

6. What is the purpose of the family?

Embracing the purpose of the family is foundational to living out a God-centered life. A family consists of one man and one woman who are joined together before God by marriage covenant (Genesis 2:21-25). God gives the family its purpose when he created it, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'" (Genesis 1:27-28) In short, the God-given purpose for the family is to take dominion. Dominion simply means to rule over. The two key elements of dominion involve reproduction and production. The command to be "fruitful and multiply" is a fertility blessing given for families to reproduce. It is a command encouraging families to receive children as a gift from God. Children are given to families to help them take dominion of the earth. The more people, the better families can spread over the earth and subdue it. This glorifies God. He designed the earth to be inhabited. He desires to see his image bearers fill the earth by families reproducing themselves. God gave families the earth to support their children by the production of good things. This means families are to harness the earth's resources and use them for God's glory and their good. This necessitates hard work and productivity. Dominion takes hard work. It also takes faith. Men must always remember the earth is the Lord's, so they must not abuse it or worship it. These two errors destroy dominion, devastate families, and hurt the environment. When families fulfill their God-given purpose to take dominion, it is good for them, the society, and the environment. The family is given the privilege and responsibility to reproduce God's image on earth, and to provide for others through productivity. God ordained this purpose so billions would exist to worship him. The God-given purpose of the family is to take dominion for God's glory.

Bible passages to read: Genesis 1; Psalm 8, 127

Questions to ponder:

1. What is the purpose of the family?
2. How is the family to fulfill that purpose?
3. What hinders the family from fulfilling its purpose?
4. What is the purpose of the family according to the world?
5. What is the purpose of your family? How can you fulfill this purpose?