

## THE FAMILY

### Mark 10:6-8

#### I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** Several weeks ago we began a series of lessons with the general theme of “grow[ing] in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.” (2 Pet. 3:18)
  - A. These lessons are designed to help Christians grow and be strong in the Lord (1 Pet. 2:2).
  - B. We cannot remain “babes” in Christ (1 Cor. 14:20); and even if we’ve been Christians for many years, we need to be reminded of these first principles (2 Pet. 3:1)
2. **3** In today’s society the family has been referred to as “an endangered species”!
3. There was a time when the family and home were the rule, but not today; consider:
  - A. In 2012 there were 2,140,272 marriages in the U. S., but 813,862 divorces (U. S. Census Bureau).
  - B. Divorce rates for first marriages peaked at ~40% in the early 1980s. But has declined to about 30% since the early 2000s.
  - C. In 2010 nearly 50% of women entering “first unions” are cohabiting (i.e., no marriage vows)(source: *NBC News*).
    - (1) By the time they’re age 20, 1 in 4 U.S. women (age 15-44) have cohabited with a man; and by age 30, 3 in 4 U.S. woman have cohabited with a man.
    - (2) The author of this study said, “The question becomes not who cohabits, but who doesn’t?”
  - D. Adults and children are at increased risk for mental and physical problems due to marital distress (e.g., Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1994; Coie et al. 1993; Coyne, Kahn, & Gotlib, 1987; Cowan & Cowan, 1992; Fincham, Grych, & Osborne, 1993).
  - E. There is a strong relationship between divorce and age at which a couple marries. The older a couple is when they marry the less likely they are to divorce.
  - F. The “triple threat” of marital conflict, divorce, and out-of-wedlock births has led to a generation of U. S. children at great risk for poverty, health problems, alienation, and antisocial behavior.
  - G. **4** In 1960 73% of children lived with two married parents in their first marriage; that figure dropped to 48% in 2013. In 1960 only 13% of children lived in a home with no parent or a single parent; in 2013 that figure climbed to 39% (*Pew Research Center*). Thus, over one-third of children in the U. S. lived in less than ideal homes.
  - H. Let’s look at the effects this is having:
    - ✓ Among long-term prison inmates, 70 percent grew up without fathers, as did 60 percent of rapists and 75 percent of adolescents charged with murder.
    - ✓ Fatherless children are three times more likely to fail school, require psychiatric treatment and commit suicide as adolescents.
    - ✓ They are also up to 40 times more likely to experience child abuse compared with children growing up in two-parent families.

Source: Wade Horn and Andrew Bush, “Fathers, Marriage, and Welfare Reform,”

And,

- ✓ “Children who grow up in single-parent homes are less likely to marry, more likely to divorce, and more likely to have children outside of wedlock.” (Daniel T. Lichter et al., “Race and the Retreat from Marriage: A Shortage of Marriageable Men?” *American Sociological Review* 57 (December 1992): 781-799. Cited on page 27 of [The Abolition of Marriage, by Maggie Gallagher](#)).
  - ✓ One study on the effects of unmarried mothers’ raising children found that daughters were more likely to become sexually active in their teen years and were more likely to become involved with men that will abuse them. ([The Abolition of Marriage, by Maggie Gallagher p. 167](#), citing Stephanie Schamess, “The Search for Love: Unmarried Adolescent Mothers’ Views of, and Relationships with, Men,” *Adolescence* 28, No. 110 (1993): 425ff).
  - ✓ In surveys conducted by the *National Opinion Research Center*, researchers found that white female children of divorce were 60 percent more likely to undergo divorce or separation in adulthood than a similar population from intact families. The divorce/separation rate for white male children of divorce was 35 percent higher than for white male children from intact families. [Brian Willats, Breaking Up is Easy To Do, available from Michigan Family Forum](#), citing N. D. Glenn and K. B. Kramer, “The marriages and divorces of the children of divorce,” (*Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 49, pp. 811-825. Cited in Judith Wallerstein, Ph.D., “The Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children: A Review,” *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, May 1991, p. 357).
  - ✓ **5**The illegitimacy rate has increased 66% since 1980 and is still growing. (See Larry L. Bumpass, “What’s Happening to the Family: Interaction Between Demographic and Institutional Change,” *Demography* 27 (1990): 483-498. Cited on page 11 of [The Abolition of Marriage, by Maggie Gallagher](#)).
  - ☒ The overall illegitimacy rate in the U.S. is 40.7% (2021; CDC)
  - ☒ 72.3% among non-Hispanic blacks
  - ☒ 66.2% among American Indians/Alaska Natives
  - ☒ 53.3% among Hispanics
  - ☒ 29.1% among non-Hispanic whites
  - ☒ 17.2% Asians/Pacific Islanders
  - ✓ “According to Washington-based *National Center for Policy Alternatives*, 40 percent of girls in school today will be the head of households.” (Janice Mall in the *Los Angeles Times*, 12 April, 1987. Cited in Amneus, *The Garbage Generation*).
  - ✓ According to one study “...women...raised in female-headed families are 53 percent likelier to have teenage marriages, 111 percent likelier to have teenage births, 164 percent likelier to have premarital births, 93 percent likelier to experience marital disruptions.” (“Intergenerational Consequences of Family Disruption,” *American Journal of Sociology* 4 (July, 1988), 130-52; cited in *The Family in America: New Research*, October, 1988. Cited in Amneus, *The Garbage Generation*, page 113).
- I. The U.S. Supreme Court legalized same-sex “marriage” (06/26/2015). According to *Pew Research* (2015):
- ☛ 57% of U.S. citizens approved of gay marriage (Millennials, 73%; Democrats, 65%; non-religious, 85%).
  - ☛ 59% whites, 41% of blacks approve of gay marriage.
  - ☛ There are now (2016) about 491,000 gay married couples in the U.S.
  - ☛ Groups are clamoring for the legalization of polygamy, polyamory, etc.

4. **6** The prime reason our society finds itself in this quagmire is that most have totally thrown out the Bible principles regarding marriage and the family (**2 Tim. 3:13**: “*But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.*”).
5. **7** Our objective is to consider some of the things the Bible teaches on this important subject so that we do not fall into the same cesspool.

## II. DISCUSSION:

### 1. **8** As the family goes so goes the nation:

**\*\*Psa. 33:12:** “*Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people He has chosen as His own inheritance.*”

**\*\*Prov. 14:34:** “*Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.*”

A. The wisdom of man does not establish truth, but it certainly can corroborate it. Note what some wise people of the world say concerning the home and family:

- (1) “Home—that blessed word, which opens to the human heart the most perfect glimpse of Heaven, and helps to carry it thither, as on an angel’s wings.” (Lydia M. Child, 1802–1880, U. S. abolitionist, writer, editor)
- (2) “Home is a name, a word, it is a strong one; stronger than magician ever spoke, or spirit ever answered to, in the strongest conjuration.” (Charles Dickens)
- (3) “Home is where one starts from.” (T. S. Eliot, 1888–1965)
- (4) “The family is both the fundamental unit of society as well as the root of culture. It represents a child’s initial source of unconditional love and acceptance and provides lifelong connectedness with others. The family is the first setting in which socialization takes place and where children learn to live with mutual respect for one another. A family is where a child learns to display affection, control his temper, and pick up his toys. Finally, a family is a perpetual source of encouragement, advocacy, assurance, and emotional refueling that empowers a child to venture with confidence into the greater world and to become all that he can be.” (Marianne E. Neifert (20th century), U. S. pediatrician, professor and author)
- (5) **\*\*** “The strength of a nation is derived from the integrity of its homes.” (Confucius)
- (6) **\*\*** “The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.” (Unknown)

B. All we need to do is recall some of the miserable statistics from our introduction to know that good, solid family life is essential to our well-being.

### 2. **9** Marriage and the home are ordained and regulated by God:

A. Soon after the first man was created, God say that he was alone and created for him an “*help meet*” (**Gen. 2:18**: “*And the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’*”).

Adam Clarke: “a help, a counterpart of himself,” one formed from him, and a perfect resemblance of his person. If the word be rendered scrupulously literally, it signifies one like, or as himself, standing opposite to or before him. And this implies that the woman was to be a perfect resemblance of the man possessing neither inferiority nor superiority but being in all things like and equal to himself.

- (1) God put Adam to sleep with divine anesthetic and performed the first surgery, by taking one of his ribs, and made a woman for the man (**Gen. 2:21-25**).

- (2) The woman became the wife of Adam and they were one flesh (**Gen. 2:24**).
- B. Note the words of the wise man Solomon (**Prov. 18:22**: “He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD.”).
- C. The Hebrew writer informs us that sexual relations are only legitimate in marriage (**Heb. 13:4**: “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”).
3. **10** The purpose of marriage:
- A. Not all marry for the right reasons. Some marry:
- ☛ Just to get away from home.
  - ☛ For spite, pity, or adventure.
  - ☛ Because of physical attraction.
  - ☛ Money.
  - ☛ To escape loneliness.
  - ☛ For social prestige.
- B. When couples marry for the wrong reasons, those marriages usually will not last (Recall: 50% of marriages end in divorce, so many are evidently marrying for the wrong reasons.)
- C. **11** The divine purpose of marriage:
- (1) To meet the needs of “man”: marriage and the family provide the atmosphere in which man and woman can be completely fulfilled (**1 Cor. 11:11-12**: “But remember that in God’s plan men and women need each other. 12 For although the first woman came out of man, all men have been born from women ever since, and both men and women come from God their Creator.”; TLB). Do you know many people that are happily married that are not “happy” in general?
- (2) For propagating and nurturing the human family:
- Gen. 1:28**: “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”
- Eph. 6:1-4**: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 ‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the first commandment with promise: 3 “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” 4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”
- (a) Note that the marriage command was given to both the man and to the woman.
- Matt. 19:4-5**: “And He answered and said to them, ‘Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?’”
- (b) Therefore, it automatically eliminates:
- ✓ Adam & Steve
  - ✓ Alice & Eve
- (c) The wickedness of man is demonstrated in this country in that...

- (i) Since the infamous 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision, over 58 million babies have been murdered while still in their mother's womb (over 2.5 times the population of Australia).
  - (ii) In our nation's capital there are three abortions for every live birth (CDC: In 2012 there were 210 abortions per 1,000 live births in the U.S.).
- (3) To keep the human race morally pure (**1 Cor. 7:2**: “Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.”; **Heb. 13:4**: “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”).

#### 4. **12** Marriage is for life:

A. With our soaring divorce rates, we need to learn that the Bible teaches marriage is for life!

**Rom. 7:1-4**: “Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? 2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. 3 So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. 4 Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another — to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.”

B. There are only two scriptural reasons which will allow one to be married more than once:

- (1) The death of one's spouse (Rom. 7:1-4; **1 Cor. 7:39-40**: “A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. 40 But she is happier if she remains as she is, according to my judgment — and I think I also have the Spirit of God.”).
- (2) When one divorces their spouse because the spouse has committed adultery (fornication) (**Matt. 19:9**: “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”).

C. God does not allow divorce from an unbelieving spouse (1 Cor. 7:10-11).

#### 5. **13** The mutual responsibilities in marriage:

A. Marriage is not a one-sided arrangement. In marriage, both husbands and wives share responsibility and must mutually accept, and faithfully discharge, their God-given responsibilities involved in the relationship.

B. Mutual responsibilities:

- (1) Love one another: **Eph. 5:33**: “Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”
- (2) Companionship: (**Gen. 2:18**: “And the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’”). Companionship is sadly missing in many marriages with the husband going one way and the wife the other.
- (3) Satisfaction of physical desires:
  - (a) Marriage is the only God-approved relationship for satisfying the sexual desires God has given “man” (**Heb. 13:4**: “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”; **1 Cor. 7:1-5**).

- (b) Many marriages end in divorce because one party does not respect the rights of the other in this area.
- (4) **Faithfulness: I Cor. 6:18:** “Flee fornication!”
- (a) Fornication and adultery are sinful (Gal. 5:19-20; Matt. 19:9).
- (b) This applies not only to wives, but also to husbands.
- (i) Recent studies suggest that somewhere between 50-70% of married people commit adultery by the time they reach age 40.
- (ii) In the past adultery rates for women were roughly half of those seen in men.
- (iii) However, rates for men and women are now roughly equal.
- (iv) The explosion of pornography on the internet; internet dating, on-line chatting, etc. pose an unprecedented challenge to marriage! Ashley Madison
- C. **14** Some responsibilities of wives and mothers:
- (1) **Proper behavior:** The place of the wife is not that of noisy prominence or display: **I Pet. 3:1-6**
- Eph. 5:22-24:** “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.”
- Col. 3:18:** “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.” (Michael Jordan vs. Phil Jackson)
- (2) **Motherhood.** Simply being a female parent does not qualify one as a “mother” in the eyes of the Lord (1 Tim. 2:15; 2 Tim. 1:5→**2 Tim. 3:15:** “and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”).
- (3) **Homemakers: (Titus 2:4-5:** “that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”; **Prov. 31:10-31**; note: does not preclude “working” outside the home).
- D. **15** Some responsibilities of husbands and fathers: Husbands must be faithful to discharge their duties in every realm of life.
- (a) **Head of the family:** God made the man to be the head of the family (Eph. 5:23-25). The man has the position of leadership (remember Phil Jackson!)(**I Cor. 11:3:** “But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”).
- (b) **Love wife at the highest order:** God requires the husband to love and honor his wife with the ultimate in love (**Eph. 5:25:** “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,”; **I Pet. 3:7:** “Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”; **I Pet. 5:5:** “Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders . Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility,”).
- (c) **Guide the household:** God made man to be the father of the family. When a man becomes a father he takes on many added responsibilities.

- (i) Guide direct, and train children (Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6).
- (ii) Discipline is essential in the family (**Prov. 13:24**: “He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly.”; **Prov. 19:18**: “Chasten your son while there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction.”; **Prov. 29:15-17**: “The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. 16 When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increases; but the righteous will see their fall. 17 Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul.”)

#### 6. **16** The children in the family:

A. Children have responsibility in the family as well as their parents.

B. Let’s note a few things the Bible says about the responsibility of young people in the family:

- (1) Obey and honor parents: **Eph. 6:1-3**: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 ‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the first commandment with promise: 3 ‘that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.’”; Lk. 2:51-53; **Rom. 1:29-32; v. 30**: “disobedient to parents”; **Prov. 17:25**: “A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her who bore him.”; **Prov. 15:20**: “A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish man despises his mother.”; Deut. 21:18-21; **Prov. 30:17**: “The eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it.”; **Deut. 27:16**: “‘Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt.’ ‘And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’”
- (2) Learn to work: **Lam. 3:27**: “It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth.”; **Eph. 4:28**: “Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.”; **I Tim. 5:4**: “But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.”
- (3) Learn to love God and His word: Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6; **2 Tim. 3:15**: “and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

### III. CONCLUSION: **17**

1. We need to follow God’s word when it comes to marriage and family relationships.
2. Each member of the family needs to learn, accept, and faithfully discharge their God-given responsibilities in the family.
3. Obeying God in these areas of life are just as important as obeying Him in any other (e.g., doctrinally correct).
4. Are you obeying God in these areas of your life?

Adapted from: *Growing in Grace and Knowledge of the Lord*, by Johnie Edwards, Titus Edwards, Johnie P. Edwards, Edwards Publishing, pp. 21-23)