



Under Cover

By Vincent M. Newfield

Remember when you were a child and you got scared at night while trying to go to sleep? It happened to me lots of times. To protect myself from the boogeyman beneath my bed, I would pull the covers over my head. Of course, this didn't offer me real protection, but it gave me enough peace of mind to be able to finally fall asleep.

Thankfully, God has given us real covers that provide real protection. He has established different types of authority in our lives to help guard against the damaging elements of the world and the attacks of the enemy. As we celebrate Father's Day this month, let's explore the God-ordained covering for the family . . . Dad. He is without doubt the "keeper of the covering."

After You Say "I Do" When a man and a woman "tie the knot," a transfer of power takes place. The position of authority once held by each one's father and mother is reassigned. For the man, Christ becomes his direct covering, and for the woman, her covering is now her husband.¹ The husband is instructed to love his wife as Christ loved the church. How did Christ love the church? Sacrificially—He surrendered all His rights and His position of power to rescue His "Bride" from certain death.

Men, we should receive the responsibility to be the heads of our homes with reverential fear—not pride. God looks to the man *first* when there are issues of sin. After Adam and Eve had sinned, God questioned Adam *first*—then He questioned Eve. Ultimately, God holds the man accountable for what is allowed in the home.

Understanding the Umbrella Picture a man and his family picnicking in the park. Suddenly, a storm begins to stir. Aware of the approaching rain, Dad motions to the family to begin picking up. As the last few things are tucked tightly into the basket, the first drops of drizzle begin to fall. Prepared for the possibility of precipitation, Dad reaches for his big, trusty red and white golf umbrella. Opening it in haste, Mom and children huddle around his waist. They then vacate for the van and head for home.

This picture in the natural paints a portrait of what's taking place in the spirit. Day in, day out, families experience storms—husbands, wives and children are exposed to the unseen *weathering* elements of the world. God's divine design places Dad with the ultimate responsibility of being the spiritual cover for his family. Mom is next in line. Scripture supports this, repeatedly placing the father *first*, then the mother, instructing children to honor and obey parents.² If the husband or father is absent from the home for reasons of death, divorce or inadequate spiritual leadership, Mom becomes the primary cover.

How do holes develop in our *umbrella*? By choosing *not* to deal with known sin. When a man chooses not to deal with a hurtful habit of lying, lust, anger, etc., it creates or enlarges holes in his covering, making his wife and children vulnerable in those areas. How are holes repaired? Through repentance of sin, renewing our minds with truth and reliance upon God for His grace to guard our spirits and overcome wrong tendencies.³

Stay Under Cover Husbands and fathers . . . don't abandon your position as covering. If your umbrella has holes in it, bring it to the Master and work with Him to fix it. Don't leave your wife and children uncovered and vulnerable to the enemy and the elements of this world. Step up to the plate and be the covering they need. And young people . . . honor your father and mother. God has given them to you for your protection. Even if you find it hard to respect them as a *person*, by God's grace you can still respect their *position*. As you and I stay under authority, we stay *under cover*—a place of safety, satisfaction and a sweet peace found nowhere else.

(1) See 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23. (2) See Ephesians 6:1-3; Proverbs 6:20,21; Proverbs 30:17. (3) See 1 John 1:9; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:22-24; James 4:6; Hebrews 4:16; Proverbs 4:23.