

 **Managing
GOD's Money**

Theme for May: The Family

Despite persistent, vicious attacks on the traditional family by Governments and others in society, God's ordained roles for the family and family members apply today. Stand firm; don't let Governments' ill-conceived anti-traditional family policies deceive you. Always remember popular policies don't equate with morally acceptable policies. God's Word is the only authority for moral absolutes. This month, we will review God's Word to learn about the traditional family under these headings:

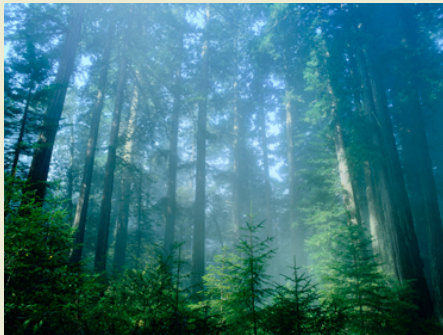
- May 1-7 - *The Husband: Servant Leader*
- May 8-14 - *The Wife: Partner and helper*
- May 15-21 - *The Parent and Child: Relationship building*
- May 22-31 - *The Family Council: Essential teaching and learning medium*



Topic for the Week: The Family Council: Teaching and Training Medium

May 22-31

The Word



Luke 6:39-40

And He also spoke a parable to them: "A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit? "A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.

God's Word is under attack. Folks adopt cafeteria-style Christianity, accepting the Bible only partially. Minority groups twist the Word to suit their agendas. Several churches lead the onslaught with "tolerant," "inclusive," "seeker friendly" messages that appeal to the masses. Often I wonder who is seeking whom!

Is the church "seeking" to become like the "world"? No wonder these days resemble the days of the Judges when each person did what was right in his own eyes!

Research shows many church folks don't know God's Word, so they accept false teachings. Hosea 4:6 describes this fittingly.

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

Then again, some preachers tell folks what they want to hear, which Apostle Paul mentions in 2 Timothy 4:3:

For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

These words are as valid today as then. How do we combat rising

ignorance of God's Word? I suggest only through the Holy Spirit's guidance as we study, model, and teach God's Word to our families.

How did you learn biblical truth? Do you have family traditions that influence your views about morality?

With so much competition for our minds, unless we plan regular family discussions, the media will teach our children and us. The Family Council ("Council"), is an approach I use to learn and teach my family biblical truths. Comparable to a business' board of directors, it's the family's training forum.

Biblical Foundation

Jesus is its foundation. It's a forum for family members to learn, teach, and model Jesus to each other. The Council's workings might present several challenges, but not one detracts from its usefulness: what if only one parent is a Christian, and the children are not Christians? If this is reality, we work with what we have. If mom is the believer and dad isn't, or if he withdraws, mom should seek God's

guidance. The same applies in the reverse.

God ordained dad as the family shepherd — the family's servant leader. He should arrange weekly family get-togethers for Bible study so he and each family member get to know better, and gradually become more like Messiah Jesus. Each gathering should stress spiritual, attitude, and behavior matters. We see the *Council's* crucial goals in Titus 2:1-8:

But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored. Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

From this passage, we may develop the following **goals for weekly Council gatherings** under dad's leadership.

Family Council's Goals

Goal #1: Family To pray for salvation of unsaved members (John 3:1-21)

Note the goal is not the unsaved family member's salvation. We can't do this. Only the Holy Spirit's prompting draws us to Christ. Our goal is to pray and let God do the rest. So if some family members are not

believers in Christ, the believers need to pray continually for their salvation.

In my case, God used my daughter to challenge my agnostic beliefs. After trying to disprove Christianity's truths over a two-year period, at age 38, I just didn't have enough faith to disbelieve Jesus is Messiah! I learned later, my daughter, some of her classmates and teachers, prayed regularly for my salvation.

Folks, I urge you, never stop praying for your parents' salvation; neither should parents stop praying for their unsaved children, nor one spouse for an unsaved spouse. After surrendering my life to Christ, I prayed for over ten-years, "begging" my Lord to save my dad. He did! About six months before he died at age 99, my dad surrendered his life to Christ! What an awesome God we serve!

Goal #2: Regular Bible Study To Grow (2 Timothy 3:16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12-14)

We study the Bible to get to know Jesus and draw closer to Him; not to know about Him. In 1 Timothy 6:20-21 and 2 Timothy 1:14, Apostle Paul cautions Timothy about "knowledge":

O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called "knowledge"— which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith (1 Timothy 6:20-21).

Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you — guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us (2 Timothy 1:14).

When we draw closer to Jesus through regular Bible study, the Holy Spirit helps us to stand

for truth, and to become witnesses for Christ. Proverbs 22:17-18 describes this aptly:

Pay attention and listen to the sayings of the wise; apply your heart to what I teach, for it is pleasing when you keep them in your heart and have all of them ready on your lips.

Goal #3: To Learn And Teach God-Ordained Roles To Family Members (Ephesians 5:21-27; 6:1-4; Psalm 143:8, 10):

Despite consequences, parents must model and teach their children biblical husband-dad, wife-mom, roles to apply inside and outside the home. TV or public schools won't show these roles. Even churches have bought lies about male and female roles.

Goal # 4: To Encourage Each Other (Proverbs 27:17; Galatians 6:1-5)

As family members encourage one another, each will develop and mold the other's character. This is essential because outside the home — in schools and in the workplace, there is a low chance we will see biblical values.

The *Council* should become the platform for each family member to share his or her individual and family experiences in the "world" as he or she stands up for Christ.

Goal #5: To Develop Healthy Family Traditions (2 Timothy 3:12-15)

The *Council* itself by God's grace might become a family tradition for our children to pass along to their children. Knowledge gained during these meetings might affect positively each family member's attitude, which might survive many generations. For example, the children will learn persecution is normal for every believer; but with Holy Spirit's help, they will accept it and be salt and light.

Application



Psalm 25:4-5

Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

Psalm 27:11

Teach me your way, O LORD; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors.

Psalm 27:14

Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.

Parents, how are you coping with the continuing attacks against the traditional family? Many Christian parents wonder if they can compete successfully against the negative influences surrounding their families. To be sure, with the help of the Holy Spirit, you can. Parents, present each family member to Jesus daily: pray for them daily; regularly invest time with them individually.

I suggest each parent ask the Lord if the *Council* proposed here is for his or her family. By God's grace, dad can start arranging weekly one to two hour meetings with the entire family. Don't exclude young children. Include them early and allow them to contribute.

As we said earlier, dad the servant leader should be the guide. If he is unsaved, unwilling, unavailable, mom should lead. If neither is a believer, as God did with my wife and I,

He can raise up believing children to lead and encourage their parents. In a single parent home, the single parent or other believer should be the guide. Here is a suggested Family Council procedure:

- ✿ Arrange to meet weekly: same day, time, and place, for one to two hours.
- ✿ Have a family fun (date) time after.
- ✿ Start and end with prayer – encourage each child to pray.
- ✿ Encourage each person to keep a journal for prayer requests, praises, "God wow's", and answered prayers.

Memory Verse

2 Timothy 4:2-4

Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage — with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

- ✿ Invite younger children to suggest Bible study topics: they may choose one of the famous stories such as David, Jonah, and Joseph from which you can show many exciting and life-changing lessons.
- ✿ Ask teenage children to suggest topics for study that interest them. Some may choose contemporary topics that might make parents feel uneasy — still, the best place to discuss these topics is at home. Even if you are uncomfortable, ask the Lord for wisdom and insight. Our children will accept false teachings from the world if we don't give them the truth at home!
- ✿ Other than topics geared specially for children, have a basic family study time. Start with a biblically based discipleship program, which

shows what it means to be a believer in Christ, and continues with the many salvation assurances.

- ✿ Always encourage participation by the entire family. Encourage each child to use his or her skills to lead a section, no matter how small.
- ✿ Add specific study topics on handling God's money, wealth, possessions, and other matters as directed by the Lord.
- ✿ End at the appointed time; you can always pick up where you left off!
- ✿ Ask the Lord to direct the *Council's* proceedings and to let His light shine through dad, the family shepherd.

Considering this

month's theme, *The Family*, this period's topic, *The Family Council*, each day reflect on the specific verses in the *Daily Reflection* section below. These questions may help your reflection:

- Who is talking to whom, about what, and in what context?
- How do these verses apply to me today?
- What lessons from these verses can I start to do today?



Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible (Copyright (c) 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers. All rights reserved.)

D A I L Y R E F L E C T I O N S

May 22

2 Timothy 4:2-4; Hosea 4:6; Judges 21:25

May 23

Psalms 25:4-5; Psalm 27: 11-14

May 24

Titus 2:1-8; Proverbs 22:17-18

May 25

Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Proverbs 17:6

May 26

Luke 6:40-49; Galatians 5:15-26

May 27

2 Timothy 3:12-15; Hebrews 5:12-14; 1 Corinthians 3:2

May 28

Proverbs 27:17; Psalm 143: 8,10

May 29

John 3:16-17; John 14:26

May 30

Ephesians 5:21-27; 6:1-4; Galatians 6:1-5

May 31

1 Timothy 6:20-21; 2 Timothy 1:14