



What Do We Believe?

Lesson 37

What Do We Believe?

Lesson 37: Christian Family: Established by God

Scriptures:

Genesis 1:26-31; 2:18-24; 24:62-67; Numbers 27:1-11; Psalm 127, 128; Matthew 19:1-6; Luke 15:11-32; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:1-6; Ephesians 5:22-33

Lesson Goals:

To assist the learner in understanding that God is the originator of family.
To assist the learner in understanding that God expects us to honor the family as His creation.
To assist the learner in understanding that family is the basic unit of society

Scripture Memory:

Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it... Psalm 127:1

The Lesson:

Jim said, "I now belong to a very important organization." Amanda said, "So do I." Emily responded that she also belonged to an organization and that it was the very first and most important organization of all. Jim asked, "Really, what organization is that?" Emily said, "I belong to a family." Amanda said, "You mean like parents and children kind of family? What's so special about that, doesn't everyone?" "Yes and no," replied Emily.

Emily is right. All of us have a father and mother. That is a fact. However, not all of us have a father and mother who live together with us in one family. There can be many reasons for that, none of which, normally, are because the children have done bad things. Sometimes parents don't take their responsibility seriously. Sometimes bad things happen and one of the parents cannot be part of the family any longer.

That is not the way God intended it. God created Adam. God saw that Adam needed someone to be part of his life who could encourage and support him. So, then God made Eve. She was to be Adam's companion. The first love-match, the first marriage, was made by God, Himself. Adam and Eve had children, God had said that was a good idea, and they all lived together. When God establishes something, it is sacred (blessed and very special). So, the relationship of husbands and wives, and their relationship with their children, is sacred. When God made man and woman, when He told them to have children, and when He said that they should take care of all His creation, He said that all of it was good.

God expects us to be together in family as long as we live. Jesus, in Matthew 19:5, repeated what the Scripture says immediately after Eve was created: "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." Jesus went on to say, in Matthew 19:6, that since marriage is a "God thing," humans should not tear it apart. Actually, he said, "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." God's rule is "one man and one woman together for life." Understood in that arrangement is the fact that parents continue to be parents of their children as long as they live.

There are many stories in the Bible about families. One of the most interesting is in the book of Numbers. It is about some sisters who were about to be robbed of their father's estate because the father had no son to give it to when he died. God told Moses to honor the rights of every member of the family. If a man died with no son, his estate was to go to the daughter. (Numbers 27)

Jesus told the story of a son who demanded his inheritance, then left home and wasted all of that inheritance. (Luke 15: 11ff) When this son realized that he was homeless and didn't even have food, he went home. He didn't know what to expect. When he got there, his father welcomed him. Jesus told the story to illustrate God's love for all humans, even when we are not good; even when we make bad deci-

sions. In another place (Ephesians 5), Paul used the relationship of husbands and wives to illustrate the relationship between Christ and the church. The fact that God gave us these stories to illustrate His love and care, tells us that He really expected the family relationships to be strong. We should have the same respect for family as God does.

Family is the first organized group of people that God created. Families are important, not only to those in the family, but to all of society. We learn much of what we know about relating to other people in our family. If families do not have good relationships, the members of the family, especially children as they grow up, don't relate well to people outside the family. So, family is a foundation on which all relationships are built.

Life Application:

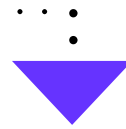
The family is a wonderful and amazing thing, when it works the way it should. Are all families together the way God prefers them to be? No. Maybe your family is one of those and for some reason you don't live with one or both of your parents. Does that mean God no longer cares for you, no longer wants what is best for you? Certainly not! Does God still love you? Can you still be useful to God? Yes and yes! God loves you very much. He wants only what is best for you. That is why He desires families to stay together.

What could possibly get in the way of us being right with God and our families staying together? Could it be the sin that so easily tangles us up? Yes. You and I are sinners. What do sinners do? They sin. They disobey God. We sin. We disobey God. You sin. You disobey God. From that disobedience come many problems, including problems in our families. But, Jesus took on Himself your sin and my sin. He became that sin so that we might have hope. When our lives have been turned over to God, putting Him in control, relationships and families can be healed. Selfishness gets in the way, but God can change our selfish hearts for hearts that want to please Him, that think of others first. Will you give control of your life over to God?

Our memory verse says, "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it." (Psalm 127:1) What does that mean? A family is whole and healthy only if God is the one in charge. We are sinful people with sinful wants. We are selfish. We need God to guide us and lead us. We need to follow His lead even with our families, especially with our families. If you know the Lord, but are struggling in your family life, will you commit today to let God be in control? Will you let Him have His way with you and your family? You will begin to see your family members differently. Let God show you how amazing and wonderful your family can be.



Planning for Lesson 38
Christian Family: Fulfilling
God's Purpose



- ◆ **Memory Verse Activity** - Provide building blocks for your students that have a word from the verse on each block. Encourage your students to construct a house while arranging the memory verse.
- ◆ Bring wedding and family pictures, or clips from a wedding video as an introduction to the lesson.
- ◆ Encourage your students to read Luke 15:11-32 and illustrate it. This can be done in cartoon blocks with captions, with one detailed picture, or as a storyboard from a movie.
- ◆ Sing “Family of God,” “Blessed Be the Tie That Bind,” “God, Give Us Christian Homes,” “O Perfect Love,” and “Household of Faith.”
- ◆ **Dig Deeper:** Read Genesis 1:26-31 and 2:18-24 as well as Genesis 24. Talk about how these couples were brought together. Contrast and compare marriages of today. Discuss the principles that could be adopted from the stories of Adam and Eve as well as Isaac and Rebekah.
- ◆ **Dig Deeper Still:** Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-6 and Ephesians 5:22-33. Make a list of the responsibilities of a husband and wife. Discuss what it means to have Christ as the head of the church, to love as Christ loved the church. Also discuss the example a godly marriage can be to those who are lost.



**Unless the Lord
builds the house,
they labor in vain
who build it...**

Psalm 127:1

Word Search



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Word Search



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