



Building Your House

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Introduction

One of my students' families comes every week with four beautiful, well-behaved, little children. They sit and play quietly while the others have their lessons. I watch in awe because my kids weren't like this at their age! It's not how God made our personalities. Our family is quirky. The four of us have crazy busy schedules and somehow manage to have quality family time. We have weird inside jokes and private dance parties inside our house (they say I can't dance). Our dinner conversations are not very mannerly, but we laugh, have a great time, and wonder through rabbit-trail conversations. This is our family. Your family may be like ours, my piano students, or something completely different.

Try not to make your family exactly like someone else's. Take the pressure off!

God will help you build your home with the same uniqueness that He made each of you. Whatever family God has given you; He has laid down clear and practical principles in the Bible we can all live by.

Ladies, God's intent for our role is specific and important. He has entrusted us with the responsibility of being the keepers of our home. That's a significant role and worthy of study and investigation. Thank you for caring enough about building your home God's way to explore this Bible study with me.

PITFALLS

Let's talk about how we *don't* want to live.

Proverbs teach us many ways to build a Godly home and many pitfalls to avoid. Let's begin with a few:

- Proverbs 24:3 (NLT), ***"A house is built by wisdom and becomes strong through good sense."***
- Proverbs 13:20 (NLT) encourages us to hang out with wise people. ***"Walk with the wise and become wise."***
- Proverbs 15:31 (NLT), ***"If you listen to constructive criticism, you will be at home among the wise."***
- Proverbs 14:1 (NLT), ***"A wise woman builds her home; but a foolish woman tears it down with her own hands."***

It's our choice, ladies, whether our home is built up or torn down. The Bible confirms it.

Since you're studying with me right now, you desire to build up your house and acquire wisdom.

We can all have a home filled with peace, joy, safety, and protection—a place our family can have rest—a haven. Did you notice the part about hanging out with wise people? Choose your fellowship carefully. We want to witness to everyone and help others grow, but our fellowship is to be with wise people.

"Better a dry crust eaten in peace than a house filled with feasting...and conflict" (Proverbs 17:1, NLT).

Have you known a family with an amazing home, great success, and everything money could buy, but they were miserable at home? I have. Could it be that conflict is the undertone in their home?

Life Reflection

If money or success is causing conflict in your home, consider the changes you can make to bring peace.

"People can ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the Lord" (Proverbs 19:3, NLT).

Unfortunately, too many people don't follow God's wisdom in their lives and for their families and then are angry at the Lord when their lives are a mess. When we acknowledge Him in all our ways, our paths are directed by Him: our husbands will be blessed, our children will be blessed, and our homes will have peace.

"It's better to live alone in the corner of an attic than with a quarrelsome wife in a starting a quarrel is like opening a floodgate, so stop before a dispute breaks out" (Proverbs 17:14, NLT).

It is said that "Money can't buy everything." Many of the happiest people live in smaller homes on a tight budget but have much love and joy. No matter what size house you are blessed to live in, make sure it's filled with peace, not quarreling.

Life Reflection

Goals: my family won't want to hang out in the corner of the attic to get some peace and quiet! What other goals can I set to nurture peace at home?

"It is better to live alone in the desert than with a quarrelsome, complaining wife" (Proverbs 21:19, NLT).

Ouch! Although there are always things to complain about, hide this Word in your heart. Try to see the positive side of a situation.

Your husband already knows that the car repair bill will be expensive and bite into vacation savings. Be chin-up and focus on the bright side of getting to go on vacation at all.



Your encouraging words can bring a calmness to your husband's stresses. Men tend to carry the weight of the world on their shoulders and feel they are letting us down if we cannot be blessed or pampered or spoiled the way they would like to treat us. But they usually don't express it that way. If we hide our disappointment, it will undoubtedly take pressure off them.



"A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength" (Proverbs 17:22, NLT).

"Don't say, 'I will get even for this wrong,' wait for the Lord to handle the matter" (Proverbs 20:22, NLT).

"Love prospers when a fault is forgiven but dwelling on it separates close friends" (Proverbs 17:9, NLT). Read the scripture again but this time replace the word "friends" with "families."

Even if your family isn't "deserving" of it, try a little cheerfulness medicine. Notice how it changes the mood in your home.

Many people wait for the other person to fix their problems before working on their own. We can have a happy home by being the first to make the change.

I know a couple married for many years and living as Christians for most of those years. Individually, these people are top-notch in every area. However, their marriage has been hindered by arguing and misunderstandings. It has also hampered their ministry.

After years of prayer, now they both work at "being the first person" to address their responsibility in the situation. I am grateful to report that their marriage is happier, and their home is more peaceful. It is never too late to work toward a good marriage and build a happy and peaceful home.

Life Reflection

Am I willing to be the one to change the mood in our home? Read the scriptures again and allow God to speak to you about how you can begin today.

"Avoiding a fight is a mark of honor; only fools insist on quarrelling" (Proverbs 20:3, NLT).

"Choose a good reputation over great riches; being held in high esteem is better than silver or gold" (Proverbs 22:1, NLT).

Ladies, climbing the ladder of success in your career, or neighborhood, or Parent Teacher Organization, or the leadership chart at your church is not more important than having a good reputation. We build our homes by being respectable as wives, mothers, or godly single ladies.

"A beautiful woman who lacks discretion is like a gold ring in a pig's snout" (Proverbs 11:22, NLT).

The definition of discretion is the quality of behaving or speaking in such a way as to avoid causing offense or revealing private information.

"Wise people think before they act; fools don't and even brag about their foolishness" (Proverbs 13:16, NLT).

It is better to focus on using discretion with the words that come out of our mouths and focus on our actions rather than spending lots of money on moisturizers, gym memberships, hair products, and clothes that make us beautiful on the outside. God created each of us to have beauty in our unique way. But, if we lack discretion, all of that is a waste.

Ladies, let's stay out of the pigpen! Let's use discretion before we speak. Be slow to speak (James 1:19). Pray every morning for discretion.

Let's revisit the definition of discretion: *It is the quality of behaving or speaking in such a way as to avoid causing offense or revealing private information.* If we use discretion, we will be a blessing to everyone around us.

Use discretion when talking to your church family. As a minister's wife, I can't tell you how often I've had to encourage ladies hurt by someone's thoughtlessness. If we use discretion—otherwise known as a filter, it will save people from so much hurt.



We want to be beautiful women for the Lord by not offending others.

Discretion also includes not revealing private information. Have you inadvertently revealed private information about your husband or your kids that embarrassed them or made them look bad in the eyes of others? I know I have. I didn't think it would be embarrassing for my kids to share a story I thought was cute or funny, but it was private information in my children's eyes. I had to apologize.

Let's be careful never to make our husbands look foolish or bad in the eyes of others. We might think it's funny, but it can humiliate them.

Life Reflection

What are some ways you can add more discretion into your day?

"Too much talk leads to sin. Be sensible and keep your mouth shut" (Proverbs 10:19, NLT). No explanation is necessary!

Timing is an important part of discretion. I recently felt directed in morning prayer to talk to my daughter about a sensitive subject. I knew I needed to be discreet and wait for the right time. When she was running out the door for musician's practice early Sunday morning, a "hot button" was pushed relating to the topic. I blew it. Words spilled out of my mouth. "The direction the Lord prompted is great for you, but the timing is terrible!" As she left and I knew I had failed to act with discretion, I repented. I am grateful for a merciful God and a forgiving daughter. I'll do better next time.

"Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing" (Proverbs 12:18, NLT).

We all want to bring healing words to our conversations, avoid cutting remarks, and use wise words. How do we do that? We must take control of our most unruly object—the tongue.

"Those who control their tongue will have a long life; opening your mouth can ruin everything" (Proverbs 13:3, NLT).

"The tongue of the wise makes knowledge appealing. Gentle words are a tree of life; a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit" (Proverbs 15:2, 4, NLT).

"Watch your tongue and keep your mouth shut, and you will stay out of trouble" (Proverbs 21:23, NLT).

THE LAWYER

I have been married for twenty-four years and have found that my being right is not the best win. I can walk away feeling victory because I was "right" and could prove it, but my home didn't have peace or unity. I didn't take time to listen to my husband and take his perspective into account. You can apply this to your children, siblings, parents, or co-workers.

It is better to have peace and unity than to be "right."

"People may be right in their own eyes, but the Lord examines their heart. The Lord is more pleased when we do what is right and just than when we offer him sacrifices" (Proverbs 21:2-3, NLT).



"Spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish" (Proverbs 18:13, NLT).

Let's be slow to speak so we won't jump to conclusions. If you ask, "Are you saying..." (then repeat what you think you heard), you can find out if you have perceived the facts and intentions correctly and probably save an argument.



"An angry person starts fights; a hot-tempered person commits all kinds of sin" (Proverbs 29:22, NLT).

If people can defend their point and "win" the argument, it can crush the spirit of a person who may also be right, or more right, but unable defend themselves well in communication.

"The human spirit can endure a sick body, but who can bear a crushed spirit?" (Proverbs 18:14, NLT)

One time, every piece of evidence pointed toward our daughter doing something deceitful, and my husband was about to come down hard on her with restrictions. But the Lord came to her defense, spoke to her daddy, and let him know that he didn't have all the facts right. Jesus told my husband that she was innocent. He slowed down and discovered that the situation wasn't as it seemed. Had he followed through with his first instinct, her spirit could have been crushed.

Our children are under our authority, Moms, but we must be careful not to crush their spirits. At work or in church leadership, let us be careful not to abuse our authority. Let us seek wisdom in leading those under us.

Life Reflection:

If you're the "lawyer" in your family, I encourage you to write down and memorize the verses in this section, so your husband, children, siblings, and parents don't feel crushed in their spirits.

GOD'S WAY: A JOYFUL AND PEACEFUL HOME

The following verses give us ideas of how to build a home filled with joy and peace:

"A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare" (Proverbs 15:1, NLT).

Let's use gentle words rather than harsh ones. Gentle words can calm tempers in your home. When dealing with children or even students who have anger management issues, try to speak gently not harshly. I have counseled young moms dealing with quick-tempered children not to allow their children to make them "lose their cool." It only fuels the fire.

As a sidebar, having positive rewards when a child keeps their temper under control and makes the right choice can be an effective tool. Always choosing to use negative reinforcement may further frustrate this child.

"Gentle words are a tree of life; a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit" (Proverbs 15:4, NLT). Gentle words will help us win, ladies!

Life Reflection:

What positive reinforcements can I use to encourage my children to make the right choice to control their temper?

EVEN-TEMPERED

"Short-tempered people do foolish things" (Proverbs 14:17, NLT).

"A truly wise person uses few words; a person with understanding is even-tempered" (Proverbs 17: 27, NLT).



Pray each day for temperance. As godly women, our goal is to have few but valuable words to speak with an even temperament. Most of us must pray daily to have an even temper in all situations. I admire one friend who seems always to be even-tempered. On the other hand, I have triggers I need to keep in check through daily prayer. I find praying each morning for the fruit of the Spirit very helpful.

Life Reflection:

Pray about your triggers at the start of each day, and the Lord will help you keep your cool! Make a list of causes that spark short-tempered reactions and start praying about them today.

Life Response

"The Lord's light penetrates the human spirit, exposing every hidden motive" (Proverbs 20:27, NLT).

We are so thankful for the Lord's light shining in our hearts today. He's taking a flashlight to the deepest parts—maybe the not-so-pretty parts of us.

He might have spoken to you during this lesson about hidden motives you need to work on. Although it is easier to walk away and ignore it because it's uncomfortable, don't be afraid to let the Lord complete His work in you. It will be painful but worth it. If you allow Him to continue to penetrate your heart, you will become the woman He desires you to be, and your home will reflect His Word.

II Corinthians 3:18 says, ***"So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord – who is the Spirit makes us more and more like him as we are changed into His glorious image"*** (NLT).

Let us go out today, reflect His glory, and continue to be changed into His glorious image! Because of the wise instruction the Lord has given us, we can fearlessly build happy homes filled with God's peace and joy. Now go build your home!

This Bible study is available in video format at <https://apassionapproach.com>