



God's Order For Family Life



CORE Discipleship is a faith-based, Christian organization. Our mission is to help you make disciples of Jesus. We provide a simple and reproducible discipleship process based on Jesus' "inner circle" or "core" comprised of Peter, James, and John. We also provide discipleship training and free discipleship resources as free downloadable eBooks.

Just like you, Father God is using the many events and circumstances of life's journey to mold and shape me into the person He desires. Occasionally, I've cooperated completely. It's in those rare moments when something extraordinary takes place - Heaven touches earth, mountains are moved, a part of me is transformed.

Through His infinite patience and unfathomable love I am learning to become the man He created me to be. As I daily surrender my life to Him through His precious Holy Spirit, I see more clearly life eternal.

My hope and prayer for you are that you too will discover God's purpose and become exactly what He has planned for you all along - His son or daughter.

May God grant that we become His disciples by His grace,

Doug Morrell

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Doug is a seasoned discipler and small group leader. Since graduating from Texas Tech University in 1984, he's worked in a dual capacity -- working within for-profit businesses around the country while also serving the church in various pastoral roles. Additionally, he and his wife Suzie are the founders/directors of CORE Discipleship, a ministry dedicated to making disciples who make disciples. Doug and Suzie have three children: Katheryn, Hannah, and Nathaniel.

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F a m i l y



THE FAMILY ACCORDING TO GOD'S ORDER

“For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17)

When God brings great calamities and judgments upon whole nations, He generally begins with His own people (Isa. 10:12; Jer. 25:29; Eze. 9:6). Because Judgment begins at the house of God, we must understand God's Word for the family.

God's family discipleship model is described in the pages of His Word. Basically, home should be base camp training and nurturing for children, while the church should be advanced training for the parents to carry out this mission. When the home partners with the church, consistent with Gods' family discipleship plan, a map emerges capable of bringing forth men and women of integrity.

Family was the first human institution God created. Family gives us a picture of the relationships which exist in the Godhead, and the relationship that exists between Christ and His church - it is through the day-to-day family that we can “see” the most profound spiritual truth. Every eternal Kingdom of God truth has its parallel in the natural family, if we will take the time to look. It is through the family that God seeks to bring into proper relationship the world with Himself. All of heaven and earth and the things in them were created by Him that they might prepare the way for and provide for the crown of His creation--humanity.

The priority of family touches God's heart more than any other issues today. As redeemed souls discover a lost relationship with God through Christ, it is consistent with Scripture that they understand divinely ordered discipleship-by-relationship in the family.

The purpose of what follows is a basis for discovering and recovering the pattern of the divine design for relationship - in the home and with our loving Father God of all.

God's Order For FamilyLife is suitable for those born into God's family - it is equally suited for those who are single as those who are married. There are sections where we will peel back layers and as such, discretion and maturity as well as confidence and trust are paramount. Anyone who has had a “family” experience, good or bad, will benefit for the “family” of God is an eternal concept; we simply need to review our current ideas and be “transformed” according to God's family plan (Romans 12:1, 2).

HOW JESUS TAUGHT

Jesus ministered to the multitudes at least 17 times according to the Bible. However, there are approximately 46 mentions in the Bible where He spent His time in private with His disciples. In those smaller group settings He trained His committed followers for their own ministries. He ministered one-on-one, one-on-two, and one-on-three. At other times His ministry was conducted one-on-twelve. He also provided on-the-job training with the 70; and spent some apprenticeship time with the 120 as well as placing some emphasis with the 500 in Galilee.

MAKE DISCIPLES

The great commission has two parts. The first is for us to go and make disciples. The second is of no less significance, but most often set aside to secondary importance, if used at all. It is to teach them (apprentice disciples) to obey. In fact, there cannot be a disciple without this training. And there cannot be training without accountability.

The primary objective of the believer today as outlined by Jesus is for disciples of Jesus to develop other men and women into disciples. Discipleship should be at the forefront of our efforts. Everything we do, say and teach should be placed beneath the umbrella of discipleship. Our families are the starting gate.

The most effective manner to train and equip our families for any skill is by providing effective models and opportunities to practice the skill itself. Jesus used a show, tell, release, and supervise model of training. After calling the disciples He took them along with Him, teaching and healing the sick as He went. Then, after He thought the disciples had seen and learned enough to try for themselves, He commissioned, empowered, instructed, and sent them out to do the same things. This model of training should be no different for those desiring to bring others into a complete understanding and walk in Christ likeness.

If the home were to consistently follow this advice, it would effectively bring forth a “next” generation able to teach others and commission them, in turn, to teach still others. Our children need to be equipped to pass on their faith; our work is not done until they are able to make disciples of others.

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP IS A PROCESS

Often times, in our zeal to teach God’s Word, we exchange programs for process; we give fish instead of teaching others to become fishermen. In the larger sense, we are raising up a generation not capable of discipling the next generation. Based on the Great Commission, Paul established a pattern for the preservation and transmission of the gospel. Teaching is to be passed on to successive generations without addition or alteration.

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” (2 Tim. 2:2)

DISCIPLESHIP BY RELATIONSHIP

The life and teachings of Jesus are the standard for our behavior. The love Jesus taught embraces more than obedience. For obedience to be real it should not be our first goal. The greatest commandment is to love the Lord, not to obey Him; if we don’t obey Him out of love our obedience will not be from our hearts. For discipleship to take place there must be a very sincere desire by everyone not to just know God’s truth, but to live by His standard. The heart of each session is based on each person’s willingness to “consider others better” than themselves (Phil. 2:3). In fact, any person demonstrating an attitude of spiritual superiority cannot be blessed or be a blessing to others. Humility is paramount.

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SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS

Jesus used a show, tell, release, and supervise model of training. Likewise, this material is designed to follow His teaching method.

Everyone in the group should have an attitude of desiring to learn from others in the group. The group is both an accountability group and a place for academic training (ideas, concepts, principles, facts, etc.).

If you are participating as a couple, there are studies that appear gender specific—not so. Each person must complete each study from his or her viewpoint. This makes for some really honest communication when you review together. Have fun!

The small groups should provide an atmosphere of trust, acceptance, and love. This kind of environment will promote openness. This is key. Most people live their lives wearing a mask. You don't really see the "truth" of their lives behind the disguise. You simply see the image that they think you want to see. The purpose of the small group is not simply academic: it is to encourage and model honesty at the deepest, gut level. The small group should be the place where people become unmasked.

Your small group should be interactive. Remember that relationships are dependent upon communication. For relationships to be real, communication should not be a monologue, but a dialogue. When you are face-to-face with people you know who love you—who are listening to your heart and your words—the truth of the Gospel can penetrate and confront the reality of lives in a very healthy manner.

Christianity is 100% spiritual. Expect change. Expect the Holy Spirit to move in the small group. As the truth of God's Word penetrates beyond the mask, expect to see a response (these are some of the reasons why it is imperative to have a seasoned Group Discipler in the group). Responses are outward, visible signs of an inner working of the Holy Spirit; they can either be responses or reactions to the presence or work of the Holy Spirit. Five questions should be asked to help discern whether these responses are of God or not (again, a seasoned Discipler is knowledgeable and not unaware):

1. Is Jesus being lifted up?
2. Is this creating a greater hunger for God and His Word?
3. Is this leading people to love God and each other more?
4. Is this bringing truth and greater spiritual depth?
5. Is there any practical change taking place (sometimes this must be judged over a period of time)?

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY APPLICATION

Being sensitive and open to the Holy Spirit is fundamental. Healing is rooted in a relationship with God and the power of the Holy Spirit. Words of encouragement, love, understanding, prayer, petition, faith, etc. should be spoken to the person being prayed for. Follow-up counseling by the Group Discipler is strongly suggested. One of the main reasons why people have their condition(s) return after having been prayed for is that they do not change their life-styles. When praying for the sick, Jesus usually touched those He ministered to and commanded the illness to leave. The power of touch cannot be underestimated.

PRACTICAL SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

1. Personal Sharing (10-15 minutes)

This is the icebreaker period. The group is allowed to talk freely and openly of whatever is on their hearts regarding the Session material. The Group Discipler may have to encourage some to share. When the group first meets, this time usually is longer and becomes shorter as people get to know one another.

2. Group Sharing (45-60 minutes)

This is the time to discuss real-life application, problems, concerns, and yes, the session material. It's a time for everyone to practice friendliness, sensitivity, honesty, transparency, listening, focus, ask questions, participation, and especially, personal application. Remember the study of the material, as a group is not the primary purpose of the group. The purpose is to help each person become all that God intended for him or her to become so that each is more conformed into the image of Jesus!

3. Prayer (15-20 minutes)

Allow the group to minister to each other. Everyone should feel free to be a part. It doesn't matter whether or not you pray individually or all together, sitting or standing. The group will have requests. The group is then in a position to pray, allowing God to move, and learn what God is calling them to do to meet those individuals needs.

4. Close (5-10 minutes)

The Group Discipler initials each person's completed session, makes sure everyone knows what material is to be covered in the next meeting, any additional assignments, and makes sure everyone knows when and where the group meets next.

STUDY TIME

Each week the Group Discipler challenges each person to complete the next week's material. Try to set aside one or two hours for a session each week on a regular basis. When your group meets, use the session material as the "spring board" for discussion. Don't forget the purpose of the small groups is to build relationships for life. Live Christ Deliberately.



“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

Genesis 1:26



IN HIS IMAGE: YOU CAN ONLY REPRODUCE WHAT YOU ARE

A. My definition of “in His image”:

B. Understanding What God Says: Gen. 1:26-28

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize: Gen. 1:26

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Am I made in God’s own image? Does my life-style agree?

2. In Genesis, man was given dominion over all the earth. Does this still apply today? Is it God’s will for me to subdue the earth today as before the fall?

3. Do I still have authority over the animals on the earth? If so, what should my response be according to God’s Word?

4. When I am suddenly surprised by an animal what is my response? According to God’s Word, what should be my response?

5. What was Adam’s original “job responsibility?”

6. For what purposes did God make woman?

7. According to Gen. 2:22-23, is woman inferior to man in any way? As husband, do I consider my wife as being inferior?

8. Gen. 2:24 describes what has become known as the “universal law of marriage.” Do I take responsibility for my marriage as indicated by God? If not, why not?

9. What did God mean when He said, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh?”

10. Do I allow either of my parents to “rule” over my spouse? Is this Biblical? Has this caused problems in my marriage? Explain:

11. According to Gen. 2:24, whose responsibility is it to keep the union of marriage together?

12. “And they shall be one flesh.” Does this mean that the union is dissolvable?

13. In the beginning the man and woman were “naked” in each other’s presence and “were not ashamed.” Am I ashamed of my mate’s nudity? Is this healthy?

14. Who came up with the idea of sexual intimacy in marriage? Do I think sex in the marriage is sinful?

15. Did sexual intimacy come before or after the Fall? What does this show me about sex today?

16. Besides propagation, what two other reasons does the Bible give for sex? (see Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 7:2).

17. Am I cooperating with God to be formed/transformed “in His image” as He intends?

“We will never be totally like God because He is our supreme Creator. But we do have the ability to reflect His character in our love, patience, forgiveness, kindness, and faithfulness.”



JESUS AND THE FATHER MODEL THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP



“Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

1 Corinthians 11:3

A. My definition of marriage:

B. Understanding What God Says: 1 Cor. 11:3

C. How this applies to my marriage:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for marriage:
1 Cor. 11:3

E. Self-evaluation:

1. How should I relate to my spouse?

2. Do I share a mutual love with my spouse? (see John 5:20; 14:31)

3. As a couple, what are the different roles and functions according to God’s Word? (John 10:17; 14:28; 17:4).

4. Do I treat my spouse as my equal? Why or why not?

6. Do I live in unity with my spouse? (John 10:30; 14:9, 11).

7. Do I esteem my spouse? (John 8:49, 54).

8. As husband, do I express love for my wife by caring for her needs? (John 5:20, 22; 8:29; 11:42; 16:15; 17:2). What does God’s Word say?

9. As wife, do I express love for my husband by being of one will and purpose with him? (John 4:34; 5:19, 30; 8:28; 14:31; 15:10; Phil. 2:5, 6, 8; Gen. 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:8-15). What does God say?

10. As husband, do I share my life, work and ministry with my wife? Why or why not?

11. As wife, do I exercise the authority entrusted to me with humility and meekness?

12. Do I show respect both in attitude and action toward my mate? Why or why not?

13. Would others who know us say we are a godly couple?

14. Is God pleased with my attitude/actions toward my mate?

15. Am I cooperating with God to allow Him to build my marriage in His way? _____

“Jesus Christ, although equal with God the Father, submitted to Him to carry out the plan for salvation. Likewise, although equal to man under God, the wife should submit to her husband for the sake of their marriage and family.”



GOD STANDS GUARD OVER COVENANT MARRIAGE

I

*“I hate divorce,” says
the LORD God of Israel,
“and I hate a man’s cov-
ering himself with vio-
lence as well as with his
garment,” says the LORD
Almighty. So guard your-
self in your spirit, and do
not break faith.”*

Malachi 2:16

A. My definition of covenant marriage:

B. Understanding What God Says: Mal. 2:13-16

C. How this applies to my marriage:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for covenant marriage: Mal. 2:16

E. Self-evaluation:

1. What does the word covenant mean?

2. When two people marry, does God stand as the witness to the marriage, sealing it with covenant?

3. Marriage covenant stands like a sentinel over marriage, for blessing or for judgment. Is my marriage a blessing or in judgment?

4. According to God, how is divorce described?

5. To whom does divorce afflict?

6. In what ways does God back up the covenant of marriage?

7. What comes against the covenant of marriage?

8. What areas in my life do I need to release to God so that my marriage may be blessed?

9. Do I have an open or closed relationship with my mate?

10. Do I share in the details of my day with my mate? Why or why not?

11. Do I allow money to become a divisive issue in my marriage? How can I overcome this problem?

12. Am I allowing God to nurture my marriage or am I keeping a part of my life hidden to His care?

“We need passion in the marriage relationship to keep the commitment and intimacy satisfying, but this passion should be focused exclusively on our spouse.”



CHRIST AND THE CHURCH MODEL MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP

H

*“However, each one of
you also must love his
wife as he loves himself,
and the wife must respect
her husband.”*

Ephesians 5:33

A. My definition of a godly marriage relationship:

B. Understanding What God Says: Eph. 5:22-33

C. How this applies to my relationship:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for relationship: Eph. 5:33

E. Self-evaluation:

1. As husband, who should my model for marriage be?

2. As wife, who should my model for marriage be?

3. As husband, how should I behave toward my wife? What area(s) do I need help?

4. Do I love my wife? Sacrifice for her? Listen to her concerns? Take care of her? Am I as sensitive to her needs and her hurts as I am to those of my own body? Why or why not?

5. As wife, how should I behave toward my husband?

6. Do I love my husband? Do I respect him? Acknowledge his calling as “head” of the family? Respond to his leadership? Listen to him? Praise him? Am I unified in purpose and will with him? Am I a true helper? Why or why not? _____

7. Is my marriage God’s workmanship? (Eph. 2:8-10). If so, can I become all that God intended for my marriage on my own initiative?

8. In what ways can I become a friend to my mate?

9. In what areas can I improve my marriage?

10. What single attribute does my mate have that I sincerely appreciate? Do I express appreciation?

11. Am I allowing God to work in my relationship? Why or why not?

“Oneness in marriage does not mean losing your personality in the personality of the other. Instead, it means caring for your spouse as you care for yourself, learning to anticipate his or her needs, helping them realize their God given dreams, goals, and purpose; in other words, helping the other person become all he or she can be.”



ESSENTIALS FOR A CHRISTIAN HOME

L

*“Love the LORD your
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.*

*Impress them on your
children. Talk about them
when you sit at home and
when you walk along the
road, when you lie down
and when you get up.”*

Deuteronomy 6:5-7

A. My definition of a Christian home:

B. Understanding What God Says: Deut. 6:4-9

C. How this applies to my home:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for home:
Deut. 6:5-7

E. Self-evaluation:

1. God revealed three things about Himself: 1) His eternity, 2) His plurality, and 3) His unity. Do I understand and believe that there are three Persons in the Godhead? Why or why not?

2. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit make up the Godhead. Are each essential? Do I acknowledge and recognize each Person in the Godhead for the work they are doing in my life?

3. How have I responded to God’s revealing of Himself to me?

4. Do I recognize that there is only one fitting response to our eternal Father who has revealed Himself to me? What is that response?

5. Has my response been a total response of love with all my being, heart, soul, and mind?

6. Do I love the Lord my God with all my heart? How?

7. Do I love the Lord my God with all my soul? How?

8. Do I love the Lord my God with all my might? How?

9. What three responsibilities does God say each earthly father should have?

10. Does God's truth govern my heart? Prove it:

11. Does God's truth govern my home? Prove it:

12. As dad, do I formally (teach diligently) the truths of God's revelation to my children? How?

13. As dad, do I teach informally (conversation) the truths of God's revelation to my children?

14. Does God's truth govern my habits?

15. Does God's truth govern my personal conduct?

16. When out of town, do I keep God's standard or do I take liberty in this freedom? How?

17. Would others say my conduct in the work place is the same as on Sunday morning in fellowship?

18. Is there be any difference in how I conduct myself in the work place and in the congregation or in my home? How?

19. According to God's Word, whose responsibility is it to teach your children of God's truth?

20. As dad, is my home a school in which I take responsibility as the teacher?

21. Have I asked God to show me how I can have a Christian home? What I need to do:

“If you want your children to follow God, you must make God a part of your everyday experiences. You must teach your children diligently to see God in all aspects of life, not just those on Sunday morning.”



HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT GOD IS HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR MATE

F

“Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.”

1 Peter 3:8

A. My definition of having a godly attitude:

B. Understanding What God Says: 1 Pet. 3:1-7

C. How this applies to my attitude:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family:
1 Pet. 3:8

E. Self-evaluation:

1. My relationship toward God reveals my relationship toward my mate. How do I treat my mate?

2. Do I fall short of the expectations my mate has of me? Why?

3. Do I fall short of the expectations God has of me?

4. Is my attitude toward my mate any different than that toward God? Why?

5. Do I seek in every way to be a good marriage partner according to God’s standard or do I base my evaluation on the world’s standard? Why?

6. As wife, do I model my behavior toward my husband on Christ, who obeyed and trusted the Father even when His own people rejected Him? If not, why not?

7. As husband, do I model my behavior toward my wife on the Father, who knows my frame (Ps. 103:14)? If not, why not?

8. Do I disregard my mate's authority? If so, why?

9. Do I respect my mate's opinions? If not, why not?

10. Do I follow my husband's direction? If not, why not?

11. Do I pattern a life of patience knowing it is God who will bring about needed changes in my mate or do I nag my mate until there is frustration? Why?

12. Have I surrendered my will to God so that my relationship to my mate can be all that God intended? What action do I need to take right now?

“Harmony, sympathy, love, compassion, and humility are five key elements that should characterize any marriage or group of believers. These five qualities go a long way toward helping believers serve God effectively.”



SERVE ONE ANOTHER AS TO CHRIST

W

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

Colossians 3:23, 24

A. My definition of a servant:

B. Understanding What God Says: Col. 3:18-24

C. How this applies to my role as servant to my mate:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for servanthood: Col. 3:23-24

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I think my role in marriage is self-chosen? Why?

2. Do I think these roles culturally assigned? Why?

3. Who ordered the husband/wife relationship? Do I really believe and live accordingly?

4. Do I live according to God’s standard of marital relationship? If not, why not?

5. Do I render service to others as a way of serving the Lord Jesus? If not, why not?

6. As husband, do I serve my wife as a way of serving Christ? Why not?

7. As wife, do I serve my husband as a way of serving Christ? Why not?

8. As husband, what is my role and direction according to God's standard?

9. As wife, what is my role and direction according to God's standard?

10. Does my marriage manifest the life of Christ here on Earth? Why not?

11. God's family life requires submission. The word "submit" (Greek hypotasso) is formed from hypo ("under") and tasso ("to arrange in an orderly manner"). In this context it describes a person who accepts his or her place under God's arranged order. Am I submitted to God in my family life? Why not?

12. Have I submitted to my mate? Why not?

"If we would regard our marriage as an act of worship or service to God, such an attitude would treat our marriage as the cost of discipleship."



HUSBANDS ARE PROTECTORS AND PROVIDERS

F

*“For your Maker is your
husband--the LORD
Almighty is his name--the
Holy One of Israel is your
Redeemer; he is called
the God of all the earth.”*

Isaiah 54:5

A. My definition of a godly husband/father:

B. Understanding What God Says: Is. 54:5

C. How this applies to me:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God's pattern for family:
Is. 54:5

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I look to God for inspiration and power to be the protector and provider in my family? If not, why not?

2. Do I believe God has called me to be the protector of my family? Have I accepted this role?

3. Do I believe God has called me to be the provider of my family? Have I accepted this role?

4. In what ways do I protect my family?

5. Am I the spiritual leader or gatekeeper over my home? How?

6. Do I isolate myself during a crisis or do I run to Christ and my wife?

7. Do I have a Christ-centered relationship with my mate?

8. Have I allowed pride to enter into my relationship to the point that I don't see a problem in my marriage? Why?

9. Do I have deep pain in my life that I have kept secret? Have I confessed and repented of this sin? Do I realize this sin to be the barrier between me and my mate?

10. Am I afraid of rejection or failure if I share deep things with my mate? Why?

11. Did my parents share an intimate relationship with one another and with Christ? Am I any different? How is this important? Do I know how to have an intimate relationship with Christ or my mate?

12. Have I developed a "first-things-first" paradigm where I focus on the most important priorities such as Christ, my mate, my children, my church family, my immediate family, etc.? Why not?

13. Does my wife view my "new man" life-style with suspicion, skepticism and lack of trust? What is my response?

14. Is my wife my best friend? Should she be?

15. Do I monitor what is allowed into my home such as what is watched on television? Magazines? Books? Why not?

16. Other than my job, in what ways do I provide for my family?

17. Do I regularly teach God's Word to my family? Do I pattern what God's Word instructs?

18. Do I regularly lead in prayer times? Meditation? Am I submissive to the elders of my fellowship?

19. Am I submitting to God those things that hinder me from becoming a godly husband/father?

"A husband is to love and take care of his wife and children just as God is protector and provider of all."



THE HUSBAND'S ROLE

H

*“Husbands, love your
wives and do not be harsh
with them.”*

Colossians 3:19

A. My definition of a godly husband:

B. Understanding What God Says: Col. 3:19

C. How this applies to me:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God's pattern for husband:
Col. 3:19

E. Self-evaluation:

1. In what ways do I show my love toward my wife?

2. What one reason do I love her more than anything or anyone else?

3. Is my love based primarily on physical attraction?

4. Is the love I have for my wife primarily emotional?

5. Do I love my wife even when she does not respond in the same way toward me?

6. Is this the kind of love Jesus has for the church?

7. Would my wife say that our relationship is joyful?

8. Is my home a place of refuge? Is it peaceful? Would my wife agree?

9. Do I demand anything from my wife or am I patient knowing it is God who is working in her?

10. Do I really listen to her as she speaks or am I preoccupied with other thoughts or events?

11. Have I recently given something costly to her as an expression of my love?

12. Am I faithful toward her? Do thoughts of other women ever enter into my heart when I am with her? If so, what's wrong with this picture?

13. Is my love toward her filled with gentleness?

14. Do I demonstrate self-control in my marriage? Does my personal appearance agree? Does my diet? Does my home?

15. Do I spend as much time with her as I do watching sports? Reading the newspaper? In work or ministry? With the children?

16. Have I confessed my failure to her?

17. Am I willing to allow the Holy Spirit to bring about God's perfect role of husband in my life? In what areas:

“Christian marriage involves mutual submission, subordinating our personal desires for the good of the loved one, and submitting ourselves to Christ as Lord. A husband can only love his wife as God desires if he is a believer and under the control of the Holy Spirit.”



THE WIFE'S ROLE

W

*“Wives, in the same way
be submissive to your
husbands so that, if any
of them do not believe the
word, they may be won
over without words by the
behavior of their wives”*

1 Peter 3:1

A. My definition of a godly wife:

B. Understanding What God Says: 1 Pet. 3:1-6

C. How this applies to me:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God's pattern as wife: 1 Pet. 3:1

E. Self-evaluation:

1. In what ways do I show my love toward my husband?

2. What one reason do I love him more than anything or anyone else?

3. Is my love based primarily on emotional attraction?

4. Is the love I have for my husband primarily physical? Financial?

5. Do I love my husband even when he does not respond in the same way toward me?

6. Is this the kind of love our Father has for Jesus?

7. Would my husband say that our relationship is joyful?

8. Is my home a place of refuge? Is it peaceful? Would my husband agree?

9. Does my husband look forward to coming home each day or does he find reason to go elsewhere? Why?

10. Do I demand anything from my husband or am I patient knowing it is God who is working in him?

11. Do I really listen to him as he speaks or am I preoccupied with other thoughts or events?

12. Have I recently blessed him with something extravagant?

13. Am I faithful toward him? Do thoughts of other men ever enter into my heart when I am with him?

14. Is my love toward him filled with gentleness?

15. My children lavish hugs and kisses on my husband when he arrives from work each day. What is his response? What can I learn from this simple act of reception?

16. Do I demonstrate self-control in my marriage? Does my personal appearance agree? Does my diet? Does my home? Why not?

17. Do I spend as much time with him as I do watching soap operas? Reading magazines? In ministry? With the children?

18. Have I ever withheld sex from him to get something I want?

19. Have I confessed my failure to him?

20. Am I willing to allow the Holy Spirit to bring about God's perfect role of wife in my life? How?

“As you live your Christian faith quietly and consistently in your home, your family will see Christ in you.”



CHRIST-CENTERED INTIMACY



“The wife’s body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband’s body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.”

1 Corinthians 7:4

A. My definition of godly intimacy:

B. Understanding What God Says: 1 Cor. 7:3-4

C. How this applies to my me:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for intimacy:
1 Cor. 7:4

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Is the sexual intimacy between me and my mate symbolic of the love between Christ and the church? How?

2. Is this intimacy based on a pure sharing of delight for your mate?

3. Are our sexual encounters affectionate or simply physical? Is there anything wrong with either?

4. Am I available at my mate’s request regardless of my personal feelings? Why not?

5. Do I understand and believe that my body is not my own, but belongs to my mate?

6. Do I ever withhold sexual intimacy for selfish reasons? Why?

7. Have I committed physical adultery? Have I asked my mate to forgive me?

8. Have I committed mental adultery? Have I asked my mate to forgive me?

9. Is there anything I ask of my mate during sexual intimacy that they are not comfortable with? Is painful? Is humiliating? Is this godly?

10. Do I base my understanding of sexuality on what the world promotes through television, publications, talk-shows or do I understand that in God's economy sexuality is a temporal attraction, a blessing, and gift? (Matt. 22:30).

11. Do I agree with God's Word that sexual intercourse is a duty?

12. Self-gratifying sexual acts like masturbation are sinful and take away the pleasure reserved exclusively for your mate. Have I acknowledged these sins before God, repented, and confessed them to my mate? Why or why not?

“Physically,
our bodies
belong to our
spouses
because God
designed
marriage so
that, through
the union of
husband and
wife, the two
become one.
Neither male
nor female
should seek
dominance or
autonomy.”



ROLE OF THE PARENTS

F

“Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

Ephesians 6:4

A. My definition of godly parents:

B. Understanding What God Says: Eph. 6:4

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family:
Eph. 6:4

E. Self-evaluation:

1. As dad do I set the pattern for my children’s obedience in my family?
Why or why not?

2. As mom do I help discipline the children as an extension of my husband’s
authority in our home?

3. As dad do I take a leadership role in my family? In what ways?

4. As mom do I submit to my husband’s pattern of discipline in our home?

5. Do I ever provoke my children to wrath?

6. Do I over-discipline my children or reign with a heavy-hand with the result
that the child reacts in a blind outbreak or rage?

7. Do I bring my children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

8. Do I continuously provide for my children so that they can become what God wants them to be?

9. Do I continuously bring them up in tender, loving care?

10. Do I provide all that is necessary for my children's physical needs?

11. Do I provide all that is necessary for my children's mental needs?

12. Do I provide all that is necessary for my children's spiritual needs?

13. Do I correctly discipline my children in the way and the will of the Lord? _____

14. As father, am I God's constituted authority in my home? Am I operating in this role? Why or why not?

15. Do I discipline my children when they do not obey as God intends?

16. Have I considered that if I do not discipline my children that I am a father who most likely is undisciplined and disobedient to God's will?

17. Do I tolerate my children's disobedience? Is this appropriate according to God's Word?

18. Do I recognize that I will be held accountable to God for raising-up my children according to God's standard? An action I will take right now:

“Parents should act in love, treating their children as Jesus treats the people he loves. This is vital to children's development and to their understanding of what Christ is like.”



BECOMING ONE IN MARRIAGE

A

*“Accept one another,
then, just as Christ ac-
cepted you, in order to
bring praise to God.”*

Romans 15:7

A. My definition of receiving one another:

B. Understanding What God Says: Rom. 15:5-7

C. How this applies to my marriage:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for oneness:
Rom. 15:7

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Am I like-minded toward my mate? How?

2. Do I submit to my marriage partner even when it will cause me to suffer?

3. Does my attitude toward others indicate real godly patience and forbearance?

4. Do I become irritated or frustrated when others do not agree with me?

5. When there is disagreement of opinions, do I practice patience knowing it is God who is at work?

6. Just as the Gentiles were grafted into God’s mercy through the disobedience of Israel, do I accept those around me with this same kind of mercy?

7. When I said “I do” did I take seriously the fact that in God’s sight I became one with my mate? Explain:

8. Do I receive others who do not share the same doctrine as I do, but nonetheless are my brothers and sisters? Why not and give examples:

9. Do I make efforts to bring about oneness in my marriage through ongoing communication?

10. Do I understand that God is teaching me patience through my inability to resolve conflict?

11. Do I take this word as being the banner over my marriage from the first day of my marriage until the last?

12. Am I allowing God to transform my life into one life with my covenant marriage partner? An action item I want to take right now:

“Family life is simply the expression and application of what it means to be a Christian.”



FORGIVENESS IS THE KEY TO LIFELONG MARRIAGE



*“I will betroth you to me
forever; I will betroth you
in righteousness and jus-
tice, in love and compas-
sion.”*

Hosea 2:19

A. My definition of forgiveness:

B. Understanding What God Says: Hos. 2:16-20

C. How this applies to my marriage:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for forgiveness: Hos. 2:19

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I believe that my marriage should be operated like a business? If so, in what ways?

2. Do I believe that my marriage can be saved through my suffering and forgiveness?

3. When I honestly examine where I spend most of my time, money and attention is it toward my mate? Why not?

4. Do I think that successful marriage is a business of perfect people living perfectly by perfect principles? Is there anything unusual about this belief?

5. Do I recognize that marriage is a state in which very imperfect people often hurt and humiliate each other? How so?

6. Have I found the grace to extend forgiveness to my marriage partner? When?

7. Do I recognize that the only way to allow the redemptive power of God to transform my marriage is by extending forgiveness? Explain:

8. Do I think the grass is greener on the other side of the fence? Would it not be wiser to water my own grass instead? Explain:

9. Do I look at other members of the opposite sex and think "if only my mate were like them?" What is at the core of this thinking?

10. Am I content with the partner God has blessed me with or am I looking for a way out?

11. Do I think I have a right to be happy in my marriage? Is happiness the same as joy?

12. Have I realized that God will not forgive me unless I forgive those who sin against me?

13. Do I realize how much pain I am causing my mate when I am unfaithful?

14. Does my attitude toward my mate reflect God's forgiveness?

15. Do I often times think of how much better my life would be if only my mate were different?

16. Do I recognize that the faults I see in my mate are really a reflection of my own faults?

17. Have I asked my mate to forgive me for any wrongful trespass? An action I am taking right now:

“Marriage can only be saved through suffering and forgiveness.”



THE CAUSE OF DIVORCE IS ALWAYS A HEART HARDENED AGAINST GOD



“So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

Matthew 19:6

A. My definition of divorce:

B. Understanding What God Says: Matt. 19:1-9

C. How this applies to my marriage:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family: Matt. 19:6

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Am I considering or going through divorce? What does this show me about my heart?

2. The divorce rates for Christians are as high as those who are non-Christians. Why?

3. Did I or should I have exercised care in choosing a life mate? (2 Cor. 6:14).

4. Jesus said the cause of divorce is hardness of heart. It begins against God. How do I feel toward God today? Do I realize that my feelings toward Him reflect my feelings toward my mate?

5. Do I realize God intended my marriage to be for life? Am I willing to endure whatever suffering and hardship to keep the covenant of marriage?

6. Other than sexual immorality, are there any other grounds for divorce according to God's Word? Why?

7. Realizing that no marriage is free of differences and difficulties that it could not end up in divorce, what am I doing today to preserve my marriage?

8. Have I noticed that Satan exaggerates my mate's failures and inadequacies to drive me away from God? How do I guard myself?

9. Do I know that I my marriage will constantly be under assault by Satan and that he will sow suspicion, jealousy, indulge my self-pity, insist that I deserve something better, and hold out the empty promise that things would be better with someone else? Am I believing any of these lies today? Do I realize that I am falling into Satan's trap?

10. Am I allowing God to change my heart and remove all hardness against Him and my mate? An action I will take right now:

“Jesus said that the cause of divorce is always hardness of heart. Instead of looking for reasons to leave each other, married couples should concentrate on how to stay together.”



RAISING YOUR CHILDREN

*“Train a child in the way
he should go, and when
he is old he will not turn
from it.”*

Proverbs 22:6

A. My definition of “train up a child”:

B. Understanding What God Says: Prov. 22:6

C. How this applies to my children:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family:
Prov. 22:6

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I keep the command to “train up a child in the way he should go”?

2. Do I realize there is a corresponding promise “that when he is old, he will not depart from it” if I keep my part?

3. Child training begins with dedication of the child to God. Have I realized that the child belongs exclusively to God and is given to me only as a steward?

4. Do I realize that I am to instruct or cause my children to learn everything essential in pleasing God? How am I doing this?

5. Do I create a desire within my child so that he is internally motivated (not externally forced) to do what God wants him to do?

6. Do I recognize that as long as my children are dependent on me that they are to be the recipients of training, regardless of age? What does this mean?

7. Am I aware and do I put into practice the thought that at each stage of my child's development I am to dedicate, instruct, and motivate them to do what God evidently has best equipped them to do for Him?

8. Am I growing weary of instructing my children? Do I seek the Holy Spirit for strength and guidance?

9. Do I believe it is the responsibility of schools, the church, and other's to train up my children in the things of God? Is this what God expects?

10. Do I realize that if the command is kept, the promise can be claimed? Do I honestly believe that God will honor His promise? Even when circumstances and situations indicate otherwise?

11. Do I understand that the promise includes the time of realization--"when he is old"--when he leaves my home to establish his own?

12. Do I accept the truth that if I do not keep the command that the promise will not be realized?

13. Am I living a Christ-like life so that my children may see the truth of God made real?

14. Am I willing to obey God so that my children may realize His promise? An action I will take right now:

“Many parents want to make all the choices for their child, but this hurts him or her in the long run. When parents teach a child how to make decisions, they don't have to watch every step he or she takes. They know their children will remain on the right path because they have made the choice themselves. This is the heart and foundation of Biblical discipleship.”



THE CHILDREN'S ROLE

L

*“Listen, my son, to your
father’s instruction and
do not forsake your
mother’s teaching.”*

Proverbs 1:8

A. My definition of obedience:

B. Understanding What God Says: Prov. 1:8

C. How this applies to my children:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family:
Prov. 1:8

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I agree with God’s Word that children have only one responsibility--to obey me?

2. Do I understand that as long as my children are dependent on me that they are to obey me regardless of age or sex?

3. Have I taken to heart that it is God’s will for my children to obey me?

4. Do I realize that my children are to obey me in all issues of life--not just those pertaining to Christian living?

5. Have I understood that when my children obey they are demonstrating righteousness and godliness?

6. Is there anything in me that contradicts what I instruct my children?

7. Do I instruct that it is more important to do what I say and not what I do?
Is there anything wrong with this belief?

8. Have I shown my children and do I understand that if they are obedient
they will have a joyful and long life?

9. Do I realize that my children long for joy and long life and the only way
to assure them of this is through obedience?

10. Do I see that this is the first commandment with a promise and that all
other important issues of life will spring from it?

11. Can I see that if my children do not learn to obey me as God's representa-
tive in the family, that they will not learn to obey Him? Or other authorities?

12. I would like to:

“Our actions
speak louder
than our words.
This is
especially true
in the home.
Children learn
values, morals,
and priorities
by observing
how their par-
ents act and
react every
day.”



GOD'S HEART IN THE PARENTS FLOWS TO THE CHILDREN

W

*“When Israel was a child,
I loved him, and out of
Egypt I called my son.”*

Hosea 11:1

A. My definition of nurturing:

B. Understanding What God Says: Hos. 11:1-4

C. How this applies to my children:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God's pattern for family:
Hos. 11:1

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I recognize that God allows His own nurturing heart to flow through me to my children?

2. Am I tender with my children? How?

3. Do I make myself available to my children on their schedule or mine? Why?

4. Do I think my work or ministry is more important than my children? If so, why so?

5. Am I close to my children as God is to me?

6. Am I sensitive to my children's needs? Explain:

7. Do I find myself teaching, encouraging, helping, and healing my children?

8. Do I think that my children's growing up is something God leaves to chance?

9. Am I aware that God conscientiously nurtures His children?

10. Is my home a refuge or a place that my children avoid? Explain:

11. At the end of the school day, do I see my children wanting to be anywhere but home? Why?

12. Do my children come home from school to an empty house? Is the reason because I want to increase the quality of life or is it to have a better life-style? Is there a difference?

13. Do I make promises to my children and not keep them? What does this say? _____

14. Do I spend more than one hour with each child each day?

15. Do I believe that time spent with my children should be quality more than quantity? What does this say about priorities?

16. It's been said that children spell love, "T-I-M-E." Am I seeding into their lives the time necessary to build a solid relationship?

17. Am I allowing God to make me into a nurturing parent? An action I will take:

“God entrusts children to parents, allowing His own nurturing heart to flow through them to the children as they are led by His Holy Spirit.”



GOD IS HONORED WHEN YOU LOVE YOUR CHILDREN



*“Sons are a heritage from
the LORD, children a
reward from him.”*

Psalm 127:3

A. My definition of heritage:

B. Understanding What God Says: Ps. 127:3-5

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for heritage:
Ps. 127:3

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I care for my children’s needs over my own? How?

2. Do I realize that a principal way of honoring God and building His kingdom
is through the care and love I provide to my children?

3. Do I sincerely believe that it is God who gave my children to me?

4. Do I hold my children in the palm of my hand or do I clench them tightly
in my fist so that nothing can harm them? Which of these does God want
of me?

5. Can I recognize that God has entrusted children to me like a man who
entrusts a fortune to his heirs?

6. Do I ever despise one of these little ones?

7. Does Jesus place value on children? Explain:

8. Whose faith does Jesus say we are to mimic? (Matt. 18:1-5, 10) Explain:

9. Do I make myself available to love, serve, and sacrifice for my children? How?

10. Do I find myself spending more time watching television, reading newspapers/magazines, with friends, or even in the work of ministry than with my children? What will I reap?

11. Have I thanked God today for Him entrusting His children to me? An action I will take right now:

“Those who view children as a distraction or nuisance should instead see them as an opportunity to shape the future. We dare not treat children as an inconvenience when they, in truth, belong to Him.”



YOU ARE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR RAISING YOUR CHILDREN

F

“Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

Ephesians 6:4

A. My definition of encouragement:

B. Understanding What God Says: Eph. 6:4

C. How this applies to me:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family:
Eph. 6:4

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Admonition means to put courage into (encouragement). Would those who are closest to me say I am an encourager or a discourager?

2. Do I understand that God will hold me accountable for the upbringing of my children--not friends, not schools, not grandparents, not youth groups, not the church or the state?

3. Do I recognize that although my children may be influenced by many groups, the final duty rests with me the parent, and especially the father, whom God has appointed as “head” to lead and serve the family?

4. Do I charge my home’s atmosphere with sarcasm? What can I expect from my children?

5. Do I charge my home’s atmosphere with unrealistic expectations? What will I reap?

6. Do I charge my home's atmosphere with destructive criticism? Does this provoke my children to wrath?

7. Am I laying a foundation of the knowledge of God?

8. Am I building a groundwork of love based on encouragement?

9. Am I seeding patience into the lives of my children?

10. Do I maintain the same standard for all my children at levels specific to their age? Should there be one standard regardless of age? Can a newborn eat meat? Should an adult drink spiritual milk?

11. Do I dominate, intimidate, or manipulate my children? Is this godly?

12. Am I tender with my children even when I don't feel like it?

13. Would God say He is pleased with my response to date? If not, what can I do to bring about change?

“The purpose of parental discipline is to help children grow, not to exasperate and provoke them to anger or discouragement.”



DISCIPLINING THE REBELLIOUS

H

*“He who spares the rod
hates his son, but he who
loves him is careful to
discipline him.”*

Proverbs 13:24

A. My definition of disciplining:

B. Understanding What God Says: Prov. 13:24

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family:
Prov. 13:24

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I understand the difference between a teachable child who needs guidance and a rebellious who needs corrective discipline? Explain:

2. Do I recognize that discipline is the other side of teaching?

3. Do I provide thorough explanations of what I expect from my children?

4. Do I demonstrate much patience taking into consideration my children’s various age/sex?

5. Do I provide amply opportunity for my children to try and experiment, including the right to fail and learn by failure?

6. If I see willful disobedience (Prov. 29:15), rebellion (1 Sam. 15:23), or stubborn foolishness (Prov. 22:15), do I take action through firm and loving discipline as God’s Word instructs?

7. Do I know the difference between childishness and willful disobedience?
Explain:

8. Do I understand and practice discipline and not physical abuse?

9. Do I know the difference between discipline that is painful and discipline that is injurious?

10. Do I ever inflict harm on my children? Is this according to God's Word? (Prov. 23:13).

11. God describes Himself as a strict disciplinarian. Does His discipline cause us pain as a part of effective correction?

12. God always disciplines out of love and for own benefit. Do I do the same?

13. Do I realize that God requires me to properly correct my children?

14. Have I realized that even my child's eternal destiny can hinge upon the godly discipline I provide? (Prov. 23:14). Explain:

15. Have I asked God to show me how I should discipline my children? If not, why not?

“Lack of discipline puts parents’ love in question because it shows a lack of concern for the character development of their children. A child’s eternal destiny can hinge upon the godly discipline provided by parents.”



HUMAN GOVERNMENT'S BEGINNING



“And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man.”

Genesis 9:5

A. My definition of authority:

B. Understanding What God Says: Gen. 9:5

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God's pattern for authority: Gen. 9:5

E. Self-evaluation:

1. One of the main factors which brought about the Flood was man's disobedience to the revealed law of God. Am I disobedient to God's law today? Am I disobedient to God's given authority in government around me? In what ways?

2. Do I believe that God Himself is the divine author of human government? If not, why not?

3. Do I believe that all earthly powers exist through God's divine permission?

4. Do I belong to an organization or group that is contrary to God's given authority? Give examples:

5. Have I been faithful to pay my taxes as God instructs? Do I do so because the government requires me to do so or because God requires this of me?

6. Do I understand that to rebel against human authority is to actually come against God Himself?

7. Do I say I am obedient to the law, teach my children that to break the law is sin, yet do I have a radar device, take pens from the office, don't tithe, fudge on tax returns, etc?

8. Do I demonstrate respect and honor to those placed in authority over me? Do I address the police as cops or other expressions indicating a rebellious attitude? What does this teach my children?

9. Do I stand willing to ask God to forgive me for this trespass? Am I cooperating with God through the Holy Spirit to overcome my rebellious nature?

“God will require each person to account for his or her actions. The Flood in Noah’s day was a result of man’s disobedience to God’s revealed law.”



THE ROLE OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT



“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.”

Romans 13:1

A. My definition of human government:

B. Understanding What God Says: Rom. 13:1-4

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for human government: Rom. 13:1

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I agree that the function of human government is to protect, punish, and promote? Explain and give examples:

2. Have I understood that since Adam all of civilization has needed some form of restraint and rule to protect citizens from themselves? (Acts 21:27-37)

3. Do I think capital murder is righteous? Why or why not?

4. Do I realize that God placed duly appointed human officials for the expressed purpose of “bearing the sword” or to impose punishment upon criminals?

5. Have I taken to heart the truth that human government is designed by God to promote the general welfare of my community where its laws are in place?

6. Do I pray for human leaders so that I may “lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty?”

7. Do I think it is wrong for any human to take the life of another? What does the Bible say?

8. Have I ever been so angry with another human that I could have done physical harm? What does this say about me? An action I will take right now:

“The purpose of government is threefold: to protect, punish, and promote. Believers are to live at peace with the state as long as the state allows us to live by our religious convictions.”



MY RESPONSIBILITY TO GOVERNMENT



*“Submit yourselves for
the Lord’s sake to ev-
ery authority instituted
among men: whether to
the king, as the supreme
authority”*

1 Peter 2:13

A. My definition of ordinance:

B. Understanding What God Says: 1 Peter 2:13

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern of keeping ordinances: 1 Peter 2:13

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Is it possible for me to be a good Christian and a bad citizen at the same time? Explain:

2. Do I recognize and accept that the powers that be are ordained by God? If not, why not?

3. Do I understand and apply this truth even to atheistic human governments?

4. Unless government is anti-scriptural, do I accept all human government?



WHY ISRAEL?

Y
*“You only have I chosen
of all the families of the
earth; therefore I will
punish you for all your
sins.”*

Amos 3:2

A. My definition of who or what is Israel:

B. Understanding What God Says: Amos 3:2

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for covenant:
Amos 3:2

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Was the selection of Israel as a special nation to God a part of His plan?
How so?

2. “I will make of thee a great nation” was the Lord’s promise to Abraham
(Gen. 12:2). In what ways have I seen God’s promise fulfilled in my life?

3. Do I recognize the importance of keeping my word? Do I?

4. Do I understand the term covenant promise?

5. Does God keep His covenant promises to His children?

6. Should I keep covenant with my brothers and sisters in Christ?

7. I promise my children that I will spend time with them and don't what does is this telling them?

8. I am consistently late for meetings, but I tell others I will be there on time. Am I breaking my word? What message is this sending?

9. Do I realize the importance of keeping my word no matter how much it will cost me?

10. Is my mate assured that I will keep the covenant of marriage regardless of circumstance or situation? An action I will take right now:

“Israel didn’t have to do anything to be chosen; God had given them this special privilege because he wanted to, not because they deserved special treatment. It was through Israel that God brought forth the Saviour and blessed the entire world.”



GOD'S PROMISE TO ISRAEL

W

“We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done.”

Psalm 78:4

A. My definition of God's grace:

B. Understanding What God Says: Psalm 78:4

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God's pattern of grace: Ps. 78:4

E. Self-evaluation:

1. For over four hundred years the people of Israel relied on the promise of God (Gen. 12:2), especially during the period of bondage to Egypt. Am I facing a situation where I am having to trust God's faithfulness to me?

2. God brought Israel out of Egypt. Do I understand that before there can be a going into there must be a coming out of? How does this apply to my life today?

3. Great acts of God serve to remind me of God's faithfulness. Do I have examples in my own life as God's care for me?

4. Have I realized that I am not my own, but that I am God's possession and that He is my God?

5. Do I realize that in God's covenant there are blessings for obedience and severe judgments for disobedience?

6. What examples should I follow or avoid based on 1 Cor. 10:6-13?

7. Do I recognize that it is my responsibility to pass along my faith to my children and that the primary source for religious instruction must always be the father? (Ps. 78:4-8)

8. God knows my frame. Do I understand God's model of Israel is for me today? How do I know?

"It is important to keep children from repeating the same mistakes as their ancestors. Passing on the history of God's work to the next generation is the responsibility of parents."



GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE

F

*“for you are a people
holy to the LORD your
God. Out of all the
peoples on the face of
the earth, the LORD has
chosen you to be his trea-
sured possession.”*

Deuteronomy 14:2

A. My definition of God's chosen people:

B. Understanding What God Says: Deut. 14:2

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God's pattern of being chosen: Deut. 14:2

E. Self-evaluation:

1. God promised Abraham that he would become the father of a great nation. Does that include me?

2. God also promised Abraham that He would bless all peoples through that nation. Do I believe God's promise to Abraham?

3. True Judaism is found in those who are righteous before God, whether or not they have Jewish parents or the physical sign of circumcision (Rom. 2:28, 29). Do I consider myself one of God's chosen people?

4. Will racial or religious background keep me from God's judgment?

5. Do I have faith in Jesus--a genuine reliance on Him and not myself--for salvation?

6. According to the Bible, will I ever reach God's standard of absolute moral perfection and be worthy of His glory on my own? (Rom. 3:23). How can salvation be attained?

7. Do I believe that God's promise to Abraham to bless the whole world through Him is still being fulfilled today?

8. Do I understand that the life, ministry, and death of Jesus as well as the existence and influence of the church today all came about through God's choice of Israel?

9. Do I realize that all whom I introduce Christ to will receive all of God's blessings? How I communicate this great truth:

“The life, ministry and death of Jesus, the beginning and existence of the church today, all came about through God's choice of Israel.”



ISRAEL'S GOVERNMENT

Y
“Yet the LORD, the God of Israel, chose me from my whole family to be king over Israel forever. He chose Judah as leader, and from the house of Judah he chose my family, and from my father’s sons he was pleased to make me king over all Israel.”

1 Chronicles 28:4

A. My definition of God’s government:

B. Understanding What God Says: 1 Chr. 28:4-6

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family:
 1 Chr. 28:4

E. Self-evaluation:

1. God gave His Ten Commandments to reveal His holiness and to set up a divine standard of righteousness for me to follow. Do I know His commandments? What are they? Do I keep them? Do I teach them to my children?

2. God provided judgments to govern the social life of the people (Ex. 21:1-11), physical injuries (Ex. 21:12-36), and protection of property rights (Ex. 22:1-15). Do I follow His rulings in my family life? In business? In my everyday dealings with others?

3. Ordinances included the sacrifices that demonstrated the need for blood to be shed for sinners to be forgiven (Lev. 1-17). Do I understand that the only way I can be saved is through the atoning blood of Jesus?

4. The sacrifice of Jesus has given me the privileges that had belonged to ancient Israel (Ex. 19:6; 29:1-9; 1 Pet. 2:9, 10). He has made me a king and priest in witness and worship. Am I operating in this kingly office as the Lord's representative? Am I Christ's servant? Do I lead in spiritual warfare? Do I make judicial decisions in my family? Am I as close to the Lord as the ancient kings were so as to be adopted by Him? (2 Sam 7:14).

5. As priest, do I teach the Lord's laws and oversee the offerings of my household? (Jer. 18:18).

6. As prophet, do I give divine pronouncements (forthtelling) of God?

7. As a wise person, do I daily read and apply practical wisdom? (Prov. 1:1). Do I teach discipline of character to my children? Do I give counsel to others in places of authority?

8. Do I understand that God uses people to reach other people, a principle that is very evident in the Great Commission? An action I will take right now:

“God uses people to reach other people, a principle evident in the laws, the government of Israel, and the Great Commission.”



WORSHIP BY ISRAEL



*“Ascribe to the LORD
the glory due his name;
worship the LORD in the
splendor of his holiness.”*

Psalm 29:2

A. My definition of “worship”:

B. Understanding What God Says: Ps. 29:2

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family:
Ps. 29:2

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I practice regular Bible meditation? How?

2. Do I delight in the Scriptures and let them be my guide? How?

3. Do I seek the Lord in the morning and wait on Him expectantly to speak to my heart and spirit?

4. Do I prioritize my private and corporate worship?

5. Have I thanked God today that He has revealed Himself, His will and His promises to me in His word?

6. Do I make time with God and His people as my highest priority and delight?

7. Do I regularly witness of God's goodness in my life? How?

8. Do I realize that worship can be private, as a family, or corporate as a congregation?

9. Does my worship include offering a sacrifice? Do I adopt a reverent attitude? Do I verbally express praise, either spoken or sung? Instrumental praise? Prayer? Feasts?

10. Do I worship the idea of Christianity and religion more than the one living God?

11. Is there anything in my life I worship more than God? If I were to consider the time, money or energy invested in other things I do, would I say God is still my first priority? Would your checkbook agree?

12. Do I understand that because of the privilege of immediate and direct access to God now available to me that I am now the temple of God? (Heb. 4:16). Explain:

“Israel’s worship could be private, as a family, corporate or as a congregation and included sacrifices, a reverent posture, verbal praise either spoken or sung, instrumental praise, prayer, and great feasts.”



WHAT CHURCH MEANS

A

“He was in the assembly in the desert, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; and he received living words to pass on to us.”

Acts 7:38

A. My definition of what church is:

B. Understanding What God Says: Acts 7:38

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for church: Acts 7:38

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I think of church as the building I go to each Sunday? Does God?

2. The word church is used in the New Testament in only two senses—a local church, or the Body of Christ, the universal church. Do I accept that the church is comprised of all believer from the Day of Pentecost until the time God takes the church out of the visible, temporal existence as I see it today? Explain:

3. Do I realize that at one time that both the local and universal churches were identical? (Acts 2:41). Explain:

4. What is sectarianism? How does God view sectarianism? (1 Cor. 3)

5. Is church division sin? (Rom. 16:17, 18; 1 Cor. 1:10)

6. Do I strive against or debate the authority God has placed into the church?

7. Do I maintain a spirit of unity or do I have my own opinion contrary to the Word of God? What does this say about my condition?

8. The Pharisees were a sect and condemned all other peoples. Do I belong to a group who sets itself up as being right and all others wrong, and refuses to fellowship or cooperate with any others? Explain:

9. Would others say of me that I am a builder or a destroyer of those around me? _____

10. Do I understand that God hates all forms of sectarianism because it divides the One Body of Christ? An action I will take right now:

“In the New Testament the church was never referred to as a building; it was a local, visible, temporal group of believers--the Body of Christ--or it was used to refer to the universal church comprised of all believers from the Day of Pentecost until the time God takes the church out of the world.”



THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH



“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”

Matthew 16:18

A. My definition of God’s church:

B. Understanding What God Says: Matt. 16:18

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for church: Matt. 16:18

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Educational institutions, schools and colleges, hospitals, Sunday school programs, and orphanages, etc., have been built and supported by churches and are practical expressions of church ministry, but these are not the church. Do I involve myself in these institutions to the degree that I have lost my first love?

2. Do I recognize that the local church can be in plurality, in many places? (1 Thess. 2:14).

3. Do I realize that the universal church is to be in unity in many places? (1 Cor. 10:32).

4. Do I understand that the church is only separated or divided on the basis of geographical locality, but should be of one Spirit and life? If not, explain:

5. Do I realize that the church is not a denomination, organization or sect? Do I understand that Christ said He would build His church? What does He mean?

6. Do I understand that the church is never used in Scripture to refer to a material building?

7. Do I say, "Let's go to church?" Is there anything wrong with this announcement?

8. Do I understand that the church meets in a building? (II Chr. 6:18; Is. 66:1, 2; I Pet. 2:5-9; Eph. 2:20-22).

9. Is it Biblical to call a church a denomination? (I Cor. 3:1-6).

10. Do I realize that the church is the eternal purpose of God? Explain:

“All believers are joined into God’s Church by faith in Jesus Christ as Savior; it began on the Day of Pentecost when 3,000 people became its first members.”



“to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

Ephesians 3:21



WHAT THE CHURCH IS TO BE ABOUT

A. My definition of church purpose:

B. Understanding What God Says: Eph. 3:21

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for the church: Eph. 3:21

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Do I agree that the ultimate purpose of the church is to bring honor and glory to Jesus?

2. In what ways am I helping establish God’s church today?

3. Do I understand that God has called me to evangelism? (Matt. 28:19, 20)

4. Do I realize that I am called by God to teach all nations, baptizing them, and instructing them in all that He commanded?

5. Have I recently introduced someone to Jesus? If not, when was the last time I witnessed to anyone? Is it the pastor’s job?

6. Do I share my testimony with others? Do I really believe in the “priesthood of all believers?”

7. Does my life-style indicate a holy, living sacrifice?

8. Do I understand that the church is to be militant in action and victorious in result? (Matt. 16:15-20). Explain:

9. Have I recognized that the power of death cannot prevent the advance of the kingdom, nor claim victory over me if I belong to God?

10. Do I take seriously the authority released to me through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection to bind and loose those bound by sin?

11. Do I realize that Jesus prayed that the church be a united church? (John 17)

12. Do I understand that God desires today of me to be a part of a body that is based on first century church principles but is 21st century operated? What does this mean?

13. Is my church of one accord, one heart, and one mind? Is sectarianism sin according to God?

14. Am I using my spiritual giftings to edify the body?

15. Am I allowing God to bring about the kind of unity His Word speaks of? If not, why not?

“The ultimate purpose of the church is to bring glory and honor to Jesus Christ. This is accomplished as the church is involved in evangelism, discipleship, and the outfitting of the saints to do the work of the church.”



THE OFFICES OF THE CHURCH

H
*“He must manage his
own family well and see
that his children obey him
with proper respect.”*

1 Timothy 3:4

A. My understanding of the offices of the church:

B. Understanding What God Says: 1 Tim. 3:1-13

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family:
1 Tim. 3:4

E. Self-evaluation:

1. The New Testament uses four terms to describe the leadership of the church and is always a plurality of leadership: 1) elder, 2) bishop/overseer, 3) pastor/shepherd, and 4) deacon/minister. Do I understand that the elders are never elders over the church but elders in the local church?

2. Do I understand that according to Biblical pattern there was never one single elder in or over a church, but always a plurality of elders acting as a check and balance against lordship?

3. Do I recognize that before a bishop/overseer takes the oversight of a flock to teach and correct them, he must be blameless--not perfect, but one against whom no evil charge can be proved?

4. Do I understand that an elder must be able to manage his own household in an excellent manner before he can be considered as an elder?

5. If I am an elder in the church, are my children obedient, and respectful to proper authority whether in the church or out?

6. Does the Bible ever indicate a voting in of eldership? Was it for life?

7. Do I recognize that the fivefold ministry of the Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher are given for the perfecting of the saints, to bring the saints into the work of the their ministry, for the edifying or building up of the Body of Christ?

8. Do I understand that there is only one mediator between God and me, and that is Jesus?

9. Do I accept that I am a part of the priesthood of all believers? Do I operate in this capacity?

10. Should there be multiple leadership or a singular-person leadership model based on what the Bible says?

11. Among the elders, is there a chief shepherd or senior elder as “first among equals?” Is this what the Bible teaches?

12. Do the elders demonstrate and pattern a life-style of brokenness or do I feel that they have somehow achieved great closeness to God that I may never achieve?

13. Am I working with God to bring unity to the Body of Christ? Do I honor those God has placed over me? When was the last time I gave something of significance to those who instruct me?

“Spiritual leadership begins in the home. If a man is not willing to care for, discipline, and teach his children, he is not qualified to lead the church.”



CHRIST AND THE CHURCH



“After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church”

Ephesians 5:29

A. My definition of relationship:

B. Understanding What God Says: Eph. 5:25-29

C. How this applies to my family:

D. A scripture verse I will memorize to help build God’s pattern for family:
Eph. 5:29

E. Self-evaluation:

1. Am I the kind of shepherd to my family who emphasizes both the warm leadership and protection of Christ? (John 10:1-18) If not, why not?

2. Do I depend on Christ’s sustaining strength for growth as a vine and branch? (John 15:1-8).

3. Do I understand and apply the Biblical principal of “Christ as high priest” and “the church as a kingdom of priests”? Do I express joyful worship, fellowship, and service through Christ?

4. Do I understand the foundational principal that God cannot use me in the building of His church if I am not cut from Him? Will a house be made perfect if stones are cut from anything but the cornerstone? Who should be the pattern for every building stone?

5. Is love the mortar which solidly holds my relationship to the church and others together? Explain:

6. Is my church a vibrant organism or is it an organization? Does it draw its vitality and direction from Christ, the head?

7. Do I believe that I have a unique and necessary place in the church for its continued growth? What is position?

8. Do I recognize that the bridegroom and bride expresses intimate relationship as well as co-ownership between Christ and the church? What does this mean to me?

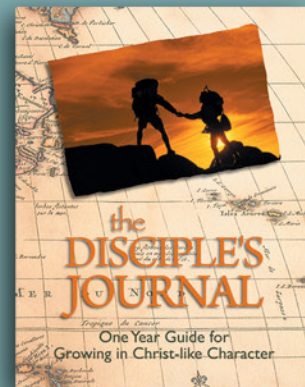
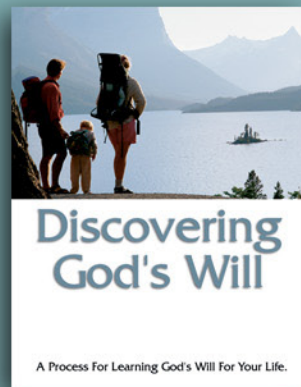
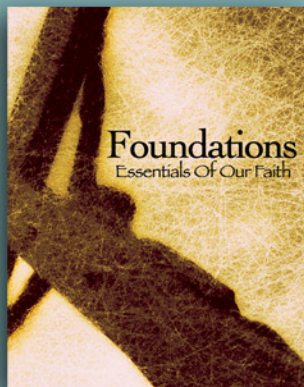
“The creation story tells of God’s plan that husband and wife should be one.”

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