

Day 1 : Building your marriage – overcoming isolation and creating Oneness.

Read : Philippians 2:1 – 4

Defeating selfishness and isolation is essential in building oneness and a godly marriage. One of the main reasons people get married is to find intimacy- a close personal relationship with another person. Yet it does not seem to come naturally. Why?

One common problem is selfishness – both partners going in their own directions and wanting things their own way. Isaiah 53:6a – Explains the failure to achieve intimacy in marriage. It says, “... going your own way’; which is selfishness. Selfishness in a marriage leads to isolation. Instead of closeness we want, we end up being separated or set apart from each other. Isolation is the condition of being alone, separated. It involves building walls of separation rather than bridges of communication. Isolation results in misunderstanding, pride, frustration and all the other symptoms of a troubled marriage.

Therefore, how do we achieve Oneness? Oneness in a marriage is achieved as both husband and wife yield to God and work together in building their home from the same set of blueprint : the Bible. God’s blueprint for replacing isolation is Oneness.

The benefits of oneness :

The following scriptures teach us about some of the benefits of oneness in a relationship – Psalm 133: 1 and Ecclesiastes 4:9 – 12. Oneness in marriage involves complete unity with each other.

Achieving Oneness :

Question : What would society say is the way to achieve oneness in marriage?

Possible answers : By working hard at your marriage,by improving your sex life, doing your share in household responsibilities.

Question : What important factors are missing from most secular instruction in achieving oneness?

Possible answer : Involving God in a relationship, obedience to God’s word. Recognition of selfishness as the root cause of trouble and solving it as a problem. Awareness that only God offers the means to change a selfish nature.

In his letter to the church in Philippi, Paul addressed the issue of oneness among Christians. (Phip 2:1 – 4) It says, don’t act from selfishness, have a humble attitude and put the interest and needs of others ahead of our own.

Conclusion : 4 step plan for achieving oneness –

- i. Agree on the goal
- ii. Deal with the conflict
- iii. Walk together
- iv. Build from the same set of blueprints (the Bible)

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the ways you struggle with the selfishness in your marriage? List at least 3 and share.
2. How can a couple build a home that will understand the pressures that are destroying marriages today?
(Matthew 7: 24-27)
3. What does Philippians 2: 2 say about how to achieve oneness in a relationship?

Day 2 : Keep the Home Fires Burning- Finding Balance Between Ministry and Family.

Read: Proverbs 3:5 – 6

Most women struggle at times with feeling that they just can't measure up. God does not measure our worth by how skinny our bodies are or even our failures and successes in the wife and mother arena. We all mess up at times. We all sometimes stink in our roles as mothers and wives. But God loves us nonetheless. In God's eyes we do measure up as long as we remember to look up. We all knew the story of God's providing the Israelites with just enough manna for each day (The book of Exodus).

Why wouldn't God allow them to store up a whole week's worth at a time? I believe it was because God wanted them to come to Him every day to receive their portion. He wanted their daily dependence. He wants this same thing from us.

Balancing ministry and family

Balancing the demands of ministry and family can be tough. But dedicating our day to God first makes all the difference. (Proverbs 3: 5 – 6). Some things that can help us to keep the home fires burning strong:

i) Have a Meeting of the Minds with your Husband

Many of us place unrealistic expectations on ourselves because we think we knew what we need to do to be a great wife to our husbands. We run ourselves ragged trying to keep up "the perfect charade". Have we ever stopped to ask our husband his definition of a good wife, you might be surprised and relieved by his answer. Most of the time, our to do list to be the perfect wife is a long list.

ii) Get Intentional with a Schedule

Discuss with your husband about your meeting or speaking schedules, and determine how much you can book and when. Once you have his blessings on your schedule, you are free to book events that are free within the guidelines you've agreed upon. The same principle can work with any type of scheduling. The key is respecting your husband and communicating in advance how you will need him to help you.

iii) Stay Tuned In to Your Children

It is our responsibilities as mothers to make our home the place where our children get the three things that their hearts long for : love, acceptance and honor. If they find these needs met within the safety of our homes, they won't go looking elsewhere. Children are our greatest mission field – our most treasured ministry. Our ministry can be wonderfully fulfilling, and in many ways it has made us a better mother. But we must keep first things first and that our schedule should not crowd out our priority blessings.

iv) Realize that Sometimes the Best Answer is No

There are times when ministry opportunities come our way that conflict with our responsibilities to our family. This is the time to delegate to someone else, postpone the ministry opportunity to a later time or graciously decline. It is better to say no right up front when you know an activity or event will stretch you too thin than to agree to participate and make your family suffer.

Discussion Questions

1. How many of us women can say that we always strike a perfect balance in all areas of life? If the answer is No, then list down some of your own shortcomings and share.

2. Your Pastor ask you to take up a responsibility in church because there is no one else to do it. If you take it up, it will conflict with your family. What will you do? What will the consequences be if you do?

Day 3 : The Role of the Christian Father

Read : Deuteronomy 6: 5 -7, Proverbs 22:6, Ephesians 6: 4

What the Bible says about the Christian Father.

The Christian father is an instrument in God's hand. The whole process of instruction and discipline must be that which God commands and which He administers, so that His authority should be brought into constant and immediate contact with the mind, heart and conscience of children.

Discipline must be exercised with watchful care and constant training with much prayer. Chastening, discipline and counsel by the Word of God, giving both reproof and encouragement, is at the care of admonition. Christian discipline is needed to enable children to grow up with reverence for God, respect for parental authority, knowledge of Christian standards and habits of self-control.

A father's responsibility is to acquaint his children with scripture (2 Timothy 3: 16- 17). As the father is faithful in role modelling, what children learn about God will put them in good standing throughout their earthly lives, no matter what they do where they go.

5 Principles Christian fathers can live by :

1. They make time for their family

A good Christian father makes time for his family and anchors his family in Christ. He provides the needs of his family. No other teacher can affect a child as much as their parents. For this reason, it's important that fathers teach their children both by their example and their words. They not only meet the physical needs of their families, but also the emotional needs as well. The family turns to him as a support in all areas of need and he provides as best as he can.

2. They love and respect their wives

He loves and respects his wife. He serves as an example to his children of what a loving relationship looks like so that they may also reflect it in their lives, particularly when it comes to their marriage. The strength a Christian husband needs in order to carry out these responsibilities flows out of his relationship with God. This requires dependence on God's spirit. He should ask God to empower him so that he can give his children not just an inheritance but a heritage. They ultimately give their wives what she needs most – to be loved, honored and cherished.

3. They give loving discipline and commendation

Colossians 3: 21 says, “You fathers do not be exasperating your children so that they do not become downhearted.” A Christian father doesn’t just discipline. He disciplines lovingly and commends his children in the process. No matter how frustrated or angry he gets, he expresses loving concern for the welfare of his children. This includes advice, correction, education and chastisement when needed. In addition, he recognizes that discipline is way more effective when a father commends his children regularly. This enriches a child’s character as they will know when they are acknowledged and appreciated.

4. They are good communicators

Good communicators not only communicating Biblical principles to their children, but also being a careful listener. Instead of being a reaction waiting to happen, they have the ability to listen calmly without being judgmental. When a child knows their father will lose their temper quickly, they are less likely to communicate their inner feelings to him. But then they know their father listens calmly, they believe that they are respected and that there is genuine interest in what is being said. The Bible tells us, ‘Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.’

5. They apply God’s practical Wisdom

A Christian father will apply God’s practical wisdom to their everyday life and guide their children in the same way. Deuteronomy 6:5-6 says, “Love the Lord God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.” Fathers who are in a committed relationship with God can guide their children in the greatest relationship they will ever have – an intimate relationship with their Heavenly Father.

Discussion Questions

1. Martin Luther said, “keep an apple beside the rod to give the child when he does well.” Discuss and share.
2. Ephesians 6:4 speaks about two aspects of a father’s role, good and bad. What are they and what lesson you can learn from them?
3. Given these: wife, children, ministry and God. How should these be ranked in order of priority in a father’s life?

Day 4 : Grandparents' Role in the Family

4 Biblical Roles of Grandparenting

1. God wants grandparents to be a Blessing Giver. (Proverbs 10: 17)

Be a Blessing Giver :

Spiritually by:

- praying for them and with them
- encouraging them in their growth and gifts
- valuing them as God's special creation

Emotionally by:

- celebrating their accomplishments
- encouraging them through their struggles
- communicating unconditional love always

Physically by:

- providing a home where they're always welcome
- providing arms where they're always safe
- providing an atmosphere where they're always accepted

2. God wants grandparents to be a Legacy Maker. (Proverbs 20:7)

Be a Legacy Maker by:

Bringing honor to your family reputation through Godly living

- living a life of integrity both publicly and privately
- bring the best out in those around you.

Making decisions based on an external perspective

- finishing well- always have the end goal in mind
- loving people and using things instead of loving things and using people

Leaving 'good tracks' for your grandchildren to follow

- letting them know why you do what you do
- being an example of faithful living

3. God wants grandparents to be a TORCH BEARER (Psalm 71: 18)

Be a Torchbearer

Of the gospel to your grandchildren and your community

- make sure your grandchildren hear the truth of the gospel
- trust the Holy Spirit to draw them on His time schedule
- demonstrate a consistent concern and compassion of unsaved people

Of moral living in an immoral world

- take bold yet generous stands on moral issues
- show them how to flourish spiritually in a hostile culture
- teach your grandchildren to develop discernment as you help them evaluate their world

4. God wants grandparents to be a STANDARD SETTER (Psalm 92: 12,14- 15)

Be a Standard Setter

By modelling, teaching and encouraging

- inspire faith
- consistent integrity
- personal discipline
- steadfast endurance
- contagious courage

What grandparents should not do

1. Grandparents should not be involved in interfering or taking sides in their children's marriage.

- The first marriage ceremony given by God Himself said that a man should leave his mother and father and cleave to his wife. The two become one flesh and so that leaves no room for parents or in-laws to enter into the marriage, even when they have children involved.

- Grandparents should not try to tell their children how they should raise their children but allow them to learn themselves.

- Of course if there is a safety issue where the grandchildren might be harmed, then the higher principle is to speak to their children about their grandchildren.

- They should not insist their children should use the same methods that they used in raising their children.

Discussion Questions

1. What will the consequences be if grandparents interfere in the raising of grandchildren by their children?

2. The Bible gives examples of grandparents, there were good and wicked grandparents. Give an example for each. Discuss what lessons can be learned from their lives.

Day 5: Principles of training for young mothers

Read : James 1: 5

Training children is a work that cannot be performed without careful thought and determination. Training children in the holy work of molding, of really forming and giving shape to an immortal spirit. To accomplish this great task, we must claim the promise in James 1:5.

Principles of training children.

i. Training is more than teaching

Teaching makes a child know and understand what he is to do. Training influences him and sees that he does it. Teaching deals with the child's mind. Training deals with his will.

ii. Prevention is better than cure

True training is watching the child to help him prevent mistakes. It is not watching him with the intention of correcting his mistake. The highest aim of true training is to help the child know that he can obey and do right, that he can do it easily and successfully and delight in doing it.

iii. Habits must precede principles

During the early years of a child's life, his body is constantly growing and changing. It is during this time that his lifelong habits can be formed. Habits influence the person by making the performance of certain acts easy and natural. After these are established, the way is prepared for the child to obey rules and principles.

iv. Developing a positive attitude is essential to learning.

During the early years of childhood, the child is very susceptible to his feelings and impressions. Because of this, the parent must try to make doing what is right seem attractive and desirable. The child must develop a favorable attitude toward being and doing good. Without this attitude, habits will have little value. With it, they will be the connecting link by which habits become the actual desired will of the child.

v. Example is better than precept.

It is not the way we think but the way we live that makes a difference. It is not our wishes or our ideas, but our will and practice that train our children. By living a principle or ideal, we prove that we will love that principle and that it is a part of us. In this way, we influence the young mind to love it and to attain it too.

vi. Love that draws is more than law that demands

Training children requires a life of self-sacrifice. It requires love that 'seeketh not its own,' but lives and gives of itself. God has given the wonderful gift of mother-love. When this love is directed into the right

channel, it becomes the handmaid of God's redeeming love. Love inspires and this inspiration is the secret of training.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some good habits that can be developed during the early years of a child?
2. The power of training lies not in what we say and teach but in what we are and do. Do you agree? Explain.
3. What happens when rules and regulations are presented without love?

Day 6 : Parenting Teens – Tech support and Media, Internet and more

Read : Proverbs 2: 11

The pace of new developments in this realm is explosive, and each breakthrough brings about great promise for good and potential for harm. We can't afford to ignore what's out there or leave our teenagers to their own devices, so to speak. When it comes to media and electronics, our kids need input, guidance and a lot of conversations about what's wise and what isn't.

i. How much privacy on the computer should I allow my teenager?

None. You reserve the right to know everything that enters and leaves your teenager's computer. Seriously consider implementing a house rule that online activity occurs only out in the open, where anyone can see what's on-screen, and not in a bedroom or behind closed door. If you hear objection, "But this is a private stuff between me and my friends," it's time for a crucial reality check. By definition, anything posted online is no longer private. Even if only one or two people are meant to read it, they can easily pass it along to hundreds of others. Don't be surprised if his or her reaction to your expectations and limits implies that you're out of touch, a snoop or worse. Listen to his concern but make sure he understands what's at stake and don't compromise his safety. If he doesn't like your rules, remind him that all these technologies are optional and that using them is a privilege, not a right.

ii. Should I allow my teen to put pictures on social networks?

One of many concerns related to teens spending hours engrossed in social networking sites is that these are not face to face conversations. Children and teenagers have unwisely posted provocative images of themselves and their friends, sensitive information about themselves and their families and thoughts about their lives. This material can be read and passed around the world within seconds and it can't be taken back. Remind your teen never to allow anyone photograph her partially or fully unclothed.

If your teenager would be uncomfortable having you, teacher, employer or future spouse see what she intends to send from her computer into cyberspace, it shouldn't be sent. Your teenager needs to understand the importance of telling you if she receives a hostile or inappropriate content, including request for personal information or a meeting.

iii. What kind of rules should I set regarding cell phone use?

Most cell phones are more than phones. They are powerful little computers that can send and receive all kinds of materials, access the internet, take photos and videos etc. Unlike a desktop computer, this one is on the move, tracking what comes in and goes out of it can be challenging. Remember it is a privilege not a right for our teenagers to carry a cellphone

You need to discuss the following with your teenager :

- a) How many calls and text messages can be made in each month.
- b) Who can be called, how often and when. There should be a reasonable 'bedtime' for the phone.

- c) Content of calls and messages – abusive or sexual content should be neither sent nor received by them. Many teens have sent provocative photos of themselves or someone else to another person only to find out that these images then spread like wildfire.
- d) Talking or texting while driving.
- e) Monitoring will happen. Privacy isn't part of the deal.
- f) The phone is subject to confiscation if misused.

Discussion Questions

Discuss and share the following questions:

1. What if I don't like the music my child wants to listen?

2. How much choice in movies, T.V shows or other media should I allow my teen?

Day 7: Why children are not saved?

Read : 1 Timothy 3:2,4,5,12

These verses remind us again of the closeness of the link between parents and children and the unity of home as a whole. The Holy Spirit teaches Paul to commence unbelieving and unruly children with the failure of the parents authority in the home. The failure at home makes the parent unfit for church office.

Some of the causes of failure in the parents' governing of the home:

i. Lack of the Self- control

The problem in the home reveals a problem in the headship. The secret of home rule is self-rule. We must first, be ourselves what we want our children to be. There are many Christian parents to whom real self-control in daily life is quite foreign. In their conversations and actions, in their likes and dislikes, they are led away by the feeling of the moment. They allow their own mood and tempers to affect their language and conduct. Their actions contradict their profession of being the servants of God's will. In Isaiah 30:15, we learn that quiet self-control is one of the first conditions of success in our own spiritual life. All Christian parents must learn this. Then, we will also be successful in influencing our children.

ii. Failure to rule.

This is failure due to neglect of the duty of ruling on the part of the parent.

Causes of this failure

a. Stem from entire ignorance of the importance of the position the parent occupies - they have never taken seriously of the extent to which the souls, wills and characters of the children are in their hands.

b. With others, this neglect rest on mistaken principles – they admire a strong will. In the self- assertion of a child's will, they see cause for amusement or admiration. They do not know that a wayward will is a curse. A will that masters itself to be obedient is the truly strong will. Strong-willed children later become disobedient.

c. With others, comes from simple weakness and laziness.

iii. Lack of Faith

The parent who completely surrenders to God and seeks undividedly to do His will, will be given faith to live in the assurance that God Himself will do the work. When we totally surrender ourselves and our children to God, we will find God to be our covenant- helper in training our children. To have power with Him in prayer is the sure guarantee of victory with the child.

Conclusion

Child raising is a work in which the parents are meant to be God's servants, His fellow-workers. To really work with Him means to walk closely with Him. The work entrusted to us is holier than we know. To train a will for God and eternity is such a great responsibility that makes us want to decline. But we cannot. If we are parents, the duty is given to us. But thank God, sufficient grace is prepared and promised to us. If we give our home and life to God to come and rule, He will take possession. Then, by the gentle influence of His Holy Spirit, they will bow their wills to Him.

Discussion Questions

1. We have often heard of godly parents whose children have turned out badly. Is all the blame to be put on the parents? (1 Timothy 3: 2, 4,5,12)

2. How will the training that we receive from ruling our children be the best preparation for our leadership in church?

References:

1. Families Matter by Wrutheran Sinnadurai
2. Ministering to Your Family by Kenneth E. Hagin and Kenneth Hagin Jr.
3. How to Bring Your Children To Christ by Andrew Murray
4. Busy Mom's Guide to Parenting Teens by Paul C. Reisser, M.D
5. Family Life Home Builders Couples Service by Dennis Rainey



TAMIL ANNUAL CONFERENCE
METHODIST WOMEN

CHRISTIAN HOME AND FAMILY WEEK 2018



To,
The Methodist Women of our TAC Churches.

1.4.2018

Dear sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This year's theme is as last year, "**The Family seeking God's glory.**" When our families are pleasing to God and all reflecting His glory, then we glorify Him. This year the Christian Home and Family Week is from *June 17 – June 23, 2018.*

Below are the topics for the week:

- Day 1 : Building Your Marriage – Overcoming Isolation and Creating Oneness
- Day 2 : Keep the Home Fires Burning – Finding Balance Between Ministry and Family
- Day 3 : The Role of the Christian Father
- Day 4 : Grandparents' Role in the Family
- Day 5 : Principles of Training for Young Mothers
- Day 6 : Parenting Teens : Tech Support and Media, Internet and more
- Day 7 : Why Children are not Saved?

Offerings collected can be used for your local Methodist Women ministries. I pray that these topics will be useful and all of you will be blessed. I believe it will be more meaningful if we observe this week together with our husbands, children and others in our church families.

Have a Blessed Christian Home and Family week.

In His Service,

Jansee

Mrs. Jansee Sham
Christian Education Coordinator

Confirmed by,

Mrs. Kany Jayapal
TAC-MW President