

FAMILY MATTERS BIBLE STUDY SERIES (STUDENT)

LESSON #1 **“INTRODUCING FAMILY LIFE”**

SCRIPTURE: **GENESIS 1:26-28 (KJV)**

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Key Verses: Genesis 1:26-28 (KJV) **“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. ²⁸ And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”**

INTRODUCTION: Families are suffering. All around the world, the failure of the family is causing serious problems. Why are families falling apart? The world has forgotten the Creator of the family and left His design out of their plans. In some cultures:

- The mother is the leader.
- Men legally have more than one wife.
- Women legally have more than one husband.
- Two men are allowed to “marry” each other.
- Two women are allowed to “marry” each other.
- Men (and women) are allowed to have as many living partners as they want, as long as they have them one at a time. (This is called serial monogamy.)

These **“FAMILY PLANS”** are not working. The attack on the family is actually a direct attack on God, since **HE DESIGNED THE FAMILY** as the basic unit of all society. Although two-parent families are becoming less common in many parts of the world, they still make up the majority of families worldwide. Children less than eighteen years of age are more likely to live in two-parent families than in other family forms in Asia and the Middle East compared with other regions of the world.

I. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE FAMILY

God created the first man and woman, and He began the FAMILY INSTITUTION. Male and Female were created in the IMAGE OF GOD and were designed to reflect HIS NATURE (**Genesis 1:27-31**). God used the LOVE RELATIONSHIP between a man and his wife as a parallel to His love relationship between HIMSELF and the CHURCH (**Ephesians 5:22-23 KJV**).

When men and women fail to follow GOD'S PLAN for the Family and Marriage, they aid Satan in His war against God. God gave Man and Woman the same Characteristics PHYSICALLY, SOCIALLY, INTELLECTUALLY, AND EMOTIONALLY. God meant for all of these to reflect His IMAGE (**II Corinthians 3:18 (KJV)**).

What does that mean: “In beholding” The believer is CHANGED or TRANSFORMED into the Image of Christ from glory to glory. This probably means two things.

1. When the believer beholds (grasps, understands, studies, lays hold of) the glory of the Lord, the same glory is CREATED IN HIM.
2. When the believer beholds the glory of the Lord, the believer PROGRESSES and GROWS from one stage of glory to a higher stage.

Since the DISOBEDIENCE of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, man has been trying to plan his life using His own ideas. This was the original temptation of the serpent (**Genesis 3:4-5**), and it still works (**II Corinthians 4:4 (KJV)**).

It is time for God's people to recognize this BATTLE for what it is and take a stand against the ENEMY. We can win the war for our families. We can defeat the enemy. In order for us to do that, we must go back to GOD'S ORIGINAL PLAN and fight the real enemy not each other.

II. FIGHTING THE REAL ENEMY

We must always remember that the real enemy of our souls is not any religion, race, or philosophy. Our enemy is the DEVIL and all the DEMONS of hell. Notice what the Bible says about him in **John 8:44 (NIV)** and **I Peter 5:8 (KJV)**.

Ephesians 6:12 (KJV) informs us that God has given us some **STRATEGIC WEAPONS** that we can use to Defeat the Enemy. This verse lists our enemies:

- Principalities,
- Powers,
- Rulers of the darkness of this world, and
- Spiritual wickedness in high places.

Notice in verses **14-17 (KJV)** our arsenal of weapons: ***“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”***

This “whole armour of God” is necessary for **Believers** and **Christian Families** to use to win the battle against the **DEVIL**.

The offensive weapon of ***“the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God”*** is **VITAL**. Without it, we spend all of our time fighting a **DEFENSIVE WAR**. Without strong dependence on the authority of **GOD’S WORD** to correct the problem with families, people will continue to use their own ideas, and the family will eventually die completely.

GOD’S ORIGINAL DESIGN

When we check God’s example of the first family, we find some interesting things:

1. From the beginning, He made them male and female (Matthew 19:4).
2. Because of the desire and need of humans for companionship, God designed marriage (Genesis 2:18)
3. The man shall leave father and mother (Matthew 19:5).
4. The man shall cleave (stick like glue) to his wife (Matthew 19:5).
5. The man and woman shall be so closely joined, they will become “one flesh” (Matthew 19:5). Charles Swindoll said, “The whole idea of mutual acceptance, giving, listening, forgiving and direction was implied [by this verse]. It is two individuals willingly blending into each other’s lives, desiring to share with and thereby complete the other.”
6. When God joins a man and woman in the true process of marriage, no man should allow that union to be torn apart (Matthew 19:6).

7. The intimate (physical) act of marriage was designed by God to be enjoyed by both men and women (Genesis 2:25).

8. God intended His family plan to bring forth fruit—children (Genesis 1:28; Psalm 127:3). The failure of the family will stop the natural growth process and damage this “fruit” beyond repair.

Marriages are declining at an alarming rate in America. When you break that down by number of marriages:

1. **42-45%** percent of first marriages end in divorce.
2. **60%** of second marriages end in divorce.
3. **73%** of third marriages end in divorce.

BLACK FAMILY DIVORCE RATE:

According to government data, the divorce rate among African American couples are higher than other American couples. The divorce rate for **BLACK COUPLES STANDS AT 12%**, while White couples divorce at a rate of **10%**, and Hispanics at **7%**, each year. More alarming is the fact that only 42% of African Americans are married. This figure accounts for the 62% of African American single parent households. Whereas, the percentage of White single parent household is 27%, and Hispanic is 35%.

Understanding **GOD’S WORD** clearly and knowing His **DESIGN** is a weapon we can use to counter the attack against families everywhere. When we use Family Plan scriptures such as Matthew 19:4-6, Mark 10:6-9 and other supporting scripture as a foundation, the enemy does not stand a chance. God’s Word will win.

WE MUST SAVE OUR CHILDREN

We need to fight for God’s family plan, and quickly. The death of families is destroying our children at an alarming rate. With the family structure falling apart, the enemy is attacking the **minds, bodies, morals, and beliefs of children all over the world**. A family that is following **GOD’S PLAN** will **TRAIN** their children in the ways of the Lord (**Proverbs 22:6**). This will be passed on to their children’s children and generations to come (**Acts 2:39**). If families use the **TIME** they have with their children for this purpose, God’s plan will flourish. Listen to **Psalm 128:1-6 (KJV)** “**Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.**

Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD. The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.”

CONCLUSION: The family is more important than we may have imagined. It has been neglected for so long and allowed to follow any design (other than God's). It has been sacrificed on the altar of careers and selfish pleasures. With God's help, a determination on our part to follow His plan and hard work to making sure everyone understands who the **ENEMY** is and what weapons we must use, we can **BUILD STRONG FAMILIES**. Remember:

1. God is more powerful than the enemy (I John 4:4).
2. His Word will last forever (I Peter 1:25).
3. We can defeat the devil (I John 2:14).
4. We must be victorious (I Corinthians 15:57-58).