

# Tim Stafford Offers 14 Values to Shape Your Family Culture

1. *God first.* Honoring God comes before anything else.
2. *Concern for others.* Jesus told us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. That means constantly and scrupulously paying attention to their welfare. Included in “concern for others” are concerns like evangelism and justice.
3. *Hard work.* Whatever we work at, we should do wholeheartedly. We work not just to please ourselves but also to please God and all those to whom we are responsible.
4. *Truthfulness.* Our words should be filled with truth, and no words that undercut the truth.
5. *Generosity.* God wants an overflowing and openhanded love for others, especially in how we invest our possessions.
6. *Submission.* In many different settings—work, marriage, church, government—we fit into a larger scheme and submit to the leadership of someone else. Submission implies accepting our limited role in the world.
7. *Sexual fidelity.* Faithfulness to a marriage partner implies eliminating anything that interferes with our love for that partner. Single people express sexual faithfulness by living chaste lives.
8. *Family unity and love.* The family is a core unit that demands respect, support and love. So does the church, as God’s family.
9. *Boundaries.* God has given each individual certain areas of responsibility that belong to him or her alone. First is his or her body. Next is his or her property. Jobs, family and relationships may also be private. These areas of individual responsibility should be protected. Theft, sexual harassment and gossip are some of the sins that violate these boundaries.
10. *Joy and thanksgiving.* Celebration should be part of every day, because we recognize all that God does for us.
11. *Rest.* We work within the limits of the time and ability God has given us. After working, we need to stop for renewal.
12. *Care for creation.* God made humans responsible to develop and care for all that he has created. Harmony, not destruction, should mark the interaction between human development and the rest of God’s creation.
13. *Contentment.* With whatever we have and whatever we are, in whatever place or position God has put us, we should learn to be at peace.
14. *Grace.* We are meant to follow in the footsteps of God himself, offering forgiveness and grace to others even when it isn’t deserved.

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