

Creating a family constitution is important, so make sure each member is involved. We've provided a sample below, but your family's constitution should fit your family's needs and unique personality.

Example: Family Constitution

Family Mission Statement:

Our family has been uniquely woven together to love and encourage one another and to make a positive difference in the world through everything we say and do—all for the glory of God.

Preamble:

God puts families together for different reasons, and it is the responsibility of each family to identify and fulfill its God-given purpose. For our part, the principles listed below reveal how we believe He has chosen us to be His hands and feet and to grow in the places He has planted us.

Our values are lived out as we build relationships in three basic arenas:

1. Our relationship with God . . .

- a. Our faith provides forgiveness, purpose and hope. It is the foundation and filter for all we do.
- b. God loves us and has a plan for us. He created us in His image and desires a personal relationship with us. We demonstrate His love for us by loving others and pursuing personal holiness.
- c. God owns it all, and we are managers of His resources. He provides for our needs, but He also expects us to cheerfully give to our local church and other institutions as He leads.
- d. While we are spiritual and emotional creatures, God expects us to honor Him through our bodies.

2. Our relationships with one another . . .

- a. We will respect one another through our words and actions at all times. We share more than our DNA. We are brothers and sisters in Christ, and this truth guides our interactions.

- b. Whether in physical altercations or verbal attacks, we will defend one another against unwarranted attacks.
- c. We will recognize the image of God in each family member and celebrate our unique personalities and interests. We will support the creativity of each person.
- d. Mom and Dad will honor their wedding vows, love each other in a way that honors God, and define how our family views marriage in future generations.
- e. Children will honor and obey their parents. Appropriate, respectful discussion can take place, but the parents' decision is final because God holds them responsible for the family.
- f. We strive to create a culture where we can discuss any issue. While disagreements and conflicts will arise, they should not divide.
- g. Unconditional love should be a reasonable expectation in every situation. Forgiveness is available, but discipline will be enforced. Trust can be earned (or re-earned) over time. Prodigals are welcome to return to the umbrella of authority.
- h. We will take responsibility for our actions. We will humbly accept kind words for accomplishments, but we also will be quick to own up to our mistakes without shifting blame or making excuses.

3. Our relationships with others . . .

- a. Ultimately, we are God's hands and feet. We will meet needs through our words, attitudes, actions, time, treasure and talents. We will fulfill this mission in our community, nation and world.
- b. We will strive to see the image of God in every individual and to treat others with the value they deserve as creations of God.
- c. We will seek relationships that make us more like Jesus. While it's important to build relationships "in the world," our most personal and influential relationships will point us toward God.
- d. We will respect authority, even when we don't agree. Disagreements will address the principle without attacking the person.