

The  
BIBLICAL GUIDE  
to a  
Successful Marriage



*Marriage*

***How to Make it Last a Life Time***



# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS ON MARRIAGE

## Lesson #1

### MARRIAGE AND HOW TO MAKE IT LAST A LIFETIME

Genesis 2:21-25

#### Three words out of Verse 24:

**Leave** - The Priority of Marriage (Ephesians 5:31) (Matthew 19:4-5).

**Cleave** - The Permanence of Marriage (Verse 23 - One Flesh; Bonded).

**Be** (Become) - The Purpose of Marriage.

Leave the single way of life and become united.

“I do.” - Meaning: I accept the responsibilities, heartaches, joys, sorrows, problems and disagreements which will come with being married.

Problems in a marriage generally begin before a couple is married. When a young man, after “dating” a young lady for a period of time, asked her to marry him and she agrees, the problems have already begun. You are asking, “Why have the problems begun at that point?” Problems begin because of the difference in their thinking. The young lady is thinking, “After I marry him, I will change him. The young man is thinking, “I will marry her, and she will never change!” It has been all hugs and kisses up to that point. The young man is used to being pampered. Then, bingo, the young lady gets pregnant and a baby comes along. All of a sudden, all of the hugs and kisses are going to the baby! You know the rest of the story! Those problems can be resolved, but you must “work” on resolving them.

#### I. Lifetime Commitment

A. When you say, “I do,” you say, I guarantee you that I will make it work.

1. Today, “If it doesn’t work, I’ll look for someone else.”

B. Why do people divorce? Problems! (People have always had problems!)

1. Reason is, “I want my way and if I don’t get it, I’ll leave.”

C. What makes a marriage last?

1. Commitment - Not love.

a. Many have said, “I love him, but I can’t live with him.”

2. A pastor stays at a church because he is committed. He could love and leave!

3. Christ and the church - He has problems with us, but He is committed to us (Hebrews 13:5).

4. He deals with the problems (Ephesians 5:26) but doesn’t leave us!

D. If your wife leaves you, you should have already decided to go with her!

1. You say, my wife has faults. **You picked her out.**

E. What is a perfect husband and wife?

1. A perfect husband does not expect his wife to be perfect.

2. A perfect wife does not expect her husband to be perfect.

F. Marriage is a lifetime commitment - "Until death, do us part...."

- G. Have you made that commitment (To her, to God, to yourself)?
1. If you did not realize what you were saying when you said, "I do," you know now!
  2. Make the commitment.

## II. Loving Communication (This is how problems are worked out between partners.)

- A. People don't believe communication will work! (Why? Because they don't try it!!!)
1. Christ works with us by communicating with us through His Word.

- B. Most failures between husband and wife are communication failures.

1. Husbands and wives communicate in five ways:

- a. Small talk level - The weather, etc.

- b. Factual level - What each one did that day.

**(Most couples end communication at this point.)**

- c. Ideas and opinions level - Dreams, visions, desires, goals.

If husband or wife responds negatively, the other will never share again. Why? The risk of rejection is too great.

Especially true with a wife. Wives are to be helpmates.

- d. Emotional level - Sharing how you feel. Your sorrows, your disappointments. If your mate asked you, "What's wrong?" and you respond, "Nothing." or, "I don't want to talk about it," you are saying to your mate, "I DON'T TRUST YOU."

WHEN YOU ARE SPOKEN TO, ANSWER.....

- e. Openness level - (Genesis. 2:25) - Not ashamed to share everything with you.

**Illustration:** God gave each man and woman 50,000 words.

Husbands spend 48,000 at work, but the wife has not had anyone to talk with all day on which to spend them! She is "dying" to spend them!

TALK TO HER!

## III. Likely Confrontations (The five most common failures.):

**Introduction:** You may say that you and your spouse have never had a problem.

A lady said to D. L. Moody, "I've been saved 25 years and have never doubted my salvation." Mr. Moody responded, "I doubt you're saved!"

If you say that you and your spouse have never had a problem, I doubt you are married.

- A. Selfish problems - Immaturity:

1. Men want to work 8 hours, come home, and flop. They expect the wife to keep working.
  - a. A man who won't fix anything around the house is selfish.
  - b. You are saying to your wife, "You are not important."
2. Many husbands want to do anything they want to do - and the wife has to like it.

- B. Financial problems - Not lack of money, but mismanagement or selfishness of money is a problem. Money is not the answer. Ask Johnny Carson or Prince Charles or Elizabeth Taylor.

1. Most marriages need "plastic surgery." (The credit cards)
2. Learn to live with what God has given. (Contentment)
3. Share the finances equally with your wife.
4. You can live without everything except your spouse.

C. Sexual problems -

1. Generally comes from denial (I Corinthians 7:5).

D. Nagging problems. (Fault finding.)

1. Proverbs 21:19
2. Proverbs 27:15
3. Men can aggravate their wives over "little things."

E. In-Law problems.

1. (Matthew 19:5) (Psalm 45:10)
2. It is always a problem when two women love one man or visa versa.

#### IV. How to Have A Good Fight (Rules).

A. Pinpoint the problem. (Know who your enemy is.) (Your mate **is not your enemy.**)

1. Know what you are fighting about.
2. It could simply be that you are too tired or too hungry.

**Example:** A man on the expressway has a bad time. He gets to his office and takes it out on his secretary. Secretary takes it out on the switchboard operator. The switchboard operator goes home and takes it out on her son, and the son takes it out on the cat!!

B. Learn to attack the problem.

1. Generally it is "ego vs ego."
2. One or the other is trying to prove themselves right.
3. No problem is too big to solve - People are just too little to solve them.

C. Deal with one problem at a time.

1. Don't collect them like "Green Stamps."
2. When it hurts bad enough, you will cash them in.
3. Don't get historical. Don't bring up things from the past.

D. Learn to negotiate.

1. Never feel you must win, or you will find yourself in a "no win" situation.
2. Never belittle your wife or call her names, and **DO NOT make her be the loser.**
  - a. **(I Peter 3:7)**

E. Learn to pray about the problem.

1. My wife and I have a disagreement and she says "You're wrong."
2. I say, "Prove it." (I can't. You're a preacher and you can talk faster than me.)
3. I pray about it and God says, "You're wrong."
4. God will always show you who is wrong - Go and apologize!!!!

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS ON MARRIAGE

## Lesson #2 MEN NEEDED I Peter 3:7-9

### Talking about a Christian Home

**Introduction:** God spoke to wives in Verses 1-6. Now He turns his attention to the husband. God commands husbands to “dwell” with their wives. The word dwell means to be "bonded together" in harmony. (Like Formica on wood.)

Proverbs 18:22 states: When a man ....  
Findeth a WIFE .... he....  
Findeth a GOOD thing... and he ....  
Findeth FAVOR with the Lord...

I Peter 7:3 says that we are to dwell with our wives, "**according to knowledge.**" We must have knowledge of certain things about God’s design of men and women, and about the manner in which God made both wives and husbands.

**A NOTE OF SADNESS:** Most men know more about their job, tools, golf, gardening, hunting, and fishing than they know about their wife!

**EXAMPLE:** You have heard men say, “I will never understand a woman!”

### UNDERSTANDING GOD’S DESIGN

**The Key to a Happy and Successful Marriage is found in Ephesians 5:21:**  
*"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of the Lord."*

Many times, I have heard a husband say to his wife, "I am the head of the home. You just need to submit to my leadership." That is true. However, the scriptures state, "submitting yourselves one to another..." That clearly states that the husband is also to submit himself to his wife. I will explain as we study.

#### **I. Dwell with Your Wife Thoughtfully - According to Divine Design.**

##### **A. The Husband’s God-Given Responsibilities to his Wife**

**HUSBANDS HAVE, BY FAR, THE GREATER RESPONSIBILITY IN A MARRIAGE!**

##### **1. The Position of the Husband**

- a. The husband is the head of the home - This is God's design (Genesis 3:16).
  1. WHY did God do it this way? (I Timothy 2:13-14)
    - a. The woman was deceived.
  - b. The husband is the head of the wife (Ephesians 5:23).
    1. The wife is to "submit herself" to his leadership.
    2. Husband is the head of the wife by God's Chain of Command (I Cor. 11:3).

- c. How is the husband to "submit" himself to his wife?
  - 1. The husband is to submit himself to his wife by "loving his wife **AS** Christ loved the church" - and "gave himself for it" (**Ephesians 5:25**).

**EXAMPLE:** I have heard men say, "You have to be careful. You can love your wife too much. She will take advantage of being over-loved."

If a man thinks he can love his wife "too much" he is proud and is putting himself on a very high level. Until a man "loves his wife like Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" he **IS NOT LOVING HIS WIFE ENOUGH!** The husband is to "imitate Christ," in loving his wife. The husband is to be willing to "give" himself for her. The husband is to **deny himself for her happiness.**

- d. The husband's greatest temptation is to neglect God's commandment to "love his wife as Christ loved the church".

- e. If the husband **WILL** love his wife as Christ loved the church, his wife will **GLADLY** submit herself to his leadership.

## **2. The Place of Accountability of the Husband**

- a. If the home is not right, your wife is not to blame. "The buck stops here!"

- b. Accountable for your wife (Numbers 30:1-15).

- 1. For her security.
- 2. For her peace of mind.
- 3. For her happiness.
- 4. For her contentment.
- 5. For her physical well being.

- c. Accountable for their children (I Samuel 3:13).

- 1. You can delegate authority.
- 2. You cannot delegate responsibility.
- 3. You cannot delegate accountability.
- 4. All that happens in your home, **you** are accountable for, you are responsible for and you will one day - **give an account for.**

- d. This means that the husband cannot blame anyone except himself for how things are going in his home.

## **3. The Provider of the Family is the Husband's Responsibility**

- a. Provide financially - (I Timothy 5:8).

- 1. He is to provide for their children (II Corinthians 12:14).

- b. Provide love - (Ephesians 5:25).

- c. Provide honour - (I Peter 3:7).

- d. Provide protection (Ephesians 5:27, 28).

1. Do not allow her to be “trashed.”
- e. Provide security
  1. Do not allow her to live in fear.
- f. Provide Spiritual leadership (Ephesians 5:26, 27) – By example (I Peter 3:7).
  1. Carnal resentment, irritation, frustration, harshness, anger, bitterness, toward your wife is the opposite of love.
- g. The husband’s love for his wife is to be a picture of Christ’s love for the church.
- h. A wife’s security is greatly important. It depends largely upon the husband fulfilling his responsibilities in this area.

#### **4. The Purity Example to be Set by the Husband**

- a. No double standard for husband and wife.
- b. Never say, “Do as I say do, not as I do.”
  1. When you pray with your children, “Our Father, which art in heaven”- act like Him.
- a. When you pray that, your children think "God is like my father."

#### **5. The Protector of the Wife and Family is the Husband's Responsibility.**

- a. A woman is more gullible than a man (I Timothy 2:14) (Genesis 3:1-7).
- b. God has created the woman as the weaker vessel and to rely on ....  
The faithfulness of her husband (I Peter 3:7).
- c. This is the husband’s responsibility, NOT his wife’s father or mother's.

### **B. The Wife’s God-Given Responsibility to Her Husband**

#### **IMPORTANT: (I Peter 3:7) “Heirs together....”**

1. The wife is to be her husband’s companion.
  - a. She is number one - the most important thing in her husband’s life.  
The husband is to be “THE most important thing in her life” (I Peter 3:3-5)  
**Adorning** (*Kosmos* – World)  
This does not condemn looking nice – Do not neglect your appearance.
    1. You should cause him to think you are beautiful - always!
    2. Make him proud of you.
      - a. Your appearance should complement your husband.
2. The wife is to be the Queen of his home.  
She is to love the King of the home (Titus 2:4-5)  
She should CONSENT and be CONTENT with her position.  
**EXAMPLE:** Sara – (I Peter 3:6)
3. The wife is her husband’s "co-operator."
  - a. The wife is not a competitor. (Do not make your wife **compete** with anything or anybody, not even your children.)  
Wife: You should not MAKE your husband compete for your attention!



- b. The wife is her husband's cheerleader - to help him meet his full potential. NEVER throw "cold water" on his dreams. (Proverbs 31:23)
- c. The wife should be a keeper/diligent of home. (Titus 2:5) (Proverbs 31:21, 27, 28)  
A wife should view that as "her part in making their home happy and successful!"
- d. The wife should willingly submit to her husband's authority (Luke 7:1-9).
  - 1. We are prone to read Verse 8 as follows:  
"I am to be a man 'OF' authority, therefore I say go and he goes..."  
Verse 8 states: "I too am a man '**UNDER**' authority (Not "OF" authority, **UNDER** authority.)
  - 2. Therefore, because he was "UNDER" authority - he HAD authority to say to a man "go" and the man would go.  
  
**PICTURE:** A sergeant in the Army has authority over other men AS LONG AS HE IS UNDER THE AUTHORITY of his Captain. However, if he is not "under" authority of his Captain, he forfeits his authority and may end up in the brig!
  - 3. The wife has authority "over" home and children, because she is "under" the God appointed authority of the home.
- 4. The wife is her husband's completer.
  - a. The other half!
  - b. Genesis 1:4,10,12,18,21,25... It is Good.... Genesis 2:18 "Not Good."  
(1). The wife meets a need (completes her husband) that no person or anything else could meet. (She is vitally necessary.)

## II. The Husband is to Dwell with his Wife "According to a Knowledge."

- A. Husband and wife are different, but equal. (The husband is not a Captain and his wife a private.)
  - 1. The wife is not "inferior" to her husband.
  - 2. The wife is superior to her husband - at doing what God made her to do.
  - 3. The example is Christ (I Corinthians 11:1-3).
    - a. Christ is not inferior to God but is in submission to God.
- B. The differences in a man and woman are not cultural differences, but creative differences.

<u>Men</u>	<u>WOMEN</u>
Leader	Responder
Thinks logically .	Thinks emotionally.
Goal accomplishing.	Considerate of others.
Thinker	Talker
Success	Security
Shops alone.	Wants her husband to go.
Carries books in hand.	Carries books like a baby.
Don't worry about it!	Wants it fixed (faucet leaking).

- C. Most men know far more about their jobs than about their wives.

**III. The Husband is to Dwell with his Wife Thankfully** (I Peter 3:7). - Giving honour to the wife.

A. Express your true appreciation to your wife. Express it in WORD and DEED.  
(Proverbs 31:28).

**Illustration of why you should:**

How would like to hire someone to do all that your wife does? She cleans your house, picks up your shoes and clothes, plans for meals, cooks your meals, decorates your house, babysits, changes diapers, gives the children baths, dresses the children, sews, serves as a chauffeur for the kids, washes your clothes, does the shopping, irons your clothes, fixes lunches, makes up beds, takes out the garbage, nurses sick children, brings you a snack and something to drink at night, and is on call 24 hours a day, just to mention the basics!

B. She does this and more for you! She needs to hear, and should hear you say, “Thank you. I greatly appreciate all that you do for me, for our children, and for our home.”

C. Hold her up in high esteem before your children. Let them see you hug her. Let them hear you express your love and appreciation for her labour of love.

D. Never “cut your wife down” in public or in private!  
Never criticize her in public or private. Counsel her and help her (Ephesians 5:25-28).  
Small, cutting remarks can hurt your wife deeply (I Peter 3:8 & 9).

E. Never “order” your wife around or expect her to “snap to attention,” when you order her around. She is not a private in the Marine Corp! She is your wife! A part of your life! – Bone of your bones!

F. Never treat her or talk to her like she is a child or servant.

**IV. The Husband is to Dwell with his Wife Trustingly** (heirs together - (I Peter 3:7) (Proverbs 31:11).

A. Trust her with your confidence.

1. Share your plans, visions, joys, fears, and your heartaches with her.

B. Trust her with your check book!

1. Don’t control the finances of the family so tightly that she cannot carry a few dollars in her pocket to spend. (You do that!!!) Regardless if you have much or have little, trust her with part of it!

2. Make her feel your trust.

C. Trust her with your communion with God (I Peter 3:7).

1. When you pray with your wife and claim Matthew 18:19, you are saying to her, “I have confidence in your spiritual walk with God! I trust you!”

**V. The Husband is to Dwell with his Wife Tenderly.** Giving honour, “As unto the weaker vessel.”

- A. Be considerate of her fabric. (She is not as physically strong as a man.)
  - 1. She was made from a rib - men are made from dirt!
  - 2. She is made from a little finer material - but more delicate material than man.
    - a. You DO NOT treat her like you are a Drill Instructor.
    - b. You should never be a dictator.
    - c. Do not rule, “with an iron hand.”
    - d. Treat your wife exactly like Christ treats the church!
  - 3. Even when “washing” your wife with the Word, set the cycle on “Delicate.”
    - a. Don’t use the Word of God to “beat” your wife. She cannot handle it.
  - 4. Silk is more delicate than denim, but worth considerably more! (and - more beautiful.)
  
- B. Be considerate of her feelings. (She is not emotionally as strong as a man.)
  - 1. Your words will do more damage to your wife, than physical abuse!
  - 2. Realize that your wife loves and trusts you and that her FEELINGS can be hurt. She is a PERSON, not a robot servant. She hurts inside when you scold!
  
- C. Be considerate of her fears. (She is not spiritually as strong as a man.)
  - 1. When possible, protect your wife from things which will cause her stress.
  - 2. Ephesians 5: 27 “... Spot or wrinkle...” **Not TRASHED on!**
  - 3. **Above all**, you should never make her afraid of you!
  
- D. Be considerate of her failures.
  - 1. Eve failed (Genesis 3:4-6).
  - 2. Eve thought (was convinced) that she was doing right (I Timothy 2:13-14).
  - 3. Don’t “put down” on her when she thinks she is doing right but is deceived!

**VI. The Husband is to Dwell with his Wife Lovingly** (Ephesians 5:2 & 25).

*“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.”* (Ephesians 5:2)

*“Husbands, love your wives, **even (in the very same manner)** as Christ also loved the church, and **gave himself** for it...”* (Ephesians 5:25) (Emphasis is mine.)

If a man thinks he can love his wife too much,  
he has exalted himself above the love of Christ for the church!

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS ON MARRIAGE

## Lesson #3

### THE IDEAL WIFE

#### Proverbs 31:10-31

**Introduction:** This is an “ideal” to aim at. Better to aim high and fall short, than to aim at mediocrity and hit it (Verses 28,30,31)!

These verses are in five categories. The entire passage is arranged according to the Hebrew alphabet. God did this on only a few occasions in Scripture where it was important.

#### Ann Landers

(I am not a supporter of Mrs. Landers. Many times, she is dead wrong. However, I agree with her on the following article that appeared in a morning newspaper.)

“It is high time that someone took on the free-swinging women’s lib movement that says, ‘The woman who stays home is a brass-plated dummy, lazy, and is a traitor to her graduating class. Why has the American woman been made to feel ashamed because she is home cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing, and taking care of her husband and children, a task which was once considered as noble and gratifying work. We used to be told that “the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.”

““Women are told that to stay home and do housework is a cop-out. However, the opposite is true. It is a cop-out and shows lack of maturity and character when a woman leaves what God created her to do, turns her responsibilities over to her husband, or a hired person, and leaves the house and takes a job. You see, a woman has a far greater responsibility to work in the home. She is a chauffeur, menu planner, chef, waitress, dishwasher, nurse, house manager, problem solver, counsellor, referee, maintenance expert, decorator, manages a laundromat, runs a beauty salon, is a personal valet to her husband and children, a tailor, a choreographer, runs a janitorial service, repairs broken toys, and does everything asked of her, plus she must be equal to any and every daily crisis imaginable.”

#### I. The Value of a Godly Wife (Proverbs 31:10).

##### A. Compared to Rubies:

1. Eastern Culture, Rubies were the Standard of value (Proverbs 8:11, 20:15).
2. Wife worth more (Proverbs 3:15).
3. Her worth cannot be estimated.
4. Cannot find anything equal in value to a godly wife.
5. Matthew 13:46 (Ruby and Pearl are same root word.)

##### B. What do husbands value in a wife?

1. Intelligent help-meet.
2. Unconditional Love (Christ and Church).
3. Femininity – No he-women.
4. Responsive to his needs.

## II. The Right Relationship to the Lord.

- A. First responsibility – Love the Lord (Mark 12:28-29).
- B. Second responsibility – Submit to your husband.
  - 1. Extends to every area except the authority of God (Acts 5:28).
    - a. What submission is not:
      - 1. It is not conditional – “I will if he will.” (Christ’s love is unconditional.)
      - 2. It is not an inferior position (I Corinthians 11:1-3).
      - 3. It is not a dominant position (Proverbs 31). - Busy.
      - 4. It is not a reclusive position (Proverbs 31:26).
      - 5. It is not just for women (Ephesians 5:21).
  - Note:** Puts an awesome responsibility on the husband.
- C. Attitude – Accept willingly GOD’S plan because it is God’s plan!
  - a. When you got married – (I Do – Promise to be a godly help-meet.)
  - b. Husband cannot make a wife submit.
  - c. Wife cannot make a husband lead.

## III. Why Is a Christian Wife Valuable (Proverbs 31:10)?

**Remind yourself: Stop and say, “I am priceless.”**

### A. Because she fulfills a special place in life.

(Today, people are all mixed up – Seeking their own thing – Not a helpmeet!)

“Why can’t he just love me like I am?” – (Romans 8:29).

- 1. What is a wife supposed to do to fulfil God’s plan for her?
  - a. She is to help her husband reach his full potential in doing what God is guiding him to do. (Ephesians 5:24 – As Church does to Christ.)
  - b. She is not to seek her own thing.
  - c. See Luke 19:11-19.
- 2. Two things: Be Faithful – Morally (He trusts you – Earn that trust.)  
Money – “Do him good.

#### **Literal meaning:**

A. “She will do him good...” She will add to his estate and not take away from it.

B. “He has no need of spoil.” Husband and his home will not lack anything due to his wife’s wasting his money.

**NOTE:** The husband can go to work and be confident in the one he leaves in charge to manage his home and his affairs while he is away.

- 3. Some Marriages - Husbands are quick to deposit, but the wife is quicker on the draw!
- 4. Some marriages need “Plastic Surgery.”

**Literal Picture:** Church is to promote Christ and exalt Christ. We are to seek his things.

Paul: (Galatians 2:20)

- a. How is she to do this if she does not take a job? By working at home. In those days, they worked at home. (Read text – Proverbs 31:13-16).
- b. She is valuable because she is a diligent home-maker (Proverbs 31:27).
  - 1. Not lazy – I’ve seen some homes!
  - 2. If she works outside the home, she forfeits:
    - a. Right relationship with the Lord.
    - b. Right relationship with her husband.
- 5. Marriage is not all glamor – It is work.

6. She is a wise shopper (Proverbs 31:14).
  - a. Good use of money – (Proverbs 31:14).
  - b. Good choice of food – (Proverbs 31:14) – Not junk food.
  - c. Hot meals – Not cornflakes and a match.
  - d. Divine services are performed three times a day.
7. She prepares clothing for her family. (Proverbs 31:21)
8. She is a busy person managing the home and family affairs.

#### IV. She is valuable because she is concerned about her outward appearance.

1. Physically fit – (Verse 17).
2. Healthy – Not tired all time.
3. Concerned about her manner of dress.
  - a. Tapestry Coverings
  - b. Clothing is silk and purple! (Not blue jeans, sweatpants, and T-shirts.)  
No woman should wear pants (Deuteronomy 22:5) God said that! It is an abomination.  
Only said it once! How many times does God have to say something?

**Application:** The word “pertaineth” is translated Clothing, Vessels, Tools or Instruments in over 50 places in scripture. A woman is not to wear that which pertaineth to a man; she is not to use the tools of a man’s work; she is not to do or wear anything that identifies her with a man.

**NOTE:** Ladies, the women in the workplace dress fabulous and click around in high heels. Your husband sees that all day. Some husbands come home, and the wife meets him at the door (5:30 in the evening), over-weight, sloppily dressed, different colour socks, hair rolled up on things that look like coke cans and tied up with coat-hangers!

4. Wife and husband came for counselling. Wife said, “I think my husband is running around on me.” I didn’t say it, but I thought about saying, “I don’t blame him.” She looked tacky!

**WARNING:** Women say, “Why can’t you just love me like I am?” God’s loves us, but He wants us to improve (Romans 8:29) Not just for women.

(II Corinthians. 3:18) Changed from glory to glory.

(James 1:23 – 24) Look in the mirror and change.

5. Coverings: For her body.

A woman should never wear shorts or a bathing suit in mixed company.

- a. Isaiah 47:1-3

Explanation: Pictures a young woman going into captivity. She was made to work at the mill grinding meal. Here, she is pulling her dress up, around her hips, she ties it up so it will not interfere with or slow her down while working and turning a grit mill. God said, “Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen....” God equates showing your thighs with being naked! When God sees you with your thighs showing, He sees you as being naked! This does not apply just to women, but to men also. See (Exodus 28:42).

The priests were to wear linen britches under their robes so no one could see their thighs. Again, God equates that with nakedness.  
**NO SHORT PANTS, OR ANYTHING ELSE THAT SHOWS YOUR THIGHS, ON MEN OR WOMEN.** God considers a man or a woman as being naked when they show their thighs.

**V. The Ideal Wife Is a Help and a Blessing to Her Husband.**

A. She **completes** her husband. Watch the progress:

1. Genesis 1:4,10,12,18,21,25.....It was good.....
2. Genesis 2:18.... It is not good!
3. Man had dominion over the entire earth. He had the animals and had God Himself to fellowship with.  
(Watch!!! Woman was made to meet a need that God Himself did not meet.)
4. She completed man.

B. She **contributes** to her husband (Proverbs 31:16 & 24).

C. She **encourages** her husband with words.

1. Words of kindness (Proverbs 31:26).
2. Luke 4:22 "...and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded...."
3. Colossians 4:6 "...seasoned with salt..."

D. She exalts her husband by her life and character (Proverbs 31: 23).

E. She never criticizes her husband.

**Example:** A woman is to her husband what the wind is to fire.  
She can fan the flame and bring him to greater heights.  
She can blow the fire out!

**VI The Ideal Wife Is a Testimony to Everyone That Knows Her.**

A. Her children praise her (Proverbs 31:28).

B. Her husband praises her (Proverbs 31:28).

C. Everyone who knows her, praises her (Proverbs 31:31) (Ruth 3:11).

**VII A Wife Can Do Nothing Better in the Sight of God Than to do What He Made Her to do.**

**She can lay up great treasure in Heaven by being  
An Ideal Wife.**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS ON MARRIAGE**  
**Lesson #4**  
**SIX WORDS THAT WILL BUILD YOUR RELATIONSHIP**  
**WITH YOUR WIFE AND WITH YOUR CHILDREN**

1. **Wrong!** “I was wrong.” You should always be ready and willing to admit when you have been wrong about any matter. Only your pride will keep you from saying, “I am wrong.” This is an action of the head. (It deals with facts.)
2. **Sorry!** “I am sorry.” This is an action of the heart! When you have been wrong in dealing with your wife or with your children, you should be sorry for that action. It is not enough to say I am wrong. It is not enough to “be sorry.” You should always go to that person and say, “I am sorry.”
3. **Need!** “I need you.” Every person needs to be needed. Every person wants to feel needed. You should always make it a point to let your wife and your children know that you need them. God made you and your wife one. You need her. She completes you. Your children are a heritage from the Lord. He placed them in your home by divine design. You need them.
4. **Thanks!** Express appreciation for every deed of kindness and thoughtfulness. People, especially your wife or your husband, need to know that you appreciate them.
5. **Proud!** “I am proud of you. I am proud to have you for my wife/husband.” I am proud of the way you look. I am proud of the way you act. I am proud of you as a Christian wife/husband. Every husband, every wife, and every child should seek to make the other members of the family proud of them.
6. **Love!** “I love you. I love you. I love you.” You cannot say those words enough. Any father who is too macho to hug his children (boys and girls) and say, “I love you,” is proud and knoweth nothing.

**Illustration of these “words.”**

A boy, Bobby Syler, was in the 8th grade at school. His teacher was Miss Thompson. In the first grade, Bobby did well. In the second grade, his report card noted, “Bobby could do better, but he has problems at home.” In the third grade the note said, “Needs to improve.” Bobby’s mother died.” In the fourth grade the note said, “Bobby is bright, but has lost interest. His Father shows no interest and is no help.” Fifth grade etc. etc. etc.

Christmas time came. All the boys and girls gave Miss Thompson gifts. She unwrapped Bobby’s gift. It was cheap perfume and an old bracelet with stones missing. The kids laughed. Miss Thompson put the bracelet and perfume on. It quieted the kids. That day Bobby stayed after class and thanked her. He said, “They were my mother’s.” Miss Thompson’s teaching and handling of Bobby was different from then on.

Four years later Miss Thompson received a note which said, “Graduating second in my high school class.” Four years later she received another note which said, “Graduating at the top of my college class.” Four years later, Miss Thompson received another note. It was an invitation to the wedding of Dr. Bobby Syler. It said, “Please sit in my mother’s seat!”



## **SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS ON MARRIAGE**

### **Lesson #5 NOAH'S WIFE**

*“In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah’s wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark...;”*

Genesis 7:13

I am sure that someone is wondering why I have included a study on a woman in this book, especially one whose name we do not know. Because, this is one of the great women of the Bible, even though she is not named in the scriptures. I cannot help but wonder why God did not give her a name as she is the mother of all mankind after the flood! Eve is the first mother of all the people of the earth, but only by seniority. Noah’s wife is the only other woman to wear that title. You as a reader and me as the writer are both kin to her by birth.

So far as things being written in scripture are concerned, nothing whatsoever is told us about Noah’s wife. I do not know of any books that have been written about Noah’s wife. I do not know of any sermons that have been preached about Noah’s wife. We do not know where she was born or when she died. Her ancestry is not mentioned. Nothing is written about her personally. However, the things that are not written in the Bible, speak volumes about this woman. Therefore, I decided to include her in this study of “Characters of the Bible.” I believe that she deserves space and deserves being mentioned honorably. Also, I believe that women of today can learn much from a study of her life. She should be studied and her life should be used as a pattern for wives and mothers to follow. I warn you; patterning after her life will not be easy, but it will bring great reward, both in this life and the life to come.

### **The Times in Which Noah’s Wife Lived**

Noah’s wife lived in a day that is very much like today. The known world at that time was densely populated. There were people of great renown. No doubt it was a busy world. People were buying and selling, eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage (Matthew 24:37-38). It was a time when people had no time for God. The people were given over to pleasure and yielding to all the desires of the flesh. People, both men and women, were corrupt. Women apparently dressed to be sexually attractive to the opposite sex (Genesis 6:1-2).

Coupled with the life style of that day, she was also married to a preacher; not just any preacher, but a preacher of righteousness (II Peter 2:5). He was a preacher that dared to preach on the sins of the people, without watering it down or making apology! Today, preachers have become masters at "almost" preaching against something. She was the wife of a man that dared to obey God and build an ark in a day when it had never rained. That was her husband. I am sure that at the mention of her name, the “socially elite” ladies of that day would give a look of disgust. Most likely they made remarks about “the preacher's wife” and how old fashioned she was; and that crazy husband of hers, building a huge boat when it had never rained. Besides that, she dressed very plainly and wore no jewellery made of gold and silver. I imagine she looked rather “ordinary.” Oh, I am sure she was faced with the temptation to be “more up to date.” After all, the preacher’s wife needed to be “in style.” Today, she would be laughed at and called an old fogey because she would not bow to pressure to wear “that which pertaineth to a man” nor would she dress in any type of apparel that was not modest or that appealed to the flesh. As of that day and time, like today, every form of evil was made attractive. I am sure that they, before it was taken away by the flood, had much of what we

have today in the form of entertainment, sports, gladiator events, and the like, but she remained unbending! Everyone is doing it! No, not everyone was doing it! Noah was not doing it and Noah's wife was not doing it! God gives us women today like Noah's wife.

I have said that to say that she may have dressed in an ordinary way; she may have had an ordinary look, but she was not an ordinary woman. She was a woman of great character, great moral values, and great respect for the testimony of God. She was a woman of convictions. She was a woman that loved God. She was a woman that felt it was more important to be faithful to and please God than to conform to the world! She was made of stuff that we rarely find in even Bible believing churches today. You cannot tell most of the ladies in our churches today from the women of the world; not by appearance; not by dedication and not by their lifestyle. We are more interested in being accepted by the status quo than in pleasing God! Thank God there are a few, but we are in great need of women like Noah's wife.

### **The Wife of a Hated Preacher**

Noah preached against the sins of the people; he preached righteousness; and I have an idea that he preached it straight. I believe he was a good preacher, yet very few came to hear him preach. As far as we know he preached for 120 years and did not have one convert. Being a preacher, I am sure at times he became discouraged. I am sure there were times when he was tempted to "just quit." After all, he was the only preacher that God had in the entire world of wickedness who was preaching righteousness. He was human! There were more than a few times during those 120 years that he was discouraged. It was at those times that his good wife stepped up and read his condition, sat with him and cried with him and encouraged him until he was ready to go at it again.

Also, Noah worked hard. He was building an ark. There is no indication that he had any help. He would work long hours. He was laughed at by the locals for building such an odd looking boat on dry ground, with no water anywhere near the site, and no means of moving the boat. No doubt he was the blunt of many jokes in local gatherings. Then, he would study by the light of an oil lamp late into the night. I am sure there were times when he was tired and over worked; exhausted. It was in those times that his wife, in a way that only a wife can, encouraged and saw to it that he "got a good night's sleep."

The preacher's wife sees the side of the preacher that the congregation never sees. They see him at his best. They see him in the pulpit. They see him preaching great messages. Even when he is hurting, he does not show them that side of his human nature. The preacher's wife sees him when he is tired. She sees him when he is hurting. She sees him when he is discouraged. She sees him cry when people do not respond or say hurtful things about his leadership or preaching.

Being a preacher and having worked on the foreign mission field, I can understand some of what Noah went through. On more than one day I returned to the house after visiting for long hours in the hot southern Mexico sun with no results; even people turning their backs for whom I had great hope. I can remember sitting down on a step in our house and crying, and thinking, "I'll just quit. These people don't want me here." Today there is a good work in that city. Matter of fact, there are a number of churches that are carrying on the Great Commission as a result of our labor there. That can be traced to a wife, my wife, who sat and encouraged me, cried with me, prayed for me, cooked and fed me, washed clothes, kept our children, and insisted that I get a good night's sleep. I went back out the next day encouraged and with confidence. That was my wife, Diane. But, that is also what Noah's wife did for that great preacher of

righteousness. Note please, that Noah's wife did all of this without receiving any recognition from anyone in the town.

Today, the preacher works and prepares all week to preach on Sunday. God blesses and all the people stop to compliment the preacher of the good message, while his wife remains unnoticed, but she is there. And without her he would be a miserable mess. The work and responsibilities of a preacher's wife today are great. But no preacher's wife has ever gone through 120 years in one place like Noah's wife who suffered total rejections, and yet she did not quit; she did not falter. she stayed steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in her ministry as Noah's wife.

### **The Mother of Noah's Children**

I think, as we read between the lines, that Noah's wife was a good mother to their boys. Matter-of-fact, they had the only good boys in the entire world. They were the only three boys who were not destroyed in the flood. I assure you that there was someone behind those results. As stated, Noah was a hard working preacher. He spent much of the daylight hours building the ark that God had told him to build. He spent many hours at night studying and preparing to preach to the people. I am sure that he gave as many hours as possible to his three boys, but as it is today, Noah's wife had much of the responsibility of raising their children.

There were no good kids in the world for her boys to play with. I am sure she took much criticism from not allowing her boys to attend certain social functions. I imagine that she was criticized for "sheltering" them from the world. I imagine that the boys complained about her controlling their lives and not letting them have any fun. I also imagine that when the flood came and they were safe inside the ark, they were thankful for a mother who loved them and had been strict!

Some may be thinking that Noah had much to do with raising the boys. I am sure he did all he could, but no father has ever been able to raise good kids alone. I am just as sure that their mother spent much more time with them than Noah did. Her boys were a priority in her life. She did not leave them unattended or with some worldly, ungodly "baby sitter" while she went to some "ladies club" and discussed how to grow African violets or some other thing just as foolish! She stayed home and raised her kids. Praise God for a woman like Noah's wife.

### **The Wife and Mother in the Ark**

This was not an easy life for a woman. First, she was as Abraham, having no continuing home! She was floating around the face of the earth having no idea where she was. She had no home to return to. She had no idea where her next home would be. She was not sure she would have a next home. How strange it must have seemed. Also, she was closed up inside the ark with scores of animals for months. The odor must have been rank! The smell of the animals, plus the smell of the off-scouring of the animals must have been something that has not since been matched. She was busy from day until night with necessary chores to care for the eight members of her family. All of this plus the thoughts that must have occupied her mind when she wondered what life would hold for her and the family when they did leave the ark. She would be facing a new world; a world void of people except for the eight aboard the ark! The world must have felt empty. Consider all of this and then consider that we have no reason to complain about the preacher's wife! I repeat, she was a woman of great character! That was Noah's wife.

Though she is not mentioned by name and though nothing of her personal life is told us, I am confident that in that great chapter of Hebrews where God listed the people of faith, the ones: "Of whom the world was not worthy." I am sure she is there somewhere, standing close behind her preacher husband, a preacher of righteousness!

### **The Preacher's Wife**

One person in the crowd knows the preacher's life,  
She's wept and smiled and prayed with him, she's the preacher's wife.

She knows the preacher's weakest point, knows his greatest power,  
She's heard him speak in trumpet tone, in his great triumphant hour.

She's heard him groan within his soul when bitter ages strike,  
Hand in hand she knelt with him, she's the preacher's wife.

You tell your tales of preachers great, who walked across the world,  
And changed the course of history by burning words they hurled,

I'll tell you how that back of them some women lived their lives,  
Who wept and prayed and smiled with them, they're the preacher's wives.

**Thank God for Noah's wife! Thank God for preachers' wives.  
A preacher can stand against anything, if he has the right kind of wife.**

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS ON MARRIAGE**

### **Lesson #6**

#### **WHAT WILL YOUR CHILDREN BE LIKE WHEN THEY LEAVE HOME?**

**I Kings 22:41-43 and 51-53**

If your children are like you and follow in your footsteps:

1. Will your children be saved at an early age?
2. Will your children follow the teaching of the Word of God without respect to selfish desires? Hebrews 11:23-27
3. Will your children's children see and hear their parents pray and call their names?
4. Will your children serve Christ or be a spectator at church?
5. Will your children know that their bodies are the Temple of the Holy Spirit and will they keep their bodies undefiled? (I Corinthians 6:19-20)
6. Will your children witness for Christ in public?
7. Will your children cheerfully tithe their income? (Malachi 3:10) (II Corinthians 9:7)
8. Will your children make decisions based on convictions or on preference?
9. Will your children have a positive, victorious attitude and react right to trials or will they complain about everything that goes wrong? (Romans 8:28)
10. Will your children be controlled by the Holy Spirit? (Ephesians 5:18) (John 14:16-26)
11. Will your children be looking for the return and living their lives in the light of the second coming of Christ?
12. Will your children live by faith? (Romans 1:17)

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS ON MARRIAGE

## Lesson #7

### Six Ways Your Teen Is Playing You

If there's one thing you can say for teenagers, it's that they know how to push their parents' buttons. Instinctively, it seems, they come with an arsenal of tools to get what they want, avoid getting into trouble, or cause their parents to blow a fuse out of frustration... for the pure enjoyment of it.

The teen years can be quite challenging for kids and parents alike. We talked with experts to learn about the six most common ways teenagers play their parents, why they do it, and what moms and dads can do to counteract the manipulation and keep the peace.

#### Understand the Motivation

Kids manipulate their parents for a number of reasons: to garner love and attention, to cover their butts, to get what they want, and to feel powerful, says David Swanson, PsyD, a child and family psychologist practicing in Los Angeles and the author of *HELP-My Kid is Driving Me Crazy, The 17 Ways Kids Manipulate Their Parents and What You Can Do About It*. It's in a teen's nature to figure out the consequences of their actions and to try different things to see what kind of response they get.

Oh, and there's one more reason: It works! Although often unaware of it, parents frequently set up reinforcements that don't work for them, inviting behaviors that fuel many teen/parent conflicts, says Joshua Klapow, PhD, a clinical psychologist at the School of Public Health at the University of Alabama in Birmingham.

#### 1. Steamrolling

Perhaps the most common form of manipulation teenagers employ is steam rolling. Steamrolling can most simply be defined as: Can I? Can I? Can I? Can I? How about now? It's the never-ending, repeat request intended (even if unconsciously) to wear a parent down in order for a teen to get what she or he wants.

Fight fire with fire, suggests Stacy Kaiser, psychotherapist, author of *How to Be a Grown Up: The Ten Secret Skills Everyone Needs to Know*, and mother of two teenage daughters.

"Think about what your bottom line is and develop a 'broken record' sentence," Kaiser says. If your teen wants to hang out in the mall with friends, for example, but he hasn't yet finished his homework, your mantra is simply, "You must do your homework before you go to the mall." No further discussion is necessary (or advised).

Keep replying with the same sentence and become a broken record. That makes it much more difficult for your teen to knock you off your feet, Kaiser says.

Swanson also offers the “watch method.” Here’s the script: “When I give you your answer if you keep asking me, I’m going to let you know that you’re steamrolling me and if you keep going, I’m going to look at my watch. For every minute you continue to do it after I told you you’re steamrolling, it’s going to be two minutes of earlier bed or video time chipped away.”

Once you’ve explained the ground rules, merely take a 10 second glance at your watch. Your teen will know you mean business. “That’s when the steamrolling stops working against you and starts working against your child,” Swanson says.

## **2. Lying**

“Teenagers think if they don’t tell you the truth, they have a better shot of getting what they want,” Kaiser says.

White lies or lies of omission are common. For example, your child may be upfront about going to her friend’s house, but leave out the fact that her friend’s parents won’t be home and alcohol will be available.

As kids get older, the lies become more sophisticated, and therefore, more difficult to identify. Plus, Kaiser says, teens begin to collaborate with one another on fabricated stories.

“They’ll both agree to tell their parents they are going to Karen’s house when they are really going to Tommy’s,” Kaiser says. If either kid’s parents call the other, their story will be corroborated because they both told the same lie. “Since the friend’s parents back it up, they get away with it,” she says.

Stay vigilant about knowing where your child is going and with whom in order to minimize lying. And when you catch him, strike immediately.

“[Let your child know] that lying is not acceptable and for this offense, [you’re] taking the TV away for a day,” Kaiser says. “If it happens again [you] take it for a week. Kids need to know that a repeat offense has bigger consequences.”

## **3. Retaliation**

Many teens provoke their parents by doing something hurtful or simply not following through with things expected of them - like cleaning their rooms - just to even the score for not getting their way.

Although a tempting response, yelling and screaming don’t work in these situations, Klapow says. “You don’t treat your teenager like a toddler, but the same principles apply. Don’t attend to the tantrum.”

As calmly as possible, let your teen know that this kind of behavior is not acceptable. If she persists, it’s time, once again, to reinforce that there is a consequence for such behavior.

Begin restricting what is most important to her - phone, TV, video games, times with friends - and then follow through.

Kaiser offers a tip for parents who have a tendency to give in before the punishment is up. “Send the cell phone to another house,” she advises. “Call a friend and ask them to hold the item. That way you can tell your child, ‘I can’t give it back to you because our friend is holding it until Friday.’”

#### **4. Emotional Blackmail**

Ask parents what they most want for their children and many will say “to be happy.” That’s what makes emotional blackmail, i.e. “I’ll be sad until I get my way,” one of the more challenging manipulations for a parent to recognize and combat.

Klapow advises parents to ask themselves a very important question: “Is it my job to make my child happy or prepared for the world? And what will my actions do, depending on which way I go?”

#### **4. Emotional Blackmail continued...**

The world is not just about being happy, Klapow says. “It’s your job as a parent to help [your teen] learn. It’s OK for your child to be sad when his behavior impacts the way he lives in the world, or the lives of others,” Klapow says.

Focus on what you’re asking your child to do, while ignoring the emotions. If he tells you you’re ruining his life by making him do homework before he can go to a party, Swanson suggests saying to your teen: “I understand that you think I’m ruining your life because you have to do your homework, but you still need to do it before you can go out.”

If you can consistently keep your poise, Swanson says, over time your child will stop using emotional blackmail as a form of manipulation.

#### **5. Shutting Down**

What parents haven’t seen their teen quiet, sullen, and refusing to talk? Kids use shutting down as a strategy, according to Swanson, because they may think if they refuse to respond, the request you’re making will magically go away.

You can let your child know that although she may choose not to speak to you, she isn’t invisible.

To combat this frustrating form of manipulation, establish a schedule around enjoyable activities, such as video games or computer time, and limit them -- say, to an hour each night. Let your child know that only after homework has been completed can she log on and that every time you have to ask her more than twice



to do her homework, she'll lose 10 minutes on the computer. That's when your teen's refusal to respond to you starts to work against her, not for her.

But it's important to tune in to the reasons why kids aren't talking, Klapow says. "Is it manipulation or something overwhelming? Recognize that there are situations when a child needs to process information and that she may need more time."

If your child is upset about something, acknowledge that and let him know you are there to talk even if it's three days from now.

## **6. Creating Doubt**

Have you ever heard this one from your teen? "I'll be an outcast if you don't let me buy those jeans!"

Parents shudder at the thought of inadvertently placing their child in some kind of social or other peer peril. Kids know this and hope to turn up the volume on their parents' anxiety.

Become a detective, Klapow advises. "Look at truthfulness of [the statement]. Be a rational observer. Is that true? How true is it?" Ask your child to help you understand why he would get beat up if you don't let him wear a certain hat and then respond accordingly.

Your teen may have a good point. "It's not all manipulation," Klapow says.

But if you find that your teen is using this method to play you and get what she wants, lay down the law. Let your child know that attempting to manipulate you in this way is totally unacceptable and deliver a consequence.

## **Parents, Stay the Course**

The most important thing for parents is to be consistent. "Over time, [consistency] is the difference between success and failure, Klapow says.

"A good, responsible parent who will walk away and feel great about what he's done is not a parent who avoids conflict with his child," Swanson says. "It is doing what you know is right, and that is to put safety first, your child's better interest for the future second, and happiness last."

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS ON MARRIAGE

## Lesson #8

### Unspoil Your Child

**A trinket here. A toy there. Somehow, it is all adding up to a kid who expects to get whatever she asks for. Here is how to unspoil your child.**

Who hasn't bought a few moments of peace from a screaming toddler with a lollipop or splurged on a pair of sneakers just to hear your son say, "Mom, you're the best!" When you're busy or stressed, it's tempting to buy your 2-year-old that stuffed pony just so you can get through Wal-Mart without the Embarrassing Public Tantrum. Or let your kid eat candy and bread for dinner so you can eat your own fish and veggies in peace. But if your child rarely has to wait between "I want it" and "I have it," then he may be missing out on the chance to develop the emotional tools he'll need to be a happy and successful adult. When your child doesn't have the opportunity to deal with the little disappointments in life by your saying no to her, you may be giving her poor preparation for dealing with the small or large difficulties that may come her way. How Well-Meaning Parents Are Giving Children Too Much — But Not What They Need. It's not too far a stretch to see how a child who is given every new video game the day it comes out can develop into an adult who gets frustrated when he isn't given the corner office on his first day of work. But you can put an end to the gimmes — whether it's your child's inflated holiday list or her insistence on treats or snacks as prepayment for good behavior. Here's how to go about implementing the despoiling process:

#### **STEP 1: Acknowledge where the problem starts.**

As much as we hate to admit it, spoiling is mostly about us parents. We often try to compensate for what we didn't have as children, to assure ourselves that our children love us, or to make up for any parental guilt we feel. One parent stated it this way: "I came from a huge family and grew up wearing hand-me-downs," she says. "So I'm always buying my daughters the most stylish, matching outfits to wear to school. I know that's more about my issues than theirs!" Giving your kids whatever new gizmo they want as soon as they want it is also a way to show off how successful you are, both financially and as a supermom. How many times have you heard a mom "complain" about how many "gadgets" her kid has, as she simultaneously glows in the knowledge that she was able to buy them for her? Try to figure out where your need to spoil is coming from. Ask yourself a series of questions: Are you tired, overstressed, and trying to find a quick-fix solution? Are you feeling guilty for not spending enough time with your kids? Are you getting more of a kick out of this gift than your child is? Once you figure out what's driving your tendency to spoil your kids, you'll be better able to kick the habit.

#### **STEP 2: Set rules and consequences.**

There is a slippery slope in parenting, where the initial "If you behave, I'll buy you a treat" turns into "Here, take this treat, and hopefully you'll behave." To wean your child off this demand-reward pattern, you'll have to set the new rules in stone. Observe your child for a few days to notice when she is really being demanding and refusing to take no for an answer — whether it's with staying up past her bedtime, asking for new toys, or wanting candy, or something FAR bigger. Let's say you recognize a pattern: Your daughter refuses to sit still at the dinner table unless she is promised her favorite dessert. The next step is to come up with a rule and a realistic consequence — such as taking away TV or computer privileges — for her behavior, keeping in mind your child's age and tolerance level. And make sure your partner's on board with the new plan; kids are experts at playing one parent against the other. Then, sit down and explain the rules to your child: "In our house, we get ice cream on Friday night if we have behaved at dinner all week. If

there is whining for candy during dinner, you will lose the ice cream privilege." Ask your child to repeat it back to you to make sure she understands — or better yet, make a chart together that she can decorate with stickers each time she follows the rules.

### **STEP 3: Don't justify your decisions.**

One mother told her 4-year-old daughter that she couldn't have any cookies before dinner. Somehow, she managed to turn this into a 10-minute discussion about why. I realize now that she had no interest in listening to my explanation about the sugar content of the cookies — she was simply doing her best to break me. This can be equally true with an 18 year-old who is wanting some much more expensive — just because “they want it.”

Parents have this illusion that if they give their children the reason why they can't do what they want, the child will stop wanting it, and as far as I know, that has never happened in the history of parenting! Instead of trying to reason your child into obeying you, simply say, "No, and that's the end of the discussion." If she comes back at you with, "Why?" remind her, "In our house, that is the rule." And as your child repeats her "But why?" refrain over and over, keep this statistic in mind: A survey by the Center for a New American Dream found that kids will ask for something an average of nine times before the parents cave. So stay strong and repeat your simple "no" on the ninth, tenth, and eleventh entreaty. Eventually, your child will realize that her attempts are futile, and she'll move on.

### **STEP 4: Resist peer pressure.**

When all their other tactics fail, children will inevitably resort to the one sentence that has been used to guilt parents since that first annoying caveman next door gave his son a shiny new rock: "But all the other kids have one!" Unfortunately, there is no magical response that will definitively shoot this argument down, but there are a couple of strategies that can be successful. "You can say to your child, "That's interesting. Let's talk about it. "There may be a good reason for your child wanting what the other kids have: It might be a great new game everyone is playing at recess or a new book they're all talking about. Tell your child that you will look into it, and see if it's something you want him to have." If the book/toy/game seems worthwhile, you can add it to his birthday list — or together you can come up with a strategy for how he can "earn" it, whether that means helping him calculate how much allowance he'll need to buy it (perhaps he needs to save half the price, and you'll kick in the rest) or suggesting it as a reward for a good report card.

More than one kid has wanted a “trip to Disney World” which cost \$2000! Sure, a number of other kids have made trips to Disney World. That does not justify the cost of a trip which you cannot afford. If a trip like that is a future possibility, make it a “VERY special occasion, not a response to “Just because I want to go.”

### **STEP 5: Brace yourself for the meltdowns.**

The first few times you stick to a new rule and say no, it will be painful — for you, your child, and everyone else within hearing distance. There will be meltdowns at first, so fasten your seat belt and react to them in a very calm and neutral way. If you hold to that line every day, your child will learn that this is not the way to get something that he wants, and he will eventually stop. In fact, experts compare this part of the despoiling process to sleep-training your baby: a week or so of stress and tears, and then one blissful night your baby sleeps till morning — or your kid finally understands the word no.

### **STEP 6: Share the thrill of anticipation.**

I remember being 8 years old and running up and down the stairs in my house, screaming with excitement because the once-a-year TV showing of The Wizard of Oz was about to begin. Today, when my daughters want to see Dorothy and the Munchkins, they simply pop in a DVD.

While our instant-gratification culture has made life easier in many ways, it has also diluted the joy of looking forward to special experiences. Just think about the buildup of excitement you get when you plan a vacation a month away — there's the thrill of planning it, packing for it, talking to your friends about it. When you finally get there, the joy is magnified. But if there is no wait, no period of dreaming about it, the thrill is often less intense. "When kids are accustomed to getting things right away, nothing excites them anymore." "The bar has been raised so high that by the time they're teenagers, they might start looking toward other things — like alcohol and sex — for thrills. We should also point out that teaching your children to wait for fun and treats helps them sustain focus and attention, two very important skills for success in school.

One of the best ways to teach anticipation is to give your child an allowance and let him save it toward the item he covets. A young daughter, for example, knows that it takes exactly three weeks of saving her \$2 allowance to have enough to buy a new Rainbow Fairies book, and seven weeks to save for a new Webkinz. For those few weeks, she talks about the book or animal, draws pictures of it, and discusses it endlessly with her little sister.

Other parents have found wish lists to be a powerful tool. Small children can cut out or draw pictures of toys they want for their birthday or Christmas; older kids can create electronic wish lists on amazon.com and other websites. And make the list finite: She can keep 10 items on it at any given time; to add a new wish, she has to eliminate an old one. This not only helps her prioritize what she truly desires but also shows your child that a toy she swore she couldn't live without in April may seem less important in July.

### **STEP 7: Indulge in nonmaterial joys.**

By now, your child should be behaving so wonderfully that you will be tempted to smother him with tons of treats. Luckily, there are plenty of things you can bestow in abundance without running the risk of spoiling: snuggling on the couch and reading books; saying "I love you"; popping a bowl of popcorn and watching the football game; listening to her tell an elaborate story about a princess and her magical purple rhinoceros without even once checking your cell phone. And don't forget those weekly rewards for good behavior — if your child has followed all the rules you set, go ahead and share an ice cream sundae or do each other's nails. Because when you strip the parent-child relationship down to its core, it's pretty simple: Most kids would forgo another stuffed animal in favor of time with you. And that's something money can't buy.

### **STEP 7: Indulge in nonmaterial joys. continued...**

#### **Get Grandma on Your Team**

Your children know that all they have to do is bat their eyes at your mom and that talking Elmo doll is theirs. How to get your parents with the program:

#### **SET LIMITS**

One mother of two in Minneapolis told me she had "present overload" after the holidays last year. "We

donated the extra toys to charity, but this year I'm asking the grandparents to buy just three gifts per child: one outfit, one toy, and one book."

### **GET COLLEGIATE**

"Ask your parents to be moderate in their gifts. If they would like to make additional contributions, ask them to consider starting a fund or a trust for your child,"

### **REQUEST THE GIFT OF TIME**

Encourage your parents to spend the day with the kids at the botanical garden or baking cookies together, instead of buying them a giant dollhouse or stuffed animal. "Love is spelled T-I-M-E," says Samalin.

"Remind your parents that your children love them, and not just things they give them."

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS ON MARRIAGE

## Lesson #9

### RAISING CHILDREN

Mark 10:13-16

**Introduction:** “This is your brand new 1996 model, baby boy. This baby boy did not come off a regular assembly line. It was hand crafted and specially designed for you and your wife. It was designed to bring you great joy. It is a one of a kind model. There will never be another one made exactly like your model. This specially designed model comes with an ‘Operators Manual.’ You should read the directions carefully before attempting to operate this particular model!”

### Caution

“This particular model is very delicate. You must handle it with extreme care. Mishandling in any way may cause serious damage. This model comes with a life-time guarantee. If at any time you have any problem, you should re-read the manual and consult with the manufacturer. Any unauthorized repairs may result in damage and may affect your warranty.”

Today, in spite of having the Bible to guide us, we have:

- 400,000 Teenagers in prison in America.
- 200,000 Teenagers are homeless.
- 100,000 Teenagers are run-a-ways.
- 1 million teens between 12-20 are pregnant.
- 1 out of 5 are using or have used drugs.
- 10 million are infected with the HIV virus.
- 10-15 % have considered taking their life.

Why? Not delinquent children. This is the result of delinquent fathers!

There are two basic causes for the tremendous failure of children:

#### 1. Failed Fathers -

- A. Too busy with jobs, money, golf, fishing, friends, interests, and other things to raise their kids. The kids have become a burden.
- B. Fathers have failed to accept their God given responsibility.
- C. In many cases they have turned that responsibility over to the wife.

#### 2. Misdirected Mothers -

- A. Leave the kids in Day Care in order to make money (Proverbs 29:15).
- B. Have made TV the baby sitter.

Children: (1) A heritage from the Lord (Psalms 127:3).  
(2) Children are given to us by God (Joshua 24:3).  
(3) Graciously given to us by God (Genesis 33:5).

**I. Communicate with Your Children (Train your children)**  
You are responsible (I Samuel 3:12-13).

- A. When should you begin to communicate:
1. Early - Proverbs 22:6
  2. When weaned from the breast (Isaiah 28:9-10).
  3. Catholic church says, "Give us your child until he is 7 years old and he will be a Catholic when he dies."
  4. II Timothy 3:14-15 says, "...from a child, thou has known..."
- B. Why should you start early?
1. This is when they want to learn. Their favorite words are What, Why, and How.
  2. This is when they believe everything that Mom and Dad teaches them.
  3. Because they will not be a child very long.
- C. How do you train a child?
1. Realize that your child is "Unique."
    - a. Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way HE....."
    - b. Cannot do that in day care.
  2. Realize your child's potential.
    - a. Thomas Edison was expelled for being too dumb to learn. His mother taught him at home!
    - b. No kid is too dumb to learn - Parents are too dumb to teach them!
  3. Utilize every opportunity to teach your child.
    - a. Train them by example
      - (1) Issac - Genesis 26:7 learned to lie. "She is my sister."
      - (2) Absalom - II Samuel 13:26-28 learned treachery.
    - b. Train them by teaching.
      - (1) Joel 1:2 & 3 - Teach them.
      - (2) Deuteronomy 6:6 & 7 - Teach them.
      - (3) Not only by "Family Altar" -
        - Family altar can be like medicine.
        - All day - Point out a drunk in gutter.
        - Point out a person in jail.
  4. Be Firm - Genesis 18:19 - Command your children.
    - a. Do not give in to any type of wrong or compromise.
  5. Be Fair - Ephesians 6:4 - Don't provoke them to anger.
    - a. Consider their feelings - Consider that they are children.
  6. Be Fun -
    - a. Make the mission field fun.

## II. Correct your child (Ephesians 6:4)

- A. Many fathers spend more time training their dog than training their child. They tie the dog up at night and let the children run wild!
1. Spank your children because you love them (Proverbs 13:24).

- a. "I just can't spank him. I love him too much." No, you love yourself more than you love your children and do not like to make yourself feel bad by spanking them.
  - b. The Lord loves us, but He spans us (Hebrews 12:6).
- 2. Spank your child because of their human, depraved nature (Psalms 58:3).
  - a. Foolishness abounds in the heart of a child (Proverbs 22:15).
- 3. Spank your child to save you a great heartache (Proverbs 29:15-17).
  - a. You are not in a popularity contest. You are raising a child.
  - b. From 1-12 children learn through the seat of their pants.
- 4. Spank your child to deliver his soul from Hell (Proverbs 23:13).
  - a. He will scream like he is going to die. He won't!
- 5. Spank your child to teach him respect for parents, pulpit, God, and authority.
  - a. You must teach him who is in control.
  - b. Never physically abuse your child.

### **III. Rules for correcting your child:**

- A. Correct your child while he is young (Proverbs 19:18).
- B. Spank your child as a last resort.
  - 1. Jesus rebukes us first (Revelation 3:19).
  - 2. Jesus chastises us later, if we do not respond.
- C. Correct your child speedily (Ecclesiastes 8:11).
- D. Never correct your child in public (Ephesians 4:6).
- E. Correct your child in love and with patience.
  - 1. Never in anger (James 1:12)
- F. Always explain to your child why you are going to spank him.
- G. Spank your child until he repents.
  - 1. Explain that it is because you want him to turn out right. (In reality it is because you want him to turn out to be what he really wants to be, but doesn't know how to accomplish the goal.)
  - 2. Explain that his sin/wrong doing is going to turn out just like God said it was going to turn out (Psalm 33:11) (Galatians. 6:7).



# **SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS ON MARRIAGE**

## **Lesson #10**

### **RAISING MISSIONARY CHILDREN ON THE FIELD**

#### **I. Realize that your children are a gift from God (Psalms 127:3-5).**

- A. Don't make negative comments about your children.
  - 1. Someone said about their children, "Lock them in a closet until they are twenty."
  - 2. Don't cut your children down in public.
- B. You do not deserve your children if you are not thankful for them.

#### **II. Things you must do in raising your children**

- A. Love them (Mark 10:13-18).
  - 1. A child spells love, T-I-M-E.
  - 2. Be their best friend, but not their buddy.
  - 3. Spend time playing games with them.
  - 4. Be an example. Never say, "Don't do as I do. Do as I say do!"
- B. Dedicate your children to Christ and His work (Luke 2:27; I Samuel 1: 11,27-28).
- C. Pray for your children faithfully.
- D. Teach your children (Genesis 18:19, Proverbs. 22:6, Joel 1:3, Deuteronomy 4:9).
- E. Make your children important to your home (Psalms 127:3-5).
- F. Encourage your children (Matthew 18:5 & 6; Colossians 3:21).
- G. Command your children (Genesis 18:19; I Samuel 3:13).
- H. Discipline your children (Proverbs. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13; 29:15-17).
- I. Communicate with your children:
  - 1. People expect more of missionary children.
  - 2. Teach them that they are an example (II Timothy 3:15 and I Timothy 4:12).
  - 3. Call their attention to the fact that they enjoy a great privilege.
- J. Share with your children:
  - 1. The work.
  - 2. The problems. (But not to the point of causing stress.)
  - 3. The disappointments. (That they might see that you trust God.)
  - 4. The issues. (That they might be informed.)
  - 5. The Blessings. (That they might know God hath done great things.)
- K. Stand by your children.
- L. Let your children be children.
- M. Apologize to your children when you are wrong.

#### **III. Things parents should not do in raising children:**

- A. Do not require them to be adults!
- B. Do not require them to be missionaries.
- C. Do not require them to diligently study the language.
- D. Do not require them to take responsibilities that parents should take.
- E. Do not require them to be house-hold slaves.
- F. Do not compromise that which is right and wrong:

1. Dress standards.
2. Principles in the Word of God.
3. Friends who are saved or not living right.
4. Places they can and cannot go.
5. Things they can or cannot do.

G. Do not be intimidated by your children for fear of losing them! Never give in to their begging, pleading, getting angry, or saying, “You just don’t trust me!”

Answer, “You are right. I do not trust you. I do not trust myself. We are flesh.

H. Do not complain about the high cost of raising your children.

**IV. Things Parents must require of their children:**

- A. Demand decisions based on the Word of God.
- B. Demand that they honour your love and friendship.
- C. Demand that they maintain a right attitude.
- D. Demand that they dress right.
- E. Demand that they attend services regularly.
- F. Demand that they grow and learn something every day.

**V. Things we did as a family while on the field:**

- A. Tried to make missionary life fun for our kids.
- B. Read Christian books at night.
- C. Went hunting.
- D. Went on outings.
- E. Went mountain climbing.
- F. Made the border trips special (Mexico).
- G. Allowed the kids to use the house for friends.
- H. Greatly limited TV (We did not have VCRs. If you have one, use it on Friday or Saturday night and make it a special time of family fellowship. **DO NOT USE IT TO BABY SIT YOUR KIDS AND GET THEM OUT OF YOUR WAY!** People lived without TVs and VCRs for centuries and did fine (did better).

**VI. Missionary activities the kids were involved in:**

- A. They taught the smaller children’s classes.
- B. They helped prepare and assemble materials.
- C. They assisted with literature in out-door film services.
- D. They went to youth camp.
- E. They went on youth outings.
- F. They hosted kid's meetings at our home.