

By
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The Husbands' Survival Guide

Part V—The Ideal Family

A father came home from work and was incredibly exhausted, but his young son wanted some of daddy's attention. So daddy thought he could relax a little if he gave his son something to occupy him for a while. Daddy grabbed the newspaper he wanted to read, found a big ad with a picture of the world, then he tore it into many pieces. He said to his son, "Tommy, let's see if you can play this game and show daddy how smart you are. This is a picture of the world when it's put together. See if you can put the the world together.

The father left his son working eagerly on the floor to put the puzzle together, so he picked up the paper to read. Before he even finished the first article, Tommy surprised him by bringing the picture to him perfectly assembled. The father said, "Tommy! Done already? How did you do this so quickly?" Tommy replied, "There was a picture of a family on the back. When I got the family right, the world fell into place!"

Tommy was absolutely correct: when the family is right, the whole world falls into place. According to Our Lady of Fatima, the last great battle between heaven and hell will be for the family. We are in the midst of that battle now, and it's one that began with World War II. There is no such thing as the perfect family... unless you hail from the Holy Family. Every family is dysfunctional. That disfunction is a consequence of the effects of original sin in the lives of individual family members. The more we give ourselves over to the effects of original sin—avoiding adherence to God's laws and self-discipline—the more dysfunctional the family. That's just the natural order of a fallen human nature.

Prior to WWII, dad was the bread winner (holding two jobs, if necessary), mom cared for her husband, children and home (the most exalted vocation *anyone* can have), and both of them were very generous with God by bringing as many children into the world as He would deign to send them. The children earned whatever money they had, rather than having allowances simply given to them. They would also help their parents around the house, making their physical-work contributions to the family... and they didn't hold out greedy little hands for doing work that was part of their family responsibilities—they were rightly taught not to expect it.

This type of family in America is quite rare (although I know a few of them), typically only found in a Norman Rockwell painting. What has changed? All the changes happened because of Satan's war on the family. Sadly, most Americans, including Catholics, seem to think the consequences of the war on the family in their own families is not only acceptable, but that it's actual-

ly good. In order to demonstrate this fallacy of modern goodness, let's start with the husband-father. After all, this series is still *The Husbands' Survival Guide*.

It's time for men to reclaim their rightful God-given role in the family. Some of their God-given role, including rights and responsibilities, has been abrogated by men themselves. Others have been made passé by a godless culture and society, particularly radical feminism and a big government nanny state that believes it can run a family better than families can. The effects of original sin, a morally bankrupt culture and society, and destructive ideologies that can't be squared with Catholic moral teaching have all turned modern men into wimps and semi-animals. I'm speaking generally, of course. Certainly not all men are this way, but this shows throughout our society at large. Want evidence?

As I was growing up and coming of age, men were certainly not ideally fulfilling their roles as husbands and fathers, but they were much closer to what they were supposed to be than today. When was the last time you saw a man hold a door for a woman? Men, when was the last time you actually did that? When men held women in high esteem, as should be, it was almost considered a sin if a man didn't hold a door for a lady, and men who saw other men refusing to do so were held in contempt. It's all about venerating womanhood.

Have you ever wondered why original sin is often referred to as Adam's sin, when it was Eve who disobeyed God first? Following conventional wisdom and the feminist ideology we're all compelled to accept as dogma, original sin should rightly be called Eve's sin. But it's called Adam's sin. Why? Because—like it or not, ladies—man was created first, and woman was created of man (Genesis 2:7, 23). This means the man is the leader, the head of a family. Paul says, "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife... As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives be subject in everything to their husbands" (Ephesians 5:22-24). Like many Catholic truths, this one isn't taught much anymore, and feminists hate it, but it is still a Catholic truth.

Before anyone gets all out of joint about this, let's place the proper emphasis on it. What Paul wrote doesn't mean the husband is a tyrant who lords over his wife. Paul also says, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and *gave himself up for her*... He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes it and cherishes it..." (Ephesians 5:25, 28-29). What all this means is that the man is the natural head of the family, and the wife is to be subject to his leadership in all that is not sinful. The onus here is on the man, though, and not the woman. A husband has the responsibility to always put his wife's needs over his own, which is the most basic aspect of leadership. What are her most basic needs? To be loved, provided for, and treated with tenderness, respect and loyalty. A man who has been married fifty years should treat his wife with the romantic tenderness he had for her when they were newlyweds, because they are one flesh, not two. This is sometimes difficult to do when disagreements arise, but it's certainly doable. That's why Paul said it's "a great mystery" (Ephesians 5:32).

In the next installment, we will continue talking about men and their proper role as husbands. Until then, if you have questions, comments or complaints, visit JoeSixpackAnswers.com and go to the "Ask Joe" page to reach me. And don't forget to sign up for the free email course and webinar invitations while you're there.