

LESSON 5 Establishing a Home

The definition in the dictionary for the word *home* is “a family’s place of residence.” But God’s standard for the ideal home far exceeds such narrow boundaries. It is made up of people who care about God and about one another, people who pray and work toward making the home conform to God’s pattern.

When two people begin their lives together as man and wife, they soon discover that many adjustments must be made. Each is a unique personality—with dreams, ambitions, frustrations, and needs—and individual differences are not done away with because a marriage ceremony has taken place.

In this lesson we will learn about the kind of home that fulfills its purpose for being. We will consider the adjustments that confront a married couple and ways of resolving problems.

A couple who recognizes that “unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain” (Psalm 127:1) and purposes to establish a home that will glorify God will find the rewards immeasurable.

The Plan

- A. Importance of the Home
- B. Necessary Adjustments
- C. Christian and Non-Christian Homes

The Goals

1. Discuss some of the adjustments newly married couples must make and suggested ways for helping them make them.
2. Explain how the home serves as a nurturing refuge for the marriage relationship and a haven in which to prepare for the future of the family.
3. Give reasons why children need the stability of a home patterned after God's standards.
4. Discuss the contrasts between the Christian and the non-Christian home.

A. IMPORTANCE OF THE HOME

The Home Defined

Goal 1. Discuss some of the adjustments newly married couples must make and suggested ways for helping them make them.

An empty house is not a home—home is where a family lives. When God first set the pattern for family life, He gave Adam and Eve a special place to be their home: a beautiful garden, which Adam was to cultivate and take care of. God still wants every family to have a home in which all members can live together as a unit.

One writer has said:

A home may be compared to a small government. The father is the president, and the mother is the vice-president. They help each other in ruling the home. They make good laws so that the children will have a peaceful place to live. Their laws will teach the children to live orderly and to be obedient. If the children learn to obey

their parents in the home, then later they will obey their school teachers, their pastor, and their country.

A home does not need to be elaborate or costly in order to be a happy, peaceful place where family members love God and enjoy being together. The relationship between them is what matters most. And if they are to build the right kinds of relationships, they must spend time together. Home is more than just a place to eat and sleep. Because these relationships are such an important part of a home, we often use the word *home* to mean “family.”

Application

1 Circle the letter in front of the word or phrase that best describes a happy home.

- a)** Good family relationships
- b)** Peaceful
- c)** Costly furniture
- d)** Love for God
- e)** A place to eat and sleep
- f)** Doing things together

2 When home is a place where children learn obedience, how does this help them later on?

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Importance to the Husband and Wife

Goal 2. Explain how the home serves as a nurturing refuge for the marriage relationship and a haven in which to prepare for the future of the family.

One of God’s provisions for humankind’s happiness was a home. Husband and wife were to share their joys and sorrows, work and play, problems and success. Home is a school for parents as well as for children, where they, too, can learn patience, understanding, and consideration for others. Home is a refuge from the tensions and problems of daily life. The love,

peace, and presence of God in a Christian home refresh both husband and wife for their responsibilities outside of the home.

One of the chief functions of the home is to provide for the birth and development of children. The shared responsibilities of parenthood bring closer together the husband and wife who seek God's daily guidance for their lives. Children in the home can bring great joy and fulfillment as "sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him" (Psalm 127:3).

This does not mean that God withholds His blessing from childless couples. The Bible does not give a husband the right to leave his wife, send her away, or marry another because she is childless. Nor does the Bible give the wife the right to leave her husband if he is unable to give her children. Whatever the reason, God is aware of your desire for children and will guide you through this concern too. Remember Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 20–21).

The Bible gives examples of childless couples, and how God answered their prayer. For instance, the priest Zechariah was in the temple when an angel of the Lord appeared to tell him that his prayer had been heard, and Elizabeth would have a son (Luke 1:13). Hannah prayed for a son, and God gave her Samuel, who became a mighty leader in Israel (1 Samuel 1:11–13). Also, today, many childless couples adopt children, and God blesses them as they provide a home for these little ones. A deep and lasting love can develop between children and their adoptive parents, and they can bring great joy to one another.

Who is like the Lord our God, . . . He settles the barren woman in her home as a happy mother of children. (Psalm 113:5, 9)

Application

3 Is your home a peaceful refuge from the tensions of the outside world? If not, what can you do to make it peaceful? Use your notebook for your answer.

4 What is one of the chief functions of the home?

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5 Name two people in the Bible whose prayers God answered in giving them children.

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Importance to the Child

Goal 3. Give reasons why children need the stability of a home patterned after God's standards.

A home is extremely important for a child, for children need the love, care, happiness, and protection of a Christian home. The training received there not only shapes their character, but also affects their entire outlook on life. Whatever dangers, problems, and disappointments children may face, they need the security of the home—where there are parents who understand, love, and take care of them. Thus, the child belongs.

A sense of security will help the child to have a well-adjusted personality. Just as what a child eats is important for his or her physical health and development, the love of the family is equally important for the child's health and lifelong happiness.

We can compare the home to a school. The parents are teachers; the children are students. Parents teach by their words and by their example. A husband and wife who live godly lives before their children need not fear to have their children follow in their footsteps. Unfortunately, there are also many ungodly parents whose children follow their pattern of living. The Bible gives us examples of godly and ungodly parents.

Second Kings 21:20–21 records, “He [Amon] did evil in the eyes of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. He walked in all the ways of his father; he worshiped the idols his father had worshiped, and bowed down to them.” On the other hand, King Jehoshaphat was a good king whose early life had been influenced by godly parents.

The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because in his early years he walked in the ways his father David had followed. He did not consult the Baals but sought the God of his father and followed his commands rather than the practices of Israel. (2 Chronicles 17:3–4)

When you establish a home, may you never forget that the greatest influence in the lives of children for right or wrong is that of the parents.

In the first few years of his or her life, a child's character and lifetime habits are formed. The influence of ungodly parents will lessen the possibility of their children ever coming to know God. In fact, they may be led very far from God. But in a God-fearing home, which is ruled with love and discipline, children learn spiritual lessons they can never forget. They are taught to be God-fearing, upright, and honest, so that they can be a blessing to the world. Therefore, Proverbs 22:6 advises, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

Application

6 Describe the kind of home which helps a child develop a well-adjusted personality.

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7 Parents teach their children both by their
and by their

8 How does the home affect the character of a child?

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Importance to the Community

We can say that a society depends on the family for its existence; that is, the family produces the members that make up that society. A good family gives the children the training that they need in order to become well-adapted members of society.

The home determines what kind of people we have in our communities. When a child is born, his first contacts are with other members of his family. His character is formed and habits are developed in the home. He learns how to treat other people. With the proper training, a child develops good habits, a sense of duty,

love, loyalty, and respect for the rights of others. Much of what he learns in the small community of the home, he will practice all of his life in the larger communities of his neighborhood and world.

Application

9 What, more than anything else, determines the kind of members of society we will be?

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B. NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS

Relationships of Husband and Wife

Perhaps an individual never faces more varied or greater adjustments than in marriage. This unique relationship demands that a man and woman adjust to a whole new way of living.

God understood man's need for companionship; therefore, He established the family. In the Garden, God looked at Adam and saw that it was not good for him to be alone, so He created Eve as a companion for him (Genesis 2:18). Later, in Proverbs 18:22, we learn that "he who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord." Yet many, having exchanged the marriage vows without having first considered the solemn responsibility of such a commitment.

Two people who consider themselves mature adults may find when they marry, that they still have a lot of growing up to do. Faults to which they were blind before gradually begin to surface. So, building a marriage is a lifetime job. It is not accomplished in the few minutes it takes for the wedding ceremony. And the more understanding a man and woman have of the responsibilities and obligations of marriage, the better prepared they will be to make the necessary adjustments.

There will be disagreements, and neither husband nor wife should expect the other to give in all of the time. They should talk over their problems and agree on a solution. The adjustments of

marriage will require all of the honesty, patience, wisdom, and unselfishness both can lay hold of.

It is sometimes difficult for either marriage partner to sacrifice his or her own plans and wishes, but love makes the adjustment possible. This is an essential part of marriage, and is necessary for a happy home!

Application

10 What is one of the main purposes of the family?

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11 In what way does a person who has been used to thinking only of himself or herself need to change when married life begins?

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12 Mature adults, who understand some of the responsibilities and obligations of marriage, will

- a)** find it easy to make adjustments in marriage.
 - b)** be better prepared to make the necessary adjustments in marriage.
 - c)** find it more difficult than others to make the necessary adjustments in marriage.
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Relationship to Parents

Another problem that often arises is the relationship to parents. Marriage should not lessen the respect and love a couple have for their parents. It does mean leaving the close relationship that the husband and wife, as children growing up, had with their parents. Now that they are establishing their own home, the most important relationship is between the husband and wife. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife" (Mark 10:7).

Parents sometimes forget that their married children are grown now and must have the right to manage their own lives. Parents may be able to give valuable advice when the young people ask for it, but they should not try to dictate to them how to manage their homes. Even in receiving advice, husband and

wife must realize that their relationship to each other now comes before their responsibility to their parents.

A wife should not run to her parents every time there is a problem between her husband and herself. It is right for her to visit her parents from time to time, but she must remember that her home is no longer with them but with her husband. She should not be away from him for long periods of time. They need one another. Long separations may weaken the marriage, and place temptation in the way of either husband or wife. Nor must the husband lean on his parents for such emotional or other support.

Application

13 Circle the letter in front of each correct completion. When two adults marry, they need

- a)** no further advice from their parents.
- b)** to continue to love and respect their parents while remembering that their relationship to them has changed.
- c)** to accept the responsibility of managing their own home.
- d)** to act like grownups and not run to their parents with all of their differences.

Money Matters

One thing that often causes quarrels is money. It is good for a husband and wife to talk over all money matters. A young husband may not have a large income, and his wife must help him by saving wherever she can. Just because she is married does not mean she should make unreasonable demands of her husband. The wife should not complain if her husband cannot afford to give her all of the new clothes she would like to have. If they have to live more simply than some of their friends and neighbors, this should not make them unhappy. It is, rather, a challenge for them to make the home as happy and attractive as possible with what they have.

Of course, the husband must not expect his wife to manage the household without money, or to provide the living for the family. A woman may help with the expenses but it is the husband's responsibility, as head of the house, to provide for his family.


If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Timothy 5:8)

Application

14 In your notebook list at least four things which cause quarrels about money in a marriage.

15 According to 1 Timothy 5:8, what does the Bible say about a man who does not provide for his family?

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C. CHRISTIAN AND NON-CHRISTIAN HOMES

Goal 4. Discuss the contrasts between the Christian and the non-Christian home.

The Non-Christian Home

Many homes are far from what God intended them to be. Sin spoiled the first home. Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and this brought jealousy, quarrels, and murder into their family in place of joy and love.

There are homes that resemble the ideal Christian home in many ways. The families of these homes respect and obey the laws of the land, and they care about one another. The husbands provide for their families; they are good neighbors; they help the poor and needy; and many of them are church members. But the vital ingredient is missing: they have never acknowledged that they are sinners and have never invited Christ into their lives and homes.

They are like the church to whom the angel said, “You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked” (Revelation 3:17). This description can apply to anyone who does not recognize the need of God. Then, when the many heartaches and problems of life press in on them, they do not have Christ’s presence, peace, and help to see them through.

There are other non-Christian homes where husbands and wives waste their earnings on gambling, drugs, tobacco, and liquor. Some become such slaves to their habits that they spend their entire salary in the bars in one night, until there is nothing left with which to buy food for their families. Quarrels arise because of jealousy and hatred. Unwholesome literature and profane talk corrupt the minds of the children of these homes. At an early age they are introduced to violence, crime, and immorality. The practice of various mystical philosophies, spiritualism, witchcraft and other occultic practices, in which the members of some non-Christian homes participate, adds to the sorrow, fears, and trouble already found there.

Application

16 Circle the letter in front of the best completion to the sentence. Revelation 3:17 speaks of people being “wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked,” which is a picture of

- a) all people who do not recognize their need of God.
 - b) families who lack the necessities of life because their money is wasted on liquor and drugs.
 - c) those who have respectable and comfortable homes, but are not members of a church.
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The Christian Home

Ideally, the Christian home is filled with the love of Christ, and acknowledges Him as its supreme authority. The members of this home do not simply remember God on Sundays; they are taught to obey and honor Him in their everyday lives. God is pleased when a couple who are establishing their home accept Christ into their lives, and pray and ask Him for His guidance. But a truly Christian home does not just happen or develop automatically because people are Christians. They must work at it.

One of the ways they do this is through family worship. Before there were any churches, God taught that each father should lead his family in worship. The man was to be a priest for his family.

Establishing family worship should still be the father's responsibility. When parents and children read the Bible and pray together regularly, they grow in the Lord and in understanding and love for one another. This time, which some call "family altar" or "family devotions" is a very important part of a child's training.

A husband and wife who begin their marriage with family devotions, and practice this faithfully, will find their lives enriched and blessed. They will be better able to resolve whatever problems may arise, as they rely upon God's help. It is best to select a time for devotions together when other activities are less likely to interfere—perhaps before the husband goes to work, or at the close of the day. Thanking God for the food before each meal is another part of worship in the home.

Those families who purpose to honor God in their homes will be blessed of Him, and they will grow in their love and understanding for one another.

Let us look together at a paraphrased version of the Bible and what it says about the unselfish love that characterizes the ideal Christian home.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (1 Corinthians 13:4–7)

Application

17 The one who should be acknowledged as the supreme authority in the Christian home is

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18 What responsibility did God give to fathers before there were any churches?

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19 The words *family altar* refer to a

- a)** time when a family read God's Word and pray together.
- b)** special place in a church where a family can pray together.

20 Members of a Christian home are best recognized by their

- a)** faithful church attendance.
- b)** doing what is right in their own lives.
- c)** honoring and obeying God in their everyday lives.

21 In your notebook list areas of your own life which do not measure up to God's standard of love. Ask God to help you to make the necessary changes.



Now that you have completed the first five lessons, you are ready to answer the first section of your student report. Review Lessons 1–5, and then follow the instructions in your student report for filling out the answer sheet. Then return your answer sheet to the address given on the last page of the student report.

Check Your Answers

- 11** He must learn to think in terms of “What is best for *us*?”
- 1 a)** Good family relationships
 - b)** Peaceful
 - d)** Love for God
 - f)** Doing things together
- 12 b)** will be better prepared to make necessary adjustments.
- 2** It helps them to obey their teachers, their pastor, and the laws of their country.
- 13 b)** to continue to love and respect . . .
- c)** to accept the responsibility . . .
 - d)** to act like grownups . . .
- 3** Your answer. We must pray and ask for God’s help; we must be faithful in our duties in the home so as not to add to someone else’s load; we must seek ways to help wherever possible.
- 14** Any four: Quarrels may come if money matters are not talked over; a wife complaining if they have to live more simply than others; a husband not providing for his family; a husband expecting his wife to earn the living
- 4** To provide for the birth and development of children
- 15** He is worse than an unbeliever.
- 5** Abraham, Zechariah or Hannah
- 16 a)** all people everywhere . . .
- 6** His parents understand him, love him, take care of him, and he feels secure.
- 17** Christ.
- 7** words, example.
- 18** Each father was to lead his family in worship.

8 His character and lifetime habits are formed in the home, and he learns lessons there (for good or bad) that he will never forget.

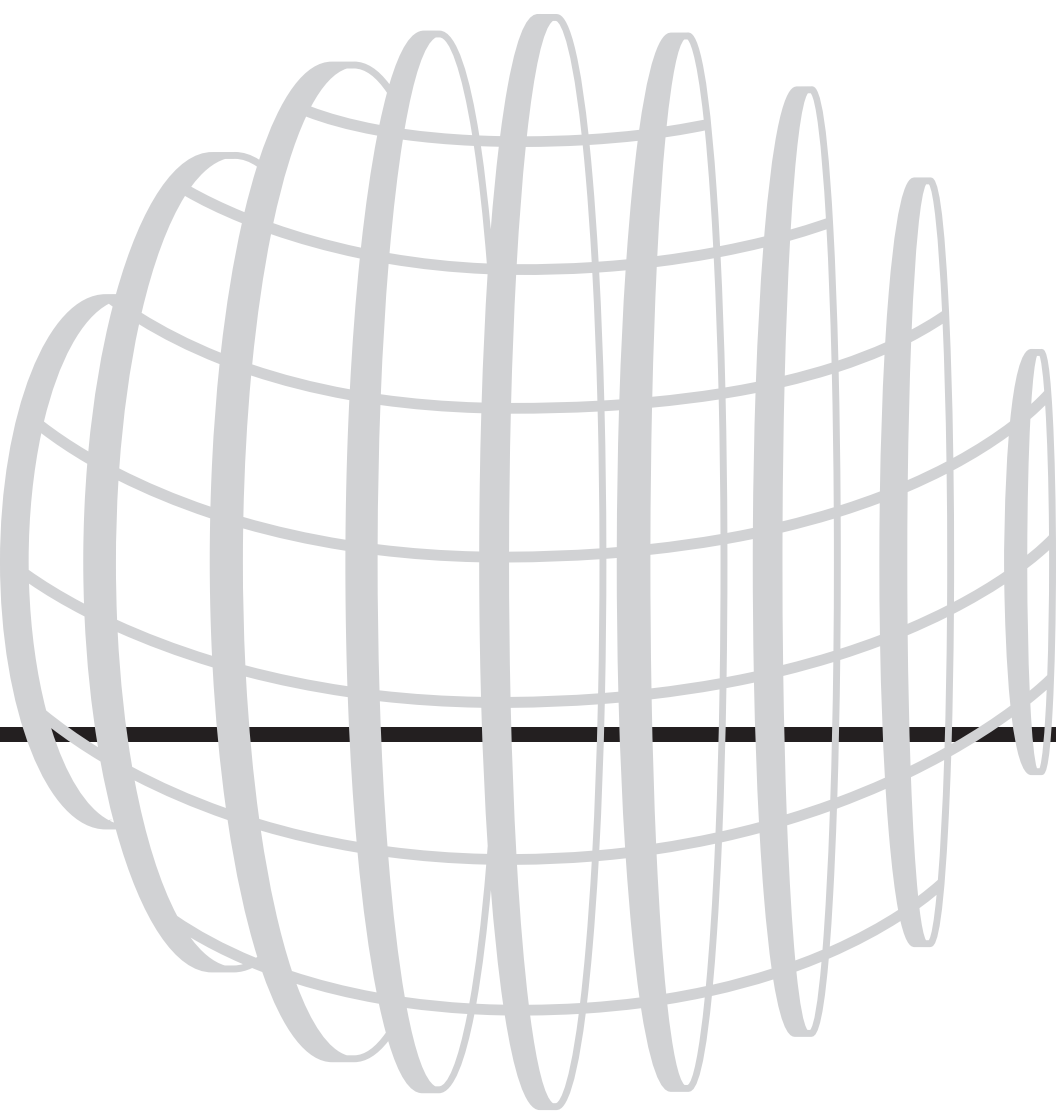
19 a) time when a family read God's Word. . .

9 Training in the home.

20 c) honoring and obeying God . . .

10 Companionship

21 Your answer





Unit

Lessons

- 6 Duties of a Husband
- 7 Duties of a Wife
- 8 Duties of Children
- 9 Duties of Parents