

Basic Training: What Does It Mean? Lesson 7  
What Is the Meaning of Family?

*Josh 24:14-15*

*14 Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.*

*15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, **choose you this day whom ye will serve;** whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but **as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.***

I. Review previous lessons

1. Lesson 1: What does it mean to receive the Holy Ghost? The beginning of a relationship with God in you leading to a changed life.
2. Lesson 2: What does it mean that God wrote a Book? He preserved His Words and Will for us to grow our relationship.
3. Lesson 3: What is the meaning of prayer? (3 parts) How to deepen our relationship with God
4. Lesson 4: What does it mean that there is one God? That the one God, known as Yahweh in the OT, came as Jesus, God in flesh, to establish the closest possible relationship.
5. Lesson 5: What is the meaning of worship? An expression of physical acts that lead us into the greatest depths and highest heights in God.
6. Lesson 6: What does it mean to live godly? (2 parts) Being transformed from worldliness by the Holy Ghost to conform to God's will as expressed in His Word.

II. Introduction

1. Lesson 7: What is the meaning of family?
2. There are three reasons we are including a lesson on something so basic as family. First, this is a Basic Training series, and family is about as basic a thing as our world has ever seen. What I mean by that, is the family has always been the basic structure of society. World culture is established not by political parties or big business, but by families.
3. I remember my 10<sup>th</sup> grade world history teacher, Mr. Buhay, saying this and writing it on the chalkboard: "Families are the basic unit of structure of our civilization."
4. In one way or another, you could not have arrived in this world without an interaction between your father and mother. And without exception, at least one member of your family, your mother, was present when you were born. And it is also likely that another family member or two were also present.
5. So yes, the family is one of those **basic** ideas that deserves to be a lesson in this **basic** training series.
6. But the second reason that we need a lesson on the family, is because the family was God's idea.
7. In the first book of the Bible, in the first chapter of the Bible, on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of creation, we read this:

*Gen 1:27-28*

*27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

*28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

8. There you see the birth of the family on the first page of the Bible.
9. And it was not a political structure that God chose to bless the world through. It was the family and lineage of Abraham.  
*Gen 12:2-3*  
*2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:*  
*3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*
10. And God Himself chose to come into this human family, by being born into a family. You can read about the generations of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham, in Matthew chapter 1 verses 1-17.
11. And then in verse 18, we read:  
*Matt 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.*
12. God could have chosen to forego the family experience by coming as a fully mature man, fully independent and capable of taking care of Himself.
13. That was the model He used when He created the “first Adam.” But coming as the “second Adam,” He chose to come directly into the family experience as a fully dependent infant.
14. He did choose to skip the human procreation method of father and mother by miraculously conceiving a child in Mary’s womb, but He did not skip the family.
15. Jesus grew up as a child among other children in the family home of Joseph and Mary.
16. So it is appropriate that we look at the structure of the family according to the Word of the Lord, since it is the basic unit of structure of society.
17. The third reason for including a lesson on families is because the family has been under attack. And sociological research has demonstrated that collapsing families play a major role in human suffering.
18. From hunger to homelessness, and from neglect to abuse, crumbling family structures contribute to these and many other problems in society.
19. I’m sure each of us can point to some family trouble you experienced that caused you needless suffering that could have been avoided if the family structure had been more stable and godly.
20. So, what is the meaning of a godly family? That is our topic today.

### III. The family should

- A. Create a nurturing and safe environment for vulnerable, dependent children
  1. A home in the little town of Nazareth was the place that the God of heaven chose to be raised as a son in the home of Joseph of Nazareth.
  2. God placed trust in the family environment as a place where an infant could be protected and raised as a special creation of God with divine purpose.
  3. After the shepherds told Mary and Joseph what the angels told them, that the Savior, Christ the Lord had been born, Mary did not forget that:  
*Luke 2:19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.*
  4. And when Simeon, a wise elder in the temple saw the 1-week old Infant, he blessed Him and prophesied over Him. And the parents did not forget that:

*Luke 2:33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.*

5. Parents must keep in mind that their children are placed into their trust by God, with the purpose of caring for them, preserving them, and preparing them for the divine purpose for which God called them.
6. God gave parents the task protecting and keeping them safe from the hurt, harm, and hindrance that would keep them from that calling.
7. God warned Joseph of the destruction that awaited that infant if they stayed where they were living, and said it is time to move on:  
*Matt 2:13-14*  
*13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.*  
*14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:*
8. And then a few years later when that danger was gone, it was time to return home:  
*Matt 2:19-21*  
*19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,*  
*20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.*  
*21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.*
9. You see in that kind of safe environment, even if it means moving from a place, or returning back to a place, the child's spirit can grow strong because they feel secure and loved:  
*Luke 2:40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.*
10. If a child does not have to fear danger and instability in their home, they can be free to focus their energy and passion on finding their purpose calling among the people:  
*Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.*
11. For Jesus, home was a place of learning:  
*Heb 5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; [experienced]*
12. One of the things He learned in the home of Joseph and Mary, was the importance of faithfulness in attending the house of God:  
*Luke 2:41-42*  
*41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.*  
*42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.*
13. *Luke 4:16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.*
14. He had been brought up going to the synagogue and reading the Word. That helps provide a strong moral foundation for children.
15. And in an ironic way, we also see that Joseph and Mary had family members and close friends around that were part of their safety net, whom they trusted to help watch the kids and keep them safe.

16. And maybe they all trusted each other a little too well:  
*Luke 2:43-45*  
*43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child **Jesus tarried behind** in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.*  
*44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they **sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.***  
*45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.*
  17. The parents had family and friends, and rabbi's in the temple, who were an extension of the safety net of home.
  18. The point is, the godly family is a safe place for children to be raised so they can follow the call of God on their life.
- B. Introduce us to God and establish our initial ideas of right and wrong
1. I want to look back to the story of Abraham, the family that God chose to bless and single out as a people through whom God would bless the rest of the human family.
  2. Abraham lived around 1800-1900 years before the time of Jesus, yet you find in the gospels at least 30 references to Abraham being the father of the Jewish people.
  3. You find 69 references to Abraham in the New Testament.
  4. They called themselves the sons and daughters of Abraham and had an expectation that they would sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.
  5. The saved dead would go to a paradise of rest called the bosom of Abraham.
  6. The Pharisees boasted to Jesus as being righteous because they were of Abraham, their father.
  7. So Abraham became the standard of uprightness. But it would be helpful to look back just one generation to see that Abraham didn't have righteousness handed down to him from his father.
  8. Abraham's father was an idolater like his ancestors and his community  
*Josh 24:2-3*  
*2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even **Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.***  
*3 And **I took your father Abraham** from the other side of the flood, **and led him** throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.*
  9. So Abraham, the one who was called the "father of us all," and the "father of the faithful," did not have that example set by his father, yet he rose to the occasion and taught his children about the God who called him.
  10. And even after God called Abraham, he made some mistakes that we see his son Isaac repeating.
  11. But the main point is, Abraham started a heritage that millions upon millions of people look to him either as part of their physical heritage, or as their spiritual heritage as being sons and daughters of God.
  12. Abraham found a level of faith in God that stood the test.
  13. Think of how he responded when God spoke this very puzzling instruction to him:  
*Gen 22:2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.*
  14. That is what the pagans did for their false gods. But not the true God!

15. Think about who that impacted.
  16. Not only was that a monumental test of Abraham's faith, but Isaac was old enough to know what was going on, so this was an ultimate display of his father's faith that lived with Isaac the rest of his life.
  17. Not only did Abraham have a great faith in God, but God had great faith in Abraham:  
*Gen 18:17-19*  
*17 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;*  
*18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?*  
*19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*
  18. The reason God chose to bless Abraham and give him special revelations was because God knew how he would raise his family to do right.
  19. Our homes are to be a place where we introduce our children to God, and to what is right, even if the family we were raised in didn't get it right.  
*Josh 24:14-15*  
*14 Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.*  
*15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*
- C. Be a mirror image of the relationship between Christ and the church, enduring, trustworthy and dependable
1. The New Testament writers included much instruction to guide families.
  2. Staring with Jesus reaffirming the foundation of the family unit that God stated in the very beginning in Genesis 2:24  
*Matt 19:4-6*  
*4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,*  
*5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?*  
*6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*
  3. One male and one female come together, and God joins them together as one inseparable family unit. That affirms the enduring family foundation upon which the rest of the family can be added.
  4. Then in Ephesians chapter 5 and 6, we see the larger family framework that makes for the godly family.
  5. First by anchoring the husband/wife relationship as a mirror image of the relationship between Christ and the church.  
*Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*
  6. By comparing the husband/wife marriage to how Christ loved the church sacrificially, that ties the structure of family and marriage to an eternal principle, not to an evolving element of society.

7. And parents are instructed to prioritize raising their children to serve the Lord:  
*Eph 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*
  8. And that love is mutual in the home:  
*Titus 2:4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,*
  9. Children are also instructed to honor and obey parents:  
*Eph 6:1-3*  
*1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.*  
*2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)*  
*3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.*
  10. And parents are to work to provide for the needs of their family:  
*1 Tim 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*
  11. So it is this framework of husband loving wife and kids, wife loving husband and kids, children loving and honoring parents, parents taking care of their family, that is the foundation of a godly family.
- D. Be bound within a moral framework blessed by God
1. The former lesson on what it means to live godly addressed moral behaviors and the kind of behaviors that God is displeased with.
  2. In a godly home, there is no place for immoral sexual acts, unfaithfulness, rage, drunkenness, violence, and jealousy.
  3. But in marriage, sexual relations are honorable and undefiled:  
*Heb 13:4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*
- IV. Conclusion
1. Tonight, we have addressed the question: What is the meaning of family? and highlighted these points. The family should:
    - a. Create a nurturing and safe environment for vulnerable, dependent children.
    - b. Introduce us to God and establish our initial ideas of right and wrong
    - c. Be a mirror image of the relationship between Christ and the church, enduring, trustworthy and dependable
    - d. Be bound within a moral framework blessed by God
  2. And finally, the family must be a place where love is not merely a vague principle, but the basis of all that goes on there. Love will last forever!
  3. 1 Cor 13:1-8