

Lessons in Living

Anybody Home?

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Is there anything bleaker than an empty house? When I was a missionary and approached an abode, I could usually tell before I rang the doorbell whether there was a homemaker inside: beautiful potted plants surrounded the entry, gleaming windows were adorned with crisp curtains, and the aroma of freshly baked goods enticed me. Sometimes, there were happy sounds of piano practicing. Once the door opened and I viewed family photos and signs of the Savior, I knew it was a Christian home. In my humble opinion, a house without a homemaker is like a store without a manager. Being a homemaker is a very important job with long-lasting consequences. Just as the father is the head of the home, so the mother is the heart of the home. "Mothers care for people, fathers care for things. When mothers leave people to care for things, people suffer."

Ezra Taft Benson, a modern prophet, advised mothers to be at the "crossroads" when children left and returned home. Prophets advise families to have meals together, set aside one night a week for home evening, and hold family councils. In today's world, it may be difficult for parents to be home all of the time, but we can try to be there at the Five Key Times. What are they? Arise & Retire, Leave & Return, and Meals. Let us make these the pivotal points of family activities. It helps to read *The Family, a Proclamation to the World*, by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Focus on the Family With James Dobson and Guidepost publications.

The ideal home is beautifully expressed in the lyrics of the song, "A House Becomes a Home" by Lorraine and Wells B. Wilkinson:

A house becomes a home when there's love inside,
When you let your love be as a guide,
When there's joy and sweet understanding
When you're handing out a compliment or two.
A house becomes a home when you do your part,
And when all your heart is wrapped in those around,
Life can be just like a symphony
When you see a house become a home.

A house becomes a home when it's peaceful there,
When for everyone there is a care,
When each one is kind and forgiving
When you're living for some happiness to share.
A house becomes a home when it's full of life,
When there is no strife among its very own,
Life can be so sweet and heavenly
When you see a house become a home.