

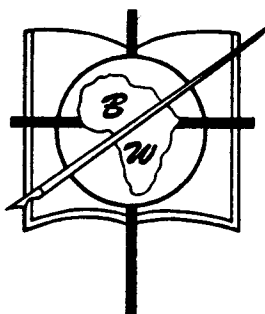
Christian Marriage and Family Life



CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

AND

FAMILY LIFE



Prepared for use in the

BIBLE WAY INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL

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GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

The BIBLE WAY Correspondence School is for anyone who wants to know more about the Bible. The **purpose** of these studies is to present God's plan of salvation, to train in Bible knowledge, and to help the believer to grow in his Christian life.

This book is part of the GOLD STAR Course of Study, and Bible Way credit can be given only to students who have completed the FIVE STAR Course.

A Bible should always be beside you as you study these lessons. You should read carefully each Bible verse in the lesson. All Scripture references in this book are quoted from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. You may read the Scriptures in any version of the Bible. If there are words in the Bible of lesson which you do not understand, then you should look them up in a dictionary.

Change of Address. If you are enrolled in the Bible Way Correspondence School and you change your mailing address, please inform the Bible Way Correspondence School Director.

Student Number. Each student enrolled in the the Bible Way Correspondence School is given a number. This number is very important because your records are filed under your number. When you write to the Director you should give your **Name, Student Number, and Address.**

**THIS IS YOUR
STUDENT NUMBER.....**
(always use it)

INTRODUCTION

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

Christians shape their ideas and test their way of living by the standards given in the Bible. Within the framework (borders) found in the Bible there may be room for differences of culture. Within these wide limits we must accept cultural differences within the worldwide body of believers. However, it is easy to read into Bible verses about family relationships, things which are not there. It is easy to fool ourselves into thinking our own cultural ideas are God's standard for all Christians.

The purpose of this Bible Way book is to present the basic biblical framework of Christian marriage and family life. Within this biblical framework all cultural and personal differences in behaviour are equally acceptable in God's sight.

In a study like this, it is important to understand the proper way to set about examining the Bible. In studying the Bible verses related to marriage and family we should keep these things in mind:

1. Many of the activities of people in the Bible are reports of events. The events are recorded without comment. God expresses neither approval nor disapproval. We should be careful in making a judgement about behaviour based on a report of an event.
2. Many of God's instructions were made to specific individuals at definite times. We should be careful in thinking these instructions are commands for us to obey today. For example, Joshua was told to slaughter a city (Joshua 8:2). Hosea was told to marry a harlot (Hosea 1:2). Neither of these was intended for us to copy.
3. We should have an understanding of the situation and context in which God spoke. In most instances advice is given within existing social requirements. There is, however, one place in the Bible where God gave his specific aim for people before there were any cultural or social structures. This is found in Genesis, chapters one and two. These chapters state God's unchanging ideal for the family.

4. Some of God's statements are not instructions to us. They are words of judgement, warning or prophecy. God is telling us what the result of sin will be. In Genesis 3:14-19 God shows what happens to human relationships when:
 - (a) a person chooses his own will above God's will,
 - (b) a person disobeys the revealed Word of God,
 - (c) a person believes the lie of Satan.
5. Finally, we should ask ourselves, "Does this Bible verse speak to the Christian family or does it speak to marriages in which one partner is not a Christian?" We need to remember that God's instructions are given to Christians. The first commitment a person needs to make is the commitment of himself to Christ as Lord. Only then can he practice Christian principles in his daily life.

As you study these lessons, ask God to guide you to understand his will and purpose for your life. Ask him to make you sensitive to the truth of his Word. Whether you are married or single, God wants you to understand his plan for family life. May he bless you as you study.

LESSON 1

WHAT IS MARRIAGE?

Memory verse:

"Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh" -- (Genesis 2:24).

INTRODUCTION

Read the following statement about marriage. Underline all the parts with which you agree:

Marriage is a life-long relationship between a man and a woman. It satisfies many needs: (1) the need to love and be loved, (2) the need for deep friendship, for sharing companionship, for sexual fulfilment, (3) the need for children, (4) the need to escape loneliness. It should be a union of love which reflects the love of God.

IN GOD'S IMAGE

To understand God's plan for marriage we must begin with God's original intention for human beings found in Genesis 1 and 2.

God created us in his image, male and female. Read Genesis 1:26,27. We are personal beings. We are not like other creatures. We have a unique capacity for relationship -- relationship with God and relationships with each other. God breathed in humans the breath of life and we became living beings (Genesis 2:7). As humans we have the ability to reflect the image of God as being compassionate, kind, patient, loving, forbearing and forgiving. The marriage relationship is the most intimate of all human relationships. Marriage involves a mysterious merging of two separate but equal individuals in such a way that they become one. A husband and wife relate to each other through a wider variety of experience than any other persons. The relationship is special because it takes place in the framework of security which comes from a lifelong commitment to each other. The marriage is distinctive in that it covers the span of the adult years -- young adulthood, middle age, old age, and death. No other relationship develops such a wealth of memories. Relationships with friends and colleagues are meaningful, but no relationship can match that of marriage for intimacy, meaning, variety, helpfulness, love and joy.

CREATED FOR GOOD

What is God's opinion of the world he created? Read Genesis 1:4,10,12,18,21,25 and 31. Everything God made was good! Then we read, "The Lord God said, it is not good..." What was not good? "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18). Even with all the animal kingdom around him, man was alone. Loneliness is the lack of opportunity to share yourself with someone who understands -- someone with whom you can enjoy a mutual commitment and trust. That was man's condition when God first made him. Though Adam needed God first and foremost, God said he also needed a companion. Read Genesis 2:18-24 to learn God's answer for man's loneliness. The word "helper" means an ally, colleague, or partner. It never means a servant or inferior, but speaks of companionship of an equal. The phrase "fit for him" is literally "corresponding to him." It was this specific human kind of intimate companionship which God said it was not good for a person to be without. In marriage he could have a close relationship with one who was as fully in the image of the creative God as himself. This one would have creativity, individuality, and ideas on a level with his own.

THEY SHALL BE ONE

Genesis 2:24,25 emphasizes the complete identification of the two personalities in marriage. Leaving and cleaving are essential to becoming one flesh. The word "leave" is a strong one. It means a definite forsaking. In leaving there is a public and legal aspect of marriage. But, more important, there is an emotional and mental leaving! Old ties of parents, relatives and friends are not disregarded, but after marriage a person's main emotional position and commitment changes to the marriage partner.

The actual translation of the Hebrew word for "cleave" is to stick to, or be glued to a person. Marriage should be much more than a piece of paper signed by a pastor or marriage officer. It is much more than two people living under the same roof or sharing the same bed. It should be a blending together of two personalities so that they become one. It should be the commitment of two wills to each other, the mutual expression of two sets of God-given emotions. Its goal is oneness, intimacy, and the unhindered sharing of each partner's innermost thoughts, feelings and very being. The one-flesh sexual union

strengthens love and makes it grow. It motivates love to faithfulness and makes it want to last. The act of love not only receives but also gives security to marriage. The "one flesh" male-female relationship was a balanced human unit. Any form of polygamy, group marriage, or homosexual union cannot be the one flesh created by God. Read 1 Corinthians 7:2.



WHAT WENT WRONG?

In reviewing Genesis 1 and 2 and looking again at God's ideal for marriage, we cannot avoid asking "What went wrong?" Within his design for human beings, God left much freedom to man. God did not want people to be blind, mindless puppets. God intended for them to be creative and thoughtful, making decisions in their own right, but within the general framework of his design. Read Genesis 1:28-31. Genesis describes this by showing God offering all the trees of the garden except one for man's choice. Read Genesis 2:16,17. A wide range of activities was open to people as long as they stayed within God's purposes, which reflect God's nature. God's purposes were for the good and benefit of humans. Yet the man and woman God made chose their own way, rejecting God's leadership and friendship. That image of God within them was spoiled, bringing immediate consequences in relationships. These consequences began with marriage. Man and woman ceased being open with each other and with God. Read Genesis 3:7,8. They also found jealousy among their children. Read Genesis 4:4,5.

REDEMPTION

The sinfulness of humans brought a need for redemption of a spoiled creation and spoiled relationships. Read Romans 5:6-15, 1 Corinthians 15:45-50, and 2 Corinthians 5:21. Christ came to restore to humanity that which was lost in the departure from God. It is only

as we allow Christ to restore in our lives an open relationship with God that the image of God is seen once again in persons. It will not be complete until Jesus comes again, but the New Testament makes it clear, we need to begin now. A central human relationship is that of husband and wife. Christians seek by God's gracious help to restore that "love-unity" into their marriages.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

Genesis, chapters 1 and 2

1 Corinthians 7:2

Genesis 3:7,8

Romans 5:6-15

1 Corinthians 15:45-50

Genesis 4:4, 5

2 Corinthians 5:21

LESSON 2

CHOOSING

Memory Verse:

"Do not be mismated with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?" -- (2 Corinthians 6:14).

**How do I find the right partner for me?
How do I know when I meet the right one?**

Seeking God's will in a partner is a first step in making a successful marriage. Study, learn and follow the guidelines the Bible gives. The most important of these is found in 1 Corinthians 10:31. Paul was pleading with us to do everything in life to the glory of God. Certainly marriage should bring glory to God. We are given a promise in Proverbs 3:5,6. We must trust in God, acknowledge him, and look to God and not to ourselves for insight and understanding. He then promises to make our path straight and show us the right way.

What is our part in knowing God's partner for us? We need to be aware of principles which will help us choose wisely. One of the most important of these principles helps us know the kind of person God would choose for us. Would God ever choose, as a partner for one of his children, a person who does not know and honour him? The command of the New Testament is, "Do not be mismated with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6:14). If one is a Christian, he should know without a doubt that the right one for him must be a Christian also.

Genesis, chapter 24, tells a story of choosing a marriage partner. We could call the story . . .

HOW ISAAC FOUND A WIFE

Abraham was old. He told his servant and chief steward, Eliezer, who was in charge of all he owned, to go to his own country and choose a suitable wife for his son Isaac. He must choose her from among his own people, who were worshippers of God. Abraham prayed that Eliezer would know God's guidance.

When Eliezer arrived in the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia he turned directly to God in prayer and prayed something like this, "O Lord God of my master Abraham, please be kind to my master by helping me today in this mission. Please let it happen that as I stand by this well of water where the young women of this city come to draw water, you will send the woman of your choice to the well. I shall know her by this sign: if I request drinking water, let her give me willingly and also offer to water my camels."

Before he finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. Eliezer said to her, "Please give me a drink." "Drink," she said, "And I will water your camels also."

When she had finished, he gave her a gold ring. "Who is your father?" he asked. Her grandfather was Abraham's brother! Eliezer was amazed and thankful to God. He knelt down right there and worshipped the Lord. The Lord had done it, just as Abraham desired, just as the servant prayed. God had caused Eliezer to meet the perfect wife for Isaac.

"This is from the Lord. Let it be as the Lord directs. Rebekah, will you go with this man and marry Isaac?" her father and brother asked. "I will go," she answered.

Eliezer, Rebekah and the people with them traveled the long way back. As they came near, Rebekah saw a man walking in the fields and asked, "Who is that man?" Yes, the man was Isaac. The story ends by telling us Isaac took Rebekah as his wife and loved her.

Did God honour Abraham's and Eliezer's trust in God?

FACING DIFFICULTIES

Choosing a marriage partner can bring difficult situations. Think of these events and write what you think a Christian who is seeking God's will should do:

1. Someone tries to force you into marriage by relating a vision or dream he says is from God.

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2. A person arranges a marriage for you. You are not sure he has your best interest as his first concern, or you feel it is not right for you.
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Remember, Christians must obey God rather than man. Read Acts 5:29. Tell the concerned people your feelings. Do it as gently and kindly as possible. Ask God for courage and strength to endure the unpleasantness now rather than to cause many people a lifetime of unhappiness in accepting the wrong husband or wife.

ENJOYING GOD’S BLESSINGS

Read Psalm 37:3-5. David, the Psalmist, gives three actions we are to do in relation to the Lord. Study these and write them here.

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You should have found these actions: Trust in the Lord (verse 3), Take delight in the Lord (verse 4), Commit your way to the Lord (verse 5).

One of the results of these acts of obedience is, "and he will give you the desires of your heart." God’s plan for your marriage is part of his plan for your life. Seek to follow his will each day. He will show you his will for your marriage.

QUESTIONS

Let us look at some of the questions people often ask about choosing a marriage partner.

1. "Where will I meet my future partner?" You may meet him or her at school, at church, at a family gathering, or somewhere else! But remember, do not look in the wrong places. Christian leaders and adults can be very helpful if they arrange occasions when groups of young people can be together.

**HE IS ABLE TO BRING THE MATE
HE HAS CHOSEN FOR YOU TO MEET YOU
AT THE RIGHT PLACE AND THE RIGHT TIME.**

2. "How will I feel when I meet this special person?" We should be attracted to the total person, his or her appearance, spirituality, character and integrity, intellect and talents, the many experiences and gifts God has given, and even his or her weaknesses. The marriage partner should not be chosen from sympathy, nor from hope for benefits and material advantages, nor from other wrong reasons or motivation. The basis of marriage is commitment, not compatibility; yet it does make things easier if the couple have interests in common and naturally find pleasure in each other's company.

CONCLUSION

The choice of a marriage partner ranks second in importance after the decision of acceptance or rejection of Christ. God will lead in this great decision if we follow the principles he has given us:

- a. choosing a person who is also a Christian.
- b. following God's leading rather than accepting another person's choice.

God's plan for a choice of marriage partner is definitely a part of his over-all design for our lives.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

2 Corinthians 6:14
1 Corinthians 10:31
Acts 5:29

Genesis, chapter 24
Proverbs 3:5,6
Psalm 37:3-5

LESSON 3

WHAT IS LOVE?

Memory Verse:

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal" -- (1 Corinthians 13:1).

INTRODUCTION

Which of the following statements is nearest to your idea of the meaning of love?

1. A strong attraction to something or someone
2. An attitude of affection and tenderness
3. A longing to be with someone
4. Devotion and adoration for someone
5. A sexual passion for another person
6. The pursuit of the highest good for another
7. A feeling of thrill when you are with someone, or thinking about that person

How does your dictionary define love? What do you think about the definitions found in the dictionary?

Most people do not have an adequate understanding of the meaning of the word "love". Too often love is thought of primarily as an attraction between sexes. Many of our ideas about love have been shaped by movies, television, advertising in various forms, magazines, books, attitudes of friends or observation of people around us. It is important for the Christian to know that God is love and communicates the truth about love through his Word, the Bible. Read 1 John 4:7-10,16-21.

WE CAN LEARN WHAT LOVE IS FROM THE BIBLE

Perhaps you have not thought of it in this way, but the entire Bible is a love story. It is the story of God's unfailing love for an often unlovable human race. God's love is a pursuing love. Throughout the pages of the Bible we find God wooing, nurturing, caring, doing the

best for those he loves. Read Jeremiah 31:3. In the New Testament we see a remarkable picture of God's love for all people. It is a love without limits. He makes the ultimate sacrifice to bring us into the circle of his eternal caring. We see God in Jesus Christ, the man willing to go through death in order to do the best for those he loves. Read John 3:16, Romans 5:8, and 1 John 3:16.

If we were to sum up all we can learn about love through a study of God's relationship with mankind, it might be this: love is always doing the very best for the one we love. Love is a choice. And love is followed by action.

LOVE ILLUSTRATED

Biblical love is not getting all you can from another person, but giving all you can. It is not dependent on what your partner does for you; it is unconditional. The most complete statement of biblical love is found in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. Read these verses, consider each action of love, and begin to think of the application in marriage.

1. Love is patient. Love is slow to anger, slow to take offense, slow to become resentful. It enables you to bear patiently with your loved one when you are wronged, criticized or neglected. It will wait to see the kindly effects of such patience.
2. Love is kind. This is the positive side of patient love. Patience refrains from reacting to offenses, while kindness finds constructive ways of doing good for the one we love, no matter how he or she has acted. Kindness is showing appreciation. Kindness is a helping hand. It is a tone of voice, an approving look or smile.
3. Love is not jealous. It is not in competition with its loved one, nor is it hurt when it comes out second best. It is not envious of the loved one's talents, leadership ability, capacity for getting along with other people or understanding of God's Word.
4. Love is not boastful. Love does not try to "show off" and brag about itself. It does not consider itself superior to its loved one. It does not brag about its strengths in order to magnify its loved one's weaknesses.

5. Love is not arrogant. Love does not have an inner attitude of pride. It does not call attention to all the hard work it does. It is not haughty, domineering, showy or overbearing.
6. Love is not rude. Love is not unmannerly, but acts courteously and politely. It shows consideration and gentleness. It is not rough or insulting.
7. Love does not insist on its own way. Love is unselfish. It does not demand that things be done to please it. Love is not concerned with its "rights". Love looks after the interest of its loved one.
8. Love is not irritable. It is neither touchy nor faultfinding. Love does not get upset when things go wrong. It is not annoyed by the loved one's actions.
9. Love is not resentful. It does not become bitter. It does not take offense. It does not keep a mental record of wrongs committed by a loved one.
10. Love does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love does not take pleasure in the misfortunes that befall its loved one. It does not rejoice when it can say, "See, you're not perfect either". Love experiences inner joy in truth and right.
11. Love bears all things. Love keeps confidential the faults of its loved one. It does not belittle the one it professes to love by exposing his or her shortcomings and failures in the presence of other people.
12. Love believes all things. Love is beyond suspicion, doubt and mistrust. It chooses to believe the best about its loved one and assumes his or her motives and intentions are pure.
13. Love hopes all things. Love does not magnify problems. Love never gives up, never despairs. Love expects the best from its loved one.

14. Love endures all things. Love is commitment. It stands firm when things are difficult. Love weathers storms of suffering or hardships. It maintains a cheerful heart during trials and problems.
15. Love never ends. It never collapses, never terminates, never looks to divorce as a solution. It keeps marriage "stuck" together.

LOVE IS A PROCESS

Although people sometimes say, "We fell in love," they really grew into it instead. Mature love grows from seeking to receive toward seeking to give. The only way we can experience a deep, abiding and growing love in marriage is to experience the love of God in our own lives. God's love for us generates love in our own hearts. Think on this -- GOD LOVES YOU! Meditate upon his love, enjoy his love, drink deeply of his love, thank him for his love. Soon you will find yourself abandoning your entire being to him, letting him fill and control you through his Holy Spirit, letting him live his life through you. Then real love will flow through you to your beloved marriage partner. The result will be a new you, one who knows how to love in the highest and noblest sense of the word. Love produces love. God wants to use this kind of love to transform marriages into the beautiful relationships he planned them to be.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

1 Corinthians 13:1

Jeremiah 31:3

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Romans 5:8

1 John 3:16

1 John 4:7-10,16-21

John 3:16

LESSON 4

PURITY

Memory Verse:

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from immorality" -- (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

INTRODUCTION

The first meeting of church elders was called in Jerusalem. The first apostles were there, and they met with Paul and Barnabas to discuss important questions that had been confusing to those first Christians.

They finally decided only three things needed to be said to the Christians of that day. Read about this meeting in Acts 15. One of the things they wrote to all Christians was to abstain from sexual immorality. A letter was written by the elders to be sent to all the churches with these instructions.

A GIFT FROM GOD

Sex is such a wonderful gift that its misuse is a serious matter. Sex was meant to be enjoyed. As a regular part of a committed marriage relationship, it is one of God's richest gifts to men and women.

The Christian is not missing experiences. God is not keeping something good from his followers. Indeed, they experience something which others are entirely unable to appreciate. In the spirit of giving, the married couple give themselves one to another in a unique way. They do not seek fleeting satisfaction for self, but aim to give happiness to the person loved.

TEACHINGS OF JESUS

No one can study the teachings of Jesus and of the New Testament without seeing God's requirements of purity and chastity. Fornication, which is sexual relations between unmarried people, is condemned at least 18 times. Read Ephesians 5:3. What is the command for Christians? Write your answer here:

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Adultery, which is sexual relations with a married person other than one's own marriage partner, is condemned at least 15 times. Read Matthew 15:19 to learn the origin of these sins. Write your answer here:

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Jesus told the story of a woman taken in adultery. He did not condemn her, but told her to "Go, and sin no more." He left no doubt that he believed she had sinned. She was lovingly forgiven, and she was firmly instructed to leave that way of life. (Read John 8:1-11. In some translations of the Bible you will find these verses as a part of the text; in others they are in a footnote.)

TEMPLES OF GOD

Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit who lives within us. (Read 1 Corinthians 6:19,20.) If we commit the sin of adultery or fornication we are guilty of breaking God's law. Our guilt does not depend on the physical result of our sin. Our culture may permit sexual sin, but sin is disobedience to God. No matter how much society permits us to abuse the gift of sex, sexual sin will remain a sin. How can we continue to call ourselves Christians yet completely disregard the teaching of Jesus Christ? (Read John 14:15.) Some people openly say they do not keep the demands of Christian morality, but some Christians deceive themselves into thinking they are keeping them. Jesus said, "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me" (John 14:21).

GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR BODIES

In biblical times and in some traditional African tribes, a person found to be pregnant outside marriage was killed by stoning or other methods. Usually in traditional societies young boys were in the company of the men and girls in the company of women. Here they received teaching in social morals. They knew what was expected of them and the results of disobedience. Such customs are often no longer practiced.

Read Romans 12:1,2. How can we know the will of God for our bodies?

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Did you understand that we can know God's will by giving ourselves to him? Does God change? Do we dare try to mould our holy God to fit into our permissive society?

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Carefully read 1 Corinthians 6:13-20. Did you know a Christian is a member of Christ's body? Would you take a part of Christ's body and join it to a prostitute only to please self? Verse 18 stresses the difference in eating and drinking, and in sexual sin. What we eat or drink goes in and out of the body, but sexual sin involves the whole of oneself; the mind, the emotions, and the body. To engage in wrong sex relationships is to violate one's inner self and damage one's personality.

SHOULD A CHRISTIAN HAVE A BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND?

To answer this question, you must ask yourself another question. What do you mean when you say boyfriend or girlfriend? The Bible clearly states that we are not to have a sexual relationship with any one else outside of marriage. If having a boy/girl friend means having a sexual relationship, then no Christian could have such a friend and be obeying God's law.

God has created each of us differently. We each have our own personality, likes and dislikes, talents and gifts. We honour God when we use these gifts wisely. As we seek God's will to find a marriage partner, we will need to know what type of person would be the best for our marriage.

A good way to do this is to have talked, listened, worked and enjoyed the company of other people of both sexes. By enjoying this type of friendship, we can learn what types of things are important to us. We can learn by working together if a person enjoys work or doesn't do their share. We can learn by going to church together whether the other person is really interested in serving the Lord or not. We can learn by visiting with parents whether they respect and honour their parents. We can learn if there are any common interests when we take time to talk with each other. We can learn to be compassionate to each other by sharing in troubles and sorrows.

Marriage is a life-long relationship. When you think of marrying someone, you need to ask yourself this question, "Will I love this person 50 years from now?" This is the commitment you make when you marry.

PURE IN MIND

Jesus' teachings are strict! He reminded the people on the mountain of the teaching against adultery. Then he explained a fuller meaning of this teaching: "Everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28). Titus states that "to the corrupt...their very minds...are corrupted" (Titus 1:15). Our hearts and minds must be pure. Peter urges us to "gird up your minds...do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but...be holy" (1 Peter 1:13-15). In Ephesians 4:23,24 Paul admonishes us to "be renewed in the spirit of your minds...after the likeness of God." By choosing what fills our minds, we choose our actions. (Read Philipians 4:8.)

GOD IS FAITHFUL

Christ does take sin seriously, but he also takes repentance seriously. Whenever a sex offender comes to him and says, "Lord, I

am sorry for what I have done," Jesus is ready to forgive. Christ can make "something beautiful" of your life, if you give him a chance.

God's care is so great! Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 and look for God's promises to us. Yes, temptations will come to us as every person, or as is "common to man," but with the temptation God will provide a way of escape. The important promise is, "God is faithful."

AIDS - a problem in our time

What is AIDS?

AIDS is a disease caused by a virus which destroys the body's ability to fight other diseases. A person with AIDS may get diarrhea, a cough or fever which continues for many days even with treatment. Some people call AIDS "slim" because it causes a person to lose weight and become very thin. Other symptoms include swollen lymph glands, fever and sweating at night, a sore mouth and rashes or swellings of the skin. After an illness of a few months to a few years, the patient always dies. Although treatment may be tried with different medicines, no cure has been found for AIDS. AIDS can be detected through a special AIDS blood test.

How is AIDS caught?

AIDS is mainly caught through sexual contact. In this way it resembles syphilis and gonorrhea. However, a person with AIDS may have no symptoms of the disease and still pass it to others through sexual contact. A person can carry AIDS in the body for 5 to 10 years, spreading it to other sexual partners while looking perfectly healthy.

AIDS can also be spread through blood. Some people have caught AIDS through using a syringe (a needle used for injections) that has been used by someone else.

AIDS can be spread by knives or razor blades used for shaving, circumcision or cutting the body. A mother with AIDS in her blood can pass the disease to the unborn child.

AIDS is NOT spread by handshakes, normal social contact, eating together, food, water, clothing, air or mosquitoes.

How can you keep from getting AIDS?

The main way to prevent AIDS is to have sex with only one person and for that person to have sex only with you. God has commanded us to have sex only with the person to whom we are married. A person who obeys God in the sexual life can prevent this most common way of catching AIDS.

How is it possible to control your sex life?

This is not easy; truly many people think it is impossible. God wants to direct our lives and to help us obey his laws about sex.

First you must agree with God that you are a sinner and deserve God's punishment. You must turn from your sin and accept that Jesus paid the price for you when he died on the cross. God raised him to life three days later showing that God accepted Jesus' death as payment for your sin. You must receive Jesus into your life to be your Lord and Master.

If you do this, Jesus will come to live permanently inside you. He will change your life. Your body will become the house for God's Spirit. When Jesus lives in you, you will be able to say "NO!" to sexual impurity and enjoy a life free from the fear of AIDS.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

1 Thessalonians 4:3
Ephesians 5:3
John 8:1-11
John 14:21
1 Corinthians 6:13-20
Titus 1:15
Ephesians 4:23,24
1 Corinthians 10:13

Acts, chapter 15
Matthew 15:19
John 14:15
Romans 12:1,2
Matthew 5:28
1 Peter 1:13-15
Philippians 4:8

LESSON 5

PARTNERS

Memory Verse:

"Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God" -- (1 Corinthians 11:11,12).

INTRODUCTION

God chose to create two sexes. Each individual is complete in Christ. (Read Colossians 2:10.) God purposes that men and women in marriage should complement each other. They are put together to make a whole marriage unit. Each brings to the other partner an addition, an enrichment, an improvement.

IN COVENANT

The biblical teaching of marriage is a partnership, a covenant of two people. It is an agreement freely entered into in which a person gives himself or herself to the other. "My beloved is mine and I am his" (Song of Solomon 2:16). The theme that sings its way through the entire Song of Solomon is the utter delight of husband and wife in one another. Shared joy, enthusiasm and pleasure spring out of every paragraph. Within the marriage union, spirit blends with spirit, and body with body.

Neither partner is independent of the other. They need each other. Read again our memory verse, 1 Corinthians 11:11,12. Persons of each sex have equal dignity and are of unique worth to God. Read Galatians 3:28.

THE EFFECT OF SIN

Sin caused a distortion of God's plan. Men and women forgot the equal partnership. The husband began to be the dominant partner, and the dignity of the wife was often lost.

THE COMING OF JESUS

Jesus brought a new plan. It was really a return to God's original plan. Paul declared, "There is neither...male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Peter instructed a husband to give honour to his wife as fellow-heir of the kingdom of God (1 Peter 3:7). In Christianity the forgotten dignity of woman was brought to light, and her value made known. Christ returned to man the precious gift of a wife as full partner. The wife is not only the helper of her husband in this present life, but is a fellow-heir with him of eternal life.

MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

In Christianity, the wife and the husband each have a right to the perfect faithfulness of the mate. (Read Hebrews 13:4.) Some societies expect faithfulness only of the wife, but God's standard is faithfulness by each partner.

Husband and wife are called to love each other (Ephesians 5:25 and Titus 2:4). Ephesians 5:21 states the responsibility of mutual submission. That is, each partner is voluntarily and lovingly to submit to the other. This mutual submission gives the family a strong base.

A TEAM

A marriage where the worth and dignity of each partner is recognized produces the highest type of relationship or companionship. Each can use the other's resources, wisdom and help. A couple who enjoy one another as friends can find great pleasure in just being together. Their times of praying, talking and reading together enrich their lives. Going places together and sharing experiences gives them common bonds. The simple things of life take on deep meaning when they are shared.

God's plan was for Adam and Eve, together, to "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it" and together rule over it (Genesis 1:28).

Read Acts 18:1-4; Romans 16:3-5; and 1 Corinthians 16:19. These verses provide a good example of a marriage partnership. Priscilla and Aquila were united in their love for each other and their devotion to Christ. They worked side by side making tents as business partners. They were partners in teaching the Word of God.

TOTAL GIVING

Paul saw equality in the sexual relationship of husband and wife. Read 1 Corinthians 7:3-5. Are both the husband and wife expected to have sexual desires? Is the body of each to belong to the other? As you read these verses did you notice Paul stressed the mutual giving of husband and wife to one another?

Read Ephesians 5 to learn the new way a husband and wife are to relate. Fear or grudging duty is not to be the motive of a wife. Rather, she gives herself "as unto the Lord." That means a response of love, joy, and delight. Can a husband care for his wife? In the ideal partnership each gives and receives from the other in a continuous exchange of Christ's kind of love. It is an adventure of growth together. Christlike love is an unconditional love; it accepts, overlooks, forgives and loves, even when the other person seems unlovable.

A NEW PERSONALITY

Marriage, or partnership, creates a third personality out of the union. Instead of thinking "I" and "mine," the partners now think "we" and "ours." They begin developing a joint vocabulary and a joint set of plans. When one feels pain, both hurt; when one knows joy, both are happy. No other human relationship is so demanding, nor so rewarding.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

1 Corinthians 11:11,12
Song of Solomon 2:16
1 Corinthians 16:19
Hebrews 13:4
Titus 2:4
Romans 16:3-5
Genesis 1:28

Colossians 2:10
Galatians 3:28
1 Peter 3:7
Ephesians, chapter 5
1 Corinthians 7:3-5
Acts 18:1-4

LESSON 6

THE HUSBAND IN CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Memory Verse:

"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" -- (Ephesians 5:25).

INTRODUCTION

In Lesson 5 we looked at the mutual responsibilities of husband and wife to love each other, to be faithful to each other, and to submit to each other. In this lesson we will emphasize the husband's unique place in marriage.

SACRIFICIAL LOVE

The husband's first responsibility in marriage is to love his wife. Read Colossians 3:19. The word used in our memory verse from Ephesians 5 for the love of a husband for his wife is the same word used to express God's love for his people. It is the kind of love that keeps on giving even when it receives nothing in return. It seeks only good for the one loved, regardless of the personal cost or sacrifice. In the Ephesian letter, Paul blends so closely the study of the Christian life in the church and in the home that it is sometimes difficult to determine whether he is talking about the church or the home. Just as the married unit in Genesis is to be a picture of the love of God, the husband-wife relationship in Ephesians 5 is to be a picture of Christ and his church.

We can better understand how husbands are to love their wives as we see how Christ loved the church. From Ephesians 5:21-33, list the characteristics of Christ's love for the church. Then, using the same verses, make a list showing the husband's responsibility in loving his wife.

Christ for his Church

Husband for his Wife

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PROVISION AND PROTECTION

The Bible does not give the husband a role of privilege. His role centres instead on responsibility, in keeping with the servant role of the Christian. The husband should provide for his wife's needs, as seen in Ephesians 5:28,29. The husband is told to give his wife the same care he would give to his own body. This includes providing the material things a wife needs as finances permit. Nourishing and cherishing mean giving tender care and understanding. Read 1 Timothy 5:8. List some of the needs a wife has.

Physical

Emotional

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Social/Cultural

Spiritual

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HONOUR AND RESPECT

Read 1 Peter 3:7. Some husbands belittle their wives, make fun of them and speak harshly to them in the presence of other people. No husband should do this. Instead, both privately and publicly, a

husband should express honour and appreciation for his wife. The husband should respond to his wife as one sharing equally the experience of God's gracious gift of eternal life. The husband who fails to give his wife consideration can hardly expect his prayers to be answered.

LEADERSHIP

Read Ephesians 5:23. The Bible does not emphasize dictatorial powers, but rather leadership. Headship does not imply inferiority or superiority. Headship is a special office of service so the marriage may thrive and grow. The husband sets the example of godly living.

Read Joshua 24:15 to learn how Joshua gave spiritual leadership to his family. Spiritual leadership includes giving advice and direction based on God's Word. The husband leads in family decision-making. He involves his wife in prayerfully searching for an agreement.

Leadership is a heavy responsibility for the husband. He cannot carry it alone. The key to being the leader in the home called for in Ephesians 5 is found in verse 18: "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit".

JOY AND BLESSING

With such heavy responsibility placed upon the husband it is possible for him to be overwhelmed and forget that God intended marriage for his good and pleasure. When marriage is experienced as God planned -- with love, consideration, gentleness, honour, and respect -- the reward is joy and blessings. Read Ecclesiastes 9:9,10 and Proverbs 5:18,19. The husband can lead the family in speaking a blessing rather than insult. Read 1 Peter 3:8-12; also read Romans 12:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:15; and 1 Corinthians 4:12. A believer must give a blessing in order to receive a blessing from God.

A husband may ask himself these questions:

1. What positive qualities about my wife can I praise her for?
2. In what way can I be a blessing to her?
3. What qualities about my wife am I thankful for?
4. What specific areas of my wife's life should I pray that God will bless her in?

With an attitude and action of responding with a blessing, good days and a rewarding life with his wife will be God's gift to the husband.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

Ephesians 5:21-33

1 Timothy 5:8

Joshua 24:15

Ecclesiastes 9:9,10

1 Peter 3:8-12

1 Thessalonians 5:15

Colossians 3:19

1 Peter 3:7

Ephesians 5:18

Proverbs 5:18,19

Romans 12:17

1 Corinthians 4:12

LESSON 7

THE WIFE IN CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Memory Verse:

"A good wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life" -- (Proverbs 31:10-12).

INTRODUCTION

Lesson 5 looked at mutual responsibilities shared by the husband and wife. Lesson 6 examined the husband's role in marriage. This lesson will help the wife discover her unique contribution to marriage.

HELPER AND FRIEND

Genesis 2:18-23 identifies the wife as a helper, an ally, a friend. In the good relationship God plans for marriage, he has put man and woman together as two halves of the same kind of being. The wife is to be a companion and comfort to her husband. She is to be a complement to her husband. Her desire should be to build him up, expressing confidence in his abilities, encouraging him, showing appreciation, believing in his significance and value, showing respect, helping him fulfil his potential, listening sympathetically, admiring him, trusting him and standing by him whatever happens. She will help her husband feel secure in her love for him.

Read Titus 2:4. The love a wife should have for her husband is a friendship love. What do you look for in a friend? Tick the traits listed below which you desire in a friend.

- Someone you enjoy being with
- Someone who understands you and supports you
- Someone who will listen to you
- Someone who believes in your word and good judgement
- Someone who does you good

- Someone who stands by you regardless of what happens
- Someone who is really glad when you do well
- Someone who will share your sorrows

Now, think how this same expressing of friendship could enrich your marriage and bring joy and vitality into the relationship.

SUBMISSION

Submission is a biblical term used in all relationships. Submitting to one another is characteristic of Christian conduct and results from being filled with the Holy Spirit. Read Ephesians 5:21. Submission is voluntarily lifting another above yourself to serve him or her.

A husband and wife are to submit to one another, to lift one another up and to serve one another. Paul begins a discussion on marriage responsibilities after he first states the general principle of submission: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21).

In the marriage relationship, submission allows two people to function as one body, to complement one another instead of competing with one another. Ephesians 5:21-33 shows Jesus as the model both for the husband's and for the wife's responsibility. Jesus was in total submission to the Father and gave up every right he had. Read Philippians 2:6. In the same way, the wife is submissive to the husband. Read Colossians 3:18.

True biblical submission is a woman's creative and challenging pleasure of discovering how she can show her husband she respects him, admires him and depends on him. It means a wife will become more interested in her husband's needs than in her own.

The wife's submission to her husband is best seen as she encourages and strengthens his leadership role and never tries to destroy, assume, weaken or eliminate it.

ATTENTION TO INNER BEAUTY

In 1 Peter 3:1-4 Peter encourages the wife to develop an inner beauty that reflects femininity, gentleness, thoughtfulness and love. As Peter wrote this he was not telling women how to dress. He was

simply giving a principle: a beautiful woman is one who has inner beauty of chaste and respectful behaviour and a radiance of a gentle and quiet spirit. A wife accomplishes more by her Christian behaviour than by what she says. She is pure and respectful. She tries never to say or do anything that embarrasses her husband or makes him feel unsure or ashamed. She is concerned about his welfare, building him up instead of tearing him down. (Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11.) A good wife is worthy of being trusted (Proverbs 31:11). She is faithful to her husband.

CARING FOR HER HOUSEHOLD

A wife should care for her household. She may give her full attention to the activities of the home or she may also work outside the home. The New Testament speaks of Lydia, Priscilla, and Dorcas, who apparently worked outside the home. If the wife works outside the home it is essential to ensure a balance so that her family is not neglected. This means the family will need to determine an effective division of household responsibilities. In some homes it might be possible to employ outside help. The wife's primary concern should not be the acquiring of money or material possessions but the welfare of her husband and children. The good wife described in Proverbs 31:10-31, while giving loving care to her husband and children, was able to engage in commercial activity and help people in need.

Read Proverbs 31:10-31 and state which verse describes each of the following characteristics of a "good wife". (Write the number of the verse on the line beside the statement.)

- She is her husband's trusted partner.
- His welfare is her concern.
- She looks after her household with food.
- She looks after her household with clothing.
- She teaches wisdom and kindness.
- She is generous to the poor and needy.
- She is a good business woman.
- She enhances her husband's reputation.
- She is respected by her husband and children.
- She is devoted to God and gives him first place in her life.

Answers, in the order listed, are: v.11; v.12; v.15; v.21; v.26;
v.20; v.18; v.23; v.28; v.30.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

Proverbs 31:10-31

Titus 2:4

Colossians 3:18

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Genesis 2:18-23

Ephesians 5:21-33

1 Peter 3:1-4

Philippians 2:6

LESSON 8

PARENTS IN A CHRISTIAN HOME

Memory Verse:

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" -- (Ephesians 6:4).

GOD'S GIFT

God made everything good for man and woman. Children given to a husband and his wife are a gift from God. When Esau asked Jacob about the people with him, Jacob said they were "the children whom God has graciously given your servant" (Genesis 33:5). Long years later, when Joseph was in Egypt, he presented his two sons to the aged Jacob, saying, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here" (Genesis 48:9).

The Psalmist wrote, "Lo, sons are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward" (Psalm 127:3). In the Old Testament people often spoke primarily of sons. They sometimes forgot the value of daughters. Christ came to earth in bodily form to restore people to God's original plan. Truly, in Christ "there is neither male nor female: (Galatians 3:28). God's gift is children, male and female.

Think again of God's beautiful plan of marriage for a man and a woman who love each other and honour God. Remember also that children are a gift of God. God gives the gift of children to some homes; to other equally loved homes he gives other gifts. We will learn more about the childless home in Lesson 11. Now let us consider the responsibilities of parents in response to the beautiful gift of children.

What responsibility do Christian parents have for planning the size of their family? Should they have as many children as their bodies can produce? In traditional societies each family wanted to have as many children as possible. Children were the glory of the family; they were needed workers. Many children died before reaching adulthood. Many factors in Africa today cause families to give careful study to

family planning. These include the high cost of bringing up children, and family income. A high birthrate will add to Africa's problem of hunger, malnutrition, limited school facilities and medical care.

The Bible commands responsibility in planning for the well-being of the family. "If any one does not provide for ... his own family, he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8). Christian parents prayerfully consider the number of children they can adequately care for. An African writer, John S. Mbiti, says "Parenthood is a great responsibility, and you are abusing that privilege and trust if you go about it carelessly or in such a way that you bring children into the world only to make them miserable, hungry, poorly clad, uneducated, and social misfits... What matters most for you and for other parents now is the number of children you can bring up properly as healthy, happy, well developed and integrated persons who fit smoothly into society and your nation."

TEACH THEM

In addition to fitting "smoothly into society and nation," Christian parents guide their children's development into the ways of the Lord. Read in Genesis 18:19 the commands of God that Abraham must follow so God could bring to Abraham what he had promised him. What two things must his children and his household do to "keep the way of the Lord?" Write your answer here:

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Would it have been possible for God to make a great nation of Abraham's children if they had not been righteous and just? How can your children fulfill the plan God has for them if you do not teach them to keep the way of the Lord? God gives this promise: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

"There has risen no one greater than John the Baptist," Jesus proclaimed (Matthew 11:11). Read Luke 1:6 to learn the type of home Zechariah and Elizabeth provided for John. Can you follow Zechariah and Elizabeth's example? The Bible says they were "both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

PROVIDE FOR THEM

The Bible gives other specific instructions for parents. Paul described his relationship to the Corinthian Christians by saying, "...for children ought not to lay up for their parents, but parents for their children" (2 Corinthians 12:14). Paul said he would gladly spend all he had for them. Should parents make demands of children that will cause great financial hardship? Such demands might include too large a bride price, gifts, etc. As young adults you may not be able to change the methods your parents use. You can be sure to follow Christian principles when you become a parent.

NURTURE THEM

Paul gave definite instruction for parents: "Do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

Moses had led the Israelite nation until he was an old man. In his farewell speech, he gave his last commandments from the Lord. Read Deuteronomy 6 to learn these important commandments. How were the Israelites to pass these truths on to their children? (See verses 6-9.) Write your answer here:

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Verse 4 gives God's great command. As you read verse 7 think of some of the best times families can use to teach their children about God. Notice how completely God-centred the life of the family was to be. Children were to be taught the words of God diligently and constantly.

GUIDE THEM

Luke 2:52 tells us Jesus "increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man." Using these four areas, think of the attitudes and abilities you would like for your children to have by the time they are grown. How can you best develop mental abilities and attitudes? What education do you desire for your children? Think of physical development. What will your children need to know about

their bodies in order to treat them properly as temples of the Holy Spirit? What will your children need to know, experience, be and do to grow spiritually? What should characterize their relationship with God? How will they need to relate to others -- Christians and non-Christians?

WITNESS TO THEM

Tell your children of God's working in your own life. Tell them about the time God healed you, or of the time God miraculously provided food for you when you were without money. Tell them how good God has been to you. Psalm 78:4 says, "We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders which he has wrought." Get your Bible now and read Psalm 78:1-7. Share God's goodness with your children. Then they too will put their trust in God.

LOVE THEM

Show your approval for your children. When they do well, praise them. Say, "I love you," in words and actions. Encourage, stimulate, and teach each child personally. Each parent should take time to spend some time alone with each child.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

Ephesians 6:4
Genesis 48:9
Galatians 3:28
Genesis 18:19
Matthew 11:11
2 Corinthians 12:14
Deuteronomy, chapter 6

Genesis 33:5
Psalm 127:3
1 Timothy 5:8
Proverbs 22:6
Luke 1:6
Luke 2:52
Psalm 78:1-7

LESSON 9

CHILDREN IN A CHRISTIAN HOME

Memory Verse:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" -- (Ephesians 6:1).

INTRODUCTION

"My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart always; tie them about your neck" (Proverbs 6:20,21). God gave Moses 10 commandments -- only 10 most important rules to guide our lives. The fifth commandment is, "Honour your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you; that your days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with you" (Deuteronomy 5:16). Paul calls this the first commandment with a promise (Ephesians 6:2).

OBEDIENCE

Read Colossians 3:20. What reason does Paul give for obeying your parents in everything? Write your answer here:

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Did you answer that obedience pleases the Lord?

Read Ephesians 6:1-3. Paul wrote these verses in a letter when he was old and in prison. He was not a criminal; he was one of the truest disciples of the Lord Jesus the world has ever seen. Paul reached out with loving advice to all people. In this text he included children and parents. Read Romans 1:30 and 2 Timothy 3:2. Did you notice that disobedience to parents is listed with the worst of sins? Both mother and father are to be honoured.

GOD'S LOVE FOR CHILDREN

God's great love for children was the primary reason for his insistence on obedience to parents. He said to honour parents, "That it

may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:3). Children do not naturally know to refuse evil and choose good. They have to grow into this wisdom; they must be taught this knowledge. Parents are their most important teachers under God.

Read of Jesus' childhood in Luke 2:41-52. As a child, how did Jesus follow the fifth commandment? Write your answer here:

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Ephesians 5 talks of wives being subject to their husbands. In Ephesians 6 the husband and wife are now called parents. Children are to obey their parents. There is no hint of one parent having greater authority than the other.

GOD ABOVE PARENTS

Acts 5:29 indicates a time when it is not best to obey our parents. "We must obey God rather than man." If our parents demand that we act against God's will, we must obey God. God speaks to children, and God's will must come first, even before parents. Samuel was just a boy when in an unusual way God came in the night to his bed and talked to him. (Read 1 Samuel 3.)

Even when obeying God conflicts with our parents' wishes, we must not take our parents' desires lightly. We should make every effort to reach an agreement. We will not become angry with them, or provoke them to anger. We will show them every kind of love and honour even though they oppose our doing God's will.

Peter reminds us that a Christian is humble in all relationships. "Likewise you that are younger be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for 'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble'" (1 Peter 5:5). When parents' wishes conflict with God's commands, a Christian chooses God's way, with gentleness and humility.

WHEN A CHILD GROWS UP

Even adults must continue to honour their parents. An adult child may live far away from his parents and have to make most of his own decisions. This separation can cause worry to parents. They may feel forsaken or even rejected if their modern sons and daughters do not maintain close contact. There is always a difference in each generation of people. This is especially true in countries where life-styles change rapidly. Grown children need to keep in close contact with their parents, to let them know they are still loved and honoured.

Old age often brings problems that need the loving concern of adult children. In Mark 7:9-13, Jesus rebuked the religious leaders of his day for observing their tradition but not truly caring for parents' needs and honouring them. Read John 19:25-27 to learn how Jesus made a plan to care for his mother even while he was dying on the cross. As Jesus showed honour and care for his mother as long as he lived, Christians today need to keep God's command to honour their parents.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

Ephesians 6:1-3

Deuteronomy 5:16

2 Timothy 3:2

Luke 2:41-52

1 Samuel, chapter 3

John 19:25-27

Proverbs 6:20,21

Romans 1:30

Colossians 3:20

Acts 5:29

1 Peter 5:5

Mark 7:9-13

LESSON 10

GROWING THROUGH CONFLICT

Memory Verse:

"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" -- (Ephesians 4:32).

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a relationship in which two personalities blend into a unity. Each has his or her own desires, needs and goals. Because each person is unique, conflict is likely to occur. In fact, there will probably be many conflicts throughout the life of the marriage. This is not bad. It is normal. How the partners respond to the conflicts and handle them is the real issue.

CONFLICT

The dictionary describes conflict as "a struggle, a collision, a clashing, a sharp disagreement, opposition of wishes." Conflict can be a time of marital growth or it can be extremely painful, unresolved and destructive. Many Christians do not meet conflict openly because no one has taught them effective ways of managing it.

WHAT CAUSES CONFLICT?

Read James 4:1-3. Before marriage the individuals have lived separate lives for twenty years or more. During that time each developed a set of individual tastes, choices, habits, likes and dislikes, values and standards. The marriage ceremony will not remove these individual differences. It will not cause the two partners always to want to do the same thing, in the same way, at the same time. Certainly the couple will have differences of opinion and choice, and these will lead to disagreements.

RESPONSE TO CONFLICT

People respond to conflict differently.

1. Some people withdraw. They may physically remove themselves from the room or environment. They may withdraw psychologically by not speaking, by ignoring their partner, or by insulating themselves so that nothing that is said or done reaches them.
2. Some people feel they must win, no matter what the cost is. Since married couples are so well aware of each other's areas of weakness and hurt they often use these areas to force the other person to give in. "Winners" may attack self-esteem or pride in order to win.
3. Some people yield in a conflict in order to get along with their partner. They suppress anger and let it build up. They may carry resentment in their hearts and feel hurt, continuing to live with the problem unresolved.
4. Some people compromise, or give a little to get a little. Sometimes compromise is necessary. However, using this method to get something for yourself in return is a poor response to conflict.
5. Some people are willing to spend sufficient time in open and direct communication of their differences so that even though some of their original wants and ideas have changed, they are satisfied with the solution they have agreed upon. They have resolved the conflict. Read Ephesians 4:29-32.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN MARRIAGE

Read Matthew 18:15-17. How do you think this Scripture can be applied to marriage? Remember, the emphasis in this Scripture is on reconciliation. The teaching of this Scripture is, "Do not accept any situation in which there is a break in personal relationships, but do what is necessary to mend the broken relationship." As you study Matthew 18:15-17, notice the action and sequence:

1. Brother to brother as equals.
2. The problem is handled immediately.
3. A personal, private settlement -- face to face, to gain something of value.
4. If a personal, private meeting fails, take one or two spiritual witnesses. The purpose is not to determine who is right or wrong. It is not to gather evidence to be used against someone, but to hear both sides and mediate a reconciliation. Talking matters over with some wise, kindly and gracious Christian people present creates a new atmosphere in which to view the problem.

5. If that still fails, take it to the church fellowship. This is not a public exposure of the problem. It is in an environment of Christian prayer, Christian love and Christian fellowship that personal relationships may be righted. It is clear that Christ expects the fellowship to be truly Christian peacemakers, not judges.
6. If these efforts fail, the person is identified as a Gentile and a tax collector. This does not mean the person is abandoned as hopeless and beyond reach. Jesus never set limits on human forgiveness. Read Matthew 18:21-35. It is a challenge to win that person with a love which can touch even the hardest heart. Matthew and Zaccheus (a Gentile and a tax collector) became Jesus' close friends. The entire church fellowship joins the individual in the process of reconciliation.

STEPS IN MANAGING CONFLICT

1. The first step in managing conflict is to start the process of reconciliation. To withdraw or to ignore the problem, hoping it will go away, does not solve anything. Keep the relationship alive. Maintain the unity. Read Ephesians 4:1-3. Do not wait for your partner to start the process. Use non-threatening, non-judgemental language such as,

"Can we talk about..."

"I am frustrated about..."

"I am worried about..."

"I am unhappy when..."

"I do not understand..."

2. Disagree as equal parts of the whole. Read Philippians 2:1-8. When power or authority over another is exercised the problem will not be solved. One partner may be able to out-think, out-talk and over-power the other in stating the logic of the situation. This is unfair. An open discussion of the problem with each partner contributing his or her ideas as equally important will help the couple find a solution which is beneficial. Neither partner should seek supremacy in the relationship.

3. Exchange positions. Being willing to see the situation from the partner's point of view will lead to a deeper understanding of what your partner thinks about issues which affect the marriage. The problem may be solved simply by a compassionate partner appreciating how the other feels. Read Colossians 3:12-17.

4. Handle the problems one at a time. Sometimes a person may try to take the pressure off of self by bringing up another problem. They may try to defend themselves by pointing out failures in their partner. Keep on the subject. Do not try to solve all the related or unrelated problems. You could respond by saying, "You may be right about that, but just now we are talking about..." Read James 3:17,18.

5. Attack the problem, not the person. Too many couples attack each other with hints, slurs or hurtful remarks. When you say, "You always...",
"You never...",
"Why can't you..."
you are attacking the person. Read Romans 2:1 and Matthew 7:2. Learn how to inform your partner of your feelings. Do not throw them like a rock. Saying it straight involves being honest about negative as well as positive feelings, and being able to say them in a non-attacking way:

"I feel..." rather than, "You are...".
Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

6. Enlist the help of a Spirit-filled peacemaker. God has placed people in the church fellowship who are gifted as peacemakers. You can identify the teachings of a person by the words Jesus used about himself in John 7:16-18.

- a. True teaching comes from God and is consistent with God's love.
- b. God reveals his will and truth to those who are willing to do it.
- c. He speaks from himself if he seeks his own glory -- but he who seeks glory for God is true.

The peacemaker should be someone who is unbiased and fair, and can see both sides. The peacemaker can tone down the destructiveness of conflict and help the couple work toward reconciliation.

7. Forgive completely. If you know Christ Jesus as Saviour, you have experienced God's forgiveness (Colossians 2:13). Because you are in Christ, you have the capacity to forgive yourself and are able to forgive others. Read Colossians 3:13. Our greatest example of forgiveness is the cross of Jesus Christ. Read 1 Peter 2:21-24. Forgiveness takes place when love accepts the hurts and sorrows of life and drops all charges against the other person. Forgiveness is accepting the other person when he or she has done something unacceptable. Forgiveness is not acceptance given on condition that the other become acceptable. Forgiveness is given freely, out of the keen awareness that the forgiver also has a need of constant forgiveness. Forgiveness is a relationship between equals who recognize their need for each other, share and share alike. Each needs the other's forgiveness. Each needs the other's acceptance. Each needs the other. And so, before God, each drops all charges, refuses all self-justification, and forgives. And forgives, "seventy times seven," as Jesus said in Matthew 18:21,22.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

Ephesians 4:32

Matthew 18:15-17

Matthew 18:21-35

Philippians 2:1-8

James 3:17,18

Matthew 7:2

John 7:16-18

Colossians 3:13

James 4:1-3

Ephesians 4:29-32

Ephesians 4:1-3

Colossians 3:12-17

Romans 2:1

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Colossians 2:13

1 Peter 2:21-24

LESSON 11

DIFFERENT KINDS OF FAMILIES

Memory Verse:

"Only, Let every one lead the life which the Lord has assigned to him, and in which God has called him" -- (1 Corinthians 7:17).

INTRODUCTION

When we think of a family we usually think of two parents and their children. In this lesson we will consider some different family patterns. Some couples have no children; in some families there is only one parent. Although the usual pattern is marriage some people remain single. God can honour and bless all of these family patterns if the people involved commit themselves to him.

CHILDLESS FAMILIES

1. The Old Testament Pattern

In Old Testament times to have many children was considered a blessing from God for Israelite families. They thought having many sons and daughters was the result of God being pleased with them. (Read Psalm 128:3,4.) Likewise, not having children was seen as a disgrace, a sign that God was not pleased. However, even in the Old Testament some people recognized that marriage without children had great worth. Elkanah asked his childless wife, Hannah, "Am I not more to you than ten sons?" (1 Samuel 1:8).

Israel lived among people who worshipped with fertility rites. Israel looked to God alone as the giver of life. The Israelites knew only God could bring the increase of "the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruits of your beasts" (Deuteronomy 28:4). Read Genesis 30:1,2 to hear Rachel's cry of longing to her husband. Jacob, her husband was understandably upset. His reply was, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"

2. The New Emphasis with Jesus

In the New Testament, after the Messiah, the Redeemer, had come, there was a change in attitude toward motherhood. There was a gradual move away from the idea that having a child was the most important act for the woman. A woman's worth no longer depended upon the number of children she produced. The emphasis changed from physical birth to spiritual birth -- entrance into the family of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Childbearing is mentioned in 1 Timothy 5. Paul's advice for dealing with the problems of young widows followed what the culture expected, to marry and have children. The reasons for this were moral (verse 11) and the means of a living (verse 16). They did not want the church to be burdened with providing a living for a young woman with many years to live and no livelihood.

3. Many Gifts

Jesus honoured and cared for his mother. However, Jesus showed that a woman is not honoured in God's sight by her physical ability to produce a child, but by doing the will of God. Read in Luke 11:27 of the woman who yelled out from one of the crowds, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!" Jesus answered, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (verse 28). Jesus was stressing the importance of being a spiritual life-bearer. (See John 10:10.) There are other gifts a man or woman can offer the world besides children, gifts equally important. A person can please God with or without children.

4. Some False Beliefs

Through the years some false beliefs have arisen regarding the bearing of children. Let us look at some of these beliefs and learn the truth about them.

False Belief Number One: "Childlessness is always the wife's fault!"

TRUTH: Not so! Childlessness should not be considered the "fault" of either marriage partner. It is not always due to the wife's condition. In fact, it may be the husband's condition. Today much can be done medically to help a childless couple, and they should not hesitate to seek the advice of a properly qualified doctor.

False Belief Number Two: "Without children the marriage is a failure"

TRUTH: Not so! Even if no children are born, there are enough good reasons for the marriage to stand and be a happy and blessed marriage. To have children in only one of the reasons for marriage. To give each other love and companionship, to help each other become what God wants them to be, to strengthen each other, to delight each other, to comfort each other -- all these can give full satisfaction. The ability of reproduction does not prove anything except that you can reproduce. It takes much more to make a person into a good husband or wife, a good mother or father.

False Belief Number Three: "Childlessness is God's punishment for sin!"

TRUTH: Not so! The lack of the gift of children is not a sign of God's displeasure. Children are indeed a gift of God, but God has many different gifts to give.

False Belief Number Four: "If they prayed harder, they would get a child!"

TRUTH: Not always! If the couple loves God they must believe that whatever he sends them is best, not second best, but THE best! If the couple has consulted a well-qualified doctor, followed his advice, and prayed sincerely for a child -- then if no child comes, God has something, which for this particular couple, is better.

THE NEVER-MARRIED PERSON

The usual pattern for men and women is marriage. There are exceptions. You do not have to be married to lead a full and happy life. The apostle Paul gives good advice in 1 Corinthians 7:17 when he says, "Let everyone lead the life which the Lord has assigned to him, and in which God has called him." The people who have the gift of singleness "for the sake of the kingdom" are able to grow in maturity as loving persons without the usual human aid provided by marriage. They devote their lives totally to serving God. Paul said there were limitations to serving God in marriage, not in singleness. "To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain single as I do" (1 Corinthians 7:8).

The single person especially needs to look to God as the source of his or her strength. It is easy in today's culture for single people to allow immorality to enter their lives. If God gives you the gift of singleness he will give you the strength to live a morally upright life which will be a witness for him. Read 1 Corinthians 7:17 again and ask God to help you accept the life he has assigned and called you to live.

THE SINGLE PARENT HOME

Some homes have only one parent. This can be caused by death, divorce or separation, or unmarried parents. God's ideal is for each home to have a loving father and mother. However, many people, usually mothers, are bringing up their children alone. Gratitude is due to the one loving parent who accepts the responsibility of two parents.

To develop as wholesome, stable adults, children need the model of both parents to follow. Teaching and training is incomplete if not done by both mother and father. The people of the church need to give guidance and help as needed and possible to the single parent family.

When the child loses one parent by death the remaining parent has the difficult task of rearing the child alone while grieving and adjusting to different circumstances.

When Christians fail to follow God's plan and children are without a loving, responsible father and mother in the home, it causes great problems to many people. Divorce and parenthood without marriage rob both adults and children of the good life God planned. However, our God accepts us as we are. Because he loves us, he forgives our living outside his plan and failing to receive the blessings he has for us. He accepts our repentance and gives forgiveness. We are to accept that forgiveness and begin to live life in his way. The goal of every parent should be to follow Proverbs 22:6. Read this verse and make it your goal.

THE DIVORCED PERSON

Divorce is not the unpardonable sin. God still loves the divorced individual. A person remains guilty only if he does not seek and ac-

cept God's forgiveness and grace. However, divorce is not the way to handle marital problems. It breaks the spirit, destroys dreams, tears apart families and cripples lives with loneliness, pain and grief. The trauma of divorce is second only to the death of a marriage partner. Read Malachi 2:13-16 to find the reasons God hates divorce. Write these reasons here:

.....

.....

.....

Divorce is the public and legal announcement of the death and destruction of a family. It is evil to God, the family's creator. "I hate divorce!" God declared (Malachi 2:16).

Read Mark 10:2-12 to learn Jesus' teaching on divorce. Notice the question the Pharisees asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" Did they consider the rights of a woman to divorce her husband? Indeed not. To them, women had few rights. Jesus quoted to them from the Old Testament writings of Moses. In verse 6 he referred to God's plan from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female." Jesus then quoted from Genesis 2:24, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one" (Mark 10:7,8). Equality of man and woman in creation and in marriage is affirmed here. The Pharisees thought of adultery as an offence against a husband's rights: Jesus applied it also to a woman's rights. Read verses 11 and 12 again. Does Jesus give the same rights and responsibilities for men and women? Do you feel women have the same responsibilities and rights as men? Jesus said, "What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder" (verse 9). Positively Jesus says marriage is of God and it is not to be destroyed or broken.

WHEN ONLY ONE IS A CHRISTIAN

We have already learnt the importance of choosing a Christian as a marriage partner. Yet sometimes a person finds himself or herself in a marriage with an unsaved partner. Perhaps one has been saved after marrying, or a choice may have been made without full attention to God's plan. In 1 Corinthians 7 Paul speaks to the Christian married to an unsaved person. In verse 15 he reminds us, "God has called us

to peace." The Christian whose partner is unsaved has the great responsibility of practicing Christian principles without the support of his or her spouse. In this case the Christian must remember to relate lovingly, gently, and humbly to his or her partner. Peter speaks especially to a wife whose husband is unsaved, encouraging her to live in such a way that she might bring him to know the Lord. Read 1 Peter 3:1.

Paul instructed the Christian partner not to dissolve the marriage, but released the Christian from responsibility if the unsaved partner left. Read 1 Corinthians 7:12-15. The partner remaining when one chooses to leave has great need of love and support from the Christian community.

CONCLUSION

We have learnt of some of the different family patterns and special challenges faced by each. In an earlier lesson we learnt that each individual is complete in Christ. Christians can rely on their Lord for strength and direction, whatever their family circumstances may be. Jesus encouraged his followers by reminding them of God's good purpose for them: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

1 Corinthians, chapter 7
1 Samuel 1:8
Genesis 30:1,2
Luke 11:27,28
Proverbs 22:6
Mark 10:2-12
1 Peter 3:1

Psalms 128:3,4
Deuteronomy 28:4
1 Timothy 5:11,16
John 10:10
Malachi 2:13-16
Genesis 2:24
Luke 12:32

LESSON 12

THE FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY

Memory Verse:

"...choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" -- (Joshua 24:15).

INTRODUCTION

As Joshua and the people of Israel surveyed the promised land they had a choice to make:

- (1) They could serve the traditional gods of their ancestors.
- (2) They could serve the gods in the new land they were entering.
- (3) They could serve the one true God who had revealed himself to the people and led them out of slavery.

You have choices to make wherever you live and whatever your culture may be:

- (1) You may choose the tradition of your land even though some things may be contrary to God's Word.
- (2) You may choose the ways of the foreign people in your midst without examining those ways in the light of biblical teachings.
- (3) You may choose the way of God as revealed in his Word, the Bible.

The family is the foundation of society. Families who choose the way of God can have great influence for good in the community. They can be living examples of God's biblical principles. They can be a "workshop" which shows the community how the Christian life works. Read Matthew 5:14-16.

THE WEDDING

A Christian marriage begins with an agreement between the two families together with public vows and witnesses. This is an excellent time to be a witness in your community. In Christian marriage the wedding should be a testimony of your faith in God and your commitment to each other. You have a unique opportunity for the Christian interpretation of cultural values.

Some young couples feel they must have an expensive wedding because a friend or a family member has had an expensive wedding. Marriage is not a competition. A young couple trying to afford a wedding with a diamond engagement ring, expensive wedding clothes imported for that one day, three-layer wedding cake, and an expensive dinner feast, may well find that all their savings, and a lot more besides, has been spent when the wedding day is over. The purpose of Christian marriage is to glorify God, not to impress others. Read Luke 12:15.

The newly-married husband often finds himself having to make lobola payments, wedding expense payments, buy presents for family members, and pay school fees for his and his wife's young relatives. There is very little left to care for the needs of his own home. It is easy to begin your marriage on the hire-purchase plan and spend most of your life trying to get out of debt. Learn to live within your income. Do not buy what you cannot afford. Read Romans 13:7-14.

A Christian couple can have a wedding that is joyful and meaningful without spending large sums of money. Extravagance should not be part of the Christian marriage. Sit down with your partner and decide how best to use what money you have. You will probably decide it is much better to spend money on necessities for your new home than to spend it on an elaborate wedding. Some new clothes may be desired, but you can choose the sort of clothes which will be useful afterwards. You will probably want to give your guests some refreshment before they return home, especially if they have come from a distance. A simple, modest meal would be appreciated. Finally, a Christian couple will not want to serve alcohol at their wedding. Read Proverbs 20:1 and Ephesians 5:18.

An expensive "society" wedding may impress people for one day. A happy marriage is a witness to the power and the love of the Lord Jesus which will last for a lifetime.

THE LOBOLA

Originally, the lobola was a meaningful custom which served to stabilize marriage. The goods involved were livestock and served as a recompense to the family of the girl for the loss of her productive

powers. Both the young couple and the relatives had a clear duty to cement the fellowship of the two family groups now linked together by marriage.

Today, in many cases, this custom has been corrupted from the original purpose of the lobola to one of improper use of another person for one's own profit. Some families use the lobola to balance the family budget and to fulfil their material wishes. Sometimes a girl may be given to the man who can offer her family the most money. The girl is not the wife of her husband, but the wife of the lobola. Read 1 Timothy 6:1-11 to find what the Bible says about craving money and what the aim of the "man of God" should be.

In families where the bride price is required, the Christian groom and his family could respectfully explain to the relatives of the bride just what the groom's financial ability is. Hopefully, they could encourage her family to allow the couple to build their marriage together on a sound financial principle of living within their income and not going into debt because of a high lobola. The young couple may find it necessary to make arrangements within the established system. However, when they become parents, they can approach the wedding negotiations as people of God who live by Christian principles. Read 1 John 2:15-17.

THE EXTENDED FAMILY

When the wedding day comes, there is a change: a new family is born. The young man and the young woman still love their father and mother, but they are joining themselves to form a new family. Their first love and loyalty are to each other. The Bible says, "...a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one" (Matthew 19:5).

Your partner must come first in your thoughts if your marriage is to be a full and happy one. Look first to your partner for all the sympathy and advice and comfort and friendship you need, and then a full and deep partnership will develop. If you speak more freely to your mother or father than you do to your husband or to your wife, then you are missing the full joy of Christian marriage.

This does not mean, however, that the wider family is forgotten once the wedding day is finished. Behind and beside the young couple stand the parents and grandparents, the aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters. Together, the young couple will learn to love and respect all the relatives, both his and hers. Together they will show due respect and kindness to the older people who have brought them up from childhood. Family responsibilities which remain with husband or wife after marriage will be met together, by both partners. If one has younger brothers and sisters, aged parents, or sick or poor relatives who must be helped, the other will gladly help.

Such responsibilities should never come between husband and wife, separating them. Working together to love and help others will draw the husband and wife into close companionship with each other.

Your Christian home can be an example to your extended family and community. If the love of Christ is seen in your family relationships, others will want your counsel. If you show Christian maturity and leadership, others will want you to sit with them and explain the Christian way.

GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR HOME

Psalm 32:8 teaches that God "will instruct you and teach you the way you should go." God will guide you as you seek to glorify him in your home.

Worship is a family activity which will help in the spiritual development of the home. Attending church together is very important. However, it does not replace what a family can find in worshipping together in their own home. In home worship each member of the family can contribute. The worship can be moulded to meet the needs of each member. Planned family devotions, Bible study time, family prayer, discussion periods and/or family singing can all be meaningful experiences that glorify God. If you do not plan and prepare for such experiences, they will not happen. Read Colossians 3:16.

The family also has the responsibility of Christian training. Read Deuteronomy 6:6,7 and Proverbs 22:6. Christian training has many parts. It includes teaching, correcting, encouraging, disciplining, and giving emotional support. Perhaps even more important than direct instruction is Christian example. By the conduct of your lives, the

evidence of your faith, and your diligence to the Scriptures, more is learned than through giving instructions. Read 1 Timothy 4:12. Husbands and wives, by living Christian lives, can contribute to the spiritual development of each other and of their children. Many children even set a godly example for their parents.

The family can glorify God by celebrating his goodness as a family activity. Family members can call attention to God's working and blessing and then declare God's part in their lives. Read Psalm 96.

Celebrate the beauty of God seen in a sunset, in a rainbow, in the first fruits of a harvest, in the flowers. Celebrate family events, birthdays, arrival of relatives and friends, the first day of school, etc.

As God works in you, you can glorify him by telling others of his power in your life. God is declared quietly by some persons and loudly by others. Be yourself and declare God as an honest expression of that unique you.

YOUR FAMILY AND THE CHURCH

Read 1 John 1:7 and Hebrews 10:24,25. The church forms a kind of extended family in which members relate as brothers and sisters in Christ. The church will provide spiritual nourishment, stimulation for growth, opportunities for worship, ways for Christian fellowship, and support for difficult times. Families need to discuss and to plan for church involvement. They need to be a part of Sunday school, worship services, prayer meetings, outreach, discipleship and special events. The family should plan together the giving of tithes and offerings. The family can support their church leaders by expressing positive attitudes and encouragement. The church family will be drawn close as fellow church members are remembered in prayer.

YOUR FAMILY AND OTHERS

In addition to the persons in groups already discussed, the family should relate in a positive way to neighbours, friends, the needy, the stranger, work associates, government and school officials and many others. Just as individual Christians are to minister, so should the family. Family life relates to all of life, including the extended family,

church, daily work, school, government and relaxation. The Bible emphasizes that whatever you do, you are to do to the glory of God. Read 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Colossians 3:17.

BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THESE BIBLE VERSES

Joshua 24:15

Luke 12:15

1 Timothy 6:1-11

Matthew 19:5

Colossians 3:16

Proverbs 22:6

Psalms 96

Hebrews 10:24,25

Colossians 3:17

Matthew 5:14-16

Romans 13:7-14

1 John 2:15-17

Psalms 32:8

Deuteronomy 6:6,7

1 Timothy 4:12

1 John 1:7

1 Corinthians 10:31

Proverbs 20:1

Ephesians 5:18

**MAN FINDS JOY AND SATISFACTION
WHEN HE ORDERS HIS LIFE ACCORDING TO
GOD'S PLAN**

