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The Quiverfull Movement: promoting Christian patriarchy

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NCR Today

This past week on Interfaith Voices, we looked at the Quiverfull Christian Movement. The name comes from the "quiver," the container in which an archer keeps arrows. And it draws on a quotation in Psalm 132: "Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them." This gives it both a sexist and violent context.

This movement actually promotes patriarchy, the total subjugation of women to men, and objects to any kind of family planning, even natural family planning (and we thought the Catholic Church had problems!) Movement adherents believe that children are the ultimate blessing from God -- and push for large families, very large families, like the Duggers on the TLC reality show with their 18 children.

But, as the author who has studied this movement, Kathryn Joyce, points out, the Duggers have money. In many of the families in this movement, poverty is the norm.

The children in these families are also used as weapons in the culture wars. As the adherents see it: the more children, the more Christians. Though this anti-feminist movement claims only a few thousand members, author Kathryn Joyce says it's making a widespread impact on conservative America. Her book is called: *Quiverfull: Inside the Christian Patriarchy Movement*.

To hear an interview with Kathryn Joyce, and the story of Vyckie Garrison, a woman who left the movement, visit www.interfaithradio.org and hit "play show." These are the final two interviews of the hour.

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