

Family

Six Lessons From God's Word:

In the Beginning

True Love

Husbands

Wives

Parents and Children

Dealing with Stress in the Home

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Introduction

God's word is perfect, but men are fallible. If you find any errors in these lessons or have suggestions to improve them, please contact me at allan@biblestudyguide.org.

This series of lessons is not intended to be an exhaustive study of the family, but a general overview of the role of each person in the family. These lessons are in outline form and are, therefore, abbreviated. My intention is for the outlines to present the Scriptures relative to a study of the family and to express a few thoughts. Students should study the Scriptures for themselves and apply the lessons beyond the few suggestions made in the outlines.

Although I assume all responsibility for what is taught in these lessons, I must note that David Hanson's class material on the home was invaluable in my studies. And, my brethren in Thomasville, Georgia at the Church of Christ on Moultrie Road have aided me in studying God's word as it relates to the family.

Allan McNabb

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In the Beginning

A. Introduction:

1. 2 Tim. 1:13 We must go to God's word and pattern our homes according to His word.
2. We cannot be faithful and obedient Christians without fulfilling our family roles (husband, wife, parent, and child).
 - a. Col. 3:17 We must do all in the name of the Lord. We cannot do anything that God has not authorized.
 - b. 1 Pet. 3:1-4 A godly wife is precious in God's sight.
 - c. 1 Pet. 3:7 A husband's prayers are hindered if he is not treating his wife (family) properly.
 - d. Eph. 6:1-3 Children must obey their parents.
3. If we are not faithfully carrying out our family responsibilities, we are not faithful Christians.
4. In this series of lessons:
 - a. We will study God's word regarding the family (home) and the roles of each individual member.
 - b. We will make application to God's commands in respect to our families.

B. God's ordination of marriage and the home:

1. Gen. 1:1, 26-27 God created man in His own image.
 - a. The Bible is our guide to organizing and maintaining godly families (homes).
2. Gen. 1:28; 2:24 The sexual relationship within marriage is:
 - a. Gen. 1:28 to have children.
 - b. Gen. 2:24 to become one flesh.
 1. 1 Cor. 6:16 This relationship is reserved for lawfully married heterosexual couples only.
 2. Homosexuality and same sex marriages are unlawful.
 - c. 1 Cor. 7:2-5 Married couples are obligated to render affection to one another. They are not to deprive one another.
3. Gen. 1:31 God's view of creation and the family was that it was "very good."
4. Gen. 2:18 It is not good to be alone. Man needed a helper comparable to himself.
 - a. Gen. 2:20 Woman is man's only comparable helper.
 1. "Helper" means *one who aids or assists*.
 2. Men and women bring different natural abilities into the home.
 - a. Women are irreplaceable.
 - b. Within a "one-flesh family," another man or an animal is not a comparable helper for a man.
 - b. It is not good to be alone. Family is for companionship.
 - c. What does a man need help with? What does a man need from a woman?
 1. Gen. 1:28 procreation
 - a. Children are a blessing from God.
 2. Gen. 2:18 companionship, a co-worker
 - a. Tit. 2:5 Mates and families are for love and affection.

3. Gen. 2:24 Mates are for intimate affection, to avoid sexual immorality (1 Cor. 7:2).
 - a. The marriage bed is undefiled (Heb. 13:4).
4. Tit. 2:5 Wives are keepers of the home (cf. 1 Tim. 5:13-14).
5. Gen. 2:21-23 Woman is of man.
 - a. "Woman" means *of man*.
 - b. Creation of woman from man demonstrates the order of authority in the family and in the church.
 1. 1 Tim. 2:12-13 Church: Adam was formed first, then Eve. Therefore, a woman is not permitted to teach or exercise authority over a man.
 2. 1 Cor. 11:3 The Head of man is Christ. The head of woman is man.
 3. 1 Cor. 11:7 Man is the image and glory of God. Woman is the glory of man.
 - a. Pr. 31:10 A virtuous wife is worth more than rubies.
 4. 1 Cor. 11:8-9 Woman was created of the man and for the man.
 - a. Eph. 5:25-33 A wife is a gift from God. A man should take great care of her (nourish, cherish).
 5. 1 Cor. 11:11-12 Men and women are not independent of one another.
6. Gen. 2:24 A married couple is commanded to leave mother and father (being joined together becoming one flesh).
 - a. "Leave mother and father."
 1. The two form a separate and independent family unit.
 2. A man and woman's family must take precedent over all other human relationships. They cannot allow other family relationships to interfere with their family.
 - b. "Joined" or "cleave" means *to join fast together, glue, cement*.
 1. Marriage is the strongest human relationship. It is a bond.
 2. Men and women must not let anything come between them.
 - a. 2 Cor. 6:12-18 Marriage between Christians is preferable.
 - c. "Become one flesh" denotes the *sexual relationship reserved only for lawfully married couples* (1 Cor. 6:15-16).
 1. Matt. 5:32; 19:9 Fornication (i.e., sexual immorality) is the only grounds for divorce and remarriage.
 - d. Matt. 19:6 God joins two people in marriage. Only God can separate them. Man cannot separate two people whom God has joined in marriage.
 - e. Eph. 5:22-33 The marriage relationship is a type to the relationship between Christ and the church.

C. Conclusion:

1. Marriage and the home are ordained by God being governed by His laws. They are governed by His laws.
2. To be faithful Christians, we must faithfully carry out our family responsibilities.
3. If we are not faithfully carrying out our family responsibilities, we are not faithful Christians.

True Love

A. Introduction:

1. Cultural sayings that exemplify true love:
 - a. Love is a decision.
 - b. Love is never having to say, "I'm sorry."
 - c. Love is giving and serving.
 - d. Love is putting others first.
2. Objectives of this lesson:
 - a. Review the motivations for love.
 - b. Review the characteristics of true love.

B. Three motives for love:

1. Commitment (agape):
 - a. This type of love is a mental decision. It is not emotional. With this type of love, we do what is good and right toward others without consideration of our emotional prejudices and motives.
 1. Agape tempers our affections (Gal. 5:6, 22; Eph. 5:2).
 2. Agape must precede our affections if we are going to be pleasing to God (Matt. 22:37-40).
 - b. Matt. 22:37-40 Agape (love) is commanded toward God and our neighbor.
 1. Jn. 14:15; 15:10; 1 Jn. 5:3 To love (agape) God is to keep His commandments.
 2. These commands are applicable to every relationship. Therefore, it is applicable to guiding us in our family relationships.
 - c. Jn. 13:34-35; 15:12; 1 Jn. 3:14 We are commanded to love (agape) our brethren.
 1. This command is applicable in guiding the interactions between two Christians who are married (cf. 1 Pet. 3:7, 12). It is applicable in guiding parents and children who are Christians.
 2. Jn. 15:12-14 Christians should lay down their lives for God, their spouse, and their brethren.
 - d. Eph. 5:25 Love (agape) is commanded of a husband toward his wife.
 1. A man should love his wife as Christ loved the church (cf. Jn. 15:12-14; Acts 20:28).
 2. Question: What is the far-reaching significance of this principle?
 - e. Matt. 5:43-48 Love (agape) is commanded toward our enemy.
2. Affection (philos), e.g., friendship:
 - a. This type of love is an emotional affection (attachment) whereby we do what is good and right toward others.
 - b. 1 Cor. 16:22 We must love (philos) Jesus or we are accursed.
 - c. Rom. 12:10 We must love (philos) our brethren (cf. Tit. 3:15; 1 Pet. 3:7, 8).
 1. This command is applicable to guiding our relationships with family members who are Christians.

- d. Tit. 2:4 Women are commanded to love their husbands and children.
 - 1. Tit. 2:3, 4 Love is a behavior that is taught and learned. Older women are to train (by correcting) younger women.
 - a. This is especially true in the case of arranged marriages.
 - 2. Tit. 2:4 Love is a motive for a woman to act properly in her God-given role in the home, cf. Tit. 2:5.
 - 3. Intimate sexual love (eros):
 - a. This type of love is not expounded upon in the Bible except possibly in Song of Solomon.
 - b. 1 Cor. 7:3-5 Each married person has a responsibility to be intimately affectionate to his mate.
- C. Character of true love (application to family love):
- 1. Jn. 15:13-14 Each family member should be devoted to one another, giving their lives for one another (spouse, children, parents, siblings, and grandparents).
 - a. Rom. 12:1 Christians are living sacrifices.
 - b. Eph. 5:2, 21 We must submit to one another, serve one another (cf. Phil. 2:3-4, 5f).
 - c. Rom.12:2 Our lives must be transformed by the renewing of our minds to have true love for our family.
 - 2. Rom. 12:9-19:
 - a. vs. 9 We should not be hypocritical. Our motives should be true and honest in everything that we do.
 - b. vs. 10 We should be kindly affectionate, in honor giving preference to each person in our family.
 - c. vs. 11 We should be diligent to fulfill our family role.
 - d. vs. 12 We should be patient in hard times, steadfast in prayer for our family.
 - e. vs. 13 We should be distributing to the needs of our family members (spiritual, emotional, and physical).
 - f. vs. 14 We should be blessing other family members.
 - g. vs. 15 We should rejoice and weep with our family members.
 - 1. We should have sympathy and empathy for each other.
 - h. vs. 16 We should have the same mind toward one another. We should not show favoritism.
 - i. vs. 17 We should not repay evil with evil.
 - j. vs. 18 We should live peaceably with our family.
 - k. vs. 19 We should not avenge ourselves (give place to wrath; cf. Eph. 4:26).
 - 3. 1 Cor. 13:1-8, 13 love:
 - a. vs. 1-3 Without love, we cannot be a good family member.
 - b. vs. 4-8 Paul reveals the attributes of love.
 - c. vs. 13 The greatest human attribute is love.
 - 1. We must make love a priority in our family relationships.
 - 4. Eph. 5:22-6:4 family love:

- a. 5:22, 33 Love is respecting each other (cf. Eph. 6:1; Tit. 2:5).
- b. 5:25 Love is giving of self.
- c. 5:28, 33 Love is loving others at least as much as self.
- d. 5:29 Love is nourishing and cherishing others.
- e. 5:31 Love is a cementing bond that cannot be broken by other human relationships when God is placed first in the relationship.
- f. 6:4 Love is seeing to the needs of other family members (nurturing, teaching, and training).

D. Conclusion:

1. Cultural sayings that exemplify true love:
 - a. Love is a decision.
 - b. Love is never having to say, "I'm sorry."
 - c. Love is giving and serving.
 - d. Love is putting others first.
2. We must be committed to true love in our family relationships to have a godly family.

Husbands

A. Introduction:

1. In the home, husbands have the most authority. Therefore, they have the most responsibility. So, it is fitting to study the husband's role in the home before studying the roles of wives and children.
2. If a husband fulfills his role in the family, an atmosphere is created for his wife and children to graciously fulfill their roles.
 - a. A husband cannot force his wife to fulfill her role. But, a wife is more likely to fulfill her role if her husband is fulfilling his role as the head of the family (cf. Eph. 5:22f).

B. Eph. 5:29; 6:4 The husband is the spiritual leader of his home.

1. A husband's first responsibility is to himself. He must be walking in the ways of the Lord. An ungodly man cannot be a godly husband or father.
 - a. Matt. 7:5 He must first correct himself before we can correct others.
 1. Gal. 6:1 He must be spiritual to spiritually restore others.
 - b. A man who is not walking in ways of Lord cannot lead others to walk in the ways of Lord.
 1. Or else, he will be a hypocrite.
 2. Compare the qualifications of an elder to a husband:
 - a. 1 Tim. 3:2 blameless.
 - b. 1 Tim. 3:4 rule his own house well.
 - c. 1 Tim. 3:7 have a good testimony among unbelievers.
 - d. Tit. 1:9 holding fast the faithful word.
2. A husband's second responsibility is to his wife.
 - a. Eph. 5:25-31 As a spiritual leader, he must promote spiritual development of his wife.
 1. vs. 25 He must love (agape) his wife as Christ loved the church.
 - a. Therefore, he must do whatever necessary to help his wife obey God.
 2. vs. 28 He must love his wife as himself.
 - a. If a man has taken care of his own soul, he must also care for his wife's soul.
 3. vs. 29 He must nourish his wife.
 - a. "Nourish" means *to rear up to maturity*; therefore, the husband is responsible for promoting his wife's spiritual development.
 - b. Compare Eph. 6:4. Fathers must *bring up* their children. Fathers are responsible for their children's spiritual education and development.
 - c. Compare Heb. 13:17. Elders must give account for souls of the flock.
 - d. Compare the qualifications of elders.
 1. 1 Tim. 3:3-4 Men who rule their house well show their

- ability to rule over the church.
2. Tit. 1:6 Elders must have faithful children.
4. vs. 29 He must cherish his wife.
 - a. "Cherish" means *to warm her with tender love, to foster her with tender care.*
 1. Cherish primarily means *to heat, to soften by heat; then, to keep warm, as of broods covering their young with their feathers* (Vines).
 - b. A husband who cherishes his wife, warms her heart toward himself. It is much easier for her to fulfill her submissive role if her heart has been warmed with tender affection.
 1. The Greek word for *cherish* only appears here and in 1 Th. 2:7, where Paul reminded them of his tender care for them. He uses the analogy of a mother who tenderly cares for her children.
 - a. Husbands should be tender toward their wives. They should not be abusive, brash, or embittered against them (Col. 3:9).
 2. As with Christ and the church, not everyone responds favorably to cherishing affection. As some people reject Christ, some wives reject their husbands and do not fulfill their role.
 - b. 1 Pet. 3:7 A husband's attitude toward his wife:
 1. He must dwell with her with understanding (in an understanding way).
 - a. Generally, women's needs are the same, but every person is different.
 - b. A husband's responsibility is to learn his wife's needs and supply them with an understanding view toward her.
 - c. Some of a wife's needs:
 1. Wives need tender affection (Eph. 5:29 cherishing) - given and received.
 - a. She does not need to be treated harshly or with bitterness (Col. 3:19).
 2. Wives need to nurture others, children.
 3. Wives need to discuss and talk. They need more communication than their husbands.
 - a. She needs to verbally hear that she is loved.
 - b. She needs to communicate problems.
 - c. She needs general verbal interaction.
 4. Wives need to display emotion.
 5. Wives need to feel secure.
 6. Wives need more rest than their husbands. She is the weaker vessel.

2. He must give her honor:
 - a. as to the weaker vessel.
 1. 1 Cor. 12:22-24 He must bestow upon her the honor due the weaker vessel (cf. Phil 2:3).
 - b. as being heirs together of the grace of life.
 1. He should give her honor due a Christian and the honor which godly men should bestow upon their wives.
 2. A husband should treat his Christian wife as a Christian. All Scriptures regarding treatment of brethren are applicable to the relationship.
3. He must treat his wife properly so that his prayers are not hindered (cf. 1 Pet. 3:8-12).
 - a. God is not favorable toward us if we are not living properly with our wives and family.
 - b. Not living in a proper family relationship is evil (1 Pet. 3:12).
3. A husband's third responsibility is to his children. Both the husband and wife have a role in raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Leadership for properly bringing up the couple's children must be supplied by the husband.
 - a. This is specifically covered in Lesson Five.
 - b. The husband is responsible for preparing himself and his wife to parent their children in the training and admonition of the Lord.

C. How does a man lead and rule over his home, family?

1. He leads and rules as a servant.
 - a. Eph. 5:21 A man serves his family by leading and ruling as God commands (cf. 1 Pet. 5:1-3).
2. Examples of elders and deacons:
 - a. 1 Tim. 3:1f; Tit. 1:5f Elders and deacons are men who have succeeded at being good family leaders.
 1. But, not all good family leaders are qualified to be elders and deacons.
 2. To learn the characteristics of good leadership, it is helpful to examine the overall character of elders.
 - b. Names applied to elders as they can also relate to husbands:
 1. "Bishop" denoting that he is an *overseer*.
 - a. Husbands oversee all of the other family members. He must place the greatest emphasis on their spiritual growth.
 2. "Pastor" denoting that he is a *shepherd*.
 - a. As elders shepherd the flock of God, a man shepherds his family (spiritually, physically, and emotionally).
 3. 1 Pet. 5:1-4 Principles of an elder's rule:
 - a. vs. 2 As a man only oversees and shepherds the church of which he is a member, a man only oversees and shepherds the family of which he is a member.

- b. vs. 3 As an elder does not rule as a lord but by example, so a man does not rule as a lord but by example.
 - c. cf. 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-11 Qualifications of elders and deacons as they relate to godly husbands:
 - 1. Men who have the same qualities as elders will be good leaders in their homes and families.
- 3. Principles of leading and ruling over a home:
 - a. "To rule" (Gen. 3:16; 1 Tim. 3:4) is *to stand before, to preside, to maintain, to be over*.
 - 1. A man must *stand before* his family showing them the way to go. He leads by his example, by instructing, by educating, and by correcting.
 - b. Gen. 18:19 A man must command his family to follow after him in the way of the Lord (to do righteousness and justice).
 - c. Deut. 6:4-9 A man must set an example for his family (vs. 6) and diligently teach his children orally and with the written word (vs. 7-9).
 - d. Josh. 24:14-15 A man must set the course for his family.
 - e. Eph. 5:22-6:4 A man must follow the example of Christ in loving, serving, teaching, training, nourishing, and cherishing his family (cf. 1 Pet. 2:21).
 - f. Eph. 5:29; 6:4 A man must see to the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical needs of his family.
 - 1. 1 Tim. 5:8 A man who does not provide for his family is worse than an unbeliever.
- 4. How do men become good leaders?
 - a. Leadership as Christians is learned. We are not born leaders.
 - b. Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17 Men must study and learn God's word to be godly leaders.
 - c. Ja. 1:5 Men must pray for wisdom to be godly leaders.
 - d. Matt. 5:13-16 Men must be living righteously before God setting a godly example for others to be godly leaders.
 - 1. Men cannot become godly leaders without personal spiritual growth and development.
 - e. Heb. 5:12-14 Men who grow to spiritual maturity can teach their families.
 - 1. Heb. 10:24-25 They learn from other Christian men.

D. Conclusion:

- 1. Husbands are the spiritual leaders of their home.
 - a. A husband's first responsibility is to his personal spiritual growth and development.
 - b. A husband's second responsibility is to his wife.
 - c. A husband's third responsibility is to raising his children with his wife.
- 2. How do men lead and rule over their home, family?
 - a. Men rule over their homes the same way elders rule over the church.
 - b. Principles of leading and ruling over a home:

1. Gen. 18:19 A man must command his family to follow after him in the way of the Lord.
 2. Deut. 6:4-9 A man must set an example for his family (vs. 6) diligently teaching his children orally and with the written word (vs. 7-9).
 3. Josh. 24:14-15 A man must set the course for his family.
 4. Eph. 5:22-6:4 A man must follow the example of Christ in loving, serving, teaching, training, nourishing, and cherishing his family (cf. 1 Pet. 2:21).
 5. Eph. 5:29; 6:4 A man must see to the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical needs of his family.
 - a. 1 Tim. 5:8 A man who does not provide for his family is worse than an unbeliever.
3. How do men become good leaders?
- a. Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17 Through the study and knowledge of God's word.
 - b. Ja. 1:5 By praying for wisdom to be a good leader.
 - c. Matt. 5:13-16 By leading others through a godly example.
 - d. Heb. 5:12-14 Through personal spiritual growth resulting in an ability to teach their families.

Wives

A. Introduction:

1. Godly wives live in subjection to their husbands. But, this does not make them a lesser person than their husbands.
 - a. In one sense, wives who are in subjection to their husbands are greater than their husbands since it is more blessed to give (Acts 20:35).
 1. Jesus came to serve (Rom. 15:1-4).
 2. cf. Pr. 12:4; 18:22; 19:14; 31:10-31
 - b. Gal. 3:28 We are all equal in God's eyes. We are all one in Christ.
 - c. We all live in subjection to someone. Everyone is subject to God and His laws.
 1. Where there is no authority and subjection to authority, chaos results.
 2. A family without authority and subjection to authority is chaotic. Family members are unhappy because of a lack of direction and self esteem.
 - a. A wife who wishes to have a happy home (family) will submit to her husband's authority providing her children with a good role model.
2. If a wife is fulfilling her role, it is easier for other family members to fulfill their roles.

B. A wife's first responsibility is to herself (to walk in the ways of the Lord).

1. Every human submissive role begins with submission to God and Christ.
 - a. Acts 4:19; 5:29 We must obey God before men.
 - b. Rom. 13:1-7 Christians must submit to their government.
 - c. Eph. 6:5-7; Col. 2:22-23 Servants (employees) must obey, as to Christ (as servants to Christ doing the will of God).
 - d. Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18 Wives must submit to their husbands as to the Lord (as is fitting in the Lord).
 - e. Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20 Children must submit to their parents "in the Lord" (well pleasing to the Lord).
2. A wife submits to her husband as a result of her submission to God and Christ.
 - a. Submission to her husband is second to her submission to God and Christ.
 - b. Eph. 6:1-4 Raising her children under her husband's guidance is her third responsibility.

C. A wife's role in marriage:

1. Gen. 1:28; 2:24; 1 Tim. 2:15 She is to do her part to maintain the sexual relationship and bear children (cf. 1 Cor. 7:1-5).
2. Gen. 2:18 She is to be her husband's companion and helper.
 - a. Gen. 2:20 Woman is man's only comparable helper.
 - b. For a wife to be her husband's helper, she must (in varying degrees) conform herself to live in such a fashion as to aid her husband.
 1. Different men want and need more or less aggressive women to be a fitting helper.

2. Different husbands need help with different things.
3. Therefore, great care should be taken when selecting a husband. A woman should select a husband to whom she desires to be a helper.
 - a. When selecting a husband, a woman is selecting her lifestyle.
3. She is to respect (reverence) her husband.
 - a. Eph. 5:33 She is to *reverence* (KJV), *respect* (NKJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV) her husband.
 1. Everyone must respect authority and thus respect those who have authority over them. Correspondingly, wives who respect authority will graciously submit to their husbands.
4. She is to submit to (obey) her husband.
 - a. A wife is to subject herself (to obey, be subject to) her husband.
 1. "Subject," (submit, obey) means *to rank under, to subject oneself to obey*.
 2. A wife's subjection to her husband is of her own free will. Her husband does not bring her into subjection.
 - a. Cf. Eph. 5:22, our subjection to Christ is voluntary.
 - b. Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18 "submit" (KJV, NKJV, NIV), "be subject" (NASB, NRSV):
 1. Eph. 5:22 as to the Lord. A wife is subject to her husband with the same commitment she has toward subjecting herself to the Lord.
 - a. She submits to the Lord first and her husband second.
 2. Col. 3:18 as is fitting in the Lord. A wife subjects herself to her husband in the manner that all holy women submit to their husbands.
 - a. She submits to the Lord first and her husband second.
 - c. Tit. 2:5 "obedient" (KJV, NKJV), "being subject" (NASB), "to be subject" (NIV), "being submissive" (NRSV):
 1. Tit. 2:4-5 A loving, discreet, chaste, homemaker is subject to her husband.
 2. Tit. 2:5 A wife who is not subject to her husband is a cause for unbelievers to blaspheme God's word.
 - d. 1 Pet. 3:1 "be in subjection" (KJV), "be submissive" (NKJV, NASB, NIV), "accept the authority" (NRSV):
 1. 1 Pet. 3:1 A wife who is submissive to her husband exemplifies the submission that all people must have toward God. In that way, she may win over an unbelieving husband.
 2. 1 Pet. 3:2 A wife who is submissive to her husband is chaste. She exhibits chaste conduct.
 - e. 1 Pet. 3:6 "obeyed" (KJV, NKJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV):
 1. Sarah obeyed Abraham, but she was not afraid because her submission was voluntary.
 - f. Note of caution: When selecting a husband, a woman should be careful to select a man to whom she desires to voluntarily submit herself.
 1. Christian men (by nature) will make this easier (rf. Lesson Three).

5. 1 Pet. 3:1-6 A godly wife in submission to her husband is a role model of good conduct, chastity, and inward godly beauty.
 - a. Tit. 2:4-5, she is discreet and chaste.
 - b. She teaches her children and husband through moral, godly conduct.
6. Tit. 2:4 She is to love her husband.
 - a. The Greek word translated "love" in Titus 2:4 is from two words: love (*philos*) and man, husband. It literally means, *lover of man* and denotes a wife's friendly affection for her husband.
 - b. Husbands must learn to understand their wives (1 Pet. 3:7). Wives must learn to love their husbands (Tit. 2:4).
7. Tit. 2:5 "keepers at home" (KJV), "homemakers" (NKJV), "workers at home" (NASB), "to be busy at home" (NIV), "good managers of the household" (NRSV):
 - a. The role of wives as "homemakers" (NKJV) is *watching over and keeping the home, taking care of domestic household affairs* (Thayer); cf. 1 Tim. 5:14.
 - b. Tit. 2:3-5 Keeping and managing a home must be taught and learned.
8. 1 Tim. 5:14 "guide the house" (KJV), "manage the house" (NKJV), "keep house" (NASB), "to manage their homes" (NIV), "and manage their households" (NRSV)
 - a. The role of a wife is to "manage the house" (NKJV) is *to rule a household, manage family affairs* (Thayer).
9. Discussion questions regarding Tit. 2:5; 1 Tim. 5:14:
 - a. What does being homemakers and managing a house include and not include (cf. Eph. 5:29; 6:4)?
 1. cf. Pr. 31:10-31
 - b. How does a wife be a homemaker and manage a house?
 - c. What is the working relationship between a husband and wife in the management of a house?
 1. How can a husband hinder or aid in his wife's keeping and managing of the home?
 - d. What results when a wife (mother) does a good job at managing the house?

D. Tips for wives:

1. How can a wife be a helper (help meet) and companion?
 - a. Tit. 2:4-5 She can learn to love her husband and be affectionate toward him. She, therefore, is helping and looking out for her husband's (family's) best interest from an endearing and affectionate heart.
 - b. She can encourage her husband with a thankful and content heart (Eph. 4:11-16; Phil. 4:11-13; 1 Th. 5:18).
 1. She can encourage him enthusiastically and patiently.
 2. She can encourage him in spiritual and temporal matters.
 3. She can encourage him as the head and spiritual leader of their household.
 - c. She can be loyal (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31).
 1. She can loyally support her husband in spiritual and temporal matters.
 2. She can put her husband before all other human (family) relationships.

3. She can speak well of him at all times.
 - d. She can be chaste and discrete (Tit. 2:4-5; 1 Pet. 3:1-6).
 1. A chaste and discrete wife helps her husband be a good spiritual leader and effective worker in the kingdom (cf. qualifications of elders and deacons).
 - a. She respects (is reverent toward) her husband (Eph. 5:33; 1 Pet. 3:1-6).
 2. A godly wife is a person of whom a husband can be proud and who can be nourished by his spiritual guidance.
 3. A godly wife makes her husband's spiritual training of their children easier by her example of godliness, her godly nurturing, her godly guidance, and her godly education of their children.
 - e. She can manage their home (keep their home, watching over their home) (1 Tim. 5:14; Tit. 2:5; Pr. 31:10-31).
 1. A man can devote a good portion of his time to temporal and spiritual affairs inside and outside his home if his wife is a good manager of their home.
 - a. In such cases, a husband can be more involved in general oversight and spiritual guidance of the home and less involved with the day-to-day management of the home.
 2. A well-managed home creates an atmosphere wherein it is easier to spiritually train children.
2. Tips for helping wives properly subject themselves to their husbands:
 - a. Perform submissive duties heartily, as to the Lord and not to men (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:23).
 - b. Be submissive as is fitting in the Lord (Col. 3:18).
 - c. Be reverent and respectful (Eph. 5:33).
 - d. Be submissive with a gentle and quiet spirit, precious in God's site (1 Pet. 3:4).
 - e. Exhibit good moral conduct, pointing others to God, so that the word of God is not blasphemed (Tit. 2:4-5; 1 Tim. 5:13-14; 1 Pet. 3:1-6).
 3. Tips for managing a home:
 - a. Take your responsibilities seriously. They are ordained by God (1 Tim. 5:14; Tit. 2:4-5).
 1. Show initiative to fulfill your role and be a dedicated manager.
 - b. Communicate problems and successes to your husband.
 1. Do not pretend that there are no problems when problems exist.
 2. Do not hide financial shortfalls in managing the home.
 - c. Let your husband fulfill his role as the head. Let him solve the family's problems.
 1. Make suggestions.
 2. Do not become stressed out by trying to solve problems which you are unable to solve alone.
 - d. Manage the household finances (budget) well.
 1. Be thrifty. Do not be wasteful.

2. Do not avoid spending money for things that must be purchased.
3. Communicate financial concerns and difficulties.
 - a. Do not hide financial problems.
 - b. Let your husband solve financial problems.
- e. Promote good health and nutrition.
- f. Be yourself: nurture, love, and nurse.

E. Conclusion:

1. Wives are the managers of the house.
 - a. A wife's first responsibility is to her own personal spiritual growth and development.
 - b. A wife's second responsibility is to her husband. If she is submissive to God, she will be submissive to her husband as to the Lord (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18).
 - c. A wife's third responsibility is to her children. Managing the house in subjection to her husband, they raise their children in the training and admonition of the Lord.
2. A wife's role in a marriage is:
 - a. to do her part to maintain the sexual relationship and bear children.
 - b. to be her husband's companion and helper.
 - c. to respect (reverence) her husband.
 - d. to submit to her husband.
 - e. to be a godly role model.
 - f. to love her husband.
 - g. to be a homemaker.
 - h. to manage the house.

Parents and Children

A. Introduction:

1. Many principles already discussed in these lessons are applicable to parents and children.
2. This lesson reviews the roles of parents and children and makes application to Bible principles.
 - a. Fathers are responsible for bringing their children up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Since a man and woman work together to achieve this goal, we consider that the commands to fathers are also applicable to mothers.

B. Parents:

1. Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21 Fathers (parents) are not to provoke their children to wrath, lest they become discouraged.
 - a. "Provoke to ... wrath" (KJV, NKJV), "provoke to ... anger" (NASB, NRSV), "exasperate" (NIV) is a verb denoting *to provoke an intensified abiding condition of anger which is frequently inclined toward taking revenge*.
 - b. A child that is wrathful or discouraged is not mentally prepared to heed his parents' instruction.
 - c. How can parents avoid provoking their children to wrath and discouraging them?
 1. Treat them as children of God (cf. 1 Pet. 3:7). Live by the golden rule (Matt. 22:36-39; Rom. 13:8-10).
 - a. Be fair and consistent.
 - b. Encourage and praise the good things your children do.
 - c. Ensure that punishment is fair and fits the offense.
 1. Parents should only punish their children for the purpose of correction (cf. Heb. 12:4-17).
 - d. Communicate your love for them and teach them to love others, especially God.
 - e. Teach your children to grow up and spread their wings in a godly manner.
 2. Teach your children how to deal with anger (cf. Eph. 5:26).
 - a. Promote a good self image, confidence, and success.
 3. Do not be bitter or harsh toward them (cf. Col. 3:19).
 - a. Do not nag, hold grudges, play head games, make fun of them to do harm, compare them with other children, or show favoritism.
2. Eph. 6:4 Parents must bring their children up in the training and admonition of the Lord.
 - a. "Nurture" (KJV), "training" (NKJV), "discipline" (NASB) is a verb meaning *to rear, feed* (cf. Eph. 5:29)
 1. Pr. 13:24; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15-17 This includes corporal punishment that is judiciously administered.
 - b. "Admonition" (KJV, NKJV), "instruction" (NASB, NIV, NRSV) is a noun literally meaning *a putting in mind*. It is training by word (speech) as contrasted with training by acts. It includes encouraging and rebuking with words.

1. If parents do not talk to their children, they cannot teach them God's ways (cf. Deut. 6:7-9).
- c. Practical advice on training children:
 1. Start training children the day they are born.
 2. Take responsibility for your children's secular and spiritual training.
 3. Use God's word to train your children.
 - a. Use Bible classes to help train your children. But, Bible classes at church cannot replace the training children receive from their parents.
 - b. Use Bible stories and God's commands in the Bible to teach morality.
 4. Set high standards. Consistently communicate and enforce high moral and spiritual standards.
 - a. Praise your children when they succeed and when they do good things.
 - b. Generally, children will meet and succeed whatever standard is set.
 1. It is easier to lower a standard than to raise a standard.
 - c. Set goals and objectives with your children and for your children.
 1. A goal that is never set is never met.
 2. A goal that is set without a plan of achieving the end result (i.e., without objectives) is seldom achieved.
 5. Communicate all of the time.
 - a. Talk about everything (good and bad).
 - b. Children whose parents regularly discuss moral issues are less likely to fall prey to Satan's lustful traps of immorality.
 6. Admit mistakes and apologize.
 - a. If a child's parents pretend to be perfect, he tends to also pretend to be perfect. Therefore, he will be closed minded to instruction.
 7. Accept apologies from your children and others.
 - a. Accepting apologies and forgiving an offender does not negate a parent's responsibility to punish and chasten his children.
 8. Be involved with your children's lives. Know what's going on in society to properly equip your children.
 - a. Know your child's friends, teachers, and employers.
 - b. Teach them to judiciously choose their recreational activities (e.g., music, TV, movies, games, parties, etc.).
 - c. Often times, trouble and bad influences steer clear of children whose parents or guardians are near to their side (cf. 1 Cor. 15:33).
 9. Worship together. Pray, study, and sing together (at church and at home). Assemble with the church together.
 10. Have fun and play together.
 - a. Children learn more when playing than when working.
 - b. If parents do not have fun with their children, their children will find

someone else with whom to have fun.

11. Be good role models and leaders. Be a parent that your child can be proud of.
 - a. Be a godly example. Walk the walk, just don't talk the talk (cf. Ja. 1:21-27; 2:14-26).

C. Children:

1. Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20 Obey your parents in the Lord. This is the first commandment with a promise. Children are pleasing to God when they obey their parents in the Lord.
 - a. "Obey": see Lesson Four. A child's obedience to his parents is voluntary submission.
 - b. "In the Lord": see Lesson Four. A child must first be submissive to the Lord and then submissive (obedient) to his parents.
 - c. "Promise": If a child obeys his parents in the Lord, he has happier and longer life avoiding many problems resulting from sin.
 1. The final result of heeding parental training in the Lord is eternal life.
 - d. "Pleasing to the Lord": God is well pleased whenever we properly submit ourselves to authority.
 1. If a child is obeying God, he will be obeying his parents in the Lord.
 2. An unrepentant and disobedient child, who is a Christian, should be taken before the church (1 Cor. 5:1f).
2. Heb. 12:3-11 Godly discipline:
 - a. vs. 6 Discipline because of love.
 - b. vs. 7-8 Parents must discipline their children.
 - c. vs. 9 Children are disciplined so that they learn to respect (obey) God and their parents.
 - d. vs. 10 Discipline is for a child's profit.
 - e. vs. 11 Discipline is not joyful in the short term. But in the long term, it produces the peaceable fruit of righteousness.
 - f. vs. 11 Children are trained with discipline.

D. The character of godly fathers is exemplified in the qualification of elders.

1. Review the chart (below) and make application.
2. The best fathers exhibit all of the qualifications of elders in respect to their moral and spiritual leadership of others.

1 Timothy 3:1-7	Titus 1:6-9
Desire:	
desires the position	
Blameless:	Blameless:
must be blameless	must be blameless as a steward of God
husband of one wife	husband of one wife
temperate	not self-willed not quick-tempered self-controlled
sober-minded	sober-minded
of good behavior	lover of what is good
hospitable	hospitable
able to teach	holding fast the faithful word
not given to wine	not give to wine
not violent	not violent
not greedy for money	not greedy for money
gentle	
not quarrelsome	
not covetous	
	just
	holy
Moreover, a good reputation among unbelievers:	
have a good testimony among those who are outside	

E. Conclusion:

1. Fathers (parents) are not to provoke their children to wrath lest they become discouraged.
2. Fathers (parents) are accountable to God for bringing their children up in the training and admonition of the Lord.
3. Children are accountable to God for obeying their parents.
 - a. A child who is obeying God is obeying his parents.
 - b. A child who is disobeying his parents is disobeying God.

Dealing with Stress in the Home

A. Introduction:

1. In this lesson, we take the Scriptures and principles presented earlier in this series and make specific application to dealing with stress in the home.
 - a. In this lesson, we will not constantly reiterate the Scriptures and principles previously presented in this series.
2. Good leaders and team members are not born. They are made through hard work, training, and devotion.
 - a. Likewise, good spouses, home leaders, managers of the home, and family members are not born. They are made.
 - b. Hard work and devotion are necessary to fulfill our roles in the home and reduce stress.
 - c. The better job we do at fulfilling our God-given roles in the home, the less stress there will be.
 1. Husbands are responsible for leadership and oversight of the home. Therefore, the responsibility to create the best possible environment begins with him.
3. Dealing with stress in the home requires us to educate ourselves. We must be knowledgeable about stress and ways of reducing stress.
4. In this lesson:
 - a. we will quickly review and define stress.
 - b. we will identify stressors in the home and make suggestions on how to reduce stress.
5. Much of this lesson contains my personal observations and insights into stress and dealing with stress in a family.
 - a. The applications made in this (or any) lesson should not be considered commands of God. But, I hope my personal insight will be especially helpful for individuals not yet married and young families.

B. What is stress?

1. "Stress" is a noun and denotes a constraining force or influence (Webster).
 - a. It can be a physical, chemical, or an emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension and may be a factor in disease causation.
 - b. It is a state resulting from stress; *esp*, one of bodily or mental tension resulting from factors that tend to alter an existing equilibrium.
2. "Stressor" is a noun denoting a stimulus that causes stress (e.g., illness, peer pressure, too busy, school, work, family).
 - a. To reduce stress, we must reduce or eliminate the negative effect stressors have on us.

C. Not all stress is bad.

1. Stress resulting from sin is good. It is God's way of directing (influencing) us away from

sin.

2. 1 Cor. 5:1f We put stress on brethren who do not repent by disfellowshipping them.
3. Jn. 3:16-21; 15:18-25; Eph. 5:7-13 As Christians, we expose darkness. We are, therefore, stressors for the world.
 - a. The stressors are the word of God and our obedience to the truth.
 - b. The only way for Christians to live at peace (without stress) with the world is to stop practicing and preaching the truth (cf. Ja. 4:4).

D. Eliminating unnecessary (unhealthy) stress:

1. To reduce unhealthy stress, we must reduce the effect a stressor has upon us.
 - a. Stressors have varying effects upon different individuals.
2. To eliminate the stressor, we must conform.
 - a. We must be careful not to conform to sinful behaviors to eliminate stress.
3. If we conform to God's word, the stressors associated with sin will be eliminated. Then, God will help us deal with the stress associated with being His child.
 - a. Rom. 5:1f; 8:28f; Ja. 1:2f; Phil. 4:4f; 1 Pet. 5:6f

E. In every aspect of life, the closer we live to God the less stress we will have.

1. Godly homes are less stressful than ungodly homes.
 - a. Godly homes are organized and run as ordained by God. When we follow God's pattern of home and family, we have less stress.
2. The first step toward reducing stress in the home is making the decision to have a godly home (Eph. 5-6).
 - a. Choosing a godly spouse will result in a less stressful home. Being married to a carnal spouse will make the home a more contentious place resulting in more stress (1 Cor. 1-3).
 - b. When both spouses accept and fulfill their God-given roles in the home (Eph. 5-6), stress is greatly reduced. Stress in a godly home is handled in a much more productive manner than in a carnal home.
 - c. Bringing our children up in the training and admonition of the Lord will greatly reduce stress (Eph. 6).
 1. Children who are trained to be godly people are less likely to become a stressor through immoral behavior.
3. In a nut shell, stress in the home is greatly reduced when:
 - a. everyone treats each other as Christians - serving and submitting to one another (Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2:1-16).
 - b. everyone lives by the golden rule (Matt. 22:36-39; Rom. 13:8-10).

F. Whenever basic godly needs of family members (Eph. 5) are being met, stress is greatly reduced.

1. Men have the need to be the spiritual leader, nourishing and training the other family members.
 - a. He needs this for himself.
 - b. His family needs him to fulfill his godly role so that they can better fulfill their roles.

1. A home in which the man does not fulfill his role as the spiritual leader is like a ship without a rudder.
 2. Men (parents) need to be respected and obeyed.
 - a. Otherwise, they cannot be leaders.
 - b. If men (parents) conduct themselves as godly leaders, it is much easier for others to respect them and fulfill their submissive roles.
 3. Women need to be loved, cherished, respected, treated with honor, and treated with dignity.
 - a. Women need tender affection whereas men usually do not.
 1. Often times, men need more physical sex and women need more emotional affection. In such cases, a balance must be struck between the two for both to have their needs met.
 - b. Women need to know that they are important in the relationship (family) and that they are loved.
 1. This needs to be communicated in words and actions.
 - c. Women need to know that their husbands would do anything for them.
 1. They need to know that their husbands love them as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it.
 - d. Generally, women need more communication than do men.
 4. Both men and women need a fulfilling sexual relationship (1 Cor. 7).
 - a. This has to be worked out by both parties for the overall good of the couple.
 5. Children need to know that they are loved and that they come first in the home.
 - a. Children need guidelines, training, and discipline (Eph. 6:1-4). Else, they will feel unloved.
 1. Genuine parental love does not exist without discipline and training.
 6. Children need to obey their parents (Eph. 6:1-4).
 - a. A disobedient child is a stressed out child.
 7. Privilege of family membership requires conforming personal behaviors to fulfill our roles in the family and meet one another's needs in a godly manner.
 - a. Stress exists when one or more family members are not fulfilling their role and doing their part to meet the other member's needs.
 - b. Each person (each behavior) either increases or decreases stress.
 1. Situations can often be handled in a manner that reduces stress (or at least does not add more stress).
 2. We must make the decision to be a person who reduces stress whenever possible. The result is a happier and more pleasant home.
- G. A relatively stress free home requires good management.
1. God has commanded that women be the hands-on, day-to-day managers of the home (Tit. 2:5; 1 Tim. 5:14).
 - a. Tit. 2:3-5 Keeping and managing a home (Christian home) must be taught and learned.
 1. Women should not expect themselves to be good managers of the home

- without training. Godly wives are continually learning and improving their management skills.
- b. Families become very stressed when there is not someone (e.g., wife, mother) seeing to the day-to-day management of the home.
 1. Poorly managed homes are chaotic resulting in a high level of stress.
 2. Poorly managed homes are not refuges from work, school, and the world. They are another "battleground" from which family members seek to escape.
 3. In families where there is a single parent or where both spouses work, special care must be taken to see that the home does not go unmanaged.
 - c. Families that do whatever is necessary to ensure that their home is well-managed by the woman, are blessed with a place of peace and rest.
2. Eph. 5:23 A husband is his wife's head; thus, he is responsible for supervising his wife's management of the home. A home's management is a reflection upon the husband's leadership.
- a. The "how to" of managing a home is up to every husband and wife within the very loose parameters set by God in Scripture.
 1. It is mostly subjective.
 - b. Therefore, both husbands and wives are managers.
 1. The husband's responsibility is to train his wife and oversee the management of the home.
 2. The wife's responsibility is to heed her husband's instruction and carry out the day-to-day management of the home.
 - c. Both husbands and wives must employ good management techniques to reduce stress within the home.
 1. Good managers are always "going to school" to improve management techniques.
 2. Good managers are good listeners and communicators.
 - a. Good managers listen to others, making sure that others understand them without jumping to conclusions.
 - b. Good managers take time to communicate, asking questions to ensure that they are understood.
 3. Good family managers are in tune with each family member. They ensure that all needs are being met.
 4. Good managers set goals and objectives, communicating them to each family member.
 - a. Good managers follow good decision making procedures.
 - b. Good managers have contingency plans for dealing with problems.
 - c. Good managers plan for continued growth of each member. They regularly evaluate each member's spiritual and personal growth.
 5. Good managers work to become good teachers and instructors (cf. Eph. 5-6).
 - a. Professional school teachers have to go to school to learn to teach.

- b. If parents are going to teach (train) their children as commanded by God, they must "go to school" (i.e., study to become good teachers).
 - 1. No one is born a good teacher. Having a baby does not make us good teachers. Parents must educate themselves to become good teachers.
 - 2. Parents can educate themselves through secular education (books, classes, talking and learning from friends and neighbors). Parents can also educate themselves through spiritual education (older Christians, elders, Bible classes).
 - 6. Good managers stay organized. They stay in their priorities.
 - a. Disorganization is a major stressor. If a person in a position of authority is disorganized, everyone under his authority will be stressed as a result of his disorganization.
3. A well-managed home is not running out of control.
 - a. Family members are not "too busy" and overworked in well-managed homes.
 - 1. A great deal of stress (esp. in young families) is due to trying to do too much.
 - 2. In well-managed homes, there is time for everyone to have some fun and enjoy life.
 - 3. In well-managed homes, greed does not dictate the family's priorities or lifestyle.
 - b. In well-managed homes, family members are living and working within their priorities.
 - 1. When Christians decide to have a family (get married, have children) they make the decision to direct their personal priorities toward doing what is best for their family.
 - 2. Our family comes second to God. We fulfill our roles in the home as He commands (Eph. 5-6).
 - 3. Our family comes before career, personal interests, hobbies, and other people.
 - a. Illustration: Drug and alcohol addicts who are parents put their addictions before their families.
 - b. Illustration: Workaholics who are parents (one or both) put their jobs before their families.
 - c. Illustration: Parents who would rather put emphasis on a fetish (personal interests, outside relationships, cleanliness, etc.) put their fetishes before their families.

H. Five major groups of families:

- 1. **A family consisting of a husband and wife without children:**
 - a. Without children, this should be one of the least stressful family situations.
 - 1. If a couple is not able to handle this family situation, they should seriously

- consider not having children.
 - 2. In this situation they have more leisure time and disposable income than when they will have children.
 - b. If they have children, they must be willing to completely change their priorities.
 - 1. They will have less (sometimes little) time for themselves and initiate love.
 - 2. They will have less disposable income.
 - c. The best time to prepare for the stress of having a family with children is before the children are born.
 - 1. If possible, wait to have children. This will allow time to learn how to be husband and wife and prepare to become parents.
 - 2. Before having children, learn to work out problems and differences of opinion.
 - 3. Before having children, learn to communicate.
 - a. Work out each person's specific responsibilities before having children.
 - b. Agree on a philosophy of raising and disciplining children.
 - d. If a couple wants to have children, they must be careful not to over commit their time and finances.
 - 1. This is the time to save money to pay the added expenses associated with children.
 - 2. When having children, Christians make a commitment to spend the time necessary to raise them in the training and admonition of the Lord. This can be difficult if previous commitments (e.g., job, bills) make it difficult to spend an appropriate amount of time with your family.
- 2. **A family with young children (infant through prepubescence):**
 - a. At this time, life becomes more complicated and stressful.
 - 1. Each child added to a family increases the complexity and stress of the family.
 - b. Sometimes, stress is created by being in too big of a hurry. Parents with children must be committed to their children thus staying in their priorities. Parents cannot be in a hurry to get to activities that are of lesser importance than child rearing.
 - c. Sometimes, there is stress associated with health problems.
 - 1. Parents must know their children well enough to detect when something is wrong. Often, parents can detect a health problem before a physician can detect it.
 - 2. Parents should take personal responsibility for the health of their children and be involved in medical decisions.
 - d. Sometimes, there is stress associated with the trouble children get themselves into.
 - 1. Parents must be prepared to deal with accidents. Knowing first aid and CPR will greatly reduce stress associated with accidents.
 - e. Sometimes, there is stress associated with medical emergencies.
 - 1. Parents must be prepared to act. It is better to over react than to under react. The consequences of under reaction could be death or serious

- illness.
- f. Some stress results from chastening children.
 - 1. This stress cannot be avoided. If the child is not chastened in order to avoid stress, the resulting stress of the child's immoral behavior later in life will be greater.
 - 2. Parents must realize that punishment is a stressor. The stress exerted upon a child when punished helps him to conform to the parents commands and behave properly.
 - g. Some stress results from other people trying to tell parents how to raise their children.
 - 1. In such situations, parents should listen and be respectful toward reputable sources. They should think about the suggestions. But, the parents must make the final decision since they are personally accountable to God for raising their children.
 - h. Young children have stress.
 - 1. Parents must be aware that children have stress inside and outside the home. Occasionally, parents are the cause of unhealthy stress.
 - 2. Some stress that children must deal with is school, homework, peer pressure, and hormonal changes of life.
 - a. To them, this is a lot of stress and parents should treat it as such.
 - b. If the home is not a refuge from worldly stress, children will flee the home to find refuge in another place. This can be detrimental to their spiritual well being.
 - c. Parent must educate themselves regarding the stresses their children experience.
 - 1. Parents cannot merely rely upon their own past childhood experiences to guide them in the education and development of their children.
 - d. Children must obey and heed their parents' instruction.
 - 3. Parents put stress on children by not listening, by not understanding them, by jumping to conclusions, by being unfair, by meting out unjust punishment.
 - a. Whenever parents make a mistake, they should take immediate steps to understand their mistake, apologize, and correct their mistake.
 - b. Parents should encourage their children to talk with them and explain themselves.
 - c. Parents should listen whenever a child says that they have made a mistake. Parents must change when they are wrong.
 - 1. A parent who pretends to be perfect will raise children who pretend to be perfect. Children who think that they are perfect are practicably unteachable.
 - d. Children must understand that parents are not Solomon.

1. Parents cannot settle every dispute.
 2. Parents cannot always make everything "all right."
 3. Children must learn that life is not always fair.
3. **A family with children who are young adults (puberty to adulthood, through college):**
- a. Sometimes, parents experience stress over letting their children grow up (make their own mistakes, be different from them).
 1. Parents can either begin letting go and holding their children accountable for their choices, or their children will rebel (push away).
 2. At this time, parents must set clear guidelines and allow their children to make decisions within the guidelines (e.g., clothes, hair, jobs, friends, music, etc.).
 3. This is the time when children pretend they're not listening to their parents, but they really are listening.
 - a. Parents should not stop communicating.
 - b. Parents should not forget that they are still their child's biggest influence.
 4. This is the time when children think that they know more than parents.
 - a. Parents cannot take their child's attitude too personal.
 5. Tips for parents with children going through this period of development:
 - a. Be the spiritual head of your household.
 1. Christian children have less problems than unbelieving children. Prepare them to leave your home.
 - b. Create an atmosphere where they can have Christian friends their age (cf. 1 Cor. 15:33).
 - c. Give them some space to make mistakes. They will learn that they do not know everything.
 - d. Set good moral guidelines (e.g., attending church assemblies, school, secular work). Then, progressively begin letting them make their own decisions within the preset guidelines and hold them accountable for their choices.
 1. Church should come before school and work. Parents may have to help their children communicate with teachers, coaches, and employers to work out scheduling details.
 2. Parents should not treat their adult children like little children.
 3. Parents should reward good behavior by allowing the child to have greater control over his life.
 4. Parents should be positive and encouraging whenever possible.
 - e. Parents should develop a close relationship (friendship) with their children and their children's friends. This can be difficult since the role of parent must take precedence in the relationship.

1. Parents should teach their children to choose good friends.
2. Parent should do fun things with their children.
3. If children are not close companions with their parents, they will seek out other adults for companionship.
- f. Parents must take responsibility for the relationship they have with their children.
 1. Parents must set the example.
 2. Parents must initiate conversation, know the lingo, know the problems confronting present-day children.
 3. Parents should deal with moral issues before they become personal issues (working, dancing, mixed swimming, cheer leading, dating, premarital sex, etc.).
- g. Parents or guardians need to be nearby their younger children at all times.
 1. Children need a parent or guardian at home after school more at this time of development than when they were going through the prepubescent years.
 2. Trouble (bad "friends") often disappears when parents or guardians are close by.
6. Tips for children going through this period development:
 - a. Always put God first. The rest will work out.
 1. God commands children to obey their parents.
 - b. Respect your parents and appreciate what they have done for you.
 - c. Try to understand that you still have a lot of growing up to do.
 1. One day, you will look back on the years when you thought you knew more than your parents and realize that you did not know much at all.
 - d. Learn from your mistakes. Correct your mistakes. Do not be ashamed to admit failure.
 - e. Seek and heed counsel from your parents and other trustworthy adults.
 1. Your parents have been in your position before. They can usually find a solution to your problems since they have more experience.
 2. Do not do anything rashly. Take time to make decisions.
- b. Sometimes, stress results from not having clear guidelines.
 1. One of the most frequent complaints at work and home is that rules change from day to day or person to person.
 - a. Parents must set forth consistent and godly guidelines.
 - b. Family stress results when children make mistakes as a result of unclear or inconsistent guidelines (rules).
 1. Children begin to feel that they are always in trouble for breaking rules they did not know existed. They may

- eventually feel that they are going to get into trouble no matter what they do and begin acting without regard for any rules.
2. Parents must take responsibility for setting and clearly communicating household rules.
 - a. Parents are responsible for setting the rules and consistently enforcing the rules.
 1. Parents should not hold their children accountable for breaking rules that were unclear or inconsistently enforced.
 - b. A good manager involves everyone in the rule setting process.
 - c. Guidelines (rules) are clearer when recorded in written form.
 1. It is easy for all parties to refer to them.
 2. They are easier to enforce.
 3. Children must take responsibility for understanding and following the guidelines (rules).
 - a. Children should ask questions to clarify guidelines they perceive to be unclear. They should not guess.
 1. Just because a person is unsure of a rule or not clear on the rules, he should not think the rule is not applicable to him. This is a lesson that can be difficult for some children to learn, but parents must be diligent in teaching this lesson.
 - b. Mature children should accept their punishment in a mature way, even when they disagree with it.
 4. **A family with a single parent or with both parents working:**
 - a. In this situation, there is often a great deal of stress from family members staying "too busy."
 1. Some families can stay busier than others because of the makeup of each person in the family. This must be carefully evaluated to strike a good balance between stressed out and bored family members.
 - a. Choosing a compatible spouse is very important to having a family where the energy and interest levels are closely related.
 2. When a family is stressed out due to being "too busy," priorities must be evaluated and the least important activities have to be dropped.
 - a. God (church) must come first, school (education and grades) must come second, and recreation must come last.
 1. Depending on circumstances, work should be prioritized somewhere after God and church.
 - b. Each family member must be sure to stay within their priorities. And, priorities should be regularly reevaluated.
 - b. In this situation, it is easy for stress to result from a poorly managed home.
 1. Not always, but often a home with one parent or both parents working is disorganized and poorly managed.
 - a. Other arrangements must be made for the day-to-day management

of the home if it cannot be accomplished by a parent.

Grandparents, other relatives, and close friends can be good resources.

2. Expectations are often the same for this home as for a home with a full-time home manager. This creates an impossible atmosphere wherein family members cannot meet their goals.
 - a. Expectations for a home with one parent cannot be the same as with two parents.
 - b. Parents must be careful not to be involved with so many activities that there is not time or energy left to manage the home and bring their children up in the training and admonition of the Lord.
5. **A family (husband and wife) in which all their children have left home:**
 - a. Occasionally, these couples divorce because their identities (the children) no longer exists within the home.
 1. At this time, a man and woman must often relearn to be husband and wife. Previously, they had thought of themselves as parents more than husband and wife since most of their time and energy was consumed by their children.
 - a. This is referred to as empty nest syndrome. It is empty nest stress.
 2. This transition in life will be easier if the couple had spent some time together before having children.
 - b. Tips for couples making the empty nest transition:
 1. A great deal of communication between spouses is helpful. When appropriate, communication with your children regarding your role as grandparents will also be helpful.
 2. Redirect your energy from raising children to other activities (grandchildren, more work with the local church, volunteering, etc.).
 - a. "Adopt" some children who need "local grandparents."
 - b. Invite young families to visit, treat the children like your own grandchildren.
 3. Don't forget that you have "extra" time to put into the work of the church which you did not have previously.
 - a. You can visit more brethren and see to more needs.
 - b. You can attend more gospel meetings and encourage brethren in different congregations.
 - c. You have more time to prepare to teach and participate in classes.
 4. Rediscover or develop hobbies.
 - a. You have more time to devote to special interests.
 - b. You have more time to make a positive difference in your community. Be careful not to waste your blessings and abilities.
 5. Do not wait for people to include you - include them in your life.
 - a. Aggressively pursue personal relationships.

I. Conclusion:

1. Good leaders and team members are not born. They are made through hard work, training, and devotion.
 - a. Families with low levels of stress have worked hard to establish and maintain a godly home.
2. Godly homes are less stressful than ungodly homes.
 - a. Whenever we follow God's pattern for godly homes, we will have less stress.
 - b. Stress is reduced in the home when:
 1. everyone treats each other as Christians - serving and submitting to one another (Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2:1-16).
 2. everyone lives by the golden rule (Matt. 22:36-39; Rom. 13:8-10).
3. Whenever basic godly needs of family members are being met, stress is greatly reduced.
4. A relatively stress free home requires good management.
 - a. God has commanded that the women be the hands-on, day-to-day managers of the home.
 - b. Families become very stressed when there is not someone (e.g., wife, mother) seeing to the day-to-day management of the home.
 - c. Families that do whatever is necessary to be certain that the home is well-managed by the woman are blessed with a place of peace and rest incomparable with any other on earth.
 - d. Eph. 5:23 A husband is his wife's head; thus, he is responsible for supervising his wife's management of the home. A home's management is a reflection upon the husband's leadership.
 - e. A well-managed home is not running out of control.