WEEK OF

JANUARY 1, 2012

SMALL GROUP

BIBLE DISCUSSION

TOPIC: A BRIEF HISTORY OF FAMILIES

Lesson in a Line:
Despite all the forces against it, God intends the family to be a place of love, worship, acceptance and safety.

Points to Make

- From the beginning of time, God established families as the basic unit of society, the primary way in which human relationships are experienced and developed.
- After creating Adam, God stated, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him" (or 'fit for him') (Genesis 2:18).
- When God created Eve and brought her to Adam, Adam recognized her as being "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23).
- This was the inception of the human family, which God instituted for the benefit, blessing and continuity of the human species.
- However, families have been under severe attack since day one! Families fight against exceptionally strong forces including Satan himself and, of course, our own inherent selfishness.
- In Genesis alone, the first book of the Bible, we see numerous examples of "dysfunction" in families – between husbands and wives, parents and children and sibling rivalry.
- Reading through the Bible you will quickly observe that there is no such thing as "the perfect family".
- No matter what your current situation is, God has a desire and a strong interest in helping you and your family get to a place of health, happiness, love, support and joy - if you will allow Him to do His divine work in your home.
- So, where do we begin? First, by asking ourselves some very important questions:
  - "What kind of family do I want?"
  - "Where is our family now versus where we want to be?"
  - "Am I willing to commit myself to doing what is required to build a successful family (with God's help)?"
  - "Have I already made so many mistakes that I believe there's no hope for recovery?"
  - "If I knew what to do, would I actually do it, or am I beyond caring?"
- There is no doubt that your home is under attack. The devil's design is to destroy anything good God has given for our benefit. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy…" John 10:10a (NASB).

Key Scriptures:
Deuteronomy 6:1-15; Psalm 78:1-8; Colossians 3:12-21

- But God has a different plan!
  - For husbands: Genesis 2:2, Proverbs 5:18-19, Ecclesiastes 9:9, 1 Peter 3:7, Ephesians 5:25.
  - For raising children: Genesis 18:19, Deuteronomy 6:1-15, Psalm 78:1-8, Proverbs 22:6, Proverbs 19:18, Ephesians 6:4.
  - For wives: Esther 1:20, Proverbs 31:27, 1 Peter 3:1-4, Colossians 3:18.
  - And for children: Colossians 3:20, Ephesians 6:1-3, Proverbs 20:11.
- We all have responsibilities to God and our families to do what is right and show forth His glory in our homes.
- We know that, but we allow many things to steal away what God has for us and our families: multiple jobs, sports, entertainment, internet, friends, tiredness, lack of discipline, bitterness, unforgiveness, unfaithfulness, other interests, etc.
- May God help us to start on the road back to experiencing His perfect will and plan for our homes, relationships and families.

Discussion Tools

- If there could be a "perfect family" what would it look like? Discuss.
- Were all the ideas the group came up with the same for everyone? Did everyone agree?
- Does God intend for all families to be exactly the same as every other family? Why or why not?
- In the family structure, God gives instructions to every member of the family.
  a) Why do you think He instructs each member as He does?
  b) Which instruction do you think is most difficult for a family member to obey?

Prayer Time

Lord, You have been our help from age to age. Help us now to build strong family relationships. Together as a family and each of us as individuals, may we live to serve You.

ICE-BREAKER: According to you, what/who was the most significant event/person of 2011?

NOTES