

The Christian Home And Family



Sermon Outlines On The Christian Home And Family

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To God Be The Glory!

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The Christian Home And Family

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The Sanctity Of Marriage

INTRODUCTION

1. **Marriage** as an institution today is struggling...
 - a. Many seek to redefine what constitutes a marriage
 - b. We hear of same-sex marriages, open marriages, polygamy, polyandry, polyamory
 - c. Others decry marriage altogether, preferring simple cohabitation
 - d. Many joke about it: “Marriage is a wonderful institution. But who would want to live in an institution?” - **Henry Mencken**
2. **The family** as an institution today is struggling...
 - a. Husbands and wives often suffer strained relationships
 - b. Parents and children are frequently at odds with one another
 - c. Much misery in life is due to dysfunctional family relations
 - d. Some prefer that government assume the role of raising children
3. I believe much of the problem is due to **self-centeredness** in our society...
 - a. People are told to “look out for #1” in all their relations (business, family, etc.)
 - b. Thus many enter marriage and start families with selfish attitudes
 - c. Yet no relationship can exist peacefully and lovingly with selfish participants
4. The Bible has much to say about marriage and family...
 - a. Especially in the teachings of Jesus and His apostles
 - b. That has helped many to have long-lasting, fulfilling relationships
 - c. Which can affect both our temporal and eternal happiness

[In this series of lessons, we shall consider what Jesus and His apostles taught concerning the Christian home and family. I believe a good place to start is by affirming “**The Sanctity Of Marriage**”...]

I. THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE DEFINED

A. THE MEANING OF SANCTITY...

1. Sanctity is defined as the quality of being holy, sacred
2. Thus it is common to speak of “holy matrimony” (i.e., sacred marriage)

B. THE SACREDNESS OF MARRIAGE...

1. Marriage is one of the holiest of relations two people can have
2. Marriage is a bond created by God Himself, thus we must treat it as sacred
3. Marriage is not something to be entered into lightly
4. “Our nation must defend the sanctity of marriage.” - **President George W. Bush**

[Is the idea of marriage as a sacred union a Biblical concept? What did Jesus and His apostles say about it...?]

II. THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE DELINEATED

A. MARRIAGE WAS INSTITUTED BY GOD...

1. From the very beginning, following the Creation - **Mt 19:3-4**; cf. **Gen 2:18-24**
2. Designed for those created as male and female - **Mt 19:4**
3. Whose union becomes “one flesh” (produce offspring) - **Mt 19:5**
- **Marriage is not a creation of the state, but of God Himself!**

B. MARRIAGE IS REGULATED BY JESUS...

1. Jesus has been given all authority, will be our Judge in all things - **Mt 28:18**; **2Co 5:10**
2. He taught that man may try to put asunder, but only God puts asunder - **Mt 19:7-9**
 - a. One may legally divorce and remarry, but adultery can still occur - **Mt 5:31-32**
 - b. God allows divorce only for fornication, and remarriage by the innocent - **Mt 19:9**
3. He taught some might have to remain celibate (“make themselves eunuchs”) for the sake of the kingdom of heaven - **Mt 19:11-12**
 - a. Perhaps because they had been divorced for adultery or unlawfully married
 - b. Or because they were single by choice, or never asked to be married
4. His apostle Paul had more to say concerning marriage
 - a. Marriage is for life; marrying another while one’s spouse is alive is adultery - **Ro 7:1-4**
 - b. Each person is to have his or her own spouse, not shared - **1Co 7:2**
 - c. Husbands and wives have certain duties toward one another - **1Co 7:3-5**
 - d. One is not to divorce; if divorced, must remain single or return to spouse - **1Co 7:10-11**
 - e. If an unbelieving spouse departs, a believer is not obligated to fulfill marital duties (but that does not necessarily imply they are free to remarry) - cf. **1Co 7:3-5,12-16**
- **Jesus as Lord over all is the final Arbiter regarding marriage!**

C. MARRIAGE IS RESERVED FOR INTIMACY...

1. The only proper relationship for sexual intimacy (intercourse) is marriage - **He 13:4**
 - a. Not before the wedding, during courtship, but only after the wedding
 - b. Greatly simplifying the perennial question: “When is the right time?”
2. Sex outside marriage (between a man and a woman) is **fornication**
 - a. Fornication includes pre-marital, extra-marital, or same-sex relations
 - b. Such conduct can keep one out of the kingdom of God - cf. **1Co 6:9-10**
3. Sex outside marriage is not without physical and psychological consequence
 - a. Even casual “hookups” deeply affect the brain and our emotions - cf. **1Co 6:16**
 - b. Chemical reactions in the body occur that lead to bonding, even addiction (this is not even considering the consequences of STDs!)
 - c. Leading to an increase of depression and suicide when there is no marriage - [Heritage Foundation, 2003](#)
 - d. 25.3% of sexually active teenage girls experienced depression, compared to 7.7% of sexually abstinent girls - **ibid.**
 - e. 14.3% of sexually active girls attempted suicide, compared to 5.1% of their virgin peers - **ibid.**
 - f. For more, read this article: [There Is Nothing Brief About A Hookup](#)
4. Pre-marital sex endangers having a successful marriage
 - a. The national divorce rate in the United States is over 40 percent - [National Survey Of Family Growth](#)
 - b. Couples who wait to have sex until marriage - and remain faithful - have a divorce rate of only 20 percent - **ibid.**
 - c. Couples who have more sexual partners prior to or outside of marriage have a much

- higher rate of divorce - **ibid.**
- d. Those who have as many as five partners have only a 30 percent chance that their marriage will not end in divorce - **ibid.**
- 5. A successful marriage requires mutual respect and trust
 - a. Courtship is the time to build respect and trust which will strengthen your marriage
 - b. If your potential spouse will **sin with you** before you marry...
 - c. ...what assurance do you have they will **not sin against you** after you marry?
- **The sanctity of marriage is preserved when it alone is the realm of sexual intimacy!**

CONCLUSION

1. Marriage is not an institution...
 - a. Created and designed by man or the state
 - b. Subject to alteration by societal whims
2. Marriage is **a sacred institution...**
 - a. Instituted by God in the beginning
 - b. Regulated by Jesus and His apostles in the Word of God
 - c. Reserved for sexual intimacy between a man and a women
3. Marriage is **a successful institution...**
 - a. When we follow the Biblical injunctions concerning it
 - b. When members of the family fulfill their proper roles

We shall consider those injunctions, starting with **the duties of husbands** in our next lesson. In the meantime, some food for thought from an uninspired (though wise) perspective...

The 10 Commandments of Successful Marriage

Judge Joseph Sabbath, after twenty year's experience in presiding over what he called "the nightmare world of the divorce courts," framed ten commandments of a successful marriage which, he predicted, could prevent at least ninety percent of marital smash-ups:

1. Bear and forbear.
2. Work together, play together, and grow up together.
3. Avoid the little quarrels, and the big ones will take care of themselves.
4. Compromise (give and take). It is the antitoxin of divorce.
5. Practice sympathy, good humor and mutual understanding.
6. Don't grouch before breakfast or after it.
7. Respect your "in-laws," but don't criticize them or take criticism from them.
8. Establish your own home, even in a one room flat.
9. Fight for each other, but not with each other.
10. Build your home on religious faith, with love and forgiveness as the watchword.

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The Duties Of Husbands

INTRODUCTION

1. Our previous lesson argued that marriage is not an institution...
 - a. Created and designed by man or the state
 - b. Subject to alteration by societal whims
2. But rather, that marriage is **a sacred institution**...
 - a. Instituted by God in the beginning
 - b. Regulated by Jesus and His apostles in the Word of God
 - c. Reserved for sexual intimacy between a man and a women
3. Indeed, marriage is **a successful institution**...
 - a. When we follow the Biblical injunctions concerning it
 - b. When members of the family fulfill their proper roles
 - c. Preventing marriage and family from becoming an emotional and psychological straitjacket, the proverbial ball and chain, and source of much strife and hurt in one's life

[What are those Biblical injunctions concerning the proper roles of the members of the family? Let's first consider **the duties of husbands**...]

I. LOVE YOUR WIVES!

A. HUSBANDS ARE TO LOVE THEIR WIVES...

1. As Christ loved the church - **Ep 5:25-27,29**
 - a. He gave Himself for the church!
 - b. He nourishes and cherishes the church!
2. As they love their own bodies - **Ep 5:28-29**
 - a. Which they nourish and cherish
 - b. Which they handle with care
3. Free from bitterness - **Col 3:19**
 - a. That is, resentment or hate
 - b. Often accompanied with wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking - cf. **Ep 4:31**

B. HUSBANDS ARE TO LOVE THEIR WIVES...

1. With “**agape**” love (active good will)
 - a. Which is commanded - **Ep 5:25**
 - b. Which is defined - **1Co 13:4-8**
 - c. The same sort of love we are to have toward God and all men
2. With “**phileo**” love (sentimental, affectionate)
 - a. As one would have for his own body - **Ep 5:29**
 - b. As parents would have for their children - cf. **Ep 6:4; 1Th 2:7**
3. With “**eros**” love (sexual)
 - a. Joining together as one flesh - **Ep 5:31**
 - b. Providing physical attention and affection due the wife - cf. **1Co 7:2-5**

[Husbands have a duty to love their wives in every way! They also have the duty to...]

II. RESPECT YOUR WIVES!

A. BY HOW YOU TREAT THEM...

1. With understanding - **1Pe 3:7**
 - a. In an understanding way - **ESV**
 - b. Be considerate - **NIV**
 - c. Learn what makes her “tick”, and treat her accordingly
2. With honor - **1Pe 3:7**
 - a. Praise her in the gates - cf. **Pro 31:28**
 - b. Put her on a pedestal
 - c. Do not ridicule her publicly
3. As to the weaker vessel - **1Pe 3:7**
 - a. Not that your wife may actually be the weaker vessel
 - b. Many wives are spiritually stronger, some physically stronger
 - c. But treat her “as” a weaker vessel (treat her like china, not steel)
 - d. Don’t be like a bull running wildly in a china shop!

B. BY HOW YOU VIEW THEM...

1. As a fellow heir of the grace of life - **1Pe 3:7**
 - a. For whom Christ died
 - b. A beloved sister in Christ, worthy of respect
 - c. With whom you hope to spend eternity
2. As one who affects the efficacy of your prayers! - **1Pe 3:7**
 - a. How we treat others has a bearing on our prayers - **Mk 11:26; Pr 21:13**
 - b. God will not heed our prayers if we mistreat our wives! - cf. **Mal 2:13-16**

[To our duties as husbands to love and respect our wives, let us add one more...]

III. SUPPORT YOUR WIVES!

A. BY PROVIDING FOR THE FAMILY...

1. The husband (and father) has the duty to provide for his family - **1Ti 5:8**
2. Failure to do so is to deny the faith (the doctrine of Christ!) - **ibid.**
3. Unbelievers (and most creatures, cf. The March Of The Penguins) provide for their own
4. A man should not take a wife unless he is willing and able to support her financially

B. BY LETTING HER CONTRIBUTE...

1. The virtuous woman contributed much to the support of the family - **Pr 31:16-19,24**
2. A wise husband lets her contribute, and to be praised for it! - **Pr 31:31**
3. Of course, not to the neglect of her familial duties - cf. **Pr 31:21,27; 1Ti 5:14; Tit 2:4-5**

CONCLUSION

1. The Christian husband is a man who...
 - a. Loves his wife in every way
 - b. Respects his wife by how he treats her and views her

- c. Supports his wife financially, emotionally, and spiritually
2. This is because the Christian husband is a man who...
 - a. Is a Christian first, and a husband second
 - b. Gladly accepts the Biblical injunctions given to him as a husband
 - c. Looks to the Word of God and prayer for the strength he needs to fulfill his duty
3. When a man is a Christian husband...
 - a. He is more likely loved and respected by his wife
 - b. She is more likely the sort of wife she should be
 - c. The children are more likely as they should be

In our next lesson, we shall consider **the duties of wives**. In the meantime, some additional food for thought for husbands...

The 10 Commandments of Husbands

1. You shall not take your wife for granted, but will honor and respect her as your equal. (**1Pe 3:7**)
2. Your highest allegiance, except God, shall be to your wife, not relatives or friends. (**Gen 2:24**)
3. You shall frequently tell her how important & valuable she is to you. (**Ph 2:3; Pr 31:10-11**)
4. You shall hold your wife's love by the same means that you won it. (**So 5:10-16**)
5. You shall actively establish family discipline with your wife's help. (**Ep 6:4**)
6. Remember to do all the little things for your wife when you say you will. (**Mt 5:37**)
7. Keep your eyes on your own wife, not your neighbor's. (**Pr 5:15-20; Job 31:1; Jer 5:8**)
8. You shall make every effort to see things from your wife's point of view. (**Gen 21:12**)
9. You shall not fail to kiss your wife every morning. (**So 8:1**)
10. You shall not be stingy with your wife when it comes to money. (**Est 5:3**)

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The Duties Of Wives

INTRODUCTION

1. Marriage as a sacred institution joins together a man and a woman...
 - a. Husband and wife in holy matrimony
 - b. Each with their God-given duties to one another
2. Previously, we considered **the duties of husbands**, who are commanded...
 - a. Love their wives
 - b. Respect their wives
 - c. Support their wives

[Now let's consider what the inspired apostles of Christ taught were **the duties of wives**, beginning with one that seems to offend many today...]

I. SUBMIT TO YOUR HUSBANDS!

A. DEFINING THE WORD "SUBMIT"...

1. The Greek word is **hupotasso** - to subordinate, to obey
2. To be under obedience, in subjection to, submit self unto - **Strong's**
3. To submit to the orders or directives of someone - **Louw Nida**
4. An example: Jesus submitting to the will of His Father - **Jn 6:38**

B. WIVES ARE TO SUBMIT TO THEIR HUSBANDS...

1. As the church submits to Christ, in everything - **Ep 5:22-24**
 - a. Presuming that it is in keeping with the will of God - **Ac 5:29**
 - b. For husbands must not abuse their authority - **1Pe 3:7**
 - c. Indeed, husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the church - **Ep 5:25-27**
2. Even as Christians wives are to submit to:
 - a. God - **Jm 4:17**
 - b. The government - **Ro 13:1-5; 1Pe 2:13-15**
 - c. Their masters - **1Pe 2:18; 3:1**
 - d. Their elders - **He 13:17; 1Pe 5:5**
 - e. One another - **1Pe 5:5; Ep 5:21**
3. Without nagging, with gentleness and quietness - **1Pe 3:1-4**
4. With respect, even as Sarah respected Abraham - **1Pe 3:5-6; cf. Ep 5:33**

C. WHEN WIVES FAIL TO SUBMIT...

1. It is not fitting in the Lord - **Col 3:18**
 - a. Grk., **aneko** - to pertain to what is due, duty, as was fitting
 - b. In keeping with Jesus' own teaching and example - cf. **Mt 20:25-28**
2. The family unit will often be in turmoil
 - a. To have a social organization that is functional, you must have some chain of authority
 - b. God is the head of Christ, Christ the head of man, man the head of woman - **1Co 11:3**
 - c. In the family, it is God's Will the husband be the head of the wife, and that parents be

- over their children - otherwise, the family will be dysfunctional
3. God will not be gracious to them - **1Pe 5:5**
 - a. God gives grace to those who humbly submit
 - b. He will not grant favor to those who proudly resist His will
 - c. Just the prayers of a husband who mistreats and disrespects his wife are hindered, so the prayers of a wife who refuses to submit to her husband! - cf. **1Pe 3:7**
 4. It may even have a bearing on the sexual orientation of the children!
 - a. A study by **Dr. Irving Bieber** was made of the family background of 106 male homosexuals
 - b. Dr. Bieber found that 81 mothers were dominating
 - What Everyone Should Know About Homosexuality, **LaHaye**, p. 71-72

[Sadly, lives are ruined when people won't listen to the teachings of Jesus and His apostles. Wives need to submit to their husbands, just as Christians are to submit to Christ. Another admonition...]

II. LOVE YOUR HUSBANDS!

A. WITH AFFECTION...

1. "admonish the young women to **love** their husbands" - **Tit 2:4**
 - a. Grk., **philandrous** - "fond of man, i.e. affectionate as a wife" - **Strong's**
 - b. "pertaining to having affection for a husband --'having love for one's husband, having affection for one's husband.'" - **Louw-Nida**
2. This affection is something that can be taught (learned); if needed, seek advice from a mature sister in Christ - **Tit 2:3-4**

B. WITH INTIMACY...

1. To prevent unfaithfulness - **1Co 7:2**
2. Rendering affection properly due, not withholding marital rights- **1Co 7:3-4**
3. Abstaining only with mutual consent, for the purpose of prayer - **1Co 7:5**

[Just as husbands are commanded to love their wives, so the wives are commanded to love their husbands. If the original love has been lost, it needs to be re-learned! Finally, wives must...]

III. MANAGE THE HOME!

A. AS HOMEMAKERS...

1. "to be discrete, chaste, **homemakers**, good" - **Tit 2:5**
 - a. Grk., **oikourous** - "a stayer at home, i.e. domestically inclined" - **Strong's**
 - b. "one who works in the home - 'one who takes care of the home, homemaker.'" - **Louw-Nida**
2. "manage the house" - **1Ti 5:14**
 - a. Grk., **oikodespoteo** - to be the head of (i.e. rule) a family: guide the house - **Strong's**
 - b. "to command and give leadership to a household -- 'to direct a household, to manage a home.'" - **Louw-Nida**
3. This also can be learned from older sisters in Christ - **Tit 2:3-5**

B. AS MOTHERS...

1. Note the instructions for young widows: "marry, **bear children**" - **1Ti 5:14**
 - a. Grk., **teknogoneo** - "to be a child-bearer, i.e. parent (mother)" - **Strong's**

- b. “to give birth to a child” - **Louw-Nida**
2. The primary design of marriage is to start a family; if a young wife is unable to bear a child, adoption is certainly a viable and wonderful option!

CONCLUSION

1. The Christian wife is a woman who...
 - a. Submits to her husband with respect
 - b. Loves her husband with affection
 - c. Manages her home and her children
2. This is because the Christian wife is a woman who...
 - a. Is a Christian first, and a wife second
 - b. Gladly accepts the Biblical injunctions given her as a wife
 - c. Looks to the Word of God and prayer for the strength she needs to fulfill her duty
3. When a woman is a Christian wife...
 - a. She is more likely loved and respected by her husband
 - b. She is more likely the sort of wife she should be
 - c. The children are more likely as they should be

In our next lesson, we shall consider **the duties of parents**. In the meantime, some additional food for thought for wives...

The 10 Commandments of Wives

1. Expect not your husband to give you as many luxuries as your father has given you after many years of hard labor. (**Php 4:11; Am 4:1**)
2. You shall work hard to build your house with the husband that you have, not fantasizing about “the one that could have been”. (**Pr 14:1**)
3. You shall not nag...hit him with your frying pan, it is kindlier. (**Pr 27:15; 21:19**)
4. You shall coddle your husband and be a warm wife. (**1Co 7:3-5**)
5. Remember that the frank approval of your husband is more to you than the side glances of many strangers. (**Eze 16:32; 2Pe 2:14**)
6. You shall not yell at your husband but will be a gentle and quiet spirit. (**1Pe 3:1-4**)
7. Permit no one to assure you that you are having a hard time of it. (**1Pe 5:9**)
8. You shall not fail to dress up for your husband with an eye to please him, as you did before marriage. (**So 4:9-11**)
9. You shall submit to your husband from your heart and allow him to be head of the household. (**Col 3:18; 1Pe 3:6; Ep 5:33**)
10. You shall assure your husband and others that he is the greatest man alive. (**Php 2:3; So 5:9-16**)

The Christian Home And Family

The Duties Of Parents

INTRODUCTION

1. Marriage as a sacred institution joins together a man and a woman...
 - a. As husband and wife in holy matrimony
 - b. Each with their God-given duties to one another
2. We've considered **the duties of husbands**, who are commanded to...
 - a. Love their wives
 - b. Respect their wives
 - c. Support their wives
3. We've considered **the duties of wives**, who are commanded to...
 - a. Submit to their husbands
 - b. Love their husbands
 - c. Manage the home

[God's purpose for marriage is to create families in which children have the benefit of parents who provide the best upbringing possible. For this to occur, **parents** must fulfill their duties...]

I. THE DUTIES OF FATHERS

A. PROVIDE LIFE'S NECESSITIES...

1. Parents ought to provide for their children - **2Co 12:14**
2. A man who fails to do so for his family is worse than an infidel - **1Ti 5:8**

B. DO NOT PROVOKE CHILDREN TO WRATH...

1. This admonition found twice in the Scriptures - **Ep 6:4; Col 3:21**
2. By unreasonable commands; by needless severity; by the manifestation of anger - **Barnes**
3. Lest by your continually finding fault with them, they should lose all courage, and despair of ever pleasing you - **ibid.**

C. PROVIDE SPIRITUAL TRAINING...

1. In the training (discipline, ESV) and admonition (instruction, ESV) of the Lord - **Ep 6:4**
2. Training by way of **instruction** - e.g., **Deut 6:6-7; 32:46; Ps 78:4-6**
 - a. Note that the Word must first be in the father's heart
 - b. Then the father can lead his family like Joshua led his family - cf. **Jos 24:14-15**
3. Training by way of **example** - considering the following: When the father is an active believer, there is about a **seventy-five percent** likelihood that the children will also become active believers. But if only the mother is a believer, this likelihood is dramatically reduced to **fifteen percent**. - **Keith Meyering, Discipleship Journal, #49, p.41**

D. PROVIDE LOVING DISCIPLINE...

1. Even as our heavenly Father disciplines His children - **He 12:6-10**
2. Even though it may be unpleasant at times - **He 12:11; cf. Pr 13:24**

[From the duties of fathers, let's now move on to...]

II. THE DUTIES OF MOTHERS

A. LOVE THEIR CHILDREN...

1. As older women were to admonish younger women - **Tit 2:4**
2. For sin can lead to a lack of proper affection - **Ro 1:31**
3. Tragically, more than 200 women kill their children in the United States each year - **American Anthropological Association**

B. MANAGE THEIR HOUSEHOLDS...

1. A primary responsibility of the wife and mother - **Tit 2:5; 1Ti 5:14**
2. An important quality of the virtuous woman - **Pr 31:10-31**
3. The most creative job in the world involves fashion, decorating, recreation, education, transportation, psychology, romance, cuisine, literature, art, economics, government, pediatrics, geriatrics, entertainment, maintenance, purchasing, law, religion, energy and management. Anyone who can handle all those has to be somebody special. She is. She's a homemaker. - **Richard Kerr quoted in Homemade, Feb. 1989**

C. PROVIDE SPIRITUAL TRAINING...

1. Especially when male leadership is lacking
2. As seen in the case of Timothy
 - a. His mother was a Jew, his father a Greek - **Ac 16:1**
 - b. Perhaps contributing to Timothy not being circumcised - cf. **Ac 16:3**
 - c. But Timothy had become a disciple, well spoken of - **Ac 16:2**
 - d. His faith positively influenced by his grandmother and mother - cf. **2Ti 1:5**
3. Too often, fathers neglect spiritual training, leaving mothers to pick up the slack

CONCLUSION

1. Blessed are the homes in which...
 - a. Fathers fulfill their duties as Christian men
 - b. Mothers fulfill their duties as Christian women
2. No home is perfect, and as fathers and mothers we often fall short...
 - a. But with God's grace and mercy, let us do the best we can
 - b. Let us give our children the guidance that they may succeed where we have failed

Finally, some food for thought: **Seven Ways To Impact Your Child's Faith**

1. Model a growing and personal faith. [If they don't see it, they won't catch it.]
2. Include faith in normal conversations.
3. Be well-rounded. [Don't compartmentalize your faith.]
4. Be authentic.
5. Serve together
6. Pray for your children and with them.
7. Learn and communicate love in their language.

-- **The Relaxed Parent by Tim Smith**

The Christian Home And Family

The Duties Of Children

INTRODUCTION

1. In previous lessons on the Christian home and family, we have discussed...
 - a. The sanctity of marriage
 - b. The duties of husbands and wives
 - c. The duties of fathers and mothers
2. We now come to **the duties of children**, who hopefully have...
 - a. Fathers who provide for them and raise them in the way of the Lord
 - b. Mothers who love them and care for them as an intricate part of the household

[A good place to begin is **Ep 6:1**, where the apostle Paul charges children to...]

I. OBEY YOUR PARENTS!

A. IN THE LORD, FOR THIS RIGHT...

1. The charge as found in **Ep 6:1**
2. “in the Lord” means that this is what the Lord wants you to do
3. Even as Jesus Himself obeyed His parents - cf. **Lk 2:51**
4. “for this right” implies that disobeying parents is wrong
5. Indeed, rebellion is as evil as witchcraft and idolatry - cf. **1Sam 15:23**

B. IN ALL THINGS, FOR THIS IS WELL PLEASING TO THE LORD...

1. The charge as found in **Col 3:20**
2. “in all things” presumes in harmony with God’s will - cf. **Ac 5:29**
3. When children obey their parents, the Lord is pleased!
4. The OT clearly reveals God’s displeasure when children disobey their parents, and how seriously it was taken back then - cf. **Exo 21:15,17; Deut 21:18-21; Pr 30:17**

[Children can be thankful their Christian parents do not live under the OT, but the NT! Nonetheless, disobedience is not to be taken lightly. Nor is obeying parents to be done begrudgingly...]

II. HONOR YOUR PARENTS!

A. BOTH FATHER AND MOTHER...

1. As charged in **Ep 6:2**
2. One of the Ten Commandments in the Law of Moses - cf. **Exo 20:12; Deut 5:16**
3. To honor implies to love, to regard highly, to show the spirit of respect and consideration - **Hendriksen**
4. Thus obedience to one’s parents is to be rendered in love and with respect

B. TO RECEIVE THE PROMISE...

1. The command to honor one’s parents came with a promise - **Ep 6:2-3**
2. “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” - cf. **Deut 5:16**

3. This promise is true in general; there are often exceptions (e.g., Jesus)
4. But a child who loves and respects his or her parents is more likely to benefit from them
5. From their wisdom, but also from God's providential care!
6. Disrespect your parents, you incur both their wrath and God's as well!

[The duty of children to honor their parents does not end when they leave the home. When mothers and fathers become aged, children have the duty to...]

III. SUPPORT YOUR PARENTS!

A. AS TAUGHT BY JESUS...

1. When He exposed the hypocrisy of the Pharisees' traditions - **Mk 7:6-13**
2. The command to honor one's parents implied care by adult children - **Mk 7:11-12**
3. Thus the duty to love, respect, and care for parents never ends!

B. AS TAUGHT BY PAUL...

1. In teaching concerning the care of widows - **1Ti 5:3-8,16**
2. Children (and grandchildren) are to repay their needy parents - **1Ti 5:4**
3. Thus we are to provide security for our parents and grandparents as needed
4. Failure to do so denies the faith, and makes one worse than an infidel - **1Ti 5:8**

CONCLUSION

1. The duties of children are clear...
 - a. Obey your parents!
 - b. Honor your parents!
 - c. Support your parents!
2. Blessed is the home and family where...
 - a. Husbands and wives fulfill their duties to one another
 - b. Parents and children fulfill their duties to one another

Such homes and families are a common occurrence, wherever the admonitions of the Lord are taken seriously by all the members of the family...!

My son, keep your father's command,
And do not forsake the law of your mother.
Bind them continually upon your heart;
Tie them around your neck.
When you roam, they will lead you;
When you sleep, they will keep you;
And when you awake, they will speak with you.
- **Pr 6:20-22**

The Christian Home And Family

The Duties Of Singles

INTRODUCTION

1. Lessons presented on “**The Christian Home And Family**” commonly...
 - a. Discuss the challenges and duties of marriage and family
 - b. Describe the responsibilities of spouses, parents, and children
2. In many cases, little is said concerning **those who are single**...
 - a. Perhaps because the nuclear family is assumed to be the norm
 - b. Yet many are single for various reasons (never married, divorced, widowed)

[The Bible has much to say for those in such situations, either because of their own choice or circumstances beyond their control. Let’s begin with those who have **never been married**...]

I. THE UNMARRIED

A. REASONS FOR NOT BEING MARRIED...

1. For some, it may be due to circumstance
 - a. Women who have never been asked to marry
 - b. Men who have yet to find a woman to accept their proposal
2. For others, it may be due to choice
 - a. There are times when single may be the best choice - **1Co 7:25-28**
 - b. Some choose singleness in service to God - **Mt 19:11-12; 1Co 7:7-8**

B. THE DUTIES OF THOSE UNMARRIED...

1. Marry, if necessary to avoid fornication - **1Co 7:1-2,7-9**
 - a. Marriage is an honorable way to avoid fornication
 - b. Of course, this presumes one has a scriptural right to marry
2. Remain chaste, if not married - **1Co 6:9-11,18-20**
 - a. Sexual intimacy outside of marriage is fornication
 - b. The body is to not to be used for sexual immorality
3. Use your singleness for the Lord - **1Co 7:32-35**
 - a. Singles often have more time, less responsibilities
 - b. Utilize your situation to serve the Lord where others cannot

[Now let’s consider another category of singles...]

II. THE DIVORCED

A. REASONS FOR BEING DIVORCED...

1. For some, it may be for scriptural reasons
 - a. They put away their spouses for fornication - **Mt 19:9**
 - b. Or they realized they were in an unlawful marriages - cf. **Mk 6:18**
2. For others, it may be for unscriptural reasons
 - a. They were put away for no fault of their own

- b. Or they put away their spouse for reasons other than fornication

B. THE DUTIES OF THOSE DIVORCED...

1. Return to your spouse if possible - **1Co 7:10-11**
 - a. In an effort to reconcile and restore the marriage
 - b. Especially if the reason was not for fornication
2. Avoid an adulterous marriage - **Mt 5:31-32; Ro 7:2-3**
 - a. It is possible for a marriage to result in adultery
 - b. Unless fornication was the cause of divorce, remarriage is adultery!
3. Remarry only on scriptural grounds - **Mt 19:9**
 - a. Where fornication was the cause of the divorce
 - b. In which the innocent party put away the guilty party

[Finally, consider what the Scriptures teach concerning...]

III. THE WIDOWED

A. THE YOUNG WIDOW...

1. Paul counsels the young widow to marry again - **1Ti 5:14**
2. To avoid idleness, gossip, becoming a busybody - **1Ti 5:13**
3. Of course, this presumes that one is willing to marry her

B. THE AGED WIDOW...

1. To trust in God, serve Him in prayer - **1Ti 5:5**
2. Like Anna did - cf. **Lk 2:36-38**

CONCLUSION

1. Singleness, whether by choice or circumstance, can be a blessing...
 - a. Freedom from care in times of distress or persecution - **1Co 7:26-28,32**
 - b. Freedom to serve the Lord in ways that the married cannot - **1Co 7:32-35**
2. Singleness does have it disadvantages...
 - a. The danger of temptation
 - b. The danger of loneliness
 - c. The danger of self-centeredness
3. Should you find yourself in the condition of being single...
 - a. Use your freedom to serve God
 - b. Watch out for dangers of being single
 - c. Remember that you are in the family of God - **Mk 10:29-30**

Whatever our circumstances, married or single, may we follow God's Word and glorify Him with our families and our lives...!

The Christian Home And Family

Resolving Family Conflict

INTRODUCTION

1. As mentioned in our first lesson, the **family** as an institution today is struggling...
 - a. Husbands and wives often suffer strained relationships
 - b. Parents and children are frequently at odds with one another
 - c. Much misery in life is due to dysfunctional family relationships
2. I believe that much family turmoil can be resolved...
 - a. When we understand the areas and reasons for potential conflict
 - b. When we are willing to take simple but profound actions

[Let's begin by reviewing common sources of marital and familial conflict...]

I. CAUSES OF FAMILY CONFLICT

A. MONEY...

1. Most couples argue over bills, debt, spending, and other financial issues
2. Parents and children argue over allowances, or the lack thereof

B. CHILDREN...

1. Discipline, diet, and other parenting issues can be sources of disagreement
2. Having children can accentuate differences in beliefs on issues like how to discipline, who is responsible for most of the child care or what educational options to choose

C. INTIMACY...

1. For spouses, frequency, quality, and infidelity are all common sources of disharmony
2. Parents struggle in guiding children through land-minds in our sex-crazed culture

D. CHORES...

1. Many couples argue over equitable distribution of household work, and how to do it
2. Instead of dividing household chores fairly they quibble over who did or didn't do what

E. FRIENDS...

1. What friends will be considered acceptable for spouses and children?
2. Not all friends are helpful to relationships, some of them are toxic

F. ENTERTAINMENT...

1. What shall we do with our spare time? Where shall we go?
2. Different interests can threaten family relationships

G. RELIGION...

1. What shall we believe? How shall we raise the children? What holidays shall we observe?
2. Religious differences in religion can create much conflict in the family

H. RELATIVES...

1. In-laws, grandparents, siblings, step-children, etc., can all create stress within a family
2. To what degree do we allow them to impact the nuclear family?

I. EXPECTATIONS...

1. We all go into marriage and family with certain expectations
2. We expect spouses to be as mature as our parents, our standard of living equal to theirs
3. Unmet expectations are a major source of conflict in marriages and families

J. PERSONALITIES...

1. There are personality traits and personal habits that can doom marriages and families
2. Even adults can suffer from “childhood arrests”, and behave like selfish children

[This list is not exhaustive, but illustrates the challenges that families often face. Even so, I believe the solution is rather simple if we are willing to implement it...]

II. RESOLVING FAMILY CONFLICT

A. RELIGION IS THE KEY...

1. Religious beliefs affect every area of potential conflict (children, money, friends, etc.)
2. Agree on religion, and other problems will be easier to handle
3. With God on your side you will have His blessing and providential aid!
4. Ignore Him, and you face your troubles on your own!

B. BEHAVE AS CHRISTIANS...

1. Grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ
 - a. Develop Christ-like qualities - cf. **2Pe 1:5-8**
 - b. Produce the fruit of the Spirit - cf. **Ga 5:22-23**
2. Treat your family like brethren
 - a. With lowliness, gentleness, longsuffering, forbearing with love - **Ep 4:1-2; Php 2:3-4**
 - b. Just as loving brethren helps to ensure good days and answered prayers - cf. **1Pe 3:7-12**
3. Love your family like enemies
 - a. Refuse to retaliate, respond with good - **Mt 5:38-42**
 - b. Love your enemies, just as God loves you! - **Mt 5:43-48**
4. It takes two to fight, so be the bigger person
 - a. If one person does the right thing, differences quickly diffuse - cf. **Pr 15:1**
 - b. Proper conduct more likely encourages the other person to do likewise

CONCLUSION

1. With so many potential causes of family conflict...
 - a. It is not surprising that many families are dysfunctional
 - b. Leading many to mistakenly believe that marriage and family are outdated
2. But when family members are willing to heed God’s Word...
 - a. Potential problems rarely arise
 - b. Conflicts are quickly abated

The home and family as Christ would have it can be one of the most wonderful blessings in the world...!

The Christian Home And Family

The Tragedy Of Divorce

INTRODUCTION

1. Our previous study listed many potential causes of family conflict that often...
 - a. Strain the best of families
 - b. Lead many to believe divorce is an easy solution
2. In the Bible, we read that God hates divorce... - **Mal 2:13-16**
 - a. It “covers one’s garment with violence”
 - b. It is “treacherous”

[For the past generation, quick and easy “no-fault” divorce has been available. We are just now learning of **the long-term effects of divorce**. It is not a pretty picture. Consider what **studies** have shown on...]

I. THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON CHILDREN

A. MENTALLY...

1. Teenagers in single-parent families and in blended families are three times more likely to need psychological help within a given year. (*Peter Hill Recent Advances in Selected Aspects of Adolescent Development Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry 1993*)
2. Compared to children from homes disrupted by death, children from divorced homes have more psychological problems. (*Robert E. Emery, Marriage, Divorce and Children’s Adjustment Sage Publications, 1988*)
3. The study of children six years after a parental marriage breakup revealed that even after all that time, these children tended to be lonely, unhappy, anxious and insecure”. (*Wallerstein, The Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children - Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry 1991*)

B. SOCIALLY...

1. Children of divorce, particularly boys, tend to be more aggressive toward others than those children whose parents did not divorce. (*Emery, Marriage, Divorce and Children’s Adjustment, 1988*)
2. Children of divorce are four times more likely to report problems with peers and friends than children whose parents have kept their marriages intact. (*Tysse, Burnett, Moral Dilemmas of Early Adolescents of Divorced and Intact Families. Journal of Early Adolescence 1993*)
3. Seventy percent of long-term prison inmates grew up in broken homes. (*Horn, Bush, Fathers, Marriage and Welfare Reform*)

C. ACADEMICALLY...

1. Studies in the early 1980’s showed that children in repeat divorces earned lower grades and their peers rated them as less pleasant to be around. (*Andrew J. Cherlin, Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage Harvard University Press 1981*)
2. Children of divorced parents are roughly two times more likely to drop out of high school than their peers who benefit from living with parents who did not divorce. (*McLanahan, Sandefur, Growing Up With a Single Parent: What Hurts, What Helps - Harvard University*)

Press 1994)

D. PHYSICALLY...

1. Children living with both biological parents are 20 to 35 percent more physically healthy than children from broken homes. (*Dawson, Family Structure and Children's Health and Well-being - Journal of Marriage and the Family*)
2. Following divorce, children are fifty percent more likely to develop health problems than two parent families. (*Angel, Worobey, Single Motherhood and Children's Health*)
3. Children of divorce are at a greater risk to experience injury, asthma, headaches and speech defects than children whose parents have remained married. (*Dawson, Family Structure and Children's Health and Well Being - National Health Interview Survey on Child Health, Journal of Marriage and the Family*)
4. Most victims of child molestation come from single-parent households or are the children of drug ring members. (*Los Angeles Times 16 September 1985 The Garbage Generation*)
5. A child in a female-headed home is 10 times more likely to be beaten or murdered. (*The Legal Beagle, July 1984, from The Garbage Generation*)
6. People who come from broken homes are almost twice as likely to attempt suicide than those who do not come from broken homes. (*Velez-Cohen, Suicidal Behavior and Ideation in a Community Sample of Children Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry 1988*)

E. SPIRITUALLY...

1. Religious worship, which has been linked to better health, longer marriages, and better family life, drops after the parents divorce. (*Patrick Fagan, Ph.D. and Robert Rector, The Effects Of Divorce In America, June 2000*)
2. Many young people from divorced families “experience a loss of trust that affects their belief in God - making them overall much less religious than their peers from intact families,” (*Elizabeth Marquardt of the Institute for American Values and Professor Norval Glenn of the University of Texas, Between Two Worlds: The Inner Lives of Children of Divorce*)
3. Children of divorce are also “much less likely to say their mother and father taught them how to pray and prayed with them – and are much more likely to say they doubt the sincerity of their parents’ religious beliefs, do not share their parents’ values, and to say there are things their parents have done that they find hard to forgive.” (*ibid.*)

[There is also the “**sleeper effect**”, where **adult children** have a resurgence of anxiety, fear, guilt, and anger they had suppressed for many years. Truly, divorce is “treacherous”! But not just for children...]

II. EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON SPOUSES

A. MENTALLY...

1. Men and women both suffer a decline in mental health following divorce, but researchers have found that women are more greatly affected. Some of the mental health indicators affected by divorce include depression, hostility, self-acceptance, personal growth and positive relations with others. (*Nadine F. Marks and James D. Lambert, “Marital Status Continuity and Change among Young and Midlife Adults: Longitudinal Effects on Psychological Well-being,” Journal of Family Issues 19, 1998*)
2. A recent study found those who were unhappy but stay married were more likely to be happy five years later than those who divorced. (*Linda Waite and Maggie Gallagher, The Case for Marriage (New York: Doubleday, 2000)*)

B. PHYSICALLY...

1. Life expectancies for divorced men and women are significantly lower than for married people (who have the longest life expectancies) (*Robert Coombs, "Marital Status and Personal Well-Being: A Literature Review," 1991*)
2. The health consequences of divorce are so severe that a Yale researcher concluded that "being divorced and a nonsmoker is [only] slightly less dangerous than smoking a pack a day and staying married." (*Harold J. Morowitz, "Hiding in the Hammond Report," 1975*)
3. After a diagnosis of cancer, married people are most likely to recover, while the divorced are least likely to recover, indicating that the emotional trauma of divorce has a long-term impact on the physical health of the body. (*James S. Goodwin, William C. Hunt, Charles R. Key and Jonathan M. Sarmet, "The Effect of Marital Status on Stage, Treatment, and Survival of Cancer Patients," Journal of the American Medical Association 258, 1987*)

C. FINANCIALLY...

1. Families with children that were not poor before the divorce see their income drop as much as 50 percent. Almost 50 percent of the parents with children that are going through a divorce move into poverty after the divorce. (*Patrick Fagan, Ph.D. and Robert Rector, The Effects Of Divorce In America, June 2000*)
2. Studies show that women experiencing divorce face roughly a 30 percent decline in the standard of living they enjoyed while married and men show a 10 percent decline. The consistency of this finding caused one researcher to conclude: "However 'prepared' for marital disruption women increasingly may be, they are not prepared in ways sufficient to cushion the economic cost." (*Pamela J. Smock, "The Economic Costs of Marital Disruption for Young Women over the Past Two Decades." Demography 30, 1993*)

D. SPIRITUALLY...

1. Jesus taught there is only one ground for divorce and remarriage: fornication - **Mt 19:9**
2. That divorce and remarriage for any other reason results in adultery - **Mt 19:9**
3. Those who divorce their spouses for a reason other than fornication, cause them to commit adultery! - **Mt 5:32**
 - a. Either by putting them in a situation where they are likely to commit fornication
 - b. Or by putting them in a situation where they might enter an unscriptural marriage
4. Those who commit fornication or adultery as a result of unlawful divorce or remarriage will not inherit the kingdom of heaven, unless they repent! - **1Co 6:9-11; Ga 5:19-21; He 13:4**

CONCLUSION

1. **My purpose** is not to pile guilt on those who are divorced...
 - a. They know first-hand the terrible consequences of divorce on their families and themselves
 - b. They need our understanding and help to make the best of a difficult situation
2. **My prayer** is that this lesson will serve as a cautionary tale...
 - a. That divorce is a treacherous and violent act for all those involved
 - b. We need to teach our children what God has spoken and society is still learning about divorce

May God help those suffering from the tragedy of divorce, and may God help us if we do not warn our families and our society of the terrible consequences of divorce...!