

Dear Bible Study Leader,

I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you because of your faith and faithfulness in leading others to get into God's Word and God's Word into them. This study is very different from the others we have done so far. This is a topical study and it is designed for married couples or those who are planning to be married soon. The Bible has much to say about marriage and family. God uses the picture of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Church to picture the love a husband is to have for his wife and a wife for her husband. Since it was God Who created and established marriage we will look to God and His Word to learn His plan and principles for marriage and the family.

Together we will look at seven dimensions of the relationship God designs when He calls a man and a woman to be one flesh. I have included a drawing, based on a carving of an African couple that was a gift that pictures well these seven ties or links. Throughout this study we will be referring to this picture that will help us better understand these seven dimensions. We will study the **spiritual** foundation of the husband and the **spiritual** foundation of the wife and the tool of **communication**, which maintains that oneness. We will consider **compatibility**, which is the evidence of oneness; **love**, which is the dynamic of that oneness; and the need for **understanding**, which grows the oneness. We will present the **sexual union** of a happily married couple to be the joyful expression of the oneness. All throughout the study we will emphasize a close look at the spiritual foundation of the oneness our God has designed for a married couple. Many cultures are experiencing epidemic separations and divorces, even in Christian marriages. There has never been a time when a study like this has been more needed than now.

This is only a survey study of this vitally important subject and will provide the biblical foundation for more in depth discussion within your groups. Remember, when we study these passages in Scripture as they relate to the marriage relationship and families to ask yourself and the group these three questions:

- What does it say? (Observation)
- What does it mean? (Interpretation)
- What does it mean to me and to those I am leading? (Application)

Even though I do not know you personally, I want you to know I am praying for you as you study and lead others through this study. Marriage and family are God's plan for the most important institution in the world—the home. God loves families and that is why they are under attack. Satan wants to destroy and break up marriages and families. I pray you will experience God's supernatural grace in your own marriage and family as you lead this study.

Dick Woodward
Pastor and Author of the Mini Bible College

LEADING THE BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Mini Bible College has prepared this Biblical survey study for Family and Marriage with its foundation on the Bible. Your role as leader is to guide your group through the study sessions and exercises, helping them to understand the truth, discover the eternal principles, and, most importantly, apply them to their lives and families. Like our Old and New Testament Survey courses, this is only a survey study. This eleven-week study is for married couples or those planning to be married in the near future and as a survey, it will provide you with some Biblical tools to nurture and grow personally and to help the families in your church grow both spiritually and in their relationships. Consequently the questions are worded with married couples in mind.

To help you, we have provided the following tools:

- This Leader's Guide
- Report forms
- Audio of the Family and Marriage Series (Audio Lessons 1-11)
- A set of workbooks for the students

Before class

- Personally start inviting people to come to this spiritual banquet. “Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests” (Matthew 22:9-10).
- Prepare yourself in prayer for those who will attend. It would be best if both the husband and wife can attend together but if only one can or will come, it is better for one to come than neither. If possible, pray for them by name. Only God can change the hearts of people, and prayer is the most powerful tool. “Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up” (Luke 18:1). If there is interest from women or men whose spouses do not wish to attend, consider starting a group just for the women and another one just for the men.
- Ask for help. Do not try to do everything yourself. Invite one or two people to help with music, singing, greeting, and keeping records.
- Review the lesson and understand the lesson objective.
- Become familiar with the material; listen, read, and study each lesson and memorize the Bible passages before class time.
- Be sure all materials are ready for each class.
- Make sure the meeting area is adequate and comfortable for the class.

During Class

(Remember to try to keep the class time to one hour and a half.)

- Greet everyone as they arrive. Remember how nice it is when you are welcomed? Extend God's welcome to all. Have someone serve as the greeter and introduce people to one another if they are not already acquainted.
- Open with a time of worship and prayer, asking God to help you and each one understand and apply God's Word to your lives.
- Recite the memory verse.
- Listen to the audio lesson.
- Work through the workbook, inviting discussion with a focus on application. We trust the questions will raise interesting discussion and understanding that will lead to application. If the group is large (more than 10), consider dividing it into smaller groups of three or four people to encourage discussion. Be sure to monitor the time and be careful that the conversation does not detract from the focus of the lesson and the study of God's Word.
- Thank all for coming and encourage attendance at the next class.
- Challenge the students to invite others to join the Bible study.
- Encourage the students to memorize the biblical passages of the lessons each week.

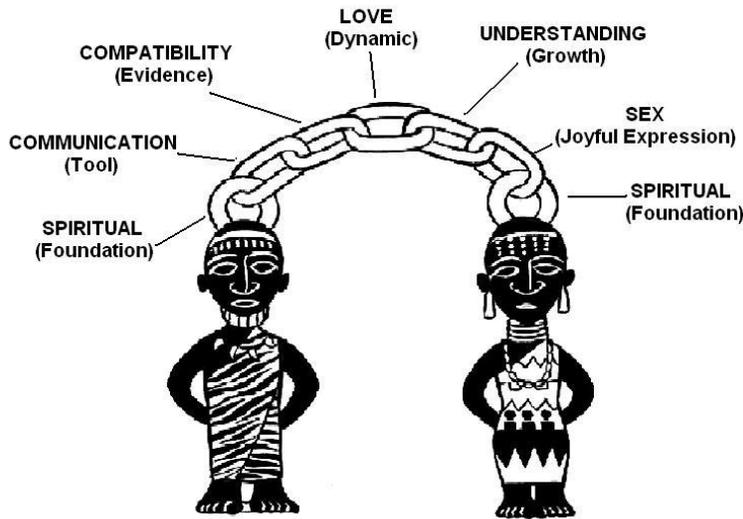
After Each Class

- Gather up all materials.
- Restore the meeting room to the proper order. Leave things more orderly than you found them.
- Fill out and file report forms.
- If you are meeting in someone's home, be sure to thank them for their hospitality.

Special Instructions for Teaching Auditory Learners – Non-Readers

It is important to remember that those who do not read and write learn and retain information differently than those of us who are literate. The auditory learners, even most of those who do know how to read, learn best from listening, discussing and telling what they have heard. Illiteracy was not an obstacle in Jesus' day. It is good to remember and even tell those in your class that most of the disciples and the majority of the people who first shared and spread the Gospel could not read or write.

In many ways, auditory learners have a greater capacity to learn what they hear than we who must write something down to remember it. Take the time, therefore, to allow your students to hear the lessons, pausing the message and even going back to listen again to a portion if it was not understood, and then allow them to respond to questions. When auditory learners can "story back"—tell in their own words what they have heard and learned—it indicates that they have properly grasped the principle. Therefore, use the study questions to guide the discussion time as they will help in the learning process. Ask the questions out loud and encourage all to participate. This will lead them into a deeper understanding of God's principles and a stronger relationship with His Son, Jesus the Christ.



Family and Marriage

Chapter 1

Audio Lesson: FAM01



Objective: To introduce what the Bible says about marriage and family.



So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.”

—Genesis 1:27-28

Then the Lord said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”

—Genesis 2:18

Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain.

—Psalm 127:1

All through the creation account, God looked at what He created and said, “It is good.” But when He saw that the man He created was alone, He said, “It is not good.” This man was incomplete without a partner. So God created a woman, joined man and woman together as one, and told them to fill the earth with their children.

The Bible gives us God's design and purposes for marriage and family. It tells us how to have a marriage in the sight of God, a marriage put together by God, a marriage brought together by God, and a marriage kept together by God. It also tells us how to raise our children and have strong families.

There are many benefits for us in learning what the Bible says about marriage and family. Next to salvation, a happy marriage and home are the most wonderful things in the world. But what does marriage mean to God? Why did He institute marriage? Why did He create us male and female? The answer is that God wanted to populate the earth with people who love Him and His kingdom.



1. **True** or false? Marriage and family are a law of life that fulfills God's purposes for the world.
2. **True** or false? Women have a role in completing men, and men have a role in completing women.
3. **True** or false? God intended for a husband and wife to minister to each other as two whole persons.
4. True or **false**? Women do not have the same worth as men.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Who came up with the idea of marriage?
 - a. **God**
 - b. Adam
 - c. Ancient cultures
 - d. Modern society
6. How does the Bible describe the relationship between husband and wife?
 - a. They become one person with no distinction between them.
 - b. They remain two completely separate people.
 - c. **They become "one flesh," or two distinct people united as one.**

7. How does the Bible address the members of a family about their roles?

a. It tells them to focus on each other's attitudes and behavior.

b. It tells them to focus on their own attitudes and behavior.

c. It does not really matter because family is not a priority.

8. What is the basic unit through which God works?

a. Individual people working independently

b. The family

c. The church

d. The government

9. Which partner in a marriage is superior?

a. The man

b. The woman

c. Neither—they are equal.

Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves. Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.

—Psalm 127

10. According to Solomon in Psalm 127, who is the most important person in the family—or in any endeavor?

a. The man who leads

b. The one who works hardest

c. Children

d. The Lord

11. How did Solomon describe parenting?

a. Raising children is like shooting arrows with a bow.

b. Being a parent is like being a watchman who stands guard.

c. Being a parent involves many nights without sleep.

d. Children are like warriors who always fight.

12. What was God's original intention for marriage?

a. For it to be an easy relationship with no effort involved

b. For it to be a temporary relationship

c. For it to be a permanent relationship

d. For it to be between any two people, no matter what gender

13. How do we let God build our marriage and family?

a. By worrying about it

b. By realizing we cannot do it on our own and by depending on God

c. By actively pursuing our own plans

d. By always working and never sleeping

14. What is God's definition of a marriage?

a. Any two people who love each other.

b. Any two people who have children.

c. A man and a woman who are joined together by God.

d. A man and a woman who get married in a church.



What are God's desires for marriage and family? What are your desires for marriage and family? How do you think He wants to use your family life to further His purposes in the world?

One of the greatest problems in Christian marriages today is men who will not accept their God-given responsibility to be the head of the home and the spiritual leader—the priest of their home. Husbands, how are you doing in leading and loving your wife as Jesus loves? What can you do today and this week to become the husband and father God wants you to be?



Thank God for the wonderful gifts of marriage and family. Ask Him to prepare your heart for this study and to teach you about His purposes and plans for your life and relationships. Pray that He would strengthen your faith and family relationships for His glory.



Going Deeper

1. Who created the idea and institution of marriage? _____

2. What is the “law of marriage and family”? _____

3. Why is this law under attack today? _____

4. What are the three levels of the pyramid of marriage and family, and why is each important? _____

5. What is the basic unit that God works through in the world? _____

6. Why is it essential to put God into our marriages? _____

7. What is the basis on which we should make the decision to marry? _____
