

STATEMENT ON THE FAMILY

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and his Church, and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel for sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to his people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect and to lead his family. A wife is to place herself in support of the servant leadership of her husband even as the Church willingly places herself in support of the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve together in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

In a marriage lived according to these truths, the love between husband and wife will show itself in listening to each other's viewpoints, valuing each other's gifts, wisdom and desires, serving in partnership to impact the culture redemptively, honouring one another in public and in private, and always seeking to bring benefit, not harm to one another.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent life-style example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honour and obey their parents.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Genesis 1:27

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." Genesis 2:24

"The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control." 1 Corinthians 7:3-5

"Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. . ." Ephesians 5:22-25

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother – which is the first commandment with a promise – that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." Ephesians 6:1-4

"He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect." 1 Timothy 3:4

"So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander." 1 Timothy 5:14 *(Scripture references are from the NIV)*

Amendments

This Statement may be amended by a majority vote of General Assembly, written notice having been given prior to General Assembly.

Adopted – General Assembly 2000

Last Amended – General Assembly 2004 (amending formula)