

Bible Study Lessons



2 Tim. 2:15

“Study to show thyself approved unto God”

For Sabbath School Classes

For Teens and Adults

The Christian Family

LESSON 1

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

LESSON READING: Gen. 1:26-28; 2:18-24; 0eut.6:1-11 Eph.6:1-4

MEMORY VERSE: Genesis 2:18, "And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet For him.'"

INTRODUCTION: This series of studies on the Christian Family is perhaps the most important and most needed of all subjects that are being addressed to the Christian community.

John Henry Jowett, one of the great pulpit masters, said, "Anyone can build an altar, it requires Almighty God to provide the Flame. Any-one can build a house, we need the Lard for the creation of a HOME." ("Thirsting For the Springs")

God the Creator, is the Author and Originator of the home. First He made the HOME, then He made the CHURCH, and then the NATION. This Fact reveals the primacy of the home over all other institutions, for it is the home that sets the pattern and lays the Foundation for every society. As goes the home, so goes the nation. When the home is what God designed it to be, the nation will be blest by God. When the home deteriorates, the nation becomes weak and often crumbles and passes away.

Geo. Moore, in "The Brook Kerith", said, "A man travels the world over in search of what he needs, and returns home to Find it." How many children have run away From home thinking to Find Freedom and fulfilment away From the 'rules and regulations" of the home only to find disappointment and loneliness and often have come to realize that "there's no place like home"?

When men fail to properly evaluate the importance of the home they have lost the prime ingredient that makes life happy and

warth living. Jesus' parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15 brings this truth out so vividly.

John Ruskin, in "The Seven Lamps of Architecture", wrote, "When men do not love their hearths, nor reverence their thresholds, it is a sign that they have dishonoured both, and that they have never acknowledged the true universality of that Christian worship which was indeed to supersede the idolatry, but not the piety, of the pagan. Our God is a household God, as well as a heavenly one; He is an altar in every man's dwelling."

There is no doubt but that Satan knows the importance of a God-centred home and therefore exerts all his diabolical influence against the home to destroy it and thereby destroy the nation and the world. It is essential, therefore, to understand how Satan attacks the home and what we can do to defeat his purposes.

God's will is that the home be "a little bit of heaven on earth". When God saw "it was not good for man to be alone" and therefore He made him "an help meet", we can see how God was concerned about man's happiness. So He established the home by making man and woman to be "one Flesh", and, to Further complement man's Fulfilment, God told man to "be Fruitful and Fill the earth." Thus we see the primacy of the home as the first institution made by a loving Creator.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. When God created the heavens and the earth, what was the final act in His creative work? Gen. 1:26,27

Answer: _____

2. Give four reasons why God made mankind male and female.

A. Gen. 2:18

Answer: _____

B. Gen. 17:28

Answer: _____

C. I Cor. 11:11,12

Answer: _____

D. Isa. 43:7; Eph.1:10-12; 2:10

Answer: _____

3. What environment did God provide for the First home? Gen. 2:8
What are your thoughts regarding city life versus country living?

Answer: _____

4. Whom did God appoint to be the head of the home? Eph.
5:25,28

Answer: _____

5. In giving the guideline for a happy home environment, what did Paul say was man's First and Foremost obligation to his wife?
Eph. 5:25,28

Answer: _____

6. Are children meant to be a blessing in the home? Psalms 127:3-5; 1145:9

Answer: _____

7. How should children regard their parents in order that the home is to be a happy place? Prov.1:8,9; 10:1; Eph.6:1-3

Answer: _____

8. Who must be the Master Builder of our home if our labour is not to be in vain? Psalms 127:1,2

Answer: _____

9. What does Paul say regarding the wife's role in the home? Titus 2:5; I Tim 5:14

Answer: _____

10. What does the Bible say regarding the care of widows? I Tim. 5:3.4; 9-13

Answer: _____

11. When Jesus delivered and healed the demoniac in the country of Gadarenes, what did He instruct him to do? Luke 8:39

Answer: _____

12. Therefore, where is the First place we should demonstrate that we are truly born again Christians? Acts 16:15,33

Answer: _____

13. In what way did Joshua demonstrate his priestly responsibility to those of his household? Josh. 24:15

Answer: _____

THOUGHT QUESTION: What are some of the ways I can improve the environment and relationship in my home?

LESSON 2

FINDING AND APPLYING BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

LESSON READING: Gal. 6:7,8; Job. 4:8;Prov. 16:28; 22:8; Hos.8:7

MEMORY VERSE: Gal 6:7 "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: For whatsoever & man soweth, that shall he also reap."

INTRODUCTION: In last week's lesson we learned how the home is such an important institution. That being the case, is it not reasonable to conclude that there must be basic rules and guidelines For the successful operation of the home?

Every successful enterprise operates according to basic principles relevant to that enterprise. If these principles are not adhered to, that institution suffers loss or even bankruptcy.

There is a Biblical idiom that states, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." This principle is irrevocable. We reap what we sow. We may regret what we have sown when the realization of the reaping is made aware to us, and we may improvise ways and means of avoiding or alleviating the consequences, but the consequences nevertheless, come to us.

Because of this unalterable principle and because of the primacy of the home as an institution, we believe it is very important that we understand and implement the principles that make the home a success and a happy place to live.

In view of the statistical Facts regarding the sad and deplorable state of the average modern home and the increasing rate of the dissolution of marriage (in many states, one Out of every two marriages ends up in divorce) it should be obvious to us that there is something drastically wrong with the structure of the home.

God, Who made the home, made it to be happy Why then is there so much unhappiness, disappointment, sorrow, frustration, heartache and divorce?

I believe that the present sad state of the average modern home is the result of a departure from God's divine pattern and the substitution of a way of life of man's own devising. When God instituted principles and rules for the home, He did not arbitrarily impose upon man dictatorial edicts for the gratification of an overbearing tyrant. He had in mind solely the supreme state of happiness For His created beings, and, when we recognize His benevolent purposes; when we properly evaluate the need of basic fundamental rules For happiness given by God and then put these rules into practise, then, and only then, will the home discover true happiness. Any state short of this is, at best, mediocre.

In our society today when everyone wants to do his "own thing" and permissiveness is an accepted way of life, it is incumbent upon the Christian to reject the modern humanistic philosophy regarding standards and principles and to call for a return to the "old paths" of Biblical righteousness and to set the example of Godly living that will indeed repair the breaches and restore the lost meaning of life and happiness in our home.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1, What is one basic law of life? Gal.6:7,8

Answer: _____

2. What does the prophet Hosea say regarding knowledge? Has. 4:6

Answer: _____

3. How does David express our defence against the results of breaking God's laws? Psalms 119:9-11

Answer: _____

4. What does Joshua say about the price of success? Josh. 1:8

Answer: _____

5. Can we escape the consequences of "doing our own thing" without regard to Biblical principles? Eccl. 12:13,14

Answer: _____

6. How does Moses set forth the conditions For happiness. Deut. 6:4-11

Answer: _____

7. Is God concerned about man's happiness? Deut. 5:29; 3 0:15-20

Answer: _____

8. What does the Bible declare about knowledge Prov. 1:7-9

Answer: _____

9. Name three benefits we will derive by applying Biblical principles.

A. Prov. 1:23 Answer: _____

B. same verse Answer: _____

C. Prov.1:33 Answer: _____

10. Name three evils that will come by not applying Biblical principles.

A. Prov.1:26 Answer: _____

B. Verse 27 Answer: _____

C. Verse 32 Answer: _____

11. How does Job describe the principle of sowing and reaping.
Job 4:8

Answer: _____

12. What does Hosea say about the same thing? Hos. 8:7

Answer: _____

13. What does David say about sowing precious seed?
Psalms 126:5,6

Answer: _____

THOUGHT QUESTION: Can you think of areas in your personal relationship to God's Word where you have not understood or applied the principles set forth in the above passages of Scripture?

LESSON 3

THE MARRIAGE COVENANT

LESSON READING: Gen.2:18; 21-24; Gen.24:1-4;140-33; SO-67; Mk. 10:7-9

MEMORY VERSE: Gen 2:24 "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."

INTRODUCTION: Someone has said, "Marriage can be the closest thing to heaven this side of heaven, or the closest thing to hell, this side of hell."

It is ironical, yet true, that often, that which was meant to be a blessing to man has turned out to be 2 curse. So it is with marriage. God, the Originator of the marriage relationship, intended that Christian marriage be the happiest state between two persons that can be achieved, and the most Fulfilling.

The Bible depicts the scene of the First marriage. When God created the man, He saw that it was not good for Him to be alone, so He made him an help meet, a woman, made from the rib of the man AND HE BROUGHT HEA UNTO HIM. (Gen. 2:18,21,22)

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL WEDDING! And God Himself officiated! In such a beautiful environment! He "brought the woman unto the man", gave her to him, and they became "one flesh".

The same Creator God, veiled in flesh, sanctioned and honoured the marriage covenant with His presence, and the performance of His First miracle, at the wedding feast in Cana recorded in John's gospel chapter two.

Someone has written, "Woman was made from the side of man - to walk together side by side. She was not taken from his head to

topple him, nor From his fest, to be trodden upon. But from His rib, under His arm- to be protected, and near his heart- to be loved."

In the creation of the sexes, divine wisdom, decreed that the chemistry of the male and: Female differed sufficiently so that one without the other is not a complete person. Although some people choose a life of celibacy and apparently live a life which appears to be a fulfilling career, yet, Knowingly or unknowingly there is that missing ingredient and dimension in their life.

God designed marriage for that total and optimum realization of joy and happiness. And when it is structured on Biblical principles, it will produce these results. The Bible declares that the marriage covenant, when executed according to divine order, makes man and woman "one flesh". It is God who joins together the man and the woman.

Though the physical act of sexual relationship is part and parcel of the marriage relationship, the actual marriage covenant is not the physical act, but rather, the solemn covenant (promise made between two parties in the presence of witnesses with Full realization of the unseen witness of Almighty God.

Some have contended that sexual intercourse constitutes and consummates the marriage covenant, But this is not technically true. According to Biblical teaching, sexual relationship is not to be indulged in until after the marriage covenant has been consummated.

We would stress the importance of the marriage covenant for, included in the terms of the solemn promise that the covenant is are "as long as both shall live" and :for better or worse, in sickness and in health" and that if there be any impediment or reason why the marriage covenant should not be made, that there be a disclosure of the reason. To contend therefore, that a marriage is not consummated or validated until the sexual act has been performed is invalid.

A civil marriage (a marriage performed by a judge or magistrate) is a legal marriage, but it lacks the additional responsibilities required by Holy Scriptures and therefore does not have the same blessing bestowed upon it as in a Christian Marriage.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. When was the first marriage performed and who officiated in it.
Gen.2:18, 21-24

Answer: _____

2. What was the occasion when Jesus performed His first miracle?
John 2:1-11

Answer: _____

3. What does Paul say regarding marriage? Heb. 13:4

Answer: _____

4. What is said about finding a wife? Prov.16:22

Answer: _____

5. What admonition did Paul give to young women's I Tim. 5:14

Answer: _____

6. Should the husband be running back to his Father and mother when there is trouble in the marriage? How about the wife?
Gen. 2:24

Answer: _____

7. Who unites the man and the woman in a Christian marriage?
Mark 10:9

Answer: _____

8. Is it wise to marry someone outside your religious faith?
Gen.24:3;28:1; Neh. 13:25 II Cor.6:14

Answer: _____

9. How close does marriage bring a man and woman? Gen. 2:24;
Eph. 5:28-31

Answer: _____

10. How does the Bible describe the relationship between Christ
and the church? Mat.25:1,6; Rev. 21:2

Answer: _____

11. Read the following passages and note the terminology with
reference to the union of God and His people. Isa. 54:5; 62:5;
Hos.2:19; Rev.19:7; II Cor.11:2

Answer: _____

THOUGHT QUESTION: Why is it difficult for people to become "one
flesh"? How do you and your husband complement one another
in your marriage? Do you really feel you are fulfilled in your
marriage?

LESSON 4

HEADSHIP IN THE HOME

LESSON READING: Deut. 6:1-9; 24:5; Eph.5:22-33 | Peter. 5:1-6

MEMORY VERSE: Eph. 5:25, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it."

INTRODUCTION: For centuries the church has taught home order, headship and submission, but when we observe the average Christian home you cannot but admit that there is something wrong. Husbands have sought to implement their concepts only to find discouragement and Frustration and many times disaster.

Can it be that following scriptural injunctions brings these results? Surely not! Then it must be that we have been misinformed.

A wrong concept of headship can only produce the way of enforced submission without true peace. To see what true headship and submission is, we must see it in the God-Head-in Jesus. "The Head of Christ is God". (I Cor.14:1:3)

The Scriptures show us how this is expressed between the Father and the Son. The Father-Son relationship which reveals Head-ship and submission is in the horizontal rather than the vertical.

The Father is not placing Himself above the Son as a Ruler, but on His right hand...on His level. The Scriptures tell us clearly that Christ is on the right hand of the Father. The Father is Head as a leader is head. He is not asking for submission by dominion, but by love. His love For the Son produces the true submission of Jesus. Jesus is not a second-class person in the Godhead under the dominion of a ruler. He is co-equal with the Father. "The Father and I are one," said Jesus, and further, "That they may be one even as we are one."

Paul, writing to the Corinthians said, "I would have you to know that the head of every man is Christ." (I Cor. 11:3) If a husband's concept of the headship of Christ is unscriptural, he cannot produce the true headship in his home, for the verse goes on to say,

".....and the head of the woman is the man." If husbands see Jesus, their Head, as a domineering ruler, they can only produce domineering rulership. Jesus is not a dominating ruler over men, just as the Father is not a ruler over His Son.

If a man's spirit is strong and unbroken, he will reach out for such scriptures as, 'Wives submit...' and move in the spirit of a ruler to enforce it for his benefit. If a man seeks headship for himself and submission on the part of his wife in order to get his own way, he is only seeking to set up his own kingdom, not God's. It may even be possible that his primary objective is to overthrow her kingdom in order to set up his own, and this only produces war.

We cannot truly be one in the Spirit, soul and body with one who is dominating us, no matter if that domineering be from husband or wife. A wife who feels that she is dominated by another, cannot respond in true love and submission. Sincere wives try to go along with this dictating vertical headship because they want to obey the Bible and keep a semblance of unity in the house. But too many times, there is a great lack of peace, joy and love. They do not sense God's blessing in it because it is not according to the way He intended it to be.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Headship in the home is compared to what other relationship?
I Cor. 11:3

Answer: _____

2. Upon what basis is the headship in the Godhead? John 6:38; 15:9; 17:21-23

Answer: _____

3. Upon what basis should headship in the home be built? Eph. 5:25

Answer: _____

4. Who is responsible to initiate love in the marriage relations? Eph. 5:25

Answer: _____

5. How does Peter express the husband's role in his relationship to his wife. I Pet. 3:7

Answer: _____

6. What does the Bible say of the man who is not interested or concerned about his responsibility in the home? Hab. 2:5

Answer: _____

7. A marriage relationship demands adjustment. What was the Jewish custom for the newly weds? Deut. 24:5; Ecol. 9:9

Answer: _____

8. The Scriptural definition for headship is leadership. What words in the following Passages support this view? Eph. 5:25;28 I Pet. 3:7; 5:3

Answer: _____

9. It is generally understood that the "covering" for the woman Paul speaks about in I Cor.11:4-15 is either a head-Piece or long hair. Can you see that Paul could have included the husband as the "covering" (leader, provider) of the woman?

Answer: _____

10. What is the meaning of "ruleth His own house" as found in I Tim.3:4,5,12; 5:177

Answer: _____

NOTE: Sadly, the thinking of the King James translators in this area of truth was coloured by the traditional, vertical, hierarchical structure of things in their day. Paul, for instance, in writing to Timothy, spoke of "one that ruleth well His own house" and "pulling their own children". The Greek word For "rule" however, is "proistemi", which means, "to lead, to stand before, to attend to, to indicate care and diligence as a shepherd," When & vertical arrangement is set up, where one rules above another, men are exalted to pre-eminence and a power structure is created. The natural man loves it, but it creates division making lines of demarkatian between the high and the low. When this occurs in the church, it separates the clergy and the laity, and in the home, it causes tensions, Frustrations and division.

True leadership hears and follows Christ, whose self-denying love motivates a glad hearing and following. Husbands, therefore, are not to be lords, but "shepherds", leading in love.

LESSON 5

RECOGNITION AND EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY

LESSON READING: Eph.5; Col.3, I Pet.3:1-7; I Pet. 5:1-11

MEMORY VERSE: Eph. 5:33, "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

INTRODUCTION: "When teaching on submission first began to be heard a few years ago it was often so hard and legalistic that the planted word did not take root. By 1969, however, the Holy Spirit began to convict hearts simultaneously within the Body of Christ that submission was not only @ neglected teaching but was essential to restoration. Those desiring to move on with God began to give ear to hear. Today, the Spirit is prompting so much teaching in this area that the only individuals left bristling at the message are those who need most to change.

Webster defines submission as "yielding, surrendering, relinquishing, giving way to." But the way of the transgressor is hard. For the woman who has not had this attitude as a part of her life, the awareness of a change in this area can be traumatic. As teaching is given on submission, she can show either she has learned by changed behaviour or she can resist the truth, which is rebellion.

Because rebellion is at the root of unrighteousness, implacability results (un-forgiveness, irreconcilable, merciless). An evil spirit can not be placated. There is no way enough can be given, compensated, appeased or compromised to sufficiently satisfy an evil spirit. While chaos is resulting from spiritual rebellion in the camp of the Philistines, as in Isa.,3, God is calling the camp of the Israelites to a new respect for authority.

A woman can, in fact, have strong opinions, be outspoken and dynamic in her own right, and still be submissive. To be in submission is to be in the role of sexual identity that is God-given. It means remaining under the covering protection of a husband, and "laying the axe' to the root of rebellion in all areas of individual life. Many more women than men are having nervous breakdowns or need counselling; are physical wrecks, or constantly Fight some kind of depression because they have placed themselves in a dominant role. They are vulnerably exposed to the enemy and, by choice, leave themselves open to demonic attack because they are out of God's order. If they were willingly under the protection of a husband they would find they have less problems to confront daily.

So much of life is based on attitude and outlook. If the woman sees her place in the house as desirable and something for which she has been chosen, then she can be free to be creative. Very Few women in our society are taught homemaking, and still fewer are taught how to maintain relationships with other people. Marriage is a relationship. She is the entire family constellation.

A housewife and mother who has a healthy attitude about what she is doing will look for creative ways to express love and joy in serving the household. A woman submitted to her calling and place in God within the home can create an atmosphere of warm acceptance that takes the rejection of the world off each family member and surrounds each with colour, pleasant odours, kind words, and give each one a healthy self-image."

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Perhaps one of the most sensitive aspects of the husband-wife relationship is the matter of recognition and exercise of authority. If headship in the home is the role of the husband, how should it be exercised and still maintain the horizontal relationship between husband and wife? Eph-5:25, 28; Eph. 4:31, 32 5:1,2

Answer: _____

2. How should the wife relate to the Husband's authority as head?
Eph. 5:22

Answer: _____

3. In addressing the husband and wife relation ship, to whom does Paul speak First? Eph. 5:22; 1Pet.3:1

Answer: _____

4. Which of the following reasons do you think applies and why?

A. Because the wife is the "weaker vessel."

Answer: _____

B. Because the wife is more easily influenced.

Answer: _____

C. Because God made the woman with a more sensitive receiver.

Answer: _____

D. Because if the husband is to exercise authority (covering) there must first be a recognition of authority (covering).

Answer: _____

E. Because the wife is legally bound to submit to her husband.

Answer: _____

5. When we speak of recognition of authority (by the wife) the very nature of the terminology obviously denotes a vertical relation. Does this mean that headship and authority (leadership) must be exercised in the same manner? Eph.5:31;1 Pet. 3:7

Answer: _____

6. Does Paul tell the husband that he is to inform, remind and demand submission and reverence (respect) from his wife? Eph. 5:22,23

Answer: _____

7. Since the husband and wife relationship in the matter of submission and exercise of authority is analogous with the relationship of the elders and pastors and the members in the body of Christ, to whom does Paul give the admonition of submission (esteem)? I Thess. 5:12,13

Answer: _____

8. In order that the elders be worthy of receiving esteem (submission) what qualifications must they exemplify? I Pet.5:1-6

Answer: _____

9. Would you conclude, therefore, that the husbands should also demonstrate the same qualifications if they are to expect their wives to submit to their headship (authority)?

Answer: _____

10. In the event that the husband does not meet every qualification as head, should the wife reject his role as head and do her own thing? I Pet. 3:1-4

Answer: _____

NOTE: There may be exceptional cases where the wife is endowed with greater wisdom and ability in leadership. The husband will be wise to accept and implement her views in Christian love.

LESSON 6

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HUSBANDS

LESSON READING: Isa. 54:1-5; Ps.23; Mat.1:1718-25; Eph.5:2e-3

MEMORY VERSE: I Pet. 3:7 (first part) "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel."

INTRODUCTION: The word "husband" means a provider, protector, head, leader and shepherd. The ramifications of these terms are indeed many and varied. Any man that has not experienced the love of God in his own life is hardly capable to demonstrate the meaning of the terms we have suggested above.

Someone has said, "IF you have anything real from God, the first place it will manifest itself is in the home. It is in the structure of the home that genuine spirituality begins. "Isn't it strange and rather paradoxical, how & man can be a counsellor on human relations and yet not be able to put it together in his own home and with his wife? I submit that the reason for failure in marriage is because men fail to recognize Biblical principles on this matter.

One of the main root causes of marriage problems is the expectation of personal fulfilment without any sacrifice. Someone has said, "It's all right to pray for a good harvest, but while you are praying, Keep hoeing."

Marriage, like most everything else, gives back to us what we put into it. It's going to cost something to have a happy home. Most men enter marriage with very little knowledge of all the ramifications of the new life they are entering.

The Bible says we need knowledge in our life together as husbands and wives. Peter tells the husband to, "dwell with her according to knowledge." (I Pet. 3:7). The husband must apply himself to know

his wife - know how she is made, how she thinks, how she responds. Remember, men, God made the female different than the male, not any physically, but psychologically and emotionally. And this is not a deficiency, but rather, is meant to supplement the characteristics of the male. Generally speaking, the male assesses Situations intellectually, whereas the female takes into account the spiritual and the emotional aspects. The combination of the male characteristics and the Female characteristics is God's ideal in resolving problems and setting guidelines. God said, "It is not good for man to be alone." Husbands, you must learn to demonstrate

the love and grace of God under pressure. Life is designed to have some bumps and hard places. When we are "rooted and grounded in love" (Eph. 3:17), we will rise in God that He may strengthen us in the inner man to meet every occasion with the assurance that the Lord will enable us to resolve problems in Love and build our relationship on a solid Foundation.

Problems will never be solved if we are trying to "save ourselves." This is Biblical teaching. The Bible declares that we must be willing to "lay down our lives" for one with whom we have made the solemn covenant of marriage. Things, gadgets or romance do not make the wife happy if the heart is not in it. She takes no delight in words, money or acts unless true love is the motivation. It's not "things" she wants, it's you!

Learn to listen to your wife, This is one of the lost arts. Someone has said, "If you don't listen to your wife at least once in three days, there is sure to be an explosion!"

Most men are insensitive and presumptive. They presume they understand the wife's need, but in so many cases they are totally ignorant and therefore fail in their role as protector, a covering for the wife.

The wife says, "Honey you've been away so much, won't you stay home tonight." The husband responds, rather reluctantly, "O.K,

Dear.” But it is obvious From his attitude that only his body is there, but his heart is somewhere else, It is the responsibility of the husband to bring into the marriage relationship that feeling of love, peace, security, leadership and mutual sharing that makes the marriage relationship the most exciting and rewarding pursuit in life.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the meaning of the term "husband"? (See Introduction)

Answer: _____

2. What is one unique characteristic of God, the Creator? Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14,15; Hos.2:19,20

Answer: _____

3. In what way did God, the Father, demonstrate His infinite love, as a husband, for the human race? John 3:16

Answer: _____

4. Is it required of a husband to love his wife as much as God loved the world? Eph.5:25; I Cor. 13:4-7

Note: To love "as Christ loved the church" is to love sacrificially and redemptively.

Answer: _____

5. What does it mean to love sacrificially? I John 4:10,11

Answer: _____

6. What does it mean to love redemptively? I Peter 1:18,19

Answer: _____

7. Can material gifts take the place of genuine love that is to be demonstrated towards the wife? (Give reasons for your answer).

Answer: _____

8. Whom did God appoint to be the provider in the home?
I Tim. 5:8

Answer: _____

9. Where does a man's true spirituality really show up? I Tim. 3:5

Answer: _____

10. What is another responsibility of the husband? Iss.61:6;
I Peter 2:5

Answer: _____

11. In what way do you see Joseph fulfilling his role as husband?
Matt.1:16-20; 24:25

Answer: _____

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LESSON 7

THE WIFE'S ROLE

LESSON READING: Gen.2:18. 21-24; I Cor.11:8-1235 Prov. 314:10-31

MEMORY VERSE: I Cor.14:11 (amplified Version) "Nevertheless, in the plan of the Lord, and from His point of view, woman is not apart from and independent of man, nor is man aloof from and independent of woman."

INTRODUCTION: In the creation of the sexes, we find that God took the "rib"™ from the man, He made a woman from the rib and then returned the rib in the unique form and quality of a woman. What God is teaching us by this is that both sexes need each other,

Norman V. Williams in "The Christian Home" refers to the origin of the two words "husband" and "wife". The word "husband" means "house- band". He is the one who "bands" or "binds" the home together. The strength and stability that the band must possess to hold the family together is represented by the husband. In contrast the word "wife" means "weaver". She is the one who uses her clever hands to weave into the family fabric the beautiful designs which produce much joy and blessing.

"God has clearly outlined the role of the woman and the role of the man. Just as they have complementary physical characteristics, so they enjoy complementary roles. The success of both roles demands cooperation by both partners. The role of the wife is filled with challenge to become a versatile woman. More than being a lover, helpmeet, mother; the success-seeking young woman is assured of a multifaceted career, a challenge that few professions can offer.

Too often women say; "I'm just a homemaker, sensing that they have missed something in life by following such a calling. But she is

more than a homemaker, she is a home manager, the "vice president" who serves directly under the head of the household, the "president" who is her husband. Her role is described in Proverbs 31:10-31 as a reflector of inner beauty, trustworthy partner, careful budgeter, submissive wife, committed helpmeet, tender lover, cheerful homemaker, tidy housekeeper, interior decorator, purchasing agent, alert investor of money, physical-fitness expert, maker of hand-stitchery, volunteer worker, compassionate neighbour, wardrobe planner, clothes designer, wife of a busy husband, creative seamstress, student of the Word, one who walks daily with the Lord - an example of a gracious godly woman.

"So we see that "submission" on the part of the wife does not incarcerate a woman in a concentration camp. It does not mean suppression or silence or shutting off her brain or surrendering her individuality. But yet, there can be only one president in a corporation. When the wife has offered her observations and convictions, she submits – in committing her husband to God as he makes the final decision.

A word about the unfortunate Women's Lib Movement with such labels as NOW, ERA, or IWY. The Christian wife should disassociate herself from this evil, rebellious, self-asserting "liberation" movement. It is a known fact that many of these feminists are not married to happy husbands, some are divorced, some are known lesbians and few demonstrate the characteristics of "femininity". The woman who refuses to submit to her husband destroys that part of him that is God-designed and unique, his leadership capability. The husband needs to be respected and admired just as the wife needs to be loved, both are emotional needs for the total fulfilment of the uniqueness of the sexes.

Though the husband is told to "love" his wife and to be the initiator "from time to time, yet the woman's nature is such that normally it is easier for her to love, and she is to fulfil her role as a lover just as

the husband is instructed to love his wife. This develops mutual esteem and admiration for one another.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the meaning of the word "woman" and "wife"?
Gen. 2:18,23 (see Introduction For "wife")

Answer: _____

2. Though the woman was made from the man, who brings Forth the man since Adam's creation? Is the man independent from the woman? I Cor. 11:8,9,11,12 (See Amplified Version)

Answer: _____

3. Is it proper for the wife to "submit" to her Husband as "head (leader, shepherd, provider, protector, lover)? Eph.5:22,24

Answer: _____

4. Does this principle still apply if the husband is not a Christian? I Peter 3:1; I Cor. 7:13,14,16 (See Amplified Version)

Answer: _____

5. Does "submission" prevent the wife from leading a versatile, productive, rewarding, Fulfilling, many-faceted career?
Prov. 31:10-31

Answer: _____

6. List at least 15 different activities mentioned in the above passage.

Answer: _____

7. Since the female nature is generally more emotional and therefore makes it easier for the wife to love, should she always leave it to the husband to initiate and promote the love relationship? How should the wife respond? I Cor. 7:3-5; Eph.5:22

Answer: _____

8. Should the wife be concerned about her outward adornment? What adorning should have priority? I Peter 3:3,4

Answer: _____

9. Does this include the care, cleanliness and beauty maintenance of her body? I Cor.3:16, 4:17; 6:19,20

Answer: _____

"The beauty of a woman is seen when her life shows forth the fruit of the Spirit. That can only come from walking in Fellowship with Jesus Christ: "But I say, walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desires of the Flesh' (Gal.5:16 NAS). Regardless whet her Physical features are like she will have an inner glow and beauty".
Spirit Controlled Family Living

LESSON 8

LOVE THE MOST IMPORTANT INGREDIENT

LESSON READING: I John 4:7-e21; John 13:34,35 I Cor. 13:1-13

MEMORY VERSE: I John 3:18 "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

INTRODUCTION: Above everything else, the most important ingredient needed to make marriage successful and happy, is love. But is it not true that most people marry because they are in love"? Why then are most marriages unhappy and one out of two end up in divorce in some areas? The answer is, that most people do not know the meaning of true love, the kind that makes marriage happy.

The Greek language has three words for love: Phileo, eros and agape. "Phileo" is that kind of love that is fraternal, it is social obligation imposed upon members of some fraternity. Happy marriages are not built on phileo love. "Eros" refers to a lustful, predator, self-centred love. 'Agape' means "I love you just as you are," The words have extremely different connotations. Eros love happens suddenly, without warning. Agape love has a time and growth dimension. Someone has remarked, "Lust cannot wait to get, love cannot wait to give."

In eros love there is a compulsive need for reassurance: "Do you really love me?" In agape love, there is a satisfying trust. There is not room for jealousy in real love. There is an inner satisfying force. There is certainty in the relationship; you don't have to try to prove it in words, even though words are nice to hear. It is found in action, and in that inner peace. I John 3:18 says, "little children, let us not love with words or with tongue, but indeed and truth."

Eros love is self-centred, agape love is other centred, Many people get married for what they think they can get out of the marriage,

not for what they can give to the marriage. In eros love, people fall in love with the characteristics and miss the person. In agape love, there is an acceptance of the whole person. In eros love, sex is a means to an end; in agape love, sex, even in the simplest form conveys meaning. With two people who really love each other, sex becomes a way of conveying meaning whether it is holding hands or sexual intercourse or something in between. Both male and female sense meaning, Fulfilment and love.

You can test your love by answering the following question:

1. Do you have a strong affectionate bond about each other's needs and desires that inspires a willingness on your part to sacrifice to fulfil them?
 2. Do you enjoy each other's personality, companionship, and friendship?
 3. Do you share common goals and interests which you communicate about Freely?
 4. Do you respect and admire each other in spite of recognized needs or weaknesses?
 5. Do you have sexual attraction for each other that leads frequently to a mutual satisfactory expression of the act of marriage?
 6. Do you desire children (if physically possible) who share both of your physical and temperamental characteristics and to whom you can impart your moral and spiritual values?
 7. Do you have a vital Faith in God that is a helpful influence on each other's spiritual life?
 8. Do you have a sense of permanence and possession about each other such that no other person is attracted to you in like manner.
 9. Do you have a growing desire to be with each other
 10. Do you have a genuine appreciation for each other's successes?
- (rearranged from Spirit Controlled Family Living)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

Note the nine characteristics of genuine love as listed below. Can you find these characteristics in I Cor. 13:1-13°

Quote the Term.

1. Patient -- Col. 3:13, Gal. 5:22

Ans. _____

2. Kind - Eph. 4:32

Ans. _____

3. Humble - I Peter 5:5; Col. 3:12

Ans. _____

4. Generous - II Cor. 9:6

Ans. _____

5. Gentleness, Courteous, Polite - Titus 3:2

Ans. _____

6. Sincerity - II Cor. 1:12

Ans. _____

7 Trusting, Confidence - Gal5:10; Prov.3:5,6

Ans. _____

8. Gracious, thoughtful - Phil.2:3,4; I Cor. 10:33

Ans. _____

9. Unselfish - Phil. 2:2-4

Ans. _____

NOTE: Compare the nine Fruits of the Spirit with the above nine characteristics of love: Gal. 5:22,29 Now read ten Christian graces (characteristics) in 2 Peter 2:5-8 and note their relationship to the fruits of the Spirit.

10. How does one appropriate agape love? Rom. 5:4

Ans. _____

11. How do we prove that we love God? I John 2:3-6

Ans. _____

In what way does this apply to husband and wife relationships?

Ans. _____

Note: German philosopher and theologian, Franz Delitzsh, in his book Christian Psychology, says that when God created man, He left out a certain part of man's soul. And when God created woman, He left out a certain part of her spirit. Therefore, what man and womantry to do subconsciously is to complement the needs of soul and spirit. That leads to fulfilment. Love strives to bring fulfilment to all of us. Psychology's "wheel theory" (personality needs, rapport, self-realization, fulfilment) says that we all move towards the desire for Fulfilment.

Regardless of whether we have been married one year or a hundred, we can all relate to problems and struggles. As we try to complement one another, conflicts and differences are going to arise. Whether it is heated waters or torrential floods, you will find that through it all love is the sustaining force. How you respond to crises in interpersonal relationships indicates the depth of your understanding of love.

LESSON 9

MAJOR EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS IN MARRIAGE

LESSON READING: Eph. 4:17-32; 5:1-33; Col. 3:41-e5

MEMORY VERSE: Eph. 4:31, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice."

INTRODUCTION: "Most couples return from the honeymoon madly in love. They continue that way until they experience their First emotional conflict or clash of wills. We call this 'a lover's quarrel'. Usually it isn't fatal though it leaves a slight scar on their relationship. But making up is such fun! And they hurry down the marital path for another period of time until their next emotional eruption, Followed by another exciting make-up session. Gradually these conflicts come closer together as the couple's wills and desires clash, and gradually they may turn their loving home into a 'hell on earth'.

No one has to tell a married couple that men and women are different. They are not only built differently but think, feel and respond differently, Some of that dissimilarity is due to their sexual identity, in spite of what some unisex advocates would have us believe. But much of it is due to their opposite temperaments. It is extremely valuable to know about human temperament as the best explanation of why people act the way they do. Many people have Found it helpful in understanding and accepting their partners, not to mention how it clarifies the reason for their own behaviour.

It has been observed that opposites attract each other in marriage. The reason is very subtle. We all admire others who are strong in areas in which we ourselves are weak. That admiration, under the right circumstance, often leads to love and the marriage altar. But the unsuspecting couple learns soon after the honeymoon that the partner is not perfect after all. And, even worse, he or she is often

weak in areas of the other's strengths. The temptation at that point is to look disdainfully Or contemptuously upon a partner's weaknesses - or clash with them.

It is imperative that each individual learn to accept his partner's weaknesses along with his strengths and stop aggravating, criticizing, or trying to change him. God alone, with the cooperation at the individual] is able to bring about the desired change. Acceptance of the total person; whether or not you like some of His weaknesses, is essential.

THE PROBLEM OF ANGER, HOSTILITY, AND BITTERNESS

Over 80 per cent of today's marriages show a disposition to problems of anger. When we speak out of anger, we include its various forms of bitterness, revenge, resentment, attack, and perhaps ten other expressions of hostility. In our opinion, nothing is more devastating to a marriage relationship, and no other emotion spoils family 'Living or destroys the psyche of children, as anger does, The home was meant to be an emotional haven of peace, love and joy to which couples and their eventual children can resort, shielded from the hostile, selfish world outside. Unfortunately, many find more hostility and animosity in their homes than in the outside,

Anger is a subtle force which circulates through many people who aren't aware of its influence. Doubtless this is the reason the Bible so pointedly commands, "Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter against them." (Col.3:19) In other words, bitterness or love may be expressed, but a relationship cannot admit both simultaneously. Inner anger has caused such unnecessary tragedies as impotence, frigidity, loss of love, colitis, heart trouble, strokes, emotional breakdowns, and almost every conceivable malady common to man."

(Spirit Controlled Family Living}

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. How does Paul describe the one who is truly born-again (Converted)? II Cor. 5:17

Ans. _____

2. By what power is this change accomplished? II Cor. 3:18

Ans. _____

3. Does this mean a born-again Christian will never be tempted to yield to the old nature? James 1:14,15

Ans. _____

4. What must we do when we do yield and sin? I John 1:7-10

Ans. _____

5. Besides confessing our sin, what else are we to do? Rom. 6:12,13; Gal.3:1-9

Ans. _____

6. Having renounced sinful habits, what are we admonished to do? Col.3:10-15; Ps.37:8

Ans. _____

7. We have noted that anger is one of the prime reasons for problems in the marriage relationship. What does Paul say about this? Eph. 4:31; Col.3:19

Ans. _____

Note: Some counsellors advise people who have a problem with anger that anger should not be suppressed but redirected or "channelled into useful endeavours" using the passage in Ephesians 4:26 (be angry and sin not) to support their view. However, please note the other sinful practices associated with anger in Ephesians 4:31. We suggest that the King James translation here is unfortunate, a more correct translation would be, "Can you be angry, and sin not?" Anger will produce such emotions as bitterness, evil passions, hostility and actual violence.

It has been suggested that "righteous indignation" is meant here. But why does Paul say, "Let not the sun go down on your wrath"? If it is possible to channel anger into constructive and useful endeavours, it would have to be that type that motivated Jesus at the cleansing of the temple when He drove the "thieves and robbers" out of the house of God. But Jesus never used this motivation to defend Himself. I submit that too many people are using this motivation (righteous indignation) as a tool to defend their carnal and sinful nature. But this will never bring peace in the home. When we come to the defence of justice, morality, and righteousness we should indeed be firm, resolute, unyielding, rigid, steadfast and vocal.

LESSON 10

MAJOR EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS IN MARRIAGE #2 FEAR, WORRY AND ANXIETY

LESSON READING: Matt.6:2e5-32; Ps.37:1-11 Luke 12:22-32

MEMORY VERSE: PRil.4:6, "Be careful(anxious) for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

INTRODUCTION: Next to anger, the most common emotional problem to strike people, and consequently the family, is Fear in its variety of forms. Fear was the initial negative emotion found in the Bible after - Adam and Eve sinned.

For the first time man was afraid of God who made him. Ever since then it has acted as an emotional destroyer. Dr. McMillen indicates that fear causes the same tensions that are induced by anger; consequently it is responsible for basically the same fifty-one ailments. The high-pressure pace of the nuclear age in which we live has accelerated the incidence of worry by increasing its causes and lessening many sources of security. The world-wide migration to cities forces man into a competitive environment that is far more conducive to fear than the old rural way of life.

Fear is not usually relegated to a single experience, but becomes a way of life. Fearful people worry about almost anything that is new and different, and some even fuss about rudimentary things that are familiar. A fearful person will inhibit himself vocationally, socially, educationally and sexually. In addition, his family and spiritual life will suffer greatly.

Everyone experiences fear when confronted by something dangerous or new, but if we let that fear keep us from doing what we should, it is out of our hand. Doubtless you know people who refuse to drive a car but have had ample opportunity to learn.

What is the real reason they do not learn? Fear. Many of our routine activities today caused extraordinary fear the first time we tried them, but our anxiety was kept in check and we proceeded, however uncertain. The fear-prone person will not allow himself to do that which arouses fear. We have met several who were afraid to marry, others who feared a new job or venture.

Fear stifles conversation and communication in the home. It hampers many parents from insisting on standards and guidelines, and it occasions many family squabbles. We have watched sadly through the years as good parents made the fatal mistake of being afraid to discipline their teenage children.

What Causes people to be fear prone? Any explanation logically begins with their basic temperament. But temperament alone does not Fully account For 4 person's fears, worries, and anxieties. It does, however, provide him with a predisposition toward mental anxiety, which can be eased considerably by love, discipline, and security in the home - followed by strong spiritual growth. The same basic temperament subjected in childhood to rejection, lack of discipline, or unreasonable dominance without the aid of spiritual development will doubtless produce a Fear-ridden adult. Add to this the possibility of traumatic childhood experiences, a negative thinking Pattern and several other Fear-producing Factors, and you have a real Fear case on your hands.

The fears of childhood are frequently overcome during the courtship state through love, libido, and excitement. However, they gradually return after the honeymoon is over and the routine of daily living sets in. Within weeks or months the Fears of one collide with the anger of another, their genuine love begins to tarnish and eventually they may deem their "incompatibility" grounds for divorce.

QUESTONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Where do we find the first evidence of fear? What was its cause and result? Gen.39:10, 16-19

Ans. _____

2. Can you Find the following conditions which engender fear in these passages? Quote

A. Suspicion -Acts.9:26

Ans. _____

B. Uncertainty - II Cor. 11:3

Ans. _____

C. People's opinions -- John 9:22

Ans. _____

D. Death - Heb. 2:14,15

Ans. _____

3. Anxiety is "a disturbed state of mind caused' by real or imaginary fears". What is another term for anxiety Found in Matt. 13:7, 22

Ans. _____

4. What does Jesus say about anxiety? Luke 21:34

Ans. _____

5. Would you say that over concern and worry manifests unbelief in God's care and love For His children? Matt. 6:25-32

Ans. _____

6. What does Peter say we should do with our fear, worry and anxiety? I Peter 5:7

Ans. _____

7. Can we trust God to help us work out our problems? Rom. 8:28

Ans. _____

8. Quote David's beautiful words regarding trust in God. Ps. 37:1-5

Ans. _____

9. How does Paul classify doubt? Aom.14:23

Ans. _____

10 What then are we to do about fear, worry, and anxiety?
I John 1:8,9; 5:14,15

Ans. _____

11. How can we maintain victory over fear, worry and anxiety?
Rom.6:13; Gal 5:16

Ans. _____

LESSON 11

SELFISHNESS, DEPRESSION AND INFIDELITY

SCRIPTURE READING: Phil.4:6-8; Phil.2:1-53 Matt.7:12; Gal.5:19-21

MEMORY VERSE: Matt. 7:12, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you; do you even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

INTRODUCTION: "The number three bomb in the arsenal of marriage problems is basic to all mankind — selfishness. We are all born with it, and to one degree or another, it plagues us throughout life. One of the chief responsibilities of parents is to train their children away from selfishness. Every baby comes home from the hospital with the self-centred attitude that he is the only child in the world. Any perceived need for food, sleep or a diaper change will occasion a howl of protest: "I want attention now!" We accept that as normal because he is immature. But unless trained out of it through years of love and discipline, he will still be immature at twenty years of age and will serve as a bad risk for marriage.

The hardest person to love over a period of time is not one who is unattractive or possesses a zero personality, but a partner who is selfish. An egocentric person thinks of himself first and foremost in everything. Consequently, he finds giving and sharing a difficult habit to cultivate.

Happiness is dependent on learning to share one's self, time, talents and possessions with others. Money is only one subject that is distorted by selfishness. Others include children, parents, holidays, sports, hobbies, lovemaking, churchgoing, giving, and most other facets of living. The cure for selfishness is basically the same as for anger and fear.

The problem of depression is evidenced by the statistics on suicides which are increasing at a fearsome pace. The real problem with depression can be cured quite readily if one is willing to face what causes it. But many strike out right there. You can actually chart your own depression, for its intensity will vary with the degree of self-pity. Every time a person uses any of the reasons everyone offers for indulgence in self-pity, he begins to get depressed.

A happy, well-adjusted person will not suddenly become depressed, as if he were hit by a viral infection. Usually he will find that something specific happened or he will remember a previous unfortunate event - perhaps rejection by someone he loves, an insult, or an injury. Anytime you find yourself drifting into depression recognize this formula: rejection, insult or injury equals self-pity equals depression. Then take steps for its cure: Confess it as a sin of the mind, ask God to take away this thought pattern and be filled with God's Spirit.

Since earliest times the misuse of man's God-given sex drive has proven to be a major human problem. The Holy Spirit was obviously aware of that fact, for in the list of seventeen common "works of the flesh" (Gal.5:19-21) the first four are sexual sins: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness. They were problems in Israel; the Corinthian church was plagued with them, and rampant sexual vice is predicted for the last days.

God's plan has always designed one man for one woman, as long as they both live. Anything short of that is a sin against God and a betrayal of the trust of your dearest friend. Faithful partners are not untempted partners.

Almost every red-blooded person has had opportunity to cheat on his mate, but love, honour, and duty rejected the opportunity. You don't accrue any brownie points for such action, but you escape the impending load of guilt and shame it causes. Even six months or a year after their sin of infidelity sexual maladjustment problems

are experienced. The wages of all sin are much too high - and that is particularly true of sexual sins.

According to Jesus, sexual sins can be committed in the mind. (Matt.5:28) therefore the pattern of mental-attitude lust must be cured before lasting victory can be obtained. Even though the secular world of psychology commonly suggests that sexual Fantasies are normal (the 'everyone is doing it' routine) they are wrong. The people of Noah's day were sexual degenerates whom God destroyed. "...even the imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Thoughts inspire the intense Feelings that lead to the marriage- jolting sin. (Genesis 6:5)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. How does the golden rule apply to selfishness? Matt 7:12

Ans. _____

2. What does Paul say about sharing? Phil.2:3,4

Ans. _____

3. Does the selfish person have God's love in him? I John 3:17

Ans. _____

4. What formula brings depression? (See Introduction)

Ans. _____

5. What is the opposite of self-pity? Luke 6:38; Eph. 4:32

Ans. _____

6. What four sexual sins does Paul mention in Gal. 5:19-21?

Ans. _____

7. Will fornicators or adulterers enter into God's kingdom?
I Cor.6:9,10; Heb.13:4

Ans. _____

8. What does Paul declare fornication to be?
I Cor. 6:18; II Cor.12:21

Ans. _____

9. Should fornicators be allowed Christian Fellowship?
I Cor. 5:9-13

Ans. _____

10. Is there forgiveness for sexual sins? John 8:3,4,10,11; I John 1:9

Ans. _____

11. What does the Bible say about homosexuality and lesbianism?
Hom. 1:21-32 (Does this include any and all sexual perversion?)

Ans. _____

LESSON 12

BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

LESSON READING: Matt.5:37; James 3:1-18; Prov. 15:1-33 :

MEMORY VERSE: Prov. 18:21, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue; and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof."

INTRODUCTION: "Three elements are necessary for a marriage to be successful: (1) a proper understanding of agape love; (2) comprehension of the proper roles of husbands and wives; and (3) sound understanding of the principles of communication.

Many of us open our mouths and assume that whatever flows out is correct. When was the last time you thought, "I shouldn't have said that"? It is good to become conscious of the mistake, but we can take the logic and learn from it. The tongue is an interesting instrument. It can express edification, love, warmth, or it can express bitterness, hate and hostility's

Communication at its optimum, is the freedom to share any question, problem or thought with someone else. We built walls many times instead of bridges. Some couples have been married ten or fifteen years and do not have the freedom to share any question, problem or thought. God meant us to communicate. We affect ourselves both inwardly and others outwardly by what we say. Proverbs 16:24 says, "Pleasant words are like Honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones". "Sweet to the soul" refers to an inner dimension. "Health to the bones" seems to imply that God keeps our inner chemistry in a much better condition if we are not emotionally upset or critical.

Obviously the opposite of correctly used words is argument. Many Christian homes are filled with screaming yelling and arguing. They are yelling because dinner is not on the table on time or junior is not moving fast enough. Arguments can be constructive if we are

objective enough to discuss how they can refine our relationship.” But in large measure we are not. Therefore, they became destructive. They build walls and produce a chain-reaction beginning with an issue, then moving to will versus-will confrontation, followed by name calling, then physical or mental hurt and then flight.

If no base of resolve can be found, no agreement will be reached. The goal of marriage is oneness. Therefore, the interest of both must supersede the individual wills. The first Biblical principle on communication is if you have something to say, say it and be quiet. Jesus said, "Let your communication be yea, yea: nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Many of us have spent hours and hours listening to the same things over and over again. Parents are especially guilty of this in child discipline.

Another point of importance is to learn to speak softly. See Prov. 15:1, Many of us by temperament are more prone to give harsh responses. Often, it is not the words that are bothersome, but the way in which they are said. If someone asks a question in an irritable voice, many of us feel like responding in a similar fashion, then we should learn to choose our words well. (Prov.17:27,28) By our ability to control our tempers, to choose words correctly and use them sparingly, we are showing the depth of our wisdom and understanding. Another principle is that we must be sensitive to communication cues. Most of us have never learned the art of Listening. The husband regardless of the pressures of the day, as spiritual leader, is supposed to listen to his wife when she says, "Boy have I had a hard day today. His response should be, "Why don't you relax and I'll take care of the kids for a while." Another note: be sensitive to the "pressure principle" of communication. As two People are talking 2 "pressure principle" is involved. There is a stress. factor subconsciously active during communication. It moves from person to person. Great strength lies with the individual who can consciously become sensitive to this and can objectively manoeuvre. If someone stops talking and looks

at you, you are expected to start talking. You can "blow" someone's mind by saying nothing, or, change the topic of conversation. Jesus gives us a classic example of this when He was confronted with the woman caught in the act of adultery (John 8) While the crowd is expecting Jesus to pass judgment on the woman, He looks at the crowd and says, "The person without sin can throw the first stone". "Christ is aware of the pressure principle and He executes it by using only one sentence. (The Marriage Manual)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AN DISCUSSION

1. How does James describe the tongue? James 3:5-10

Ans. _____

2. What are our words capable of doing? James 3:10; Prov. 18:4,21

Ans. _____

3. What principle of communication did Jesus give? Matt. 5:37

Ans. _____

4. What does Solomon say about pleasant words or words fitly spoken? Prov. 16:24; 25:11

Ans. _____

5. How should the Christian respond in confrontation?
Prov. 17:27,28

Ans. _____

6. What is said about choosing well the words that we speak?
Prov.17:27,28

Ans. _____

7. Is listening important in the art of communication?

Prov.17:28, 18: 13

Ans. _____

8. What is said about talebearing or gossip? Prov. 18:8; 16:28

Ans. _____

9. How does the Bible describe the flow of words of love and wisdom from our lips? Prov. 16:24; John 7:38; James 3:17

Ans. _____

10. What is said of a "Fool's lips?" Prov.18:5,5

Ans. _____

LESSON 13

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RAISING CHILDREN

LESSON READING: Deut. 6:1-9; Eph.6:1-4; Ps.127:3-5; Heb.12:5-11

MEMORY VERSE: Eph.6:1,2 "Children, obey your Parents in the Lord: For this is right. Honour thy Father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise."

INTRODUCTION: "Nothing is more of a challenge than raising children. It is a Full-time Commitment from 'breath one' - child one. And every parent, whether or not he realizes it, has a philosophy of child psychology. Each day as you interact in love and in crisis, that philosophy is shaping that child.

Tragically, many parents take out their unresolved conflicts and pent-up hostilities on their children who become whipping boards and are battered by their parents. On the other hand, many parents are passive. We live in an era of 'progressiveness'. Briefly, this philosophy encourages parents to help create an 'atmosphere of individuality'. Each child's expression and personality can best be developed if he is given the freedom to find it. Therefore, help him to work out his hostilities. Do not stymie feelings. If authority has to be challenged, then so be it.' But this idea is also tragic.

Some homes have an authoritarian philosophy. One parent makes the decisions. One is dominant. When he or she speaks the rest listen. But we submit that the best approach is a democratic approach. Here the views of all are taken into consideration. This sacrifices neither structure nor 'chain of authority', for in the final analysis, if there is disagreement the father makes the final decision.

Sound and clear principles for raising children do exist and we will enumerate them but first we want to analyse two major areas where parents fail. The first and most obvious failure occurs through ignorance. Now, this is not malicious. Ignorance means 'lack of knowledge.' We can only work from what we know and understand. If parents do not know the correct principles for raising their children, failure is a strong possibility.

Secondly, parents fail through example. Many parents expect their children to be something they themselves are not. You can pass along your strengths to your children, but your weaknesses are reproduced as well. What we are psychologically, socially and spiritually is reproduced in our children. If you have certain habits that you know are wrong, do not be too surprised if these 'patterns' crop up in your children. Psychologists estimate that ninety percent of what a child is comes directly or indirectly from the parents.

It is an awesome responsibility to raise children by God's Word. These principles are set forth for application. First, it is the responsibility of the parents to teach the children. See Deut. 6:7, As a parent you must be aware of the process, the product, and the person. In each of these stages, you are a teacher. If you react correctly as your child experiences these stages, later you will most likely be accepted not only as a person, but as a friend. In teaching we must be consistent. The number one reason for children becoming 'spoiled' is the lack of consistent discipline. If, for example, a child is punished for something you have established as being wrong, the second time the child makes the same mistake the same punishment is not meted out, then an inconsistent pattern has emerged. As a teacher, you must not only define boundaries within that framework you must also establish an interpretation of ethics. You tell the child what is right and wrong. A slow, deliberate and methodical approach to discipline is essential. It demands perception and discernment on our part. Remember, from the time you get up to the time you go to bed you are a teacher.

We owe it to our children to have some absolute and meaningful conclusions concerning psychological and spiritual values. What parents believe must be lived and, should be evident to their children at an early age. Besides teaching the child, the parents also have the responsibility to train the child. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:65) What is the difference between teaching and training? Well, it is one thing to have a philosophy of teaching, another to have a method. "Training" in the original Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible conveys the idea of a method. A method connotes purpose and control. We will submit four steps in dealing with problems. This method is geared for children up to the age of thirteen, not for the late teens.

The first step is to go over the problem and review the consequences. Whatever the child has done, identify the problem and review the possible consequences. Weigh the consequences by the intensity of the offense, and the psychological makeup of the individual.

The second step is called "Feedback number one". This means that you have the child tell you exactly what the problem is and the consequences. Take for example, stealing from the cookie jar. The cookies were made for supper. Eating before supper would spoil the appetite. Penalty for disobedience - spanking.

To follow through with the consequences is the third step. If you have said, "If you do that again you will have to be spanked," be aware that you must keep your word. Be consistent. Always follow through on what you have said.

The fourth step is "feedback number two" and forgiveness. After a child has been punished and perhaps some cooling time has elapsed, go to the child and say, "Do you realize why you were spanked?" In almost every case, the child will answer, "Yes". Then have the child tell you why. The psychology of this method is that

you are teaching the child values. After it is all over it is good to take the child in your arms and say, "I love you and I forgive you For what you have done." That is methodology that will avoid screaming, yelling and beating.

Do not become emotionally involved when you discipline your child. You can raise your voice but still be objective and in control. Your mind can govern your Feelings, When a child does something wrong; you can be genuinely upset but absolutely in control of yourself and your actions so that in training our children they do not bring out the worst in us. Remember too, corporal Punishment is not capital punishment; however, be sure that the spanking is firm enough to produce the desired results. The Bible defends corporal punishment and it should be used when there is deliberate disobedience and malicious mischief. Always be sure the child knows why he or she is being punished. Under no circumstances hit a child with your hand or in the face. The Biblical "rod" was a thin narrow device, a "switch" or a fair compromise would be to use a paddle. And it is meant to be used on "the seat of learning" the buttock.

What does it mean to "nurture" a child? see Eph. 6:4. Here are some suggestions: Realize that you must develop in your children what is called "righteous fear" something that is a little stronger than respect, so that the child will say, when he is older, When dad said something, he meant it." Realize that threats are usually worthless. Do not say things you do not mean, e.g. "If you do that again, I'm going to give you away." Obviously, you do not mean that.

Then, parents must agree on the purpose and method of discipline. A child soon learns how he can pit mother against father or vice versa. When a decision has been made, do not cross that decision. Do not Fight or bicker in the presence of your children Realize that your responsibility is to control the children, however, if you expect your children to respect your leadership, realize you have to be tender, and show compassion, warmth and love. I Tim.3:4 makes it

clear that we should rule our own house and that our children should be in subjection to us.

If the teenager is smarter than the parents he will rule the parents and manoeuvre them to get his own way. If there is an area in which we need wisdom, perception and understanding, it is in being able to give proper direction to our teenagers. What we are actually doing, as parents, is preparing our children to be independent. What a task! Values, ethics, principles, life style...all of this and more to be determined.

The number one need within your teenager is for relationship. Your teenager wants relationship with you. The two basic needs of all of us are: 1) Love

And affection, and 2) a sense of belonging. Teenagers must find this at home or they will seek it elsewhere. That is why some go to drugs, alcohol or sex. They are asking "Who am I? Where am I going? What is life all about? (Identity crisis) Are your teenagers going to be able to come to you and say, 'Mom, Dad, I've got a problem. I don't understand. Help me.'" Teenage years are very crucial in terms of identity and today's youth face pressures we never had. The situation in which we find ourselves today is a paradox. Scientifically we have gone to the moon and are headed for Mars. Morally, however, we have retrogressed. There is more rape, more venereal disease and more illegitimacy than ever before. As a parent, you must be able to get your son or daughter to see that there is purpose to all the rules and the structure you have built into your home. Otherwise, there will be confrontation. Let the teenager feel & sense of individuality by encouraging participation in resolving problems.

If a teenager cannot come to the point of sensing individuality and freedom in his psychological environment or religious training, then the teenager will consciously or subconsciously rebel. The religious experience must be something that is lived and practised. It must

be vital and alive. It must pulsate through your total being and life. Thus, it provides balance between freedom and structure.

In today's hedonistic (pleasure seeking) philosophy, if a teenager is not involved in drugs or sex, he or she is not "with it" (supposedly). Therefore, the teenager has to see purpose in being an individual and standing up as an individual. The atmosphere of your home should enable your teenager to find himself as an individual. The home is that unique laboratory that God means for development, growth and finding identity in a world of confused values and standards.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. What does the Bible say about children?

Gen. 33:5; Ps.127:3-5; Prov. 17:6

Ans _____

2. What example of motherhood do we see in Hannah?

I Samuel 1:22-28

Ans _____

3. When did Timothy begin his instruction in the Scriptures?

II Tim.3:15

Ans _____

4. What does the Bible say about training and instruction of children? Deut.6:1-9; Prov. 22:6; Eph.6:4;Gal.4:1,2

Ans _____

5. What happens when parents are indulgent with their children? (to favour, pamper or spoil) I Sam.2:22-29; Prov.13:24; 29:15

Ans _____

6. What was done to the stubborn and rebellious child in Old Testament days. Deut. 21:18-21

Ans _____

7. Is it possible for a prophet of God to fail in the proper upbringing of his own children? I Sam.8:1-5

Ans _____

8. What does the Bible say of Moses' upbringing? Heb.11:23; With what results' Heb. 11:24-26

Ans _____

9. Should children be left to make their own standards of right and wrong? Prov. 29:15, 22:15

Ans _____

10 Does discipline {chastisement) inhibit, impede or retard a child's development and maturing? Prov.23:13,14; 29:15

Ans _____

11. What precaution should the fathers take when administering discipline or correction? Eph.6:4; I Tim.3:4; Prov.19:11; 16:32;25:28

Ans _____

12. Does this mean that corporal punishment should never be used? Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13,14; Heb. 12:5-11

Ans _____

13. How must children relate to their parents? Eph. 6:1-3; Ex.20:12; Heb.1e:9; Prov.e3:e2

Ans _____

14. At what age are we admonished to recognize God and accept His guidelines in our life? Eccl.12:1; I Tim.4:12

Ans _____

15. What is the number one need between teenagers and parents? What is "identity crisis?" What are the two basic needs of all of us? What is means by "purpose and structure" (See Introcuton)

Ans _____

NOTE: IMPORTANT! Because of lack of space, many areas of counselling on the Christian family have not been dealt with in depth. We would suggest the teacher especially, as well as the student, obtain good Biblically-oriented books on this subject. We would stress that great care be taken in the selection of reading material even of so-called Christian authors. Humanistic, permissive philosophies have permeated almost all areas of counselling. However, there are a number of good authors who have based their principles on the Bible. We suggest such authors as Larry Christenson, Tim LaHaye, Jay E. Adams, Duane Cuthbertson and others who have not departed From Biblical principles.

Beware of authors like B.F. Skinner, Sigmund Freud, Carl Rogers, Alfred Adler and others who either scoff at or minimize Biblical principles. Skinner, in his popular book, "Beyond Freedom and Dignity" reiterates the dream of a utopian | Walden II, where science will produce a problem free society. According to Freud, man's main problem is poor socialization, he is a victim of his environment. His theory is that the source of man's difficulties is the conflict between his conscience (or Superego) and his normal desires (Id). Every time he violate a "do" or "don't" he Feels guilty

(not because he is, but because he violates His unreasonably strict Superego or conscience). Freudianism and Skinnerism reject Biblical principles as does the Rogerian theory. We must watch traces of their theory also in "Christian" authors.

James Dobson, for instance, recommends strict Behaviouristic methods for child raising in the name of Christianity. Dobson's approach centres upon manipulation but says nothing of Biblical confrontation. Conspicuously absent in such child discipline, is the use of the scriptures, conversion, repentance, the work of the Holy Spirit and sanctification. Ephesians 3:4 emphasizes, in contrast, both discipline (by reward and punishment) and nouthetic confrontation (the "nurture and admonition of the Lord"). Biblical persuasion, conviction and personal commitment are ignored.

Another example: When Bruce Narramore writes, "By combining the practical insights of modern psychology with the lasting truths of the Bible, we have a solid and balanced approach to the problem of the modern parent" ("Help, I'm a Parent") he expresses an eclectic viewpoint (using various sources for basic principles). But, the Bible does not need to be "balanced" of F by modern psychology. The principles of God's approach are clearly set Forth in the Scriptures. In II Peter 3:15-17 we are told that the Scriptures are sufficient to equip us for teaching, reproof, correction and discipline in the way of righteousness which truly brings happiness and fulfilment.

We find another example of softening and removing responsibilities for personal sin in Clyde Narramore's book, "The Psychology of Counselling" when he does not speak plainly about the sin of homosexuality by suggesting that the counsellors must help the homosexual offender to see that "life experiences and other factors have caused him to turn ta unnatural patterns." Thus confession of sin is avoided.

What we are trying to show is the dangers of wrong teaching and how subtle these teachings can be. Humanistic philosophies are counter— Scriptural principles and our society is suffering today because the Bible has been, to a2 great degree, set aside as the basis of truth.