

## =THE CHRISTIAN'S BEHAVIOR=

### Lesson 11 Toward His Family

AIM: to teach my pupils proper behavior patterns toward members of their families, especially within their homes.

POINT OF CONTACT: Let's play a word-association game: When I say, "cheese and," of what do you think that would complete that combination? Did you think, "crackers"? When I say, "ham" of what do you think? What do you associate with "cold," "red," or "salt"? What do you associate with "home"?

INTRODUCTION: When a person has been away from home for a stay in the hospital, a time of service in the armed forces, a few months in a distant college, or even for a vacation, one of the happiest suggestions can be, "Let's go home." Home with the family could be a place of warmth, security, safety, blessing, love, beauty. Home could, however, be a place of discord, filth, confusion, frustration, unkindness, fear. Our Heavenly Father has left in His Word blueprints that could be labeled, "PLANS FOR BUILDING HAPPY HOMES." We're going to open some of these basic plans in order to learn what a Christian's behavior ought to be toward his family.

Think of all the family relationships that you have. First of all, you are a son or a daughter. Second, you are a grandson or a granddaughter. Third, you might be a brother or a sister. Fourth, you might be a niece or a nephew. Fifth, you might be a cousin. Sixth, you might be an aunt or an uncle. Seventh, you might someday be a husband or a wife. Eighth, you might someday be a son-in-law or a daughter-in-law. Ninth, you might someday be a father or a mother. Tenth, you might someday be a mother-in-law or a father-in-law. You might not now have all of these relationships, but you anticipate that sometime in the future you will have additional relationships to those that you have now. Whichever of these relationships are yours or will be yours, you should know the Bible directions concerning your behavior with regard to them. Our lesson for this week discusses God's commandments concerning the Christian's behavior toward his family.

#### I. THE RELATIONSHIP OF SONS OR DAUGHTERS TO THEIR PARENTS.

1. Children are commanded by God to obey their parents. Ephesians 6:1.
2. Children are to obey their parents in all things. Colossians 3:20.
3. Sons and daughters are to honor their fathers and their mothers. Ephesians 6:2. They are to accept and to remember their instruction and training. Proverbs 1:8, 9. (The chain about the neck was a lovely piece of jewelry which showed loving favor of the giver.) Proverbs 13:1.
  - 1) They will always uphold their name. Proverbs 20:20.
  - 2) They will always respect their wishes and their desires.
  - 3) They will always remember what they have done for them. (They will take care of them in their later years when they need help. Giving money to someone else or to some other cause is no substitute for keeping this commandment. Matthew 15:4-9.)
  - 4) They will always be kind and loving toward them.

#### II. THE RELATIONSHIP OF WIVES TO THEIR HUSBANDS. Marriage is a union instituted by God. He wanted Adam to have a wife, so He created one for him. The account of this is found in Genesis 2:21-24.

1. God has a specific wife in mind for each man. Eve was intended as a help meet specifically for Adam, her husband. Girls should often pray: "Lord, let me be the wife of the man for whom You intended me."
2. God wants all wives to be Christians. He is not willing that anybody should perish. II Peter 3:9. A non-Christian wife could not perform the duties which God commands wives to perform. She has to submit herself first unto the Lord. Ephesians 5:22.
3. God wants all wives to be subordinate to their husbands. Husbands and wives are made by God to be one flesh with each other—they are one body. Genesis 2:24. Here are some interesting quotations on this matter: "A body with two heads is a monstrosity...a house with two heads cannot stand." "Such submission of a wife to her husband is part of her obedience to the Lord." Read Colossians 3:18.
  - 1) Girls and young ladies, do not be physically submissive to any man until he has become your husband. "A dirty bride is unthinkable." See Hebrews 13:4.

- 2) Wives should be a help to their husbands. God created Eve to be a help to Adam. Proverbs 31:10-31 portrays the good wife; it shows her as a worker who is helping to operate a home properly. She is not idle. She purchases food and prepares it for the meals; she consistently cares for the clothing of the family; she determines to be strong enough to carry out her tasks.
- 3) Wives allow honor of others outside the household to be focused upon their husbands. Proverbs 31:23. She should reverence her husband; she should honor him. I Peter 3:6. If there is a young man who will not take the lead in a home, then young ladies should not become interested in him as a possible husband.
- 4) The wife's main earthly desire should be to please her husband. Read Genesis 3:16. "This subordination was not necessarily as a result of her display of her own weakness. God had originally intended the wife to be a help."
4. God wants all wives to have good dispositions and good personalities.
  - 1) Wives are to be even-tempered and reasonable. They are not to be argumentative. Proverbs 19:13 compares the contentious wife to a dripping faucet. The constantly dripping water causes irritation; so does an argumentative wife. Proverbs 27:15, 16.
  - 2) Wives are to be prudent. Proverbs 19:14. Wives are to act wisely, to be understanding and to be self-disciplined. All of these traits come from the Lord.
  - 3) Wives are to be properly clothed. Proverbs 31:22.
  - 4) Wives are to be gracious. Proverbs 11:16. This would include being hospitable in her own home to family and mutual friends.
  - 5) Wives are to be discreet. It is contrary to the character that God intended a Christian wife to have if she is crude or coarse in her behavior, her language or her dress. Proverbs 11:22.
5. God wants all wives to display and have good works and goodness. In this way she will be a crown to her husband's head and will not bring shame upon his name nor upon their home. Proverbs 12:4; 31:30.
6. God wants all wives to be thrifty and careful with household funds. It is far more important to lay up treasures in Heaven than it is to have the finest of material possessions. Matthew 6:19-21.
7. God wants all wives to understand that the husband-wife relationship is to be for life. Notice Matthew 19:4-6.

### III. THE RELATIONSHIP OF HUSBANDS TO THEIR WIVES.

1. God commands husbands to love their wives. Ephesians 5:25.
  - 1) A man should be sure that a lady has the kind of characteristics that would allow him to present her as Jesus will be presenting His church. Ephesians 5:25-29. He should be able to honor her. I Peter 3:7.
  - 2) Husbands are to love their wives as much as they love their own bodies. Ephesians 5:29, 31.
  - 3) Husbands should be willing to leave their own fathers and mothers' homes and to make their first family relationship that of making homes with their wives. Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31. Husbands are commanded and held responsible for nourishing and cherishing their wives.
2. God commands husbands to be responsible for the proper operation of their household. The superior rank as head of the household carries with it grave burdens. Ephesians 5:23, 24.
  - 1) The husband is held accountable for the distribution of money. He is to provide for his own. He is to give back to God at least one-tenth of his income. Malachi 3:8-10; I Timothy 5:8.
  - 2) The husbands are responsible for the spiritual training of their households. Wherever the husband is not a Christian, the wife should keep her faith, living by it and teaching and winning her children. II Timothy 1:5.
3. God wants all husbands to understand that their husband-wife relationship is to be for life. Matthew 19:4-9. In thought and in practice he is to keep only her in his heart as the woman whom he desires. Matthew 5:28; Ephesians 5:31.

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1. Parents should recognize that God wants them to train their children. The emphasis is upon the word “train.” Proverbs 22:6.
  - 1) Children need training. A human baby is the most dependent of any baby born in the world. Human babies are born sinners; therefore, they need to be trained to do right. Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12. No person has a natural inclination to do right; he has to be trained to do so.
  - 2) Children are trained by example as well as by teaching. If parents do not want their children to have any bad habits or to commit any wrong deeds, they themselves should not do these things!
  - 3) Children who have been trained properly will not depart from their parents’ teachings. Proverbs 22:6. If it seems as if children of Christian parents are departing from ways which the parents desire for them to take, then the parents should review their program of training to see where it is lacking; they should work to improve it! Children are to be trained to have good character traits.
  - 4) Not even an animal responds to training that is administered without love. Think of God’s great love to Christians that moves Him to chastise, to prune, to teach them. In order that we might understand His great love, He had likened it to the love that a parent has for his child. We are told over and over in God’s Word of His love for us. Parents should constantly remind their children in word and action of their love for them.
2. Parents should punish any wrong-doing of their children.
  - 1) Correction is not to be withheld from any child, even to the point of beating him with a rod. The child can take it, and he needs it. Proverbs 23:13, 14.
  - 2) Whenever wrongdoing is punished, the children are learning that sin does not pay.
3. Parents are to lead their children to know the way to Heaven. Fathers are commanded to bring up their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” They are not to provoke their children to wrath. They are not to lead them to continue on their way to Hell. Ephesians 6:4. Sometimes mothers have to lead their children to know the Lord, as Eunice did Timothy, and as Lois, her mother, did before her.
4. Parents should never discourage their children from accepting Jesus as their Saviour. Jesus commanded that children are to be allowed to come to Him. Mark 10:14.
5. Parents should be in the position of setting patterns of household schedule, etc. All things are to “be done decently and in order.” I Corinthians 14:40. Being punctual, performing duties suitable to age and ability, being honest and trustworthy, and respecting the property and time of others are all mutual obligations of parents and children, with the parents setting the rules and checking on performances of children.
6. If reared properly, children will honor and praise their parents. Proverbs 19:26; 20:7; 31:28.

V. THE RELATIONSHIP OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS TO EACH OTHER. They are to love each other, helping each other, helping each other whenever they can. As long as Moses was too young to help himself, Miriam watched over him. When Moses became older, he took over his responsibility as a brother to lead and protect his sister. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus as sisters and brother had a love-filled home.

VI. THE RELATIONSHIP OF OTHER RELATIVES TO EACH OTHER.

1. Any relatives who are acting as parents, for whatever length of time, are to be respected as if they were actually parents.
  - 1) Sometimes aunts and uncles or grandparents take orphaned children to live in their homes. Guardianship or custody of children should be treated the same as a parent-son or a parent-daughter relationship. Consider as an example the relationship of Uncle Abraham and his nephew, Lot. Abraham was in a position of advising and instructing his nephew, Lot. Lot should have been as an obedient son to his uncle. Children are to obey and to respect their aunts, also. I Timothy 5:4. Proverbs 17:6 teaches us how grandchildren are the crown of their grandfathers.
  - 2) Sometimes other people through marriage become foster parents to children. For example: Jesus did not have an earthly father; Joseph was appointed by God to be Jesus’ foster father. Jesus was subject to Joseph, just as any child is subject to his true father. Luke 2:51.
2. Parents-in-law to sons-in-law and daughters-in-law.

- 1) They are to love their sons-in-laws and daughters-in-laws just as they would their own children. They are to be concerned for their welfare. The children are to respond to this concern.
- 2) Read some Bible examples. Notice the concern of Moses' father-in-law for Moses' well-being. Moses took his father-in-law's advice. Exodus 18:13-27. Read of the concern of Ruth's mother-in-law for Ruth's life. Ruth 1:8-19. Ruth followed her Christian mother-in-law.
3. Cousins' relationship to each other. Christian cousins can become as friends or brothers and sisters to each other. For example, see how Mary and Elisabeth, who were cousins, confided in and strengthened each other's faith. Read Luke 1:36-56.

CONCLUSION. Proverbs 10:8 says, "The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall." (The word "prating" means "empty-headed.") Every Christian ought to consider and obey God's commandments concerning his relationships with every member of his family.