



# LifeSpot ... Family treasure

## A defence for the family

Of all the symbols in the Bible for our relationship with God, the symbol of the family is the most dominant and the most powerful. God is our Father. We are his daughters and sons. Christ is our Brother. We are siblings together in Christ. The Holy Spirit is our Comforter—God's close-knit family influence. God started humanity with a family. He administered salvation through the family groups of Israel. Christ the Saviour came into a family, then established his own “family” of followers. No wonder the enemy is intent on destroying families! But we have a defence—we kneel before our Father, knowing we're his family and we carry his name (Ephesians 3:14-15).

## Priority: family

The Puritans used to speak about the family as an *ecclesiola* or “little church”. Your spouse and your children are sacred trusts God has given you, to cherish and grow in the ways of God. A man named Brother Yun was a house-church leader in China, frequently away from home, often imprisoned. A crisis came, and he changed his priorities. “I started to put my love for God first in my life, my love for my family second, and my love for ministry third.” It saved his family. King David, after celebrating the return of the Ark of the Covenant, went to a more important mission. He “returned home to bless his family.” 1 Chronicles 16:43 (NIV). Perhaps it's time for us to do the same.

## Is there a father in the house?

“We are facing a generation which has parents but no fathers” (Henri Nouwen). It's a problem Christians can meet and correct, but only with God's strength. Jay Rockefeller's three-year-old son one day struck angrily at the TV set when he saw his father there. He saw his father more often on the TV than in person. Our own Father in Heaven blesses us daily with his presence—through the Spirit, through the Word, through prayer. “A father to the fatherless is God in his holy dwelling.” Psalm 68:5 (NIV). Christian men today can reflect God's fatherhood, being present for their daughters and sons. And perhaps, being something of a dad for a fatherless child.

## God's treasures

Men have prominence in the Bible, but prominence and importance are not identical. As pearls compared to steel, rarity means treasure. Male and female were made in the image of God and stand equally before him. While Eve fell first into sin, Adam was one step behind her. When God set up his plan of rescue, it was through the woman that the promise was made (Genesis 3:15). While the generations were recorded through men, the biological transmission of the Messiah met its destiny in a virgin named Mary. Women among us are God's treasures. We men are called to regard them as a sacred trust and blessing, honoring their role in the family of God.