
An Exegetical Study of 1 Timothy 5:8 and its Implication for the Christian Family.

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Abstract

Biblical and African culture seems to agree on father as the head and the provider for the family. However, it has been observed in recent years that the changing economic role of women has greatly crushed the role of fathers. The women upsurge in financial power reduces the important of paternal financial role in many families, specifically among Christian families many fathers had abandoned their role for their wives, as a result, there are increasing rates of divorce and remarriage, laziness and unfaithfulness among Christian couples. The biblical injunction which described whoever does not provide for his own.... seems to be confusingly gender based, some interpret that passage to mean gender while some think otherwise, consequently, it remains contentious in our contemporary world. Considering Biblical language and culture; the scripture consider male to be father of all therefore must be responsible to all. Hence interpretation of the 1 Timothy 5:8, in relation to the Christian families, become necessary. Historical critical method, with the exegesis of the pericope was employed. It has been discovered that some men imbibe the colonial way of life and abandoned their family under duress, some demand for gender compliment, out of inferiority complex they bow for the western way of life and dodge their responsibilities, this is a disgrace to the African fatherhood, and it usually led to violence in the family. The load of responsibilities shifted on some women has increased the

burden that such mothers are carrying today. However, some men withstand and uphold both the Biblical and African traditional belief and culture, these are the few that were able to take care and provide for their family as a man and father. It is recommended that Christian fathers should boldly take up their responsibility not minding the level of their income and should keep the family bond together. While the spouse support.

Keywords: Father, Marriage, Family, Provision, 1 Timothy 5:8,

Introduction

Two to three centuries ago, fathers' roles were primarily to serve as breadwinners and the conveyers of moral values and religious instructor to their children. In African tradition, a father, who is called 'Baba' in Nigeria among the Yoruba, is seen as one with authority, his actions and reactions are very significant in the family and community; his decisions are highly respected and binding on his family, the mother and the children look up to the father for provision and protection. Fortunately, this tradition is the same with biblical tradition. In Old Testament, אָדָם (Adam) is the generic name of the human race, also the New Testament ἀνθρώπος stands for man as in human being. But πατήρ in Greek and אָב (abh) in Hebrew means Father. Studying God's plan during creation, man (as male), was made the head and the father of all. He was created special as an image of God, attached with responsibilities which include tilling of the ground so as to provide for his wife and the children they will later have. This reveals that, huge responsibilities of providing and caring were laid on him as a man (male) right from the time of creation. Furthermore, the Greek πατήρ (pater) according to Theological Dictionary ⁷³is from the root pa, meaning nourisher, protector, upholder. This is the reflexion of what Father stands for in Hebrew culture, as

⁷³ Theological dictionary, <http://play.google.com/store> Online dictionary access 2023

well as in the Roman culture and coincidentally in Africa as well.

However, over the years there has been a serious issue on inadequacy of provision in the family and have consistently led to family crises and violence. Pressure on men to fulfill the expectations of their families, standing on their own feet and (re)claiming what it is to be a man has always been the heart cry of many women and family members in Africa today. Unemployment, poverty, income inequality, gender power, etc. shows that some biological fathers frequently play a relatively limited role in providing and raising their children (Holborn & Eddy, 2011).⁷⁴ Though the effort of mothers to meet the need of the family has drastically change things in the family front. This is due to the advent of industrialization and factories that started playing the major role of sources of employment, for both married and unmarried women that are looking for job for sustenance. Shefer 2010⁷⁵observed, some fathers, the decision to stay home with their children stems from; their spouse's strong earning, and their own desire to serve as the primary caregiver. That view comes from the western way of thinking it is never an Africa way of thinking and that is why the stay-at-home fathers are usually been confronted with disgrace in African context, because it is a breaking of the social norms surrounding masculine behaviour. Therefore, in an attempt to address who should be the breadwinner or primary provider, this work exegetes 1 Timothy5:8 vis-à-vis the Christian families.

Patriarchal Society

Patriarchy refers to a system where the hierarchy of authority is controlled and dominated by male (Oderinde2012)⁷⁶ in the same vein, the theological dictionary, the word 'Patriarchy' is used in Septuagint as the equivalent of the head of the family

⁷⁴ Holborn & Eddy 2011 safe and peace promotion research unit

⁷⁵ Shefer, women and gender studies 2010

⁷⁶ Oderinde, Gender relations 2012 pg

or of a tribe. It can then be alluded that, patriarchal society is the one that recognize the authority of a man as the head of family to be final; Odunlami ⁷⁷also posit that many nations in Africa is patriarchal in nature, and its supreme practice makes the elderly men rule the families within the clan. It is a social system in which the father is the head and authority of the household, also in which lineage is trace through the male line. In addition to this view, the supremacy of man in a patriarchal society seems to be inborn and natural this reveal the reason why men particularly in Africa, naturally feel they should be responsible for the welfare of their family, even a little boy will tell the mother not to worry he will take care of her. Oderinde progress that,

The privilege of male includes control over wealth and resources; therefore, they are considered to be financially responsible for women and the children. Furthermore, even if the woman seems financially active, their contribution to the household and society at large are often considered to be secondary or that it included the man.

Back in history women have always been a secret pillar behind their husband but nobody acknowledges this role, instead all praises go to the father of the house, due to the nature of African culture women's effort are never mentioned. Scripture seems to be the pattern for patriarchal way of life, in Gen28; 13, 15; 15 1chronicle24:31, also in New Testament Hebrew7:4, Acts7:8,1 Timothy 5:8 and many more pointed to the practice of patriarchal system.

In differing opinion, Babawale O.O. (2016)⁷⁸ surmise that, family care and provision is a responsibility for everybody, regardless of age, gender, or any other thing. He also asserts that, based on African male sensitivity the passage 1

⁷⁷ Odunlami, Marital relationship in practical theology 2016

⁷⁸ Babawale, Family provision and care 2016

Timothy5:8. One may assume that Paul was addressing the males to care and provide for the widows and other family member and not female, this is not true of the passage. This assertion is based on Greek word τις which is translated as anyone, someone, something or whosoever, Babawale posit that this kind of representation is used in Greek for any circumstances that brings the two genders together it does not necessarily mean the group of males alone.

The pronoun τις is a nominative, masculine/feminine, singular (Babawale state that it is plural) this clearly shows the line of thought of the scripture writer. Though the preceding verses of the passage (1 Timothy5:8) talk about care for the widows, but the use of οικειων which is translated as immediate family or relative, point and indicate who is expected to provide. Historically, from creation Bible is patriarchal in culture and practice, a close examination of Pauline's writing reveals that anytime Paul refers to family he has the patriarchal system in mind (Ephesians 6:4, Romans 9:5,1 Thessalonian2;11) which is always in agreement with the Old Testament culture and belief. Female cannot be considered to be a provider in a system where male is the head of the family. It can then be concluded that in 1 Timothy 5:8. Paul is referring to the father or the most senior man who is the head of the family and has been saddle with the family responsibility to provide for his family or relative; otherwise, he is worse than an unbeliever.

Father as the Head of the Family

The family is usually the major source of the basic necessities of life and health and are majorly provided by the head of the family. Love, tenderness, food, water, clothing, shelter, education, security and many more are the things that make life meaningful. Fatherhood is developing, the way that men carry out their paternal duties is reflective of the ancient time in which they live; it includes social and cultural forces, the mother and the father's anticipations for fathering behaviours, as well as the father's own inborn abilities, wishes, and desires.

Fatherhood is greatly influenced by men's relationships with their own fathers, the quality of relationship, and the extent to which the father was emotionally available. (Dick 2011)⁷⁹

Children's confessions about the important of their fathers' availability and involvement in their upbringing cannot be overlooked, the children's training should not be left for mothers alone if the family desire success and peace in future. As an African and the head of the family, a father will do all he can to be an example and at the same time prepare his children especially the sons to be a responsible adult. This is an issue worthy of careful consideration for fathers who want to be the head of the family indeed. It would be emphasized that in the African community, the extended family is traditionally practiced (Degbey, 2012)⁸⁰. In the same vein, it is a common knowledge that when one speaks of the family in an African context, one is referring not to the nuclear family but the extended family (Gyekye, 1996)⁸¹. It has been well-illustrated that the nuclear family pattern was never the dominant pattern of family life in Africa.

Questionably, in contemporary societies, practices of family and notions of family are shifting. Western culture has gradually been incorporated into African culture; it is confusing and systematically swallowing up the African pattern of family, it has led to so many problems. One of the problems which have been pointed out include the fact that much of the research on the consequences of father non-involvement suggests itself as universal. Traditionally, in African context, the nuclear family is being headed by the father (husband), while the extended family is being headed by the most senior man on the family tree. Nevertheless, Africans practice an extended family in which the grandfather as the head of the family has authority and can still provide for his children and grandchildren. Where

⁷⁹ Dick, the changing role of the father in the family 2011

⁸⁰ Degbey, parenting-in-south-america-and-african-context 2012

⁸¹ Gyekye, parenting-in-south-american-and african-context 1999

the uncle is the most senior in the family, he takes the responsibilities of the family.

In Africa, children that are trained by the grandparent, most of the time turns out to be discipline and responsible. However, these two father figures played a very vital role in childhood and as an adolescent. It has been observed that growing into adolescent is a difficult and tedious task for both the mother and the child without a responsible biological father, especially as a boy. The fact that the grandfather can stand in for the father does not makes it right because it is very difficult to tolerate someone who is not your biological father. This implied that the duty of the father as the head of the family cannot be swap. In the same vein, Tikumma study (cited in Oladele 2014)⁸² advance that, *It is the duty of the Nigeria men to provide food, clothing, shelter and other vital needs of the entire family as well as to pay children's school fee.* Entire family, in Africa context includes wife, children, and mother, father and immediate siblings. The duty of the father as a provider is not something to handle with levity due to its importance in the life of the children and their future. It is the responsibility of the father as head of the family to raise a child and provide for the need of that child with the support of the mother, in order for the child to become a responsible adult. It can then be inferred that the role of a father as the head and provider in the family is very important.

Father as a Provider in Christian Family

Using the Bible and Biblical teachings as guideposts, fathers were responsible for the moral development of their children (Lamb, 2000)⁸³. Moreover, fathers served as role models of good Christian values. Fatherhood is a set of behaviours far beyond biological reproduction, reflecting for a moment on the father as the family provider and protector, inevitably, such thoughts raises childhood memories that leave a lasting imprint on which

⁸² Oladele, failed marriage and consequences for the church 2014

⁸³ Lamb, the history research on father involvement 2000

we are. How did he fulfil these roles? Did he fill them fully, or did he fall short? Many fathers fall short and these shortcomings affect their families profoundly even for generations to follow. Mbiti⁸⁴ posit that, *only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his own being, his duties and responsibilities towards himself and others.*

This reveals that it is only when a man takes up his responsibilities, that he will come to understand who he is in terms of being responsible or not. It is therefore, important for Christian fathers to consider some practical ways that a father can be a provider, it is something to be practised and there are ways to it. Though, some fathers provide financially for the family, but being a provider goes beyond financial support there is need for family bond and his love for the family must be obvious, everything together makes a provider (Thomas 2017).⁸⁵

This shows that providing for family especially in Christian family goes beyond theory. A godly father provides for the spiritual needs of his children. This is a father who can be found reading the Bible with his kids, praying with them, and answering their questions. The father holds primary responsibility, in Ephesians 6:4 “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” A godly father provides for the physical needs of his children. This point may seem understandable to some but is lost in the community where children seem to live in poverty than adults, which can only be the result of the falling short of the father in his duty at home. Thomas progressively states that, before sin even entered the world, Genesis 2:15 says that *The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it. Work is an*

⁸⁴ Mbiti, introduction to African Religion 1991

⁸⁵ Thomas, father as a provider 2017

act of worship, and men are supposed to work and provide for their families.

In agreement, God had planned it right from the beginning that man should be the one to work and provide for the family, deviating from this tend towards disobeying and distorting God's original plan. A godly father provides for the relational needs of his children. A wise father brings his children into a healthy church community. In the New Testament, Paul often uses the metaphor that the church is a family by spiritual birth. Proverbs 12:6 "the righteous chooses his friends carefully." godly friends of all ages who love God and live righteously are wonderful influences upon a child; therefore, godly Fathers expose and help in selecting godly friends for their children. A godly father provides for the generational needs of his children's children. Making money to provide for the family is not the same thing as spending it wisely. Proverbs 28:25 says, "A greedy man stirs up strife." In agreement Thomas posit, *the greedy father is the one with lots of toys and hobbies that take his free time and money away from the needs of his wife and children.* Though it is not a sin for a man to have nice things, it is a sin if he consistently gets nice things for himself and failed to be generous with his family as a demonstration of biblical priorities. Proverbs 19:14 goes even further by teaching that; "house and wealth are inherited from fathers." Wisdom lives from generation to generation; Proverbs 13:22 goes further still: "a good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children." Wise father first established a godly relationship with a wise woman, provide for the need of his children, and finally anticipates that his wisdom and wealth will be passed on to his grandchildren.

I witnessed first-hand the way my father provided. It wasn't perfect, but he embodied the role of provider to its fullest (Thomas). For Thomas being a provider goes beyond dictionary definition of provider which state 'one that provides' however, according to him, a provider is one who blesses and protects someone else. This is based on what he learned from his father,

in addition he explains that, a man who can't provide for his family isn't worth anything and that being a provider is a serious role and one that men should invest time growing. Thomas' experience with his father is a typical example of how a typical African man will raise his children to be a responsible adult and pass it on to the next generation. In that light, thinking of how to bless, protect, and provide for the family, living positive exemplary life for the children to emulate, especially immediate family, should be the priority of a real father and something to prepare for over the years, so as to become a real provider. According to Oladele (2014)⁸⁶ *Where there is an increasingly argument on financial issues in the family or when a mother discovered that her spouse is not financially faithful it can lead to divorce.*

In some Christian home today many women are suffering from inconsistency of financial commitment on the part of their spouse; some fathers were unable to fully provide for their family due to low income has been gathered from the respondent, nevertheless there are some that are not just responsible, with the income they are earning the impression given to the spouse is 'they don't have,' the whole financial responsibilities is left for the woman to carry. Once the woman discovered, apart from the dissolution of the marriage the children will be negatively affected. The story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11–32 uncovers more. It may be easy for us to relate more to the prodigal son, who disobeys and dishonors his father, conversely the role of the father as a provider is often overlooked or not even mentioned at all. It is challenging to put oneself in that role, the role of a provider, one who blesses and protects his family regardless of their actions.

Biblical injunction in 1 Timothy 5:8

The injunction in 1 Timothy 5:8 "but if anyone does not provide for their (his) own, especially for those of his household, he has

⁸⁶ Oladele,

denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.” Finding and knowing the likely intended meaning of the biblical writer to the original audience before contextualisation, has been a great help in interpreting the scripture. Nevertheless, accurate and correct interpretation cannot be compromise if one is to contextualise properly. Since the periscope above is an injunction and is the focus of this study it becomes very important to examine the interpretation of some scholar on the text.

Croskery (2023)⁸⁷ submit that this passage asserts the obligations that spring out of family relationship. It points to the duties of supporting relatives, and all who live under one’s roof, who through poverty may have become dependent. Croskery view this passage as a sense of duty in the family but did not state who should bear the responsibility since the passage talk about providing, the above submission also referred to relative as those who live under one’s roof which indicate family setting, then who provide for the family was not clearly stated. This seems part of the problem of the text interpretation.

Furthermore, Croskery added that, it would place the Christian confession in a position far below that of the unbeliever, who recognized the duty of supporting relatives as one of his best principles. It would be a serious dishonour to Christ and the gospel to neglect duties held in highest honour by the heathen. Again, Croskery did not pin down who is neglecting duty, but by using ‘Christian confession’ makes it sound like general statement for all Christians. Is the text not referring to a particular gender? It should, for it to mention household, relative, family then somebody must be responsible.

Davies⁸⁸ agree to this when he assert that, it is the place of the head of family/societies to rule and direct. This establish the

⁸⁷ Crockery, biblehub.com (online access2023)

⁸⁸ Davies, Commentary on 1 Timothy 5:8

fact that somebody must be the head of the family. Albert⁸⁹ observed, the words “his own,” refer to those who are naturally dependent on him, whether living in his own immediate family or not. There may be distant natural dependant relatives, besides those who live under the same roof. And especially for those of his own house, “kindred.” The word “house,” or “household,” better expresses the sense than the word “kindred.” The meaning is those who live in his own house, they would naturally have higher claims on him than those who did not.

Shedding more light on the pericope English⁹⁰ comment; “Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, as denied faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” It seems clear that the mandate to provide is a categorical (as opposed to a relative) one, which is helpful to know, as we want to rightly understand the author’s intending meaning. This comment suggests that the mandate ‘to provide’ is definite and unconditional one, hence there is need for Apostle Paul to instruct his son in the Lord (Timothy) concerning it, and for him to instruct others. It implied that there is need to keenly look into the pericope for intending meaning.

In this midst of this serious and disturbing issue, how can one determine what the Bible say about men providing for their immediate family? Is the idea of man, culture or biblical? In answer to this question English submitted, unlike women today, women in patristic were dependent on their male relatives to provide the necessities of life. Provision fell to fathers, husbands, and eventually sons to ensure that those in their household had food to eat, a home to live in, and clothing to wear. The above view clearly shows that right from the time of patristic age women, even if the woman make money it is spent under the influence of the man. Therefore, men are the

⁸⁹ Albert, Note on New Testament 1798-1870

⁹⁰ English, Provision in 1 Timothy modern reformation.org

one in charge of spending to take care of the family. On the contrary, English added, in the society today, the belief that the husband is called to provide for his wife is quickly becoming a model of the past. With the rise of the new feminism movement, women are throwing off the “shackles” of expecting their spouses to take care of them and her stepping into the road previously held by men. With the repercussion that comes with this supposedly view, people have begun to rethink this belief, even some within the church.

Therefore, the questions in the heart of the pious ones are, “who should provide for the family? If it is the father, why is provision a man’s unique responsibility and not a woman’s?” Again, English opines that, the answer takes us all the way back to the Garden, when Adam was created. Before God brought his wife to him, Adam was given work to do; specifically, naming the animals and tending the Garden. Eve was created as his necessary helpmeet in that work, but the ultimate responsibility was Adam’s. Paul emphasizes this in Ephesians 5:23, when he says, “For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church” From the above assertion it is obvious that authority and responsibility go hand-in-hand. Adam’s authority over Eve was not for his own luxury or satisfaction, but for the glory of God and their mutual good. ‘Provision’ is not mainly in terms of physical needs, a man who supplies social and economic security for his family has done well, but the totality of this biblical duty are: Husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies and as Christ loves the church, and fathers are not to provoke their children to anger, but to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. If men are called to imitate their Lord, then part of that example and path is to provide for one’s household the way Christ provides for the household of God.

Exegetical Study of 1 Timothy 5:8

*Εἰ δέ τις τῶν ἰδίων καὶ μάλιστα τῶν οἰκείων οὐ προνοεῖ,
τὴν πίστιν ἤρνηται, καὶ ἔστιν ἀπίστου χεῖρων. BYZ*

And whoever does not provide for relatives, and especially for family members, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. NRSV

The *εἰ δέ τις* construction states the matter as a general principle both by its conditionality ‘if’ (*εἰ*) and by its indefinite pronoun *τις* which means ‘anyone’ it is an indefinite pronoun, nominative, singular, masculine. It can stand as masculine or feminine, here it takes masculine because of *τῶν ἰδίων* that it agrees with. This is genitive, plural, masculine, it indicates persons who in some sense belong to a so-called reference person, it is translated as ‘his own’ people in the singular form and ‘their own’ in the plural. *Μάλιστα* is an adverb used to indicate a very high point on a scale of extent and is translated as *especially, or particularly*. *οικείων* is an adjective, genitive, plural, masculine, it is derived from *οἶκος* which means *family* one who belongs to a particular household, it is therefore translated as *member of a family, or relative*. *Οὐ* is a marker of negative propositions, is translated as *not*. Therefore, *τῶν ἰδίων καὶ μάλιστα οικείων* is Paul’s way of defining those who should be cared for *τῶν ἰδίων, οικείων*, together with a note of special responsibility *καὶ μάλιστα* for the latter plural *οικείων* (Gal. 6:10; Eph. 2:19; 1 Tim. 5:8) has the meaning here “*members of the household*” in the sense of “*his immediate family*.” The use of masculine gender suggest that Paul seems to focus his attention on man as the head of the family to take up the responsibilities of providing for his family especially the immediate ones.

Significance of the text for Christian Families

Traditionally, both in the Bible and in African, it is clear that woman cannot own a family she can only take care of the children and support the husband where there is need. Man is the owner and the head of the family; it is therefore expected of the man to provide for his family. Paul has the role of the father as the head, in view when he was writing this letter to Timothy, hence allusion can be found in Eph5:25,6:4 also in

Luke 11:7, 1 Peter 3:7, Deut 6:7, Exo 12-13, Gen 22, 28; 13 Matt 7:10. This shows that anytime Paul or any of the New and Old Testament Biblical authors raises the issue that bothers on family they have the head of the family in view, which is the father or husband. Fathers should therefore provide for their wives and children who are part of themselves; otherwise they denied the faith and are worse than infidel.

In the pericope understudy, Paul expresses the terrible implications of not caring for one's own: It amounts to a denial of Christianity and an action and attitude worse than that of an unbeliever. To default on the basic care and support of a family member is the same as denying the faith, for no one can claim love and loyalty to God and at the same time neglect his family. To do so makes a person worse than an unbeliever, for even unbelieving idol-worshippers understood the responsibility of caring for family needs. Families provide a ground in which one can demonstrate the excellence love for God. Christian who disregards the most basic human responsibilities has, for all practical purposes, denied the faith. Studies indicate the importance of fathers' involvement for positive childhood and adulthood. The Christian fathers should contribute to their children's health and well-being by providing emotional and financial support, appropriate monitoring and discipline. Though women are to support but should not be left to play the role of a breadwinner in the family.

Conclusion

The study revealed that many African fathers specifically Christians are no longer the olden day breadwinner of the family, this can be alluded to so many reasons such as; unemployment, retirement, greediness, low income earning and laziness on the part of some that feel comfortable with the income of the wife. It was noted that, some scholars/pastors feel 1 Timothy 5:8 is not referring to a particular gender that it can be any of the gender. It was also discovered that women are playing larger role in the family, to the point of taking over the

role of fathers, as a result of the high income of some mothers when compare to their spouse's income, based on this some fathers have shifted their responsibilities totally on the mother, forgetting that the mother also have her own role to play, this has increase the burden that mothers carry today, which is contrary to both Biblical and African culture.

Traditionally in Africa, Fathers in those days, especially before the advent of the colonial masters, shows they are responsible by providing food, clothes, and shelter, pay all bills and provide security for their family. Mothers' role is to prepare food for the family and see to the welfare of the children. On rarely occasion, the woman will follow the man to the farm together with the children, if the need be. This reveals the security consciousness of the parent in those days, father goes to the farm while mother stay at home to take care of the children and prepared food for the returning father, the children will go to the farm with the father once they are of age. This is to train the children to be responsible, it is also to protect and prevent the children from bad influence. This is also observed in the life of the biblical patriarchs.

The situation is a reverse today, the advent of white man and office job that take man away from his family led to the struggle of self-survival that women engage in, specifically the Christian married women that have children to take care. Consequently, some modern-day fathers stay at home or roam about aimlessly, while the mother goes out to work and provide for the need of the family. Miscreants are on the increase today because some fathers have totally distorted family arrangement; In such family their underage child is the one providing for them, because the father failed in his responsibility and probably what the mother is earning is nothing to write home about. Unfortunately, this has changed the beauty of African and Biblical culture and setting. This is part of the reason why many homes are crumbling today. When it comes to family issue, Paul usually compares man with Christ being the head of the church, Christ nurture and care for the

church, man in the same vein should emulate Christ by caring for his wife and children. Father is the head and is to provide and take care of the family.

Recommendations

In the light of these findings, it is recommended that Christian family should take a clue from the teachings of Paul; fathers should see Christ as an example; as the head of the church, he gave himself for it, nurture, take care of it, and always ready to meet the church's need. Fathers should follow the steps of Christ and should take pride in going back to the ancient way, take the bull by the horn, do all he can positively do to provide for his family's needs financially, physically, and spiritually. Even if the income is nothing compare with the spouse, he should not either dodge his duty or shift it to the mother, doing so suggested that the father fly down is position for the mother, and this is the reason why some women are more prosperous than their husband. In contrast they should boldly take up their responsibilities, contribute what the income can take care, show love and care, by doing this the bond of the family will be strengthen and the spouse will joyfully complement.

The children's need should be highly considered, they are the future of the family, neglecting them is neglecting one's future. It is therefore recommended that Parents should not allow their underage children to be the provider, and fathers should make sure mothers did not take a job or career that will hinder her from looking after the children especially when they are still young. Mothers can work to support the father where there is need but not as the breadwinner of the family.

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The Epistemological Significance of the Pursuit of Wisdom in Proverbs 1:7 and 9:10 in the Context of Belief in the Existence of God

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Abstract

The paper deals with the profound epistemological significance of the pursuit of wisdom, as articulated in Proverbs 1:7 and 9:10, within the overarching context of belief in the existence of God. The passages are central in the Judeo-Christian tradition and have long been acknowledged as foundational in shaping believers' intellectual and spiritual landscape. The study examines the textual and historical context of Proverbs 1:7 and 9:10, elucidating their role in ancient Israel's wisdom literature and their relevance in contemporary religious discourse. It explores the notion that fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, which has profound theological implications. Furthermore, the paper investigates the epistemological implications of this pursuit of wisdom within theism, highlighting the interplay between faith and reason. As represented in these verses, the pursuit of wisdom is analysed as a dynamic process that enriches one's understanding of the world, ethics, and the divine. The paper draws comparisons between the perspectives presented in Proverbs 1:7 and 9:10 and various philosophical and theological traditions, seeking to discern the universality of their insights and relevance in contemporary epistemology and belief discussions. The intersection of faith in God and the pursuit of wisdom is explored to reconcile the tension between religious dogma and intellectual inquiry. The study underscores the enduring