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Train & Multiply™

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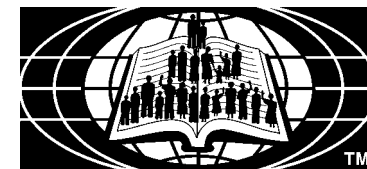
My Family



Pastoral Leader Training Booklet

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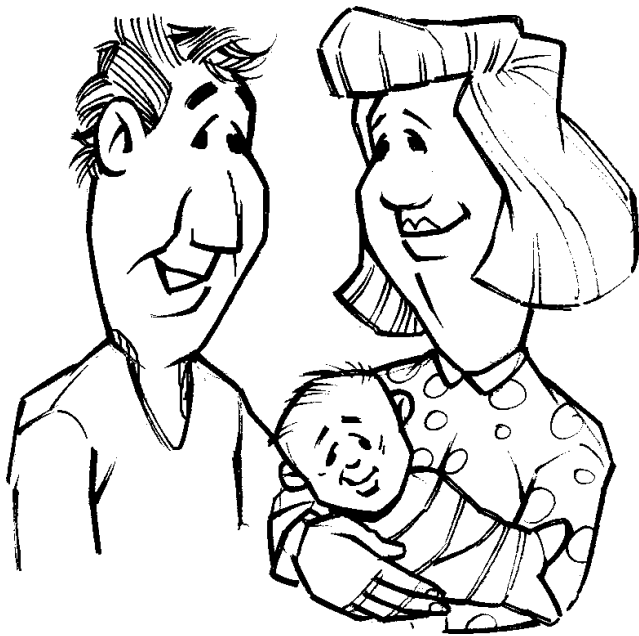


T&M™

Ask the Lord to use this study to strengthen ministry to families.

MY FAMILY: A GIFT FROM GOD

God helps mankind to establish order in society, with governments, laws, good customs and norms. The most basic unit of society is that of the family. (Genesis 2:24) God himself established this foundation of society. If families are strong all of society is strengthened.



NOTES

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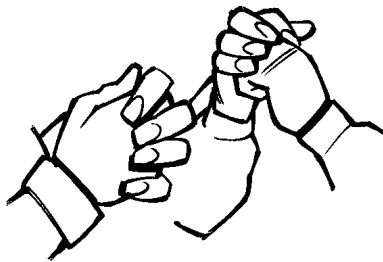
3. The first responsibility of a Christian youth is to obey God and:

- ☐ his parents.
☐ his friends.

4. What happens when a father lets his son keep bad company?

PRACTICAL WORK

- Prepare a detailed study of Ephesians 5:21 to Ephesians 6:4, to teach your congregation. Include guidelines in this study.
- Encourage each father in the congregation to have family worship, and to teach his children.



THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY

God established the first family in Eden. Read of God's plan for the family in Genesis 2:18-25, Ephesians 5:22-33, and Ephesians 6:1-4.

The Lord commanded Adam and Eve to have children. They are a blessing. But it is sinful not to care for our children. Christian parents are responsible for the care and education of their children.



Which is better?

- ☐ To have two or three children who are well nourished and educated.
- ☐ To have six badly raised children, of whom half die from malnutrition.

UNDERSTANDING AND LOVE IN THE HOME

Wise couples communicate constantly with each other, frankly and freely, sharing their deepest thoughts. This way, they understand and accept each other, and live in peace and harmony. When there is no mutual understanding, both suffer. If necessary, the elders of the church can help them to reach mutual understanding, to communicate, and so to live in peace and love. The elders' wives must help in this ministry. With their husbands, they can visit and counsel married couples, to talk in confidence about any problems and help the couples agree on solutions.

How can we help couples to understand each other?

- ☐ By scolding everyone in Sunday sermons.
- ☐ By counseling them in private.

How does a married couple develop mutual understanding? They discuss managing the home, sharing its responsibilities and raising the children. The Christian husband listens to his wife. She respects her husband. The elders can help them in this. The wife who tries to

- Model self-discipline. Children quickly see their parents' hypocrisy. We can hardly expect a child to obey rules if we fail to obey them. Gossip, arriving late, indulging in vices, etc., give the children a bad example and undermine the parent's authority.
- Pray daily with the children. Have a time of family devotions.

SUMMARY TEST

1. The first responsibility of a Christian husband towards his wife is:

2. The first responsibility of a Christian wife towards her husband is:

- Do not shout at them hysterically; that shows lack of self-control, and the child would lose respect for you. Talk to them, to explain what they must do, and why.
- Parents should not criticize each other in front of the children, or seek the child's support against the spouse.
- Above all give the children a stable, secure home, where there is love, openness and communication. There should be mutual respect, and a concern for each other's problems, acceptance, demonstration of love (by word and actions like hugs, caresses, etc.), however small or naughty the child.
- When there has been an argument or squabble between the children, or between the child and his teacher, class-mates or friends, wise parents listen to both sides, to find out what really happened.
- When two children quarrel, do not punish the older one just because he is older. Sometimes, smaller children deliberately provoke older ones, because they want them to be punished! Don't forget that the smallest child also has a fallen nature!

dominate her husband is foolish. The wise wife is subject to her husband. (Ephesians 5:22-24) A foolish husband tries to dominate his wife using force. The wise husband loves her tenderly and firmly, so that she gladly and willingly follows his lead.

GOD'S ORDER FOR THE FAMILY

God gave an order for the family. In following this, the family prospers, is united, well led, and blessed with happiness. By rejecting this order, the whole family suffers.

BIBLICAL ORDER IN THE HOME

(Ephesians 5:21 and Ephesians 6:4)

Christ

Christ is the head of the husband and the Savior of the whole family.

Husband

The husband, who is head of his wife and of the children, loves, cares for and protects those God has given him: (Ephesians 5:25-33 and Ephesians 6:4).

Wife

The wife honors her husband, and is subject to him:
(Ephesians 5:21-22)

Children

The children obey their parents: (Ephesians 6:1-3)

In a Christian home, who is the head of the wife (in the Lord)?

A loving husband has authority over his wife. Who is his head?

Christ is the Head of the husband and of the church.

Whom do the children obey?

- “Do not exasperate your children,” giving orders which are neither just nor reasonable. (Ephesians 6:4) Do not spank when you are angry, because you may go too far!
- To reinforce good habits and help children to improve, give them small rewards, and make positive comments when all the family are together.
- For adolescents, non-physical punishments work better, for example, the loss of privileges; giving more household jobs than normal, etc.
- Wise Christian parents respect their children, and do not laugh at them. If we make mistake in dealing with a child, we admit it and ask forgiveness. This builds mutual trust. We never punish a child for making a mistake or performing imperfectly. Such unfairness causes a child to hate himself, sometimes for life.
- Never compare the children or show preference for one over another.

- If a child breaks one of the family rules, or is cheeky, punishment should be immediate, impartial and without anger. When punishing a child, make it clear that it is for his bad behavior. You might say, “I love you but not what you did.” Follow with a hug and a loving talk.
- Corporal punishment is normally more effective than shouting and anger. It must be just, in proportion to the offence, and not excessive. For example, never hit on the head or shake a child; that can cause brain damage. Never strike while angry. Some children are extremely sensitive and respond better to a soft word of rebuke.
- Be consistent. If the child disobeys, the punishment should always follow, whatever the situation or occasion. For example, if the child disobeys in public, he can be taken aside immediately and punished.
- Both parents must use the same criteria and back each other up. In this way, the children cannot manipulate the parents, getting them to contradict each other.

Children from a Christian home obey their parents and come to know God through the parents’ example and instruction. God made these rules for the family’s welfare.

For example, children obey their parents. The wife is subject to her husband. He is responsible for them, before Christ, and cares for all his family with Christ-like sacrificial love. The whole family submits to Christ the Head.

When we respect this God-given authority and order, there is discipline, forgiveness and love. If the parents really love their children, they will correct their faults firmly.

Family love acts honestly and promotes confidence. It avoids unkind jokes. It forgets past offences. It prevents resentment and quarrels. It controls anger.

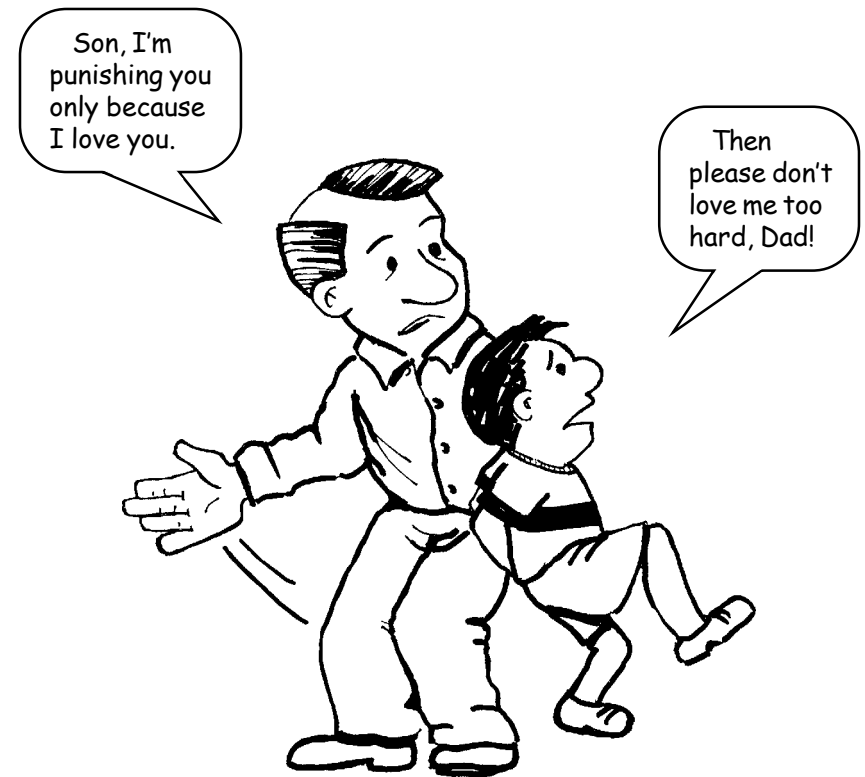
To sum up:

- The Christian wife honors her husband. (Ephesians 5:33)

- The Christian husband loves his wife as Christ loved the church and died for her. (1 Peter 3:7, Ephesians 5:23-33)
- The children obey their parents. (Ephesians 6:1-3)

THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE

- God commands a newly wed couple to leave their parents. (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6) The new couple should not remain under the control or financial care of their parents or in-laws. Their parents, although they may wish to help, end up damaging their children's new home and relationship, if they try to take control. Married couples care lovingly for elderly parents who need help. (1 Timothy 5:16) But they do not let the parents interfere in family affairs or in running the home.
- Husband and wife are "one flesh." (Ephesians 5:30-31) The Lord does not approve of divorce. He strictly forbids sexual relations outside marriage. (Exodus 20:14, Matthew 5:31-32)



- Wise parents set limits and establish norms. They agree on what the children may or may not do. These norms must be biblical, just and reasonable, and always be upheld.
- Explain to the children that these limits are for their own good. Although the discipline may be painful to the child, it is also painful to the parents.

GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINING CHILDREN

Parents who love their children discipline and pray for them. Most churches ask parents to dedicate their children in some way publicly to the Lord. (Luke 2:22-23) Jesus loves little children.

(Mark 10:13-16). Do your people have children whom they should dedicate to the Lord according to the custom of your church?

- Christian children honor and obey their parents (Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-3) and are a delight to them. Their parents must correct them when they disobey.

“A youngster’s heart is filled with rebellion, but punishment will drive it out of him.”

(Proverbs 22:15)

“If you refuse to discipline your son, it proves you don’t love him; for if you love him, you will be prompt to punish him.”

(Proverbs 13:24)

When adultery takes place, who are affected?

When adultery happens, all suffer. Society suffers. The church suffers. The adulterers themselves are hurt. Families are destroyed. The children lose the security of a happy, peaceful home.

- A Christian should only marry another Christian. (2 Corinthians 6:14) To disobey this command is a spiritual disaster. There is no mutual support in the faith. The Christian weakens. There is no agreement on criteria, principles, interests, priorities, discipline, etc. It is like yoking together a donkey and a dog to pull a sled.

What problems arise, if a believer marries an unbeliever?

- A newly converted man should not leave his wife just because she does not yet believe. He should try to win her for Christ, through his own good example. (1 Corinthians 7:12-16, 1 Peter 3:1-7)

An obedient believer does not seek excuses to leave his wife. Why not?

- Sometimes a man and a woman live together without being married. When they are converted they should either separate or declare before God their vows to remain faithful to each other (Christian marriage).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CHRISTIAN HUSBAND

- The Christian husband loves his wife, and seeks the happiness and welfare of his whole family. He leads them spiritually in God's ways. (1 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12)

By your example and words, teach your children to work hard and honestly.

Solomon taught: *"If you love sleep, you will end in poverty! Stay awake, work hard, and there will be plenty to eat!"*

(Proverbs 20:13) Follow the ant's example. It works hard. It does not waste time in foolishness and laziness. (Proverbs 6:6-11)

A son tends to follow his father's example.



Laziness keeps a man poor, but the diligent prosper. (Proverbs 10:4, and Proverbs 28:19). The youth who works need not fear the future. (Proverbs 10:5)

What can you do, to help parents in your church discipline and educate their children properly?

Keep your son away from alcohol and other vices.

Solomon says the wise youth does not get drunk; he does not go round with heavy drinkers. (Proverbs 23:19-21) Poverty awaits the drunkard. He looks for wine, not work. (Proverbs 23:21)

In Proverbs 23:29-32 Solomon says:

“Whose heart is filled with anguish and woe?”

“Who is always fighting and quarrelling?”

“Who is the man with blood-shot eyes and many wounds?”

“It is the man who spends long hours in the taverns, trying out new mixtures. Don’t let sparkle and smooth taste deceive you. For in the end it bites like a poisonous serpent, it stings like an adder.”



The husband should love his wife as Christ loved the church. (Ephesians 5:25) The husband loves his wife as he loves his own body. Just as he nourishes and cares for his own body, so he cares for and protects his wife. (Ephesians 5:28-30, 1 Peter 3:7, Colossians 3:20)

- The Christian husband works diligently to support his family. He cares for and disciplines the children. (Ephesians 6:4) Whoever does not provide for his family is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Timothy 5:8)

Do you spend enough time with your wife and children, giving them much affection, teaching them from the Bible and seeing to their moral, material, spiritual and emotional needs? If not, reorganize your schedule immediately, and make time to do this. What changes must you make in your schedule?

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CHRISTIAN WIFE

The Christian wife submits, in love, to her husband. She helps him to lead the family. (Colossians 3:18) They form a team, and her husband is the captain.

The Christian wife helps and works with her husband. She cares for him and the children. She supports him in his work for the Lord, and may develop her own ministry in the home or neighborhood. She works diligently, and her husband and children praise her. (Proverbs 31:10-31)

The mother corrects the children when their father is away, according to the home rules agreed between the couple. They must agree on these rules, and keep them constantly, without changes that cause insecurity in the children.

Do not threaten children with “Just you wait until your father gets home, he’ll punish you.” This leads to fear of the father, and at the same time, weakens the mother’s authority.

Help your child to avoid evil company.

Solomon warns the young man against violent people, and against evil women. He must keep away from them. (Proverbs 5:3-5)

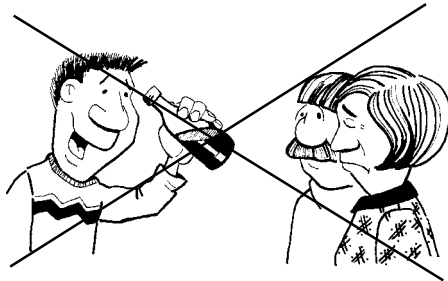


Help your child to obey his parents.

Solomon instructed children to listen to their parents. What they teach should not be disregarded, because they have more experience. (Proverbs 1:8-9, Proverbs 4:1-5)

If a youth remembers the teaching of his parents, he will stay on the right path. (Proverbs 3:1-2)

The foolish youth does not heed his father's instruction; an intelligent son pays heed. (Proverbs 15:5)



The wise child is a joy to his parents; the foolish child gives pain. (Proverbs 10:1)



RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHRISTIAN PARENTS

Christian parents bring up their children in the faith; they love, care for, teach and correct them. (Ephesians 6:4) They are just and unvarying in their relationship and dealings with them. They are not hypocritical, but rather, practice what they teach. Jesus took children in His arms and blessed them. He corrected His disciples when they tried to keep children away from Him. (Mark 10:13-16) Children are a blessing; they are gifts from God. (Psalm 127:3-5)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS FAMILIES

Strong churches have whole families. A congregation which has only one member of a family, or mainly children, or young people, remains weak. The church strengthens families, and keeps them united. God seeks whole families. When Lydia was converted, she also brought all her family to Christ. (Acts 16:14-15) In the same way, Cornelius the centurion was converted along with all his family (Acts 10:24, Acts 10:44-48) The jailer at Philippi (Acts 16:33-34) and Crispus of Corinth (Acts 18:8) received the Gospel along with all their families.

What are your plans to bring entire families to Christ?

How can you encourage parents to teach the Christian faith to their children?

A wise pastor helps fathers to counsel their children and not leave discipline to the wife. He does not wait until things go wrong. He starts when a child is small.

King Solomon lived some thousand years before Christ. His book of Proverbs in the Bible help us teach the young.

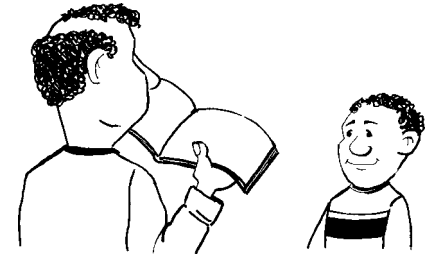
The book of Proverbs has short, easily remembered sayings, with which parents can guide their children. The following are some examples...

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Help your child to obey God.

Help the young to know God. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. If a child does not know God, he will be a fool.

(Proverbs 1:7)



Help the young to read
God's Word and to keep the
commandments in their heart.

Then God will protect them. (Proverbs 2:1-5, 10-12) Daily family worship is important. *“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”* (Proverbs 22:6)

Teach your child to trust in God, not in himself. The Lord will show the best way. (Proverbs 3:5-7)

Help your child to accept the Lord's discipline. A good father corrects his child with justice and love, just as the Lord corrects those who really are His children. (Proverbs 3:11-12)