

# ***MARRIAGE***

## ***Leaving Home***

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When a man and woman unite in the bonds of marriage, the happiness of their new life together is in part determined by how well they establish their home as a separate entity from the home of their parents. The failure to establish a new home in this manner is the cause of unrest in some marriages. In *Genesis 2:24* we read, “*Therefore shall a man **leave** his father and his mother, and shall **cleave** unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*” This verse is not instructing us to abandon or dishonor our parents when we marry. Such an interpretation would violate other biblical principles (*Exo. 20:12* and *1 Tim. 5:4*). However, it does clearly teach that the husband and wife are to leave their parents’ homes and establish a separate home of their own.

Various circumstances can interfere with this important separation. The location of their home, with respect to their parents’ homes, is an important consideration. Living near parents can be a blessing as long as the lines of separation are understood and respected. Each couple must consider their situation based on the tendencies of both themselves and their parents. While some newlyweds will find it necessary to move several miles away from their parents’ homes, others may be able to live next door to their parents with no significant problems. It all depends on the commitment of the parents and children to maintain separate homes in the sense of establishing separate decision-making units. That’s not to say that parents cannot provide encouragement and even counsel as God’s word directs (*Tit. 2:1-6*). However, failing to recognize God’s structure can be the cause of strife between the homes of the married children and the parents. This is especially true if the parents interfere with their children’s problems (*Pro. 26:17*) or if the children confide in their parents about problems that should be privately discussed between themselves (*Mat. 18:15*).

When children are born, tension may arise if the grandparents do not respect their children’s responsibility to train their children. There are appropriate times for the grandparents to provide counsel with regard to the biblical method of training children (*Gal. 6:1, Jam. 5:19-20*); however, it is the responsibility of the parents to train and discipline (*Pro. 1:8, Eph. 6:4*). The grandparents need to make sure they do not spend too much time with their grandchildren, especially at the grandchildren’s home (*Pro. 25:17*). Occasionally, in today’s culture, the grandparents spend more time with their grandchildren than the parents. Oftentimes, this is the result when the mother of the children has a full time job. Grandparents can be excellent babysitters; however, the responsibility of raising children is placed on the parents. There are situations in which the grandparents are required to help raise the grandchildren. Too often, however, the parents allow the children to spend too much time with the grandparents because of

choice, not necessity. I have often observed grandparents encourage this practice because they prioritize their desire to be with their grandchildren over their responsibility to encourage parental responsibilities.

As the world around us drifts farther away from the family structure that God ordained, may we exemplify the proper order of the home and thereby shine as lights in a confused society (*Phi. 2:15*). Furthermore, if you are part of the older generation, make sure the counsel you give your married children is based on the truth of scripture, not your emotions (*Jer. 17:9*).