



For some, the word “family” invokes an image of the immediate, nuclear family. For others, it signifies the extended family. In either case, whether we are single or married, we inherently know that *family matters*. According to Perry F. Webb, “The home...is the lens through which we get our first look at marriage and all civic duties; it is the clinic where, by conversation and attitude, impressions are created with respect to sobriety and reverence; it is the school where lessons of truth or falsehood, honesty or deceit are learned; it is the mold which ultimately determines the structure of society.”

A comparison of the descendants of “Max Juke” and Jonathan Edwards illustrates the point: (*Today Matters*, 106)

<i>Max Juke</i> ( <i>lazy, drunk, adulterer</i> )	<i>Jon. Edwards</i> ( <i>theologian, pastor, president of Princeton</i> )
180 paupers (25%)	13 college presidents
140 criminals (20%)	65 professors (1 law school dean)
60 habitual thieves (8.5%)	100 lawyers (plus 30 judges)
50 common prostitutes (7%)	66 physicians (1 medical school dean)
	80 held public office (1 US Vice President, 3 US Senators, 3 governors)

The Bible identifies four institutions that are established by God for the good of humanity. It can be reasonably concluded from the Genesis account that each has its own sphere of importance, and that there is also an order of precedence: (1) worship of *God*, (2) love of *family*, (3) responsibility of *work*, (4) authority of *government*.

When Mother Teresa received the Nobel peace prize in 1979, she was asked, “What can we do to promote world peace?” She did not suggest a greater devotion to work, nor sacrificial efforts for the government. Her profoundly simple reply was: “Go home and love your family.”

Your family matters today. It is easier to neglect family than work, but an investment if your family today will favorably influence generations to come. It is one of the most critical decisions you will make as a leader.

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1. *What do the following tell you about family and leadership?*

Titus 1:6

1 Timothy 3:4-5

1 Timothy 5:8

2. Read Genesis 13:1-13. *What do you learn about the priorities of Abram compared to Lot?*

3. Lot, like Max Juke, made decisions with destructive consequences on his family. Read Genesis 19.

Genesis 19:4-8

Genesis 19:12-14

Genesis 19:32, 36-38

4. *“Oh Lord, because family matters, show me today how to be better at...”*

*“I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all the people on earth will be blessed through you.”*

(Genesis 19:3)