

Relationship Reboot

DEVOTIONAL | FAMILY

APRIL 18, 2021

Discussion Starter: What are some reasons you can think of why it is important to try to have a healthy and happy family?

Key Passage: “*Better is a dry morsel with quiet than a house full of feasting with strife*” (Proverbs 7:5). “*If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.*” (Romans 12:18)

The Idea of Family in the Old Testament

1. God intends for marriage to be heterosexual and monogamous.

Both Genesis 1 and 2 indicate that marriage is heterosexual and monogamous. The man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife. While marriage entails much more than gender differences, it entails no less. Paul affirms that marriage is gendered (See Ephesians 5:22-33).

Further, when God called Adam to name the animals, “*there was not found a helper fit for him*” (2:20b). Note that Adam was looking for one partner. Populating the earth only requires one man and one woman. Although many biblical leaders embraced polygamy, the clear design for marriage is monogamy. God wanted men and women to have a “one-flesh” union through marriage (Genesis 2:24) and then have children (Genesis 1:28). Then, they, with their children, would become a family, which would become the foundation of human society.

Discuss: Why do you think Satan attacks marriages and families with such rage and does all he can to divide and destroy families?

2. Family Members Are to Care for Each Other

After Cain killed his brother Abel, God asked him: “*Where is your brother?*” Cain flippantly replied, “*I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?*” (Genesis 4:9-10) With His question, God was indicating that, yes, Cain was expected to be Abel’s keeper and vice-versa.

Discuss: In what ways do family members watching after and caring for one another reflect Christian values?

3. Two of the Ten Commandments Deal with Protecting the Family

The 5th Commandment regards honoring your parents, and the 7th Commandment prohibits adultery.

Discuss: In what ways would honoring parents and honoring marriage by not practicing adultery strengthen a family?

The Idea of Family in the New Testament

1. Husbands and Wives Love and Respect Each Other

Discuss: Read Ephesians 5:22-23. Briefly summarize how a husband is to love his wife and how a wife is to love her husband.

2. Avoid Frivolous Divorce

In Matthew 19:3-9, Jesus spoke on the sanctity of marriage and against frivolous divorce.

3. Children Obey Parents

In Ephesians 6:1-3, Paul spoke about the importance of children obeying parents: “*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² ‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³ that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.*”

Discuss: How can a child benefit from obeying his/her parents?

4. Parents—Particularly Fathers— Do Not Provoke Your Kids

In Ephesians 6:4a, Paul tells parents (he emphasizes fathers since fathers are charged with ultimate responsibility for the way children are raised) not to agitate or exasperate their children through unfair or cruel behavior: “*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger...*”

Instead, Paul says to “*bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord*” (v.4b). Discipline includes teaching kids to show self-control and do what’s right, and instruction includes providing both a godly example and training for kids.

Discuss: In what ways do parents push their children toward anger?

Discuss: What do you think bringing a child up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord looks like on a daily basis?

For Further Study

Sacred Marriage by Gary Thomas

The Gospel and Marriage by Russell Moore & Andrew Walker

Articles on “Family” at www.crosswalk.com