



PILLAR TWO: SEDER

HOW TO BUILD HOUSEHOLD ORDER

Bring Peace, Purpose, and Biblical Structure
to Your Home So Your Family Thrives

*"These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.
Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home
and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."
-- Deuteronomy 6:6-7*

THE VERTICAL MAN

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01 WHY ORDER MATTERS

Your home is not supposed to feel like a war zone. It is not supposed to run on autopilot, resentment, or silent exhaustion. Your household was designed by God to be a sanctuary -- a place where peace reigns, children flourish, marriages deepen, and every person under your roof knows they are loved, led, and safe.

But for most men, the home is the place where they feel the least equipped. You can lead a team at work, close a deal, coach a game -- and still walk through your own front door with no plan, no rhythm, and no idea how to lead the people who matter most.

"For God is not a God of disorder but of peace." -- 1 Corinthians 14:33

This is the second pillar of The Vertical Man framework: **SEDER** -- the Hebrew word for *order*. It encompasses three dimensions: **Torah** (Instruction), **Mishpat** (Justice), and **Shalom** (Wholeness). Together, they form the leadership intelligence that governs how you lead your home.

The aim is clear: **Homes, habits, finances, marriage, and fatherhood arranged according to God's Word to produce peace and flourishing.**

"Your home and habits reveal your theology. SEDER establishes systems of order across marriage, parenting, money, and time."

The research is clear: routines create structure, foster stability, and reflect the orderliness of God's creation. Business principles like Vision, Unity, Systems, Metrics, Relationships, and Culture can transform chaotic households into thriving ones. But it starts with one decision: **the captain must take the wheel.**

The role of a man leading his family in discipleship is akin to that of a captain guiding his ship. The captain does not control the wind or the waves -- but he sets the course, maintains the vessel, and keeps his crew safe. That is your calling.

02 THE CAPTAIN'S AUDIT

Assessing the State of Your Household

Before you can chart a new course, you need to know where you are. A captain who does not inspect his ship is sailing blind. This audit is your honest assessment of the six critical areas of household life.

STEP 1: RATE EACH AREA (1-10)

Circle or mark the number that best represents the current state of each area in your home. Be honest -- this is between you and God.

SPIRITUAL RHYTHM

How consistent is your household's prayer, Scripture, and worship life?

SPIRITUAL RHYTHM

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

FINANCIAL HEALTH

Are you budgeting, tithing, saving, and living within your means?

FINANCIAL HEALTH

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

RELATIONAL WARMTH

Do the people in your home feel emotionally safe, loved, and connected?

RELATIONAL WARMTH

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Is your home clean, organized, and a place of peace -- not chaos?

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

COMMUNICATION CLARITY

Do you and your wife/family communicate openly, honestly, and respectfully?

COMMUNICATION CLARITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

When disagreements arise, do you resolve them with grace or let them fester?

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

JOURNAL PROMPT:

"If I could change one thing about the daily rhythm of our home, what would it be?"

Your lowest-scoring area is your starting point. Do not try to fix everything at once. A captain repairs the biggest leak first. Identify the one area that, if improved, would have the greatest ripple effect on your

household -- and start there.

03 VISION CASTING

Write Your Family Mission Statement

No ship sails without a destination. No army advances without orders. And no household thrives without a shared vision. If you have never written a family mission statement, your family is drifting -- carried by culture, convenience, and the current of everyone else's priorities.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." -- Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)

STEP 2: DRAFT YOUR FAMILY MISSION STATEMENT

Answer each question below. Then combine your answers into a single statement that captures who your family is, what you value, and where you are going.

WHO ARE WE?

What defines your family at its best? What are the non-negotiable traits you want to be known for? (Examples: generous, faithful, honest, joyful, resilient, hospitable)

WHAT DO WE VALUE?

What are the 3-5 core values your household will be built on? Write them down. If a decision or activity does not align with these values, it does not belong in your home.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

What does your family look like in 5 years? 10 years? When your children leave your home, what will they carry with them? What will they say about the home they grew up in?

HOW DO WE LIVE?

What are the daily habits, weekly rhythms, and annual traditions that express your values? How does your family worship, serve, play, and rest together?

OUR FAMILY MISSION STATEMENT

The [Your Last Name] family exists to _____.

We are a household built on _____, _____, and _____.

We lead with _____. We serve with _____.

We seek first His Kingdom in all things.

Our home is a place where _____.

We are building a legacy of _____.

DATE NIGHT ASSIGNMENT:

Take your wife out this week. Bring this draft. Walk through it together. She is not your crew -- she is your co-captain. This mission statement must be built together.

04 SYSTEMS AND ROUTINES

Build the Rhythm of a God-Honoring Home

Vision without systems is just a wish. The families that thrive are not the ones with the best intentions -- they are the ones with the best **rhythms**. A rhythm is a repeatable, intentional pattern that turns your values into daily reality.

"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." -- Proverbs 22:6

STEP 3: DESIGN YOUR FAMILY'S WEEKLY RHYTHM

MORNING ROUTINE

The first hour of your household's day sets the tone for everything. What happens before the world gets its hands on your family?

- Wake at a consistent time (the captain rises first)
- Personal prayer and Scripture (before screens)
- Family breakfast together (even 15 minutes counts)
- Brief family prayer or Scripture reading before departure
- Clear assignments for the day (who needs what, who goes where)

EVENING ROUTINE

The last hour is where connection happens. Protect it fiercely.

- Shared family dinner (devices away, faces present)
- Debrief the day: highs, lows, and where God showed up
- Age-appropriate devotional or bedtime prayer with children
- Husband-wife check-in (10 minutes, no logistics -- real connection)
- Screens off by a set time (create a household digital curfew)

WEEKLY ANCHOR POINTS

DAY / TIME	RHYTHM	PURPOSE
Sunday	Corporate worship together	Anchor the week in God's presence
Monday evening	Family meeting (15-20 min)	Review the week, assign tasks, share prayer needs
Wednesday	Date night or couple check-in	Invest in your marriage outside of logistics

Friday evening	Sabbath preparation	Slow down, prepare for rest
Saturday	Sabbath / family rest	No work, no hustle -- play, worship, be present

ACCOUNTABILITY: Implement one new family routine this week. Just one. Run it for seven days and report back to your accountability partner. Do not overhaul everything at once -- install one system, let it take root, then add the next.

05 FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Managing the Household Economy

Money is not a taboo subject -- it is a stewardship subject. How you handle finances reveals what you truly believe about God's provision, your family's future, and your responsibility as a leader. Financial chaos in the home breeds anxiety, conflict, and distrust. Financial order breeds peace.

"From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked." -- Luke 12:48

STEP 4: THE FAMILY FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

You cannot manage what you have not measured. Complete this snapshot honestly. If you are married, do this **together** with your wife.

CATEGORY	MONTHLY AMOUNT	NOTES
Total household income	\$ _____	
Housing (mortgage/rent + utilities)	\$ _____	
Food and groceries	\$ _____	
Transportation	\$ _____	
Insurance (health, auto, life)	\$ _____	
Debt payments (credit, student, other)	\$ _____	
Children (school, activities, care)	\$ _____	
Giving / tithing	\$ _____	
Savings / emergency fund	\$ _____	
Entertainment / subscriptions	\$ _____	
Total monthly expenses	\$ _____	
Surplus or deficit	\$ _____	Income minus expenses

BIBLICAL FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES

Tithe first. Give the first portion to God, not the leftovers (Proverbs 3:9-10).

Budget with intention. Every dollar has an assignment. Zero-based budgeting is the goal.

Eliminate debt aggressively. "The borrower is slave to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7).

Build an emergency fund. Three to six months of expenses. This is not optional -- it is stewardship.

Live below your means. Contentment is a discipline, not a feeling (1 Timothy 6:6-8).

Be generous. Generosity breaks the grip of materialism and teaches your children what matters.

JOURNAL PROMPT:

"What is my biggest financial fear? What does God's Word say about provision?"

06 COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT

Leading with Grace Under Pressure

Every household has conflict. The question is not whether disagreements will come but how you will lead through them. A home with no conflict is a home with no honesty. But a home with unresolved conflict is a home where bitterness takes root.

The goal is not to eliminate conflict but to foster an environment where every family member feels comfortable sharing their thoughts, feelings, and experiences -- and where resolution follows a rhythm of **listen first, validate, then respond.**

STEP 5: THE FOUR QUESTIONS

This week, sit down with your wife and ask these four questions. Do not defend, explain, or react. Just **listen.**

1

"What is one attribute you would like to see me improve?"

Let her speak. Write it down. Do not argue.

2

"What is one attribute you would most like to develop in yourself?"

This shows you care about her growth, not just your own.

3

"What would indicate to you my desire to be more like Christ?"

She sees you every day. She knows where the gap is between your words and your walk.

4

"What is one mutual goal you would like to see us accomplish together?"

This aligns your vision as a team, not two individuals sharing a house.

THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION MODEL

When conflict arises in your home, follow this pattern:

PAUSE: Do not react in the moment. Take a breath. Ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom before you open your mouth.

LISTEN: Let the other person speak fully. Do not interrupt, correct, or prepare your response while they are talking.

VALIDATE: Say back what you heard. "What I hear you saying is..." Validation is not agreement -- it is respect.

OWN: Take responsibility for your part. Even if it is 10%, own that 10% fully and without qualification.

RESOLVE: Agree on a next step. Not a lecture. Not a verdict. A mutual commitment to move forward.

PRAY: Close with prayer. Invite God into the resolution. This is not performative -- it is surrender.

07 FAMILY DEVOTIONS

Leading Spiritual Formation at Home

This is the area where most men feel the most inadequate -- and it is the area where your leadership matters most. Your children's faith is not the church's responsibility. It is yours. The pastor feeds them on Sunday. **You feed them the other six days.**

*"These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."
-- Deuteronomy 6:6-7*

STEP 6: DESIGN A 4-WEEK FAMILY DEVOTION PLAN

You do not need a seminary degree to lead your family spiritually. You need 10-15 minutes, an open Bible, and the willingness to show up. Here is a framework:

WEEK	THEME	SCRIPTURE	DISCUSSION STARTER	FAMILY ACTIVITY
1	God Made Us on Purpose	Psalm 139:13-16	"What is one thing that makes you unique?"	Each person shares one gift they see in each family member
2	We Belong to God	1 John 3:1	"What does it mean to be God's child?"	Write family "We Are" statements and post on the fridge
3	God's Rules Protect Us	Psalm 119:105	"Why do we have rules in our house?"	Together, write 5 family rules based on Scripture
4	We Serve Others	Galatians 5:13	"Who needs our help this week?"	Plan and execute one family service project together

10 PRACTICAL STEPS FOR FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

1. Lead by example -- your children are watching your faith, not just hearing it
2. Establish regular devotions -- consistency matters more than length
3. Pray together daily -- at meals, at bedtime, when things go wrong
4. Set spiritual goals as a family -- memorize a verse together, read a book of the Bible
5. Serve together -- find ways to give as a family, not just individually
6. Celebrate spiritual milestones -- baptisms, answered prayers, acts of faith
7. Create space for questions -- let your children doubt, ask, and wrestle honestly

8. Use everyday moments -- car rides, walks, chores are all teaching opportunities
9. Invite accountability -- let your children see you confess, repent, and grow
10. Keep it age-appropriate -- a 5-year-old and a 15-year-old need different approaches

CHALLENGE: Lead family devotions every day for 21 days. It does not have to be perfect. It does not have to be long. It has to be **consistent**. Your children need to see their father open the Bible -- not because he is performing, but because he believes.

08 THE 20 SIGNS CHECKLIST

Does Your Household Need a Reset?

Check every box that is true for your household right now. This is not about shame -- it is about clarity. You cannot fix what you refuse to see.

- Mornings are chaotic -- everyone is rushed, stressed, and leaving frustrated
- There is no regular family prayer, devotion, or spiritual conversation
- You and your wife argue about the same issues over and over without resolution
- You do not know your family's exact monthly income and expenses
- There is debt you have not discussed openly as a couple
- Your children spend more time on screens than in conversation with you
- You cannot remember the last time you had a meaningful date night
- Meals together as a family happen less than three times per week
- You feel more like a roommate than a husband
- Your home is physically disorganized and cluttered
- There is no weekly family meeting or intentional check-in
- You are too exhausted by evening to engage with your family
- Important decisions get made reactively, not prayerfully
- Your children do not know your family's core values
- There is no family Sabbath or designated rest day
- You and your wife have different parenting approaches and have not aligned
- Conflict gets swept under the rug instead of resolved
- You feel guilty about how much time work takes from your family
- Your family has no written goals, mission statement, or vision
- You would not want your children to replicate your household as adults

BOXES CHECKED	YOUR STATUS
0-4	Strong foundation. Focus on deepening what is already working.
5-9	Emerging cracks. This guide came at the right time. Start with the Captain's Audit and one new rhythm.

10-14	Significant drift. Your household needs intentional restructuring. Work every section of this guide.
15-20	Crisis territory. You are not too far gone. God rebuilds broken things. Start today, and find a brother to walk with y

09 THE HOUSEHOLD SCORECARD

Complete Self-Assessment Tool

Rate yourself honestly on each statement. Use a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Total your score at the end.

MARRIAGE / PARTNERSHIP

- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] I regularly express love, appreciation, and affirmation to my wife.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] We have a consistent date night or intentional connection time.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] We discuss finances openly and make decisions together.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] We resolve conflict within 24 hours rather than letting it linger.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] I pray for and with my wife regularly.

PARENTING

- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] I spend intentional one-on-one time with each of my children weekly.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] My children know our family's values and can articulate them.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] I lead age-appropriate spiritual conversations with my children.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] I am consistent in discipline -- firm but not harsh, clear but not rigid.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] My children would say I am emotionally available and present.

HOUSEHOLD SYSTEMS

- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] Our family has a morning and evening routine that works.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] We have a written budget and review it monthly.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] We have a weekly family meeting or check-in.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] Household responsibilities are clearly assigned and shared.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] We observe a regular Sabbath or rest day.

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] I lead family devotions or prayer at least three times per week.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] I model confession, repentance, and grace in my home.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] I am actively growing in my own faith, not coasting.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] My family sees me read Scripture, pray, and serve others.
- [1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5] I am passing my faith to my children through action, not just words.

YOUR SCORE	WHAT IT MEANS
80-100	Your household is thriving. Keep refining and investing. You are building something your children will replicate.
60-79	Solid but inconsistent. You know what to do but struggle with follow-through. Focus on systems and accountability.
40-59	Significant gaps. Your family needs you to step up -- not with perfection, but with presence and intention.
20-39	Rebuilding required. Start with one area, one rhythm, one conversation. God is in the restoration business.

10 21-DAY HOUSEHOLD ORDER CHALLENGE

Daily Actions to Transform Your Home

Commit to one action per day for 21 days. Check off each day as you complete it. Share your progress with your accountability partner or brotherhood group.

DAY	ACTION	DAY	ACTION
1	Write down your family's 3 core values	12	Write the first draft of your family mission statement
2	Wake up 30 minutes before your family and pray for each member	13	Plan and go on a date night with your wife (no kids, no phones)
3	Eat dinner together with no screens -- ask everyone about their day	14	Spend 20 minutes of one-on-one time with each of your children
4	Review your household finances and write down all monthly expenses	15	Create a family chore chart with clear responsibilities for everyone
5	Tell your wife one specific thing you admire about her	16	Tithe or give generously to someone in need as a family
6	Establish a bedtime routine and stick to it tonight	17	Begin a family Sabbath practice -- one full day of rest and worship
7	Lead a 5-minute family devotion before bed (read one Psalm)	18	Apologize to someone in your family for something unresolved
8	Hold a 15-minute family meeting -- review the week and plan for the next	19	Share your family mission statement with your wife and refine it together
9	Ask your wife the Four Questions from Section 06	20	Lead family devotions -- share one thing God is teaching you right now
10	Declutter one room in your house together as a family	21	Gather your family and read the mission statement aloud. Pray over your home
11	Set a household digital curfew -- all screens off by a set time		

COMPLETION GOAL: After 21 days, revisit the Captain's Audit from Section 02 and score yourself again. The change will be measurable. Share your before-and-after scores with your accountability partner or brotherhood group.

11 YOUR NEXT STEP

Continue the Journey

This guide gave you the blueprint. You have assessed your household, drafted a mission, built systems for your mornings and evenings, confronted your finances, learned to lead through conflict with grace, and committed to leading your family spiritually. But a blueprint is only as good as the builder who executes it.

Your home is your first ministry. Your family is your first congregation. The order you build now echoes for generations.

Household Order is **Pillar Two** of the Vertical Man framework. Two more pillars remain:

PILLAR THREE: GEVURAH (POWER)

How You Fight

Forge physical, mental, and spiritual discipline to stand firm under pressure and temptation.

PILLAR FOUR: NACHALAH (LEGACY)

What You Leave

Build a covenant legacy -- spiritual, relational, and financial -- that blesses generations.

TAKE ACTION NOW

- 1 **Complete the Captain's Audit**
Rate every area of your household honestly. Know your starting point.
- 2 **Write your Family Mission Statement**
Take your wife on a date night and build this together.
- 3 **Install one new rhythm this week**
Morning routine, evening routine, or family meeting -- pick one and commit.
- 4 **Start the 21-Day Challenge**
One action per day for three weeks. Small steps, massive transformation.
- 5 **Find an accountability partner**
A brother who will ask you the hard questions and walk with you.
- 6 **Visit theverticalman.com**
Access the full Vertical Man program and join the brotherhood.

READY TO BUILD YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

Visit us at theverticalman.com

Email Sean McDonald directly: sean@theverticalman.com

Join the brotherhood. Build your household. Stand vertical.

THE VERTICAL MAN

I am not a man of the world.

I am a man under God.

I seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness.

I know whose I am. I know who I am.

I lead my household with order and grace.

I forge my strength in discipline and prayer.

I secure a legacy that outlives me.

I die daily to the horizontal.

I rise to stand vertical.

I AM A VERTICAL MAN.

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