ leading and guiding the family unit together.

In an equal partnership, “love is not possession, but participation, ... part of that co-creation which is our human calling.”¹⁰ “With true participation, husband and wife merge into the synergistic oneness of an ‘everlasting dominion’ that ‘without compulsory means’ will flow with spiritual life to them and their posterity ‘forever and ever.’”¹¹

Elisha’s Thoughts:

One heart and One mind in full partnership in a marital relationship

Moses 7:18 and the Lord called his people Zion because they were of one heart and one mind and dwelt in righteousness, and there was no poor among them.

Our marriage is our first attempt at a Zion people. We work on becoming one heart and one mind with our spouse. We must be on the same page in values, goals, teachings or it will fail and fall apart and be separated.

Family proclamation expresses pure truth pure doctrine and pure knowledge. It shows us fundamental principles that are unchanging and that will lead us to our greatest source of happiness. It expressly warns what happens to societies when they fail to follow the principles outlined in the proclamation. We are watching the fulfillment of that prophecy in our day. “We warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals communities and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and moderns prophets.”

Boyd K Packer said:

“Living together without marriage destroys something inside all who participate. One cannot degrade marriage without tarnishing other words as well, such words as *boy, girl, manhood, womanhood, husband, wife, father, mother, baby, children, family, home.* - “ *Boyd K Packer 1981*

President Gordon B. Hinckley

“God-sanctioned marriage between a man and a woman has been the basis of civilization for thousands of years. There is no justification to redefine what marriage is. Such is not our right, and those who try will find themselves answerable to God” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1999, 70; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 54).

*disclaimer- I do know that not unfortunately all families are not the same, however our goals should be the GOLD standard set forth in the proclamation. Sometimes we cannot control outside forces that destroy our families. Weather death, faith crisis, infidelity, sin etc. we can choose how to remain faithful to our covenants and continue to make our home a temple where the spirit can dwell.

“Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it” (Ps. 127:1).

A man who holds the priesthood leads his family in Church participation so they will know the gospel and be under the protection of the covenants and ordinances. If you are to enjoy the blessings of the Lord, you must set your own homes in order. Together with your wife, you determine the spiritual climate of your home. Your first obligation is to get your own spiritual life in order through regular scriptural study and daily prayer. Secure and honor your priesthood and temple covenants; encourage your family to do the same. “Being a Righteous Husband and Father,” 50, 51.

A man who holds the priesthood has reverence for motherhood. Mothers are given a sacred privilege to “bear the souls of men; for herein is the work of [the] Father continued, that he may be glorified” (D&C 132:63).

In an increasingly wicked world, how essential it is that each of us “stand in holy places” and commit to be true and faithful to the teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ. *The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*, 155.—

HOLY PLACE= our home

To reach success in the family, parents must have love and respect for each other. Husbands, the bearers of the priesthood, should hold their wives in the highest esteem before their children, and wives should love and support their husbands. In return, the children will have love for their parents and for each other. The home will then become a hallowed place where the principles of the gospel can be best lived and where the Spirit of the Lord can dwell. To be a successful father or a successful mother is far greater than to rise to leadership or high places in business, government, or worldly affairs. Home may seem commonplace at times with its routine duties, yet its success should be the greatest of all our pursuits in life.²³

The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter, 156

We are all alike unto God this is a partnership although we have different roles as laid out in the family proclamation.

1 Cor 11:11 Neither is man without the woman neither women without the man in the LORD

Psalms: 127 3 Lo children are an heritage of the Lord and the fruit of the womb is his reward

Moses 1:39 : for this is my work and my Glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

Our children are our stewardship from our Father in heaven. They are his children they were his children before they were ours.

The responsibilities of parenthood are of the greatest importance. The results of our efforts will have eternal consequences for us and the boys and girls we raise. Anyone who becomes a parent is under strict obligation to protect and love [their] children and assist them to return to their

Heavenly Father. All parents should understand that the Lord will not hold guiltless those who neglect these responsibilities. “Parents’ Concern for Children,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 65

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6.)

40 But I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth. D&C 93:40).

This is a command not a request or a if you want, this must be done otherwise you will stand accountable before GOD

There is great hope for anyone who has had wayward children, because agency Is real and as parents we cannot take that away, in the story of the prodigal son. But always remember we teach correct principles and then they will govern themselves.

D&C 68: 25-25 And again, inasmuch as ^aparents have children in Zion, or in any of her ^bstakes which are organized, that ^cteach them not to understand the ^ddoctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when ^eeight years old, the ^fsin be upon the heads of the parents.

Doctrine and Covenants 121:45–46

Doctrine and Covenants

45 Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.

46 The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever.

AMEN

Micah’s Thoughts:

A big focus of this talk is on unity in marriage between husband and wife, and that unity reaching the potential the Lord sees can be obtained in the Patriarchal order. So the focus of this talk would be the blessings that flow from the Patriarchal order.

Renae from our group has done a few really good papers on the Patriarchal order, and here are some insights from Renae’s thoughts shared recently on Discord:

Doctrine and Covenants 103

15 ... the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;

1 Nephi 14

12 ... I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, ...

14 And ... the power of the Lamb of God ... descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

President Boyd K. Packer (April 2010)

The Book of Mormon makes it clear that we never will dominate by numbers. But we have the power of the priesthood.

President Russell M. Nelson (April 2018)

Now, may I voice a concern? It is this: Too many of our brothers and sisters do not fully understand the concept of priesthood power and authority. ... I fear that too many of our brothers and sisters do not grasp the privileges that could be theirs. (3)

Footnote 3: JST, Genesis 14

30 For God having sworn unto Enoch and unto his seed with an oath by himself; that every one being ordained after this order and calling [the Patriarchal Order of the Priesthood] should have power, by faith, to break mountains, to divide the seas, to dry up waters, to turn them out of their course;

31 To put at defiance the armies of nations, to divide the earth, to break every band, to stand in the presence of God; to do all things according to his will, according to his command, subdue principalities and powers; and this by the will of the Son of God which was from before the foundation of the world.

How many members of the Church have paid the price for this level of priesthood power?

Making, understanding, and keeping our covenants -> increased personal purity -> power in the priesthood -> redemption of Zion

D. Todd Christofferson (“Come to Zion,” General Conference, October 2008)

“Zion is Zion because of the character, attributes, and faithfulness of her citizens. ... If we would establish Zion in our homes, branches, wards, and stakes, we must rise to this standard. It will be necessary (1) to become unified in one heart and one mind; (2) to become, individually and collectively, a holy people; and (3) to care for the poor and needy with such effectiveness that we eliminate poverty among us. We cannot wait until Zion comes for these things to happen—Zion will come only as they happen.

As we consider the unity required for Zion to flourish, we should ask ourselves if we have overcome jarrings, contentions, envyings, and strifes (see D&C 101:6). Are we individually and as a people free from strife and contention and united ‘according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom’? (D&C 105:4). Forgiveness of one another is essential to

this unity. Jesus said, 'I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men' (D&C 64:10)."

To finish off this section Elder Soares referenced Doctrine and Covenants 121. Here is a synopsis of this section from the student manual:

D&C 121:41–46. A Guide to Increased Priesthood Power and Influence

Following the principles in these verses allows the priesthood holder to receive greater power. If a priesthood holder senses this power withdrawing because of the presence of compulsion, contention, disunity, or rebellion, he should immediately evaluate his actions to be sure he has not been exercising unrighteous dominion.

There is a relationship between home and priesthood duties. President Hugh B. Brown said: “I should like to say to you fathers tonight that our conduct in our homes determines in large measure our worthiness to hold and exercise the priesthood, which is the power of God delegated to man. Almost any man can make a good showing when on parade before the public, but one’s integrity is tested when ‘off duty.’ The real man is seen and known in the comparative solitude of the home. An office or title will not erase a fault nor guarantee a virtue.” (In Conference Report, Apr. 1962, p. 88.)

Section II (Brandon B)

The second relevant principle is the Golden Rule, taught by the Savior in the Sermon on the Mount: “And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”¹² This principle indicates an attitude of mutuality, reciprocity, unity, and interdependence and is based on the second great commandment: “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”¹³ It merges with other Christian attributes such as long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, and kindness.

To better understand the application of this principle, we can look at the sacred and eternal bond established by God between our first parents, Adam and Eve. They became one flesh,¹⁴ creating a dimension of unity that allowed them to walk together with respect, gratitude, and love, forgetting about themselves and seeking each other’s well-being on their journey to eternity.

Those same characteristics are what we strive for in a united marriage today. Through the temple sealing, a woman and a man enter the holy order of matrimony in the new and everlasting covenant. By way of this order of the priesthood, they are given eternal blessings and divine power to direct their family affairs as they live according to the covenants they have made. From that point on, they move forward interdependently and in full partnership with the Lord, especially in regard to each of their divinely appointed responsibilities of nurturing and presiding in their family.¹⁵ Nurturing and presiding are interrelated and overlapping responsibilities, which means that mothers and fathers “are obligated to help one another as equal partners”¹⁶ and share a balanced leadership in their home.

“To nurture means to nourish, teach, and support” family members, which is done by helping them to “learn gospel truths and develop faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ” in an environment of love. To preside means to “help lead family members back to dwell in God’s

presence. This is done by serving and teaching with gentleness, meekness, and pure love.” It also includes “leading family members in regular prayer, gospel study, and other aspects of worship. Parents work in unity,” following the example of Jesus Christ, “to fulfill these [two great] responsibilities.”¹⁷

Brandon’s Thoughts

Among the very first things my Grandmother taught me, she was my strongest formative teacher of the Gospel, was about the Golden Rule. “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”. I am still comforted by the things she taught me all those years ago, whenever I think of them. The Golden Rule was just one of many things she taught me. It was at the very core of not only what she taught, but how she lived her life. At the time I was barely out of my infancy, I remember being distinctly comforted by these words. It gave my life a foundation to base everything on. I also remember going to sleep as a very young child feeling that God loved me profoundly and even that there was a small remaining feeling that He missed me a lot, that although He could see me where I was, He knew how sad I was that I couldn’t be in His presence at the time. As I was constantly reminded of the Golden Rule, these feelings from my earliest childhood would keep recurring. I understood that this was perhaps somewhat like an indication of the way God treats His children, how He loves us, cares for us and watches over us.

At my mission homecoming talk the topic I chose was the Love of God, because that was what I experienced the most out in the mission field. Not only that God loves us but that I kept being surprised as I would experience it in new ways almost constantly. Needless to say I’ve been reminded of God’s unfathomable love for His children since I was born.

The Golden Rule is, perhaps, golden because God is where it ultimately comes from. Even non religious people immediately understand what the Golden Rule is whenever it’s brought up in conversation.

Matthew 7:12 states what it is clearly:

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

This also happens to be like second great commandment. The 2 greatest commandments as found in Mark 12:30-31:

30 And thou shalt ^alove the Lord thy God with all thy ^bheart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy ^cstrength: this is the first commandment.

31 And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

These are the essential, foundational commandments by which His children are able to keep all of the other commandments the Lord has given. We can enter into the service of God and become worthy instruments in His hands. We can participate with Him in the gathering of Israel, the fullness of the gospel being brought to bear on the earth, and the establishment of Zion. Truly, if we have not charity, we are nothing. Kindness and love are absolutely essential.

Through temple covenants we enter into partnership with God following in the example of our first parents Adam and Eve. We receive the blessings of eternal families and carry out our privileges, duties and responsibilities in this partnership by keeping the 2 great commandments at the very foundation, which foundation is the Lord Jesus Christ.

What a time we live in as we heed the commandment to be a people prepared to receive Him at His coming. As I recall the time Gordon B Hinkley first published The Family Proclamation, I felt it to be such obvious, self evident retreading of firmly established truth and undeniable reality. It seemed as if it was being pointed out to me that we breath air and drink water to stay hydrated. That 1+1 still equalled 2 and that if I looked up on a sunny day the sky would be blue. However, the Holy Ghost once again testified to me of the truthfulness of every word. At the time, I could never have guessed where we would be today!!

How powerfully these words ring in my ears now. Reading from The Family Proclamation:

“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.”

Babylon is making war against all who believe these words to be true. In an age where people live their lives according to “my truth” the plainest, simplest things to understand suddenly are considered violent aggression against large swaths of the population. As has been long prophesied of the last days, good being had for evil and evil being had for good.

But our ability to stay the course and keep these commandments and rear our families unto God in righteousness is the measure by which we shall be judged. As Stated further in the proclamation:

“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” (Psalm 127:3). Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, and to teach them to love and serve one another, observe the commandments of God, and be law-abiding citizens wherever they live. Husbands and wives—mothers and fathers—will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations.”

Recently a wonderful talk was given by Jeffrey R Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles at the Brigham Young University campus devotional addressing these things as well:

“To this, Elder Oaks then challengingly responded, “I would like to hear a little more musket fire from this temple of learning.” He said this in a way that could have applied to a host of topics in various departments, but the one he specifically mentioned was the doctrine of the family and defending marriage as the union of a man and a woman. Little did he know that while many would hear his appeal, especially the School of Family Life, which moved quickly and visibly to assist, some others fired their muskets all right, but unfortunately they didn’t always aim at those hostile to the Church. We thought a couple of stray rounds even went north of the Point of the Mountain!

My beloved brothers and sisters, “a house . . . divided against itself . . . cannot stand,” and I will go to my grave pleading that this institution not only stands but stands unquestionably committed to its unique academic mission and to the Church that sponsors it. We hope it isn’t a surprise to you that your trustees are *not* deaf or blind to the feelings that swirl around marriage and the whole same-sex topic on campus—and a lot of other topics. I and many of my Brethren have spent more time and shed more tears on this subject than we could ever adequately convey to you this morning or any morning. We have spent hours discussing what the doctrine of the Church can and cannot provide the individuals and families struggling over this difficult issue. So it is with a little scar tissue of our own that we are trying to avoid—and hope *all* will try to avoid—

language, symbols, and situations that are more divisive than unifying at the very time we want to show love for *all* of God's children.”

Simply put, The Family Proclamation was given prophetically in preparation to defend against Babylon's attempt to overthrow God given basic self evident truths. We MUST lead and nurture our families in righteousness. Husbands must lead their families back to the presence of the Lord by righteous example, keeping ALL of God's commandments, and wives must participate in leadership and loving nourishment of their children in established gospel truth so a full account can be given, spotless before God at the last day. Obedience to sacred covenants made in holy places blesses our families with everlasting partnerships with Jesus Christ and our Father in Heaven in exaltation. To conclude the Family Proclamation prophetically states:

“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.”

Micah's Thoughts:

What is the Patriarchal Order?

- The Highest Order of the Priesthood
- An Order of Family Government
- The Government of God
- Received in the House of the Lord

The Highest Order of the Priesthood

“The Melchizedek High Priesthood [is] no other than the Priesthood of the Son of God.”

“The power of the Melchizedek Priesthood is to have the power of ‘endless lives;’ for the everlasting covenant cannot be broken... Those holding the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings.”

-Joseph Smith, Teachings of the Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith, Chapter 8: The Everlasting Priesthood

“President Joseph F. Smith described the priesthood as ‘the power of God delegated to man by which man can act in the earth for the salvation of the human family.’ ... The scriptures teach that ‘this same Priesthood, which was in the beginning, shall be in the end of the world also’ (Moses 6 7).”

-Dallin H. Oaks, “The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood,” General Conference, April 2014

An Order of Family Government

“The order of the priesthood spoken of in the scriptures is sometimes referred to as the patriarchal order because it came down from father to son. But this order is otherwise described in modern revelation as an order of family government where a man and a woman enter into a covenant with God—just as did Adam and Eve—to be sealed for eternity, to have posterity, and to do the will and work of God throughout their mortality.”

-Ezra Taft Benson, “What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children about the Temple,” Ensign, August 1985

“Who will be the subjects in the kingdom which they will rule who are exalted in the celestial kingdom of our God? Will they reign over their neighbors’ children? Oh no. Over whom will they reign? Their own children, their own posterity will be the citizens of their kingdoms; in other words, the patriarchal order will prevail there to the endless ages of eternity, and the children of each patriarch will be his while eternal ages roll on.”

-Orson Pratt, “Different Degrees of Reward and of Punishment—Marriage for Eternity Necessary to a Fullness of Celestial Glory,” Journal of Discourses, 15 39

The Government of God

“In the premortal existence—our first estate—We lived under the patriarchal order, the family order. It was an order consisting of Father, Mother, and children, an order presided over by our Parents and directed by love, kindness, gentleness, and godly persuasion.”

-Robert Millet; referenced by Barbara Morgan Gardner, *The Priesthood Power of Women in the Temple, Church, and Family*, 11

“Adam and his posterity were commanded by God to ... enter into the order of the Son of God. ... God said to them, ‘thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity.’”

-Ezra Taft Benson, “What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children about the Temple,” Ensign, August 1985

Received in the House of the Lord

“To enter into the order of the Son of God is the equivalent today of entering into the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood, which is only received in the house of the Lord.” Adam and his descendants entered into the priesthood order of God. Today we would say they went to the House of the Lord and received their blessings.”

-Ezra Taft Benson, “What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children about the Temple,” Ensign, August 1985

“When a man and a woman are sealed in the temple, they enter together, by covenant, into an order of the priesthood [footnote: the new and everlasting covenant of marriage].”

-Joseph Smith, *Gospel Topics Essays*, “Joseph Smith’s Teachings about Priesthood, Temple and Women

The Relationship Between the Patriarchal Order and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

“The power of the priesthood exists both in the Church and in the family organization. But priesthood power and priesthood authority function differently in the Church than they do in the family... The Church exists to provide the doctrine, the authority, and the ordinances necessary to perpetuate family relationships into the eternities. Thus, the family organization and the Church of Jesus Christ have a mutually reinforcing relationship.”

-Dallin H. Oaks, “Priesthood Authority in the Family and the Church,” General Conference, April 2020

The Calling of Husbands and Fathers

“A father presides and exercises the priesthood in his family by the authority of the priesthood he holds. He has no need to have the direction or approval of one holding priesthood keys in order to perform his various family functions.”

-Dallin H. Oaks, “The Melchizedek Priesthood and the Keys,” General Conference, April 2020

“Fathers, yours is an eternal calling from which you are never released. ... It is a calling for both time and eternity.”

-Ezra Taft Benson, “To the Fathers in Israel,” General Conference, October 1987

“Now fathers, I would remind you of the sacred nature of your calling. You have the power of the priesthood directly from the Lord to protect your home. There will be times when all that stands as a shield between your family and the adversary’s mischief will be that power. You will receive direction from the Lord by way of the gift of the Holy Ghost. The power you receive will depend on what you do with this sacred, unseen gift.”

-Boyd K. Packer, “The Honor and Order of the Priesthood,” Ensign, June 2012

“Brethren, you bear the priesthood of God. ‘The rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven.’ You and your family have received priesthood ordinances. It is ‘in the ordinances [of the priesthood that] the power of godliness is manifest. That power is available to you and your family in your own home as you keep the covenants you have made.”

-Russell M. Nelson, “What We Are Learning and Will Never Forget,” General Conference, April 2021

The Calling of Wives and Mothers

“When a father is absent ... [the] mother is the family leader. She presides in her home and is instrumental in bringing the power and blessings of the priesthood into her family through her endowment and sealing in the temple. While she is not authorized to give the priesthood blessings that can be given only by a person holding a certain office in the priesthood, she can perform all of the other functions of family leadership. In doing so, she exercises the power of the priesthood for the benefit of the children over whom she presides in her position of leadership in the family.”

-Dallin H. Oaks, “The Melchizedek Priesthood and the Keys,” General Conference, April 2020

“Motherhood is near to divinity. ... It places her who honors its holy calling and service next to the angels.”

-The First Presidency, Conference Report, Oct. 1942; **Russell M. Nelson**, “Our Sacred Duty to Honor Women,” General Conference, April 1999

The Calling of Family

“Since parenthood is a divine calling, I must conclude, then, that both men and women who are sealed according to God’s law and keep their covenants, receive priesthood authority to act in their eternal callings as fathers and mothers respectively. Their responsibilities include exercising their powers of procreation (multiply and replenish the earth), and teaching and administering the plan of salvation and exaltation to their children. Parents also receive priesthood power to bless each other and their children as they continue to keep their covenants.”

-Russell M. Nelson, “The Price of Priesthood Power,” General Conference, April 2016

Eternal Calling

“[Church callings] are temporary assignments placed upon the shoulders of men. But the family, on the other hand, can be an eternal organization.”

-Boyd K. Packer, “The Family and Eternity,” Ensign, February 1971

“In Church callings we are subject to release. But we cannot be released as parents.”

-Russell M. Nelson, “Salvation and Exaltation,” General Conference, April 2008

“Although the Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] plays a pivotal role in proclaiming, announcing, and administering the necessary ordinances of salvation and exaltation, all of that, as important as it is, is really just the scaffolding being used in an infinite and eternal construction project to build, support, and strengthen family. And just as scaffolding is eventually taken down and put away to reveal the final completed building, so too will the mortal, administrative functions of the Church eventually fade as the eternal family comes fully into view. In that context, it’s important to remember that our Church assignments are only temporary, and that at some point we will all be released either by our leaders or by death. But we will never be released from our eternal callings within the family.”

-M. Russell Ballard, “Women of Dedication, Faith, Determination, and Action,” Brigham Young University Women’s Conference address, May 1, 2015

“‘The family unit is the most important organization in time or in eternity.’ The Church was created in large measure to help the family, and long after the Church has performed its mission, the celestial patriarchal order will still be functioning.”

-Ezra Taft Benson, Conference Report, October 1970

Section III (Karen)

It is important to observe that the government in the family follows the patriarchal pattern, differing in some respects from priesthood leadership in the Church.¹⁸ The patriarchal pattern entails that wives and husbands are accountable directly to God for the fulfillment of their sacred responsibilities in the family. It calls for a full partnership—a willing compliance with every principle of righteousness and accountability—and provides opportunities for development within an environment of love and mutual helpfulness.¹⁹ These special responsibilities do not imply hierarchy and absolutely exclude any kind of abuse or improper use of authority. The experience of Adam and Eve, after they left the Garden of Eden, beautifully illustrates the concept of interdependence between a mother and father in nurturing and presiding over their

family. As taught in the book of Moses, they worked together to till the earth by the sweat of their brow in order to provide for the physical well-being of their family;²⁰ they brought children into the world;²¹ they called on the name of the Lord together and heard His voice “from the way toward the Garden of Eden”;²² they accepted the commandments the Lord gave them and strove together to obey them.²³ They then “made [these] things known unto their sons and their daughters”²⁴ and “ceased not to call upon God” together according to their needs.²⁵

My dear brothers and sisters, nurturing and presiding are opportunities, not exclusive limitations. One person may have a responsibility for something but may not be the only person doing it. When loving parents well understand these two major responsibilities, they will strive together to protect and care for the physical and emotional well-being of their children. They also help them face the spiritual dangers of our day by nurturing them with the good word of the Lord as revealed to His prophets.

Although husband and wife support each other in their divinely appointed responsibilities, “disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation.”²⁶ Sometimes one spouse or the other will have the responsibility of acting in both roles simultaneously, whether temporarily or permanently.

I recently met a sister and a brother who each live in this condition. As single parents, each of them, within their family sphere and in partnership with the Lord, has decided to devote their lives to the spiritual and temporal care of their children. They have not lost sight of their temple covenants made with the Lord and His eternal promises despite their divorces. Both have sought the Lord’s help in all things as they continually strive to endure their challenges and walk in the covenant path. They trust that the Lord will take care of their needs, not only in this life but throughout eternity. Both have nurtured their children by teaching them with gentleness, meekness, and pure love, even while experiencing difficult circumstances in life. From what I know, these two single parents do not blame God for their misfortunes. Instead, they look forward with a perfect brightness of hope and confidence to the blessings the Lord has in store for them.²⁷

Brothers and sisters, the Savior set the perfect example of unity and harmony of purpose and doctrine with our Father in Heaven. He prayed in behalf of His disciples, saying, “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: ... that they may be one, even as we are one.”²⁸

I testify to you that as we—women and men—work together in a true and equal partnership, we will enjoy the unity taught by the Savior as we fulfill the divine responsibilities in our marriage relationships. I promise you, in the name of Christ, that hearts will be “knit together in unity and in love one towards another,”²⁹ we will find more joy in our journey to eternal life, and our capacity to serve one another and with one another will multiply significantly.³⁰ I bear witness to these truths in the holy name of the Savior Jesus Christ, amen.

Footnotes:

1. See [Moses 7:18](#).

2. See “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](#).

3. [Moses 3:18](#); see also [Genesis 2:18](#).

4. “The Lord intended that the wife be a helpmeet for man (*meet* means equal)—that is, a companion equal and necessary in full partnership” ([*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Howard W. Hunter*](#) [2015], 224).
5. See [Moses 3:18–24](#); [4:12](#); [5:10–12](#).
6. See [Romans 2:11](#); [1 Nephi 17:35](#); [2 Nephi 26:33](#).
7. See [Mosiah 2:41](#).
8. [2 Nephi 26:33](#).
9. See Guide to the Scriptures, “[Unity](#),” scriptures.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
10. Madeleine L’Engle, *The Irrational Season* (1977), 48.
11. Bruce C. Hafen and Marie K. Hafen, “[Crossing Thresholds and Becoming Equal Partners](#),” *Ensign*, Aug. 2007, 28; *Liahona*, Aug. 2007, 30; see also [Doctrine and Covenants 121:45–46](#).
12. [Luke 6:31](#); see also [Matthew 7:12](#).
13. [Mark 12:31](#).
14. See [Genesis 2:23–24](#).
15. See “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
16. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
17. See *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, [2.1.3](#), ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
18. See [Doctrine and Covenants 107:21–26](#); see also *General Handbook*, [4.2.4](#).
19. See Dallin H. Oaks, “[Priesthood Authority in the Family and the Church](#),” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2005, 24–27; Ezra Taft Benson, “[What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children about the Temple](#),” *Ensign*, Aug. 1985, 6–10; *Tambuli*, Apr./May 1986, 1–6.
20. See [Moses 5:1](#).
21. See [Moses 5:2](#).
22. [Moses 5:4](#).
23. See [Moses 5:5](#).
24. [Moses 5:12](#).
25. [Moses 5:16](#).
26. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
27. See [2 Nephi 31:20](#).
28. [John 17:21–22](#).
29. [Mosiah 18:21](#).
30. See Henry B. Eyring, “[Our Hearts Knit as One](#),” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 68–71.

Karen’s Thoughts:

1. “The patriarchal pattern entails that wives and husbands are accountable directly to God for the fulfillment of their sacred responsibilities in the family.”
2. “It calls for a full partnership—a willing compliance with every principle of righteousness and accountability—and provides opportunities for development within an environment of love and mutual helpfulness.”

Revelation: 20:11-15 *Accountability Directly to God*

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and

the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

The Family Proclamation

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

Doctrine and Covenants 19-21 [Joseph Smith]

19 And again, verily I say unto you, if a man ^amarry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the ⁿnew and everlasting covenant, and it is ^ssealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of ^ppromise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the ^kkeys of this priesthood; and it shall be said unto them—Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit ^tthrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths—then shall it be written in the Lamb’s ^bBook of Life, that he shall commit no ^mmurder whereby to shed innocent ^bblood, and if ye abide in my covenant, and commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, it shall be done unto them in all things whatsoever my servant hath put upon them, in time, and through all eternity; and shall be of full force when they are out of the world; and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their ^eexaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the ^sseeds forever and ever.

20 Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from ^eeverlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be ^ggods, because they have ^aall power, and the angels are subject unto them.

21 Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye abide my [law](#) ye cannot attain to this glory.

Russell M Nelson “[Celestial Marriage](#),” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 92–93).

“The subject of marriage is debated across the world, where various arrangements exist for conjugal living. My purpose in speaking out on this topic is to declare, as an Apostle of the Lord, that marriage between a man and a woman is sacred—it is ordained of God. I also assert the virtue of a temple marriage. It is the highest and most enduring type of marriage that our Creator can offer to His children.

“While salvation is an individual matter, exaltation is a family matter. ...

“... To qualify for eternal life, we must make an eternal and everlasting covenant with our Heavenly Father [see [D&C 132:19](#)]. This means that a temple marriage is not only between husband and wife; it embraces a partnership with God [see [Matthew 19:6](#)]”

Russell M. Nelson, “[Nurturing Marriage](#),” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2006, 36–38 *Full Partnership and Willing Compliance*

[Step 1: Doctrinal Foundation]

“The first step is to comprehend the doctrinal foundation for marriage. The Lord declared that marriage is the legal wedding of one man and one woman: “Marriage is ordained of God unto man.

“Wherefore, it is lawful that he should have one wife, and they twain shall be one flesh, and all this that the earth might answer the end of its creation.”

Worldly trends to define marriage in some other way would sadly serve to destroy the institution of marriage. Such schemes are contrary to the plan of God.

It was He who said: “For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh.”

Scripture further reaffirms that “the man [is not] without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.”

Marriage is the foundry for social order, the fountain of virtue, and the foundation for eternal exaltation. Marriage has been divinely designated as an eternal and everlasting covenant. Marriage is sanctified when it is cherished and honored in holiness. That union is not merely between husband and wife; it embraces a partnership with God.

“Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other.”

Children born of that marital union are “an heritage of the Lord.” Marriage is but the beginning bud of family life; parenthood is its flower. And that bouquet becomes even more beautiful when graced with grandchildren. Families may become as eternal as the kingdom of God itself.

Marriage is both a commandment and an exalting principle of the gospel. Because it is ordained of God, the intimate physical expressions of married love are sacred. Yet all too commonly, these divine gifts are desecrated. If a couple allows lewd language or pornography to corrupt their intimacy, they offend their Creator while they degrade and diminish their own divine gifts. True happiness is predicated upon personal purity. Scripture commands: “Be ye clean.” Marriage should ever be a covenant to lift husbands and wives to exaltation in celestial glory.

Marriage was intended by the Lord to endure beyond physical death. His plan offers eternal perpetuation of the family in the kingdom of God. His plan provides temples and opportunities to officiate therein for the living and the dead. A marriage sealed there launches a husband and wife into that grand order of unity so necessary to the perfection of God’s work.

Doctrines related to marriage include individual agency and accountability. All of us are accountable for our choices. Couples blessed with children are accountable to God for the care they give to their children.

As I meet with priesthood leaders, I often ask about the priorities of their various responsibilities. Usually they mention their important Church duties to which they have been called. Too few remember their responsibilities at home. Yet priesthood offices, keys, callings, and quorums are meant to exalt families. Priesthood authority has been restored so that families can be sealed eternally. So brethren, your foremost priesthood duty is to nurture your marriage—to care for, respect, honor, and love your wife. Be a blessing to her and your children.

[Step 2: Strengthening Marriage]

With these doctrinal underpinnings in mind, let us consider the second step—specific actions that would strengthen a marriage. I will offer sample suggestions and invite each couple privately to ponder them and adapt them as needed to their own particular circumstances.

My suggestions use three action verbs: to *appreciate*, to *communicate*, and to *contemplate*.

To *appreciate*—to say “I love you” and “thank you”—is not difficult. But these expressions of love and appreciation do more than acknowledge a kind thought or deed. They are signs of sweet civility. As grateful partners look for the good in each other and sincerely pay compliments to one another, wives and husbands will strive to become the persons described in those compliments.

Suggestion number two—to *communicate* well with your spouse—is also important. Good communication includes taking time to plan together. Couples need private time to observe, to talk, and really listen to each other. They need to cooperate—helping each other as equal partners. They need to nurture their spiritual as well as physical intimacy. They should strive to elevate and motivate each other. Marital unity is sustained when goals are mutually understood. Good communication is also enhanced by prayer. To pray with specific mention of a spouse’s good deed (or need) nurtures a marriage.

[Step 3: Contemplate]

My third suggestion is to *contemplate*. This word has deep meaning. It comes from Latin roots: *con*, meaning “with,” and *templum*, meaning “a space or place to meditate.” It is the root from which the word *temple* comes. If couples contemplate often—with each

other in the temple—sacred covenants will be better remembered and kept. Frequent participation in temple service and regular family scripture study nourish a marriage and strengthen faith within a family. Contemplation allows one to anticipate and to resonate (or be in tune) with each other and with the Lord. Contemplation will nurture both a marriage and God’s kingdom. The Master said, “Seek not the things of this world but seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God, and to establish his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

My Thoughts:

I urge all of us to schedule some time in the temple and review the promises and blessings in the initiatory, endowment, and sealing ordinances. They are profound and powerful truths. I marvel at what God has in store for us as we strive to live His gospel principles with fidelity. The temple truly will add power to our lives! I can testify of this! Eternal families are attainable through the grace and love of our Savior Jesus Christ. We must be sanctified and ready as unified partners in this marital relationship coupled with God as our partner and mentor. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Micah’s Thoughts:

“The experience of Adam and Eve, after they left the Garden of Eden, beautifully illustrates the concept of interdependence between a mother and father in nurturing and presiding over their family. As taught in the book of Moses, they worked together to till the earth by the sweat of their brow in order to provide for the physical well-being of their family”

“My dear brothers and sisters, nurturing and presiding are opportunities, not exclusive limitations. One person may have a responsibility for something but may not be the only person doing it.”

This, we believe, was the bravest and boldest thing that he taught in the entire talk... That the "domains" of men and women are not solo, they are not "you do all this and I do all this, and we cannot help each other or dabble in each others domain, for if you help nurture the children and I help toil and labor for our bread, well, then we are in sin!" This isn't accurate in the slightest... If men are required to do all the laboring in the field for bread without help, regardless of the desires of the wife, well that would mean that women would be required to do all the laboring in the house with the children without help, regardless of the desires of the man! You can't have one and not the other in an equally yoked situation... Well, what do the scriptures teach us on the matter- and once again, real life applications and examples in the scriptures trump all others for we can see in actual fact what the authors are actually trying to teach:

Helaman 6

12 They did raise grain in abundance, both in the north and in the south; and they did flourish exceedingly, both in the north and in the south. And they did multiply and wax exceedingly strong in the land. And they did raise many flocks and herds, yea, many fatlings.

13 Behold their women did toil and spin, and did make all manner of cloth, of fine-twined linen and cloth of every kind, to clothe their nakedness. And thus the sixty and fourth year did pass away in peace.

Mosiah 10

4 And I did cause that the men should till the ground, and raise all manner of grain and all manner of fruit of every kind.

5 And I did cause that the women should spin, and toil, and work, and work all manner of fine linen, yea, and cloth of every kind, that we might clothe our nakedness; and thus we did prosper in the land—thus we did have continual peace in the land for the space of twenty and two years.

Moses 5

1 And it came to pass that after I, the Lord God, had driven them out, that Adam began to till the earth, and to have dominion over all the beasts of the field, and to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, as I the Lord had commanded him. And Eve, also, his wife, did labor with him.

How does this relate to or tie into the Family Proclamation? It does so flawlessly...

“Husband and wife (both) have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. “Children are an heritage of the Lord” (Psalm 127:3). Parents (plural) have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs (plural), and to teach them to love and serve one another (plural), observe the commandments of God (plural), and be law-abiding citizens wherever they live (plural). Husbands and wives—mothers and fathers—will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations. (both)

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.”

-The Family: A Proclamation to the World

As one can clearly read in these scriptures and The Family Proclamation, as well as this talk we are breaking down, the actual doctrine, and actual principles are the same. No where does it say that parents can abandon each other in their spheres, and no where does it say that "men shouldn't help women and women shouldn't help or else they aren't following God's commands!" No, in fact clearly spelled out is the stipulation that "circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation"... How do we best do that? With our spouses, being equally yoked to each other, both being united in purpose and love.

“Now Satan is anxious to neutralize the inspired counsel of the Prophet and hence keep the priesthood off-balance, ineffective and inert in the fight for freedom. He does this through diverse means including the use of perverse reasoning.... Sometimes from behind the pulpit, in our classrooms, in our Council meetings and in our church publications we hear, read or witness things that do not square with the truth... Now do not let this serve as an excuse for your own wrong-doing. The Lord is letting the wheat and the tares mature before he fully purges the Church. He is also testing you to see if you will be misled.”

-Ezra Taft Benson (Our Immediate Responsibility. BYU Devotional, October 25, 1966)

President Harold B. Lee:

It is not to be thought that every word spoken by the General Authorities is inspired, or that they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost in everything they read and write. Now you keep that in mind. I don't care what his position is, if he writes something or speaks something that goes beyond anything that you can find in the standard church works, unless that one be the prophet, seer and revelator—please note that one exception—you may immediately say, “Well, that is his own idea.” And if he says something that contradicts what is found in the standard church works (I think that is why we call them “standard”—it is the standard measure of all that men teach), you may know by the same token that it is false, regardless of the position of the man who says it” (“The Place of the Living Prophet, Seer and Revelator,” address to Seminaries and Institutes of Religion Personnel, BYU, 8 July 1964, p. 14; Church CES Manual, Living Prophets For A Living Church, 1974, p. 66)

Now more than ever we need to be grounded on actual truth, actual principles, the actual pyramid of truth. Going through Nauvoo I was so impressed by the strength and work ethic of the women of that time period! They sowed seeds! They planted crops! They even fixed roofs! It was humbling to see what it really looks like to be "equally yoked" with your spouse, to see glimpses of the patriarchal order, to get an actual taste of what Zion truly will be like... With families, all working and toiling together in love and unity, building each other up.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen