



NewLife Series
EVANGELISM, DISCIPLESHIP, MISSIONS
English, Tagalog & Cebuano Versions.

By Pastor Bien Llobrera

BOOK 8

*Disciple-making:
Filipino Context*

LESSON 1

FILIPINO HEART – Part 1

Palm: Family,

Thumb: “Utang na Loob”,

Pointing Finger: Social Acceptance

Middle Finger: Social Mobility

Ring Finger: Benefactor-Hero Complex

Little Finger: Closeness to God

A critical stage in the life of a disciple is the BUILDING of a Christ-like character. Without a Christ-like character all the knowledge we have received and all the skills we have developed will not result in continuing fruitful service. So many highly trained Christians are no longer actively serving the Lord today, and some do not even walk with the Lord anymore, for lack of a Christ-like character.

What is involved in character building? Where do we begin? The building of a Christ-like character has been going on from the very start of the Newlife Discipleship Studies. Through the different hands of a disciple you have already received some knowledge and skills.

But character building involves more than knowledge and skills, which are more or less observable on the outside. Character building goes deep into the dark corners of our hearts, deep into the secret thoughts, deep into our inner motivations.

How is character building done? The building of a Christ-like character is done by allowing the Word of God, the two-edged Sword, to penetrate our innermost being so that we may be transformed into the perfect character of Christ, the Living Word.

What does Hebrews 4:12 say about the Word of God?

What does Hebrews 4:13 say about God?

In the light of Hebrews 4:13 how important is character building?

THE HEART

We see, then that the sharp two-edged Sword of God's Word is the primary instrument for character building. Where do we begin to experience the transforming power of God's Word? The Bible tells us that we begin at the heart. According to Proverbs 4:23 what are we to do with our heart, and why?

The heart, according to the Bible, is our true personality, from which flow the springs of life - the motives, plans, attitudes, actions, habits, ways.

It is therefore vitally important that we understand the Filipino heart, the Filipino personality, as revealed in the Filipino value system. There are at least six value-categories, which make the Filipino to think, talk, and act as he does. These value-categories may be placed on the hand.

Palm: FAMILY

The strongest value for the Filipino is the family. The family is the basic means of survival. As long as a person has a family his necessities are assured of being met. Family means both the immediate family and the extended family of relatives. A person who knows he has relatives he can go to will venture into seemingly hostile territory. For example, a young man in the province will venture to go to the city as long as he knows there is a relative there with whom he can stay. All he needs to have is sufficient fare to get to the city; once there he is assured of a place to sleep and food to eat.

For this reason, independence is difficult to develop in the Filipino individual. To tell him to be independent is to tell him to jump off the ship of the family and into the open sea. This also explains Filipino loyalty to the family; it is the loyalty of a sailor to his ship in the middle of shark-infested waters.

Positive Implications

The Filipino will tend to respond warmly toward the gospel when this is presented as a call to become a member of the family of God.

When taught properly, the Filipino will find it natural to show loyalty and helpfulness toward other members of God's family.

Family pride can be transformed into a strong motivation to live worthy of the calling he has received to be a child of God.

Negative Implications

Because of his tendency to find identity in his family connections, it takes a long time for the Filipino to develop a sense of individual worth.

Because of his dependence on the family, the Filipino finds it difficult to develop the right kind of independence.

The Filipino's loyalty to his family is sometimes blind. Right or wrong the family must be supported, protected, and preserved from public shame.

The Filipino individual makes a decision with an eye to family approval. He does not ask, "Will God approve of this?" Rather he asks, "Will my family like this?"

Self-Evaluation

As a Christian, what have been your conflicts regarding the value of family?

What truths from God's Word have helped/will help you to resolve these conflicts?

Thumb: "UTANG NA LOOB"

"Utang na loob" - - literally, debt inside; that is, an abiding debt of gratitude – refers to the value of reciprocity. This debt is to be paid back to people who have helped one to survive or to advance in life, beginning with my immediate family, relatives, friends, patrons. The indebted person keeps on reciprocating, but the debt never gets fully paid. To forget one's "utang na loob" is the height of ingratitude if not wickedness. But in an effort to repay the debt, some persons may be forced to compromise with or commit illegal or immoral acts.

Related to the "utang na loob" is the Padrino-Bata System. The "bata" (protégé) is forever indebted to his "padrino (patron), and he will do anything to please the patron. The patron in turn assures the protégé of security and protection, regardless of how immorally and illegally the protégé acts toward those outside their group. A patron can get employment for the least skilled protégé, in spite of a long line of highly qualified applicants for the same position. Hence the saying, "Not what you know, but whom you know."

There is one interesting fact about “utang na loob.” A “higher” debt of gratitude can be used as a reason for deferring to reciprocate a “lower” one.

Positive Implications

The value of “utang na loob” makes the Filipino naturally thankful.

When he is made to see his higher “utang na loob” to God, the Filipino will be motivated to greater loyalty and service to God.

Romans 1:14 says that the Christian (represented by Paul) is a debtor to all. This approach has often been found effective in witnessing, when the Christian says, “Friend, you may not know it but I have a debt to pay to you. I want to pay that debt now.”

A Filipino Christian may be motivated to witness to those he is indebted to by making him realize that the best way to pay his “utang na loob” is by giving the gospel, the best treasure of all, to those to whom he is indebted.

Negative Implications

Oftentimes the Filipino Christian is put in a dilemma: Obey God or pay my “utang na loob” to human person? Paying one’s “utang na loob” sometimes become more important than being strictly law-abiding and God-fearing. The Filipino reasons: If I steal to pay my “utang na loob” God will understand my situation and will not hold me guilty.

Living by strict discipleship standards threatens to isolate the Filipino Christian from those to whom he has “utang na loob.”

An indebted person is sometimes pressured to make a false profession of faith when the person witnessing to him is the one to whom he has “utang na loob.”

Self-Evaluation

As a Christian, what have been your conflicts regarding “utang na loob?”

What truths from God’s Word have helped/will help you to resolve these conflicts?

Pointing Finger: SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE

Under social acceptance are included the values of “pakikisama” (smooth interpersonal relationship), “hiya” (shame), and “barkada” (peer group).

“Pakikisama requires that I try to get along smoothly with others, and as much as possible to remove or minimize the differences which might arise among relatives and friends. Smooth interpersonal relationship demands that I tell you what I believe you wish to hear; to soften negative facts, and not to rock the boat. Harmony (even if only on the surface) is always preferable to open conflict. I will say yes or no, whichever is least hurting you. Or I will play it very safe and say “Maybe” or “I’ll try.” These last two answers signal another Filipino not to expect too much from me, but he is not hurt because I did not disappoint him frontally; besides, who knows, I may in fact even do what he asked me to do.

Shame or “hiya” demands that even if we dislike each other, we must avoid publicly embarrassing each other. This is important in courtship, when a girl does not like a suitor. The saying goes, “It’s all right if you don’t like me, just don’t embarrass me in public.” When put to shame a spurned suitor can go berserk or amok. In such a case, the girl not the suitor is blamed.

“Barkada” (peer group) points out the reality that the Filipino is always group-oriented. He dreads being alone. Hence, he must learn the value of “pakikisama” or getting along well with everyone. “Pakikisama” tends to maintain the status quo and discourage the pursuit of individual excellence. “Pakikisama” is careful not to put the group to shame. Refusal to get along well with us means that you despise us, and this puts us to shame. Our wounded pride will retaliate against you.

Positive Implications

“Pakikisama” may be transformed into relationships governed by love and concern for other people.
Social acceptance may be transformed into a motivation for the Christian’s light to shine.
Smooth interpersonal relationship may be transformed into speaking and acting the truth in love.
“Hiya” may be transformed into a holy fear and shame before God, the One who really sees everything.

Negative Implications

The values related to social acceptance has made the Filipino into a personality that is “other directed” and “controlled from the outside.” The question “What will others say,” is more powerful to the Filipino than “What will God say?”

Truthfulness, sincerity and integrity are difficult to develop in the Filipino Christian because to him nice feelings matter more than truthful speaking.

The pursuit of personal excellence oftentimes leads to isolation from friends. Hence, “pakikisama” usually tends to mediocrity, maintaining the status-quo or even retrogression.

Self-Evaluation

As a Christian, what have been your conflicts regarding social acceptance?

What truths from God’s Word have helped/will help you to resolve these conflicts?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

From what you have learned or experienced so far as a Christian, How can a Christian show loyalty to Christ and still be loyal to his family?

MEMORIZE

Hebrews 4:12: For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

Review: Luke 8:15; John 4:34

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 2

FILIPINO HEART – Part 2

We continue our study of the Filipino Personality Hand, which shows to us the Filipino heart. The heart of the Filipino is motivated by six value-categories, three of which we have covered in the previous lesson. These are FAMILY (represented by the palm), “UTANG NA LOOB” (thumb), and SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE (pointing finger). We go on to the next three value-categories.

Middle Finger - SOCIAL MOBILITY

Social Mobility means that Filipinos aspire to improve their economic and social standing. This is motivated by their deep sense of loyalty and debt toward their family. They want to lift up the family (if possible, including the extended family) economically and socially. This explains the system of nepotism prevailing in business and government offices.

Another motivation for social mobility is the desire to get out of “low class” (manual, blue collar) work and get into “high class” (white collar) work. The means of social mobility is higher education for the white collar professions. The ideal is to attain an economic and social

standing in which a person orders others to work for him.

Since this desire for social mobility is rooted in family loyalty, when someone makes it big the other members of the family look to him with a dependent and mendicant attitude. A person who does not share his success becomes branded as disloyal and without “utang na loob” toward the family.

Positive Implications

The desire for social mobility may be encouraged, enhanced and ennobled to become a strong motivation for excellence and success.

Using social mobility as a reference point, the need for spiritual mobility and progress may be emphasized.

The dependent attitude of less fortunate family members may be redirected to true dependence on God, who is the source of all true success.

Negative Implications

A person with a dependent and mendicant attitude may find it hard to develop independence.

A person committed to the social and economic progress of his family may find it difficult to commit himself totally to Christ, as this may jeopardize his plans for his family.

Nepotism breeds nepotism. One who has advanced through nepotism will be required to show the same favor toward those related to people who have helped him.

Self-Evaluation

As a Christian, what have been your conflicts regarding social mobility?

What truths from God's Word have helped/will help you to resolve your conflicts?

Ring Finger – BENEFACTOR-HERO COMPLEX

One popular song of earlier years went something like this:

One day I'll go around the world,
One day I'll go to the sea,
And I'll find a land I can explore,
They'll name it after me...
Then one day I'm someone to be proud of,
Someone you're glad you knew...

This desire to be somebody someday is perhaps the same for all peoples. But the Filipino is perhaps even more keenly aware of it because of his group-orientation. He wants to prove something to his family, relatives, and his community.

The Filipino hopes to come back to his hometown someday as a benefactor or hero. He will donate something, anything, from one section of the hollow-block wall fence around the school to a whole school building. He may come home as a sports hero or a notorious personality. Two features of this benefactor-hero complex are, first, the person's fame is offered as the glory of the group. Second, usually no one asks questions about where the money for the donation came from (legal or illegal means); what matters is that

something useful for the group is donated. The honored hero seems to be not a bit more honored than the notorious gang lord; both the famous and notorious proudly acknowledge their place of origin.

Positive Implications

The desire to bring home something of benefit to one's group or hometown may be transformed into a motivation to bring home the highest good of all, the gospel.

The seed of the gospel may be sown in public testimonies by the Christian benefactor-hero.

Key people whom the benefactor-hero recognizes and honors may be rendered receptive to the gospel as a result of the thankful gesture of the Christian benefactor.

Negative Implications

This benefactor-hero complex obviously hides many pitfalls of pride.

The benefactor-hero may encourage the dependent mentality on the part of recipients.

Those who do not get a share in the gifts and festivities may become negative to the message which the benefactor brings.

Evaluation

As a Christian, what have been your conflicts regarding the benefactor-hero complex?

What truths from God's Word have helped/will help you to resolve your conflicts?

Little Finger – CLOSENESS TO GOD

The Filipino is very God-conscious. However God is conceived of usually as a distant third person “He.” For example, in times of difficulty, the Filipino complains, “I don’t know why He gave me this trial.” Many times God is thought of as no more than Fate. Yet in desperate situations the Filipino prays to God devotedly and makes promises to Him, promises of a penitential and ascetic nature. God serves as a last resort. In irrevocable circumstances God becomes some kind of opiate or a way of explaining away a hopeless situation. On the whole, in normal conditions most Filipinos view God as merciful to the good. Hence, when trouble comes to people, who think they are good, they usually wonder, “What did I do to deserve this?” Some become bitter toward God. Others simply resign to God’s will, still hoping that He will somehow show mercy.

Positive Implications

The Filipino habit of referring to God may provide an opportunity for sharing about who God really is and what He does.

Most Filipinos have a vague notion of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Still this knowledge provides a common acceptable ground for sharing about spiritual things, specially about having a personal relationship with Christ.

Even if God is looked upon as a last resort, the Christian can still present the God who really loves and cares and truly answers prayers. The Christian has an opportunity to share the true basis of prayer, a personal relationship with God through being born again into the family of God.

Negative Implications

Most Filipinos have ideas of God, which are limited to traditional religious rituals and symbols. They tend to resist the Biblical ideas of God.

God is treated as one resource in times of great need. Filipinos do not relate God easily to the way they live their daily lives.

Filipinos see no conflict between praying to God and consulting faith healers and spiritists. This is because the faith healers and mediums use images and other symbols used by the traditional religion.

Self-Evaluation

As a Christian, what have been your conflicts about the traditional Filipino idea of God?

What truths from God's Word have helped/will help you to resolve these conflicts?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Please study the diagram of the Filipino Personality Hand. Note that the FAMILY is placed on the palm to show that it affects all other values. In the Filipino Personality, why do you think the value CLOSENESS TO GOD should be placed on the palm instead?

MEMORIZE

Hebrews 4:13: And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account. Hebrews 4:13

Review: Luke 8:15; John 4:34; Hebrew 4:12

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 3

THUMB: SELF-IMAGE- Part 1

(Note: For those who completed Book 6-A, this lesson will be a review but also an opportunity for deeper understanding.)

IN the development of a Christ-like character we need to know the heart - - the value system of a person. This we have done through a brief study of the Filipino Personality Hand.

We also need to know in what areas of life a person is experiencing confusions and struggles. According to our diagram there are at least six areas of conflict for the Filipino Christian, and each area is affected by his value system. Let's start with the first area – SELF-IMAGE.

In the Character Hand the area of self-image is put on your thumb. Who do you think you are? Do you like or hate yourself? What aspects of your personality do you

like or don't like? Do you see traits and qualities in other people and you wish very much that you had these traits and qualities?

Your self-image refers to the way you look at yourself and treat yourself. You may have a good, healthy self-image, or a poor, unhealthy one. As we have mentioned in our study of the palm of the Filipino Personality Hand, the Filipino usually has a difficult time achieving a sense of self-worth. This is because of his close identity with his family; he is primarily identified as belonging to such and such a family. He is not known for himself or accepted for what and who he is. But it is important for the Filipino, and for any other person, to know himself, be himself, and have a healthy attitude toward himself. This attitude to oneself is called self-image.

To evaluate your self-image, answer this revealing question asked by a famous counselor:

“If you had the power to change any of the following, what would you change about your...

Appearance

Abilities

Parentage

Environment (physical, economic, social)

If you want to change a lot of things, this could be an indication of a poor self-image. On the other, you may also have an unhealthy self-image if you think it's hopeless to change anything. A good self-image should have at least three characteristics.

Accepting the Unchangeable

The first characteristic of a healthy self-image is ACCEPTING myself as God created me in my unchangeable aspects. For example, these are unchangeable: the color of my skin, the shape of my nose, who my parents are, my social and economic background.

Please list several things that you can't seem to accept about your unchangeable aspects.

The Word of God, the two-edged Sword, gives us many reasons why we may accept thankfully the unchangeable aspects which God had given to our personality.

One big reason is this: GOD CREATED ME EXACTLY AS I AM IN ALL ASPECTS OF MY INNER AND OUTER PERSONALITY.

Please carefully study Psalm 139:13-16. According to this passage, which aspects of your personality did God create?

According to Psalm 139:16 what things about you did God record in His book?

Think of that!

Before you were born, all the parts of your body, and all the days you are going to live have been recorded in God's book. God created you according to His

specifications. And your whole life have been planned. Honestly, how do you react to this?

Some people ask, “How about people who are born with defects?”

Please study John 9:1-3.

What did the disciples ask the Lord Jesus about the blind man? _____

What answer did the Lord Jesus give?

Born defective – for the glory of God? Yes!
The disciples, like us, were looking for someone to blame. Who sinned? Who’s to blame? The answer of the Lord Jesus is “No one is to blame. God planned it all for His glory.”

You may not even have a defect. It may only be something that you do not exactly like. Based on John 9:3 what should be your attitude toward that aspect of your personality, which you consider unpleasant or somewhat ugly?

Other people complain, “Why was I born in such and such a place, and with such and such economic and social standing?”

Please read carefully Acts 17:26-27. According to this passage, who decides where you will be born and where you will live? What was His purpose in placing you there?

God made you. And He made you exactly as you are now, even with imperfect or defective features, in order that the works of God may be manifested in your life.

And God placed you precisely where you are, so that there you may find God. These truths help us to develop a healthy self-image. Based on these truths you may say, “I was created according to God’s plan in order for His purpose to be fulfilled in my life.”

Please write out the first characteristic of a healthy self-image.

Changing the Changeable

The second characteristic of a healthy self-image is related to our changeable aspects. A healthy self-image is characterized by BECOMING your true self in your changeable aspects.

When God originally created humans in the beginning, He created them perfect. According to Genesis 1:26-27, God created humans to be like whom?

Your true self is the person who was originally created perfect by God in the beginning. But sin came into your life. The life which is controlled by sin and lived far away from God is the false self. A healthy self-image enables you to distinguish between your true self and your false self. It will also enable you to change – to move out of your false self and move into your true self. The New Testament uses three related words in the

original Greek to describe this process of change which you must undergo.

FORMED (MORPHOO)

Please study Galatians 4:19:

My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed (MORPHOO) in you,

This kind of change is illustrated by the growth of a new life in the womb of a mother. The baby starts out as a seed or cell, but that cell has powers of growth within itself, and it grows until the full baby is developed.

Like that seed of life we must allow Christ to be formed within us until His life completely fills us within. Your true self is the Christ-like self, or, more accurately, the Christ-self.

According to Galatians 2:20 what must we always remember about our Christian life?

TRANSFORMED (METAMORPHOO)

Please study Romans 12:2:

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed (METAMORPHOO) by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

One modern paraphrase of this verse goes this way: “Do not let the world outside press you into its own mold, but rather let God mold you from within.”

In this verse we see demonstrated both the poor self-image and the true self-image. The poor self-image is always trying to be like someone or something on the outside. The healthy self-image seeks to be what God wants it to be. Poor self-image results in DEFORMATION, because the person becomes what it is not meant to be. Healthy self-image results in TRANSFORMATION (METAMORPHOO), because the person becomes what God has purposed him to become.

According to Romans 12:2 transformation comes through the renewing of the mind. According to the following verses, with what should we fill our minds?

- Joshua 1:8 _____
- Psalm 1:2 _____
- Col 3:16 _____

CONFORMED (SUMMORPHOO)

Please study Philippians 3:20-21:

²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed (SUMMORPHOO) to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.



The change indicated by the words FORMED and TRANSFORMED deals with inner growth and change into Christlikeness. Someday the outer change which we have been longing for will happen. At the second coming of Christ, our lowly bodies will undergo a wonderful change. Our bodies will be CONFORMED to the glorious Body of our Lord Jesus Christ. At that time we may be sure that the humanly unchangeable aspects, which caused us a lot of pain and embarrassment, will attain a glory, which will prove that they were meant to be a part of our resurrection bodies.

Since God will someday give us perfect bodies, to what should we then give our attention and efforts during this time, according to 2 Corinthians 4:16-18?

What promise can we claim for defects or weakness that God permits us to suffer during this time, according to 2 Corinthians 12:9?

Practical Application

Since the focus and emphasis of God’s work is changing our inner personality, what attitudes should we have toward ourselves and others, according to the following verses?

- 1 Samuel 16:7 _____
- Jeremiah 9:23-24 _____
- 2 Cor 10:12, 17-18 _____
- Romans 15:7 _____

Please write the second characteristic of a healthy self-image.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

In what ways can you apply the characteristics or principles of a healthy self-image studied in this lesson?

Accepting the unchangeable

Changing the changeable

MEMORIZE

Galatians 4:19: My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you. Galatians 4:19

Review: Luke 8:15; John 4:34; Hebrew 4:12; Hebrews 4:13

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 4

Thumb: SELF-IMAGE- Part 2

(Note: For those who completed Book 6-A, this lesson will be a review but also an opportunity for deeper understanding.)

THE third characteristic of a healthy self-image is COOPERATING with God in the process of my growing into Christ-likeness. This cooperation means that I will trust God to do His part while I faithfully do my part.

Someone has pointed out that we must beware of three attitudes which, taken exclusively by themselves, will keep us from growing. Yet when taken together in the right proportions, these three attitudes will become ingredients of success. The three attitudes are:

“It’s all up to me.”

According to John 15:5 what is the danger of this attitude?

“It’s all up to others.”

According to Psalm 146:3-4 what is the danger of this attitude?

“It’s all up to God.”

According to James 2:14, 17 what is the danger of this attitude?

A Delicate Balance

In the process of growing into Christ-likeness, there is a delicate balance between God’s part and your part, and to some extent the part which some other Christians play. This balance is clearly explained in Philippians

2:12-13. Please read this passage carefully and then answer the following questions:

According to Philippians 2:12 what is your part?

According to Philippians 2:13 what is God's part?

What do other Christians (represented by Paul) play in the process of change? Phil 1:8-9

Let's study Philippians 2:12-13 carefully.

"Work out your salvation." Please compare this with Ephesians 2:8-9. Does Paul contradict himself? Please explain your answer.

REMINDER: To work out your salvation does NOT mean to keep or retain your salvation; if you don't, you might lose your salvation. No, that's not the meaning. When you were born again, your salvation was guaranteed forever (1 John 5:11, 12). From that moment on you received the GIFT of eternal by grace through faith in Christ alone, not because of any good work or merit on your part. To work out your salvation means to **GROW TO FULL SPIRITUAL MATURITY**, from being a spiritual baby to a spiritual youth and finally to a spiritual parent (1 John 2:12-14).

The apostle Paul is very careful to remind his readers not to entertain the mistaken thought: "It's all up to me." Please look at Philippians 2:13 again, and from this verse, why do you say that Paul is not encouraging Christians to believe that it's all up to them?

Paul says that it cannot be all up to us. As we work out our salvation (this is our part), we must realize that God is really the one who is working in us (that's His part). Paul actually used a different word for God's part. The verse may be translated this way: "Work out your salvation...because it is God who is ENERGIZING you." You do the action, God gives the power.

The energy exerted by God in us results in two things: to WILL (gives us the desire to obey), and to DO (gives us the power to obey) God's good pleasure.

Paul seems to be saying, "Go on, WORK OUT your salvation because the DESIRE you feel inside you is actually from God; and along with that desire He will also give you the POWER of His Spirit to accomplish what pleases Him."

Paul demonstrates this principle in his own life. Please summarize Paul's thoughts in the following verses:

Philippians 4:13 _____

Colossians 1:29 _____

1 Corinthians 15:10 _____

The Journey – And Your Resources

Your true self-image is Christ-likeness. This is difficult, in fact impossible, to attain if it were all up to you. But with God's Spirit inside you, exerting His unlimited power, giving you the desire and imparting to you the ability, you can be Christ-like. The apostle Peter shows

us how. Please carefully read 2 Peter 1:1-8, then answer the following questions.

According to 2 Peter 1:3-4, what resources has God given to you to enable you to live the Christ-like life?

Becoming Christ-like does not come instantly. It is a journey by stages. What are the qualities of Christ-likeness that we need to develop, according to 2 Peter 1:5-7? List them in their proper order.

- 1st _____
- 2nd _____
- 3rd _____
- 4th _____
- 5th _____
- 6th _____
- 7th _____
- 8th _____

What result will we experience when these eight qualities are developed in us? 2 Peter 1:8

PPL METHOD

Perhaps you are asking, “Just how exactly am I to develop these qualities?” We suggest you use the PPL (Prayer-Practice Ladder) Method. This is how PPL works.

Step 1: Evaluate the level of development of each quality in your life. For example, your FAITH is only up to

Level 1; UNDERLINE Level 1. Write down the date you BEGIN your prayer focus on this level.

Step 2: UNDERLINE the next level you will focus your prayer on; in our example, FAITH level 2. For at least a week pray daily a prayer like this one, “Lord, help me to develop the level of faith that believes that You will supply my material needs.” You may pray for a longer period than one week if you feel you need to. Write down the date you END your prayer focus on this level.

Step 3: Practice your faith at that level. In our example, try to bring all your material needs to God during the week and really trust Him to work in supplying those needs. And let this become a habit of your faith from now on.

NOTE:

Work specifically and systematically from the first quality through the next, step by step. This does not mean that you are not growing in the other qualities. Rather, this means that you are consciously “working out your salvation” at your most basic area of character development, one step at a time.

Now evaluate yourself by the CHARACTER CHART that follows.

CHARACTER CHART

<u>Date Begin</u>	<u>QUALITY</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>End</u>		
FAITH		
Level		
___	1. Faith for Salvation	_____

- ___ 2. Faith for material needs _____
- ___ 3. Faith for victory over sin _____
- ___ 4. Faith for fruitful service _____

VIRTUE

Level

- ___ 1. Commitment to Christ’s absolute Lordship _____
- ___ 2. Surrender of questionable habits _____
- ___ 3. Striving for excellence in motives, attitudes, actions _____
- ___ 4. Aspiring to accomplish the most with my gifts and opportunities _____

KNOWLEDGE

Level

- ___ 1. Gospel truths _____
- ___ 2. Discipleship principles and skills _____
- ___ 3. Bible doctrines _____
- ___ 4. Experiential Knowledge of God’s Character and ways _____

SELF-CONTROL

Level

- ___ 1. Subordinating physical desires to spiritual values _____
- ___ 2. Denying legitimate pleasures for the sake of discipleship training _____
- ___ 3. Controlling all appetites _____
- ___ 4. Giving up my rights so God can work in His own way and time _____

PATIENCE

Level

- ___ 1. Not complaining when under

temptation, trial, persecution _____

___2. Bearing with people’s weaknesses, stubbornness, and failures _____

___3. Sticking with a job until it is done _____

___4. Waiting for God’s will and promises to be fulfilled _____

GODLINESS

Level

___1. Hating sin _____

___2. Fearing God’s discipline _____

___3. Desiring God’s approval and reward _____

___4. Loving God for Himself _____

BROTHERLY KINDNESS

Level

___1. Not hurting or burdening others _____

___2. Giving what I can spare _____

___3. Sharing freely all I have _____

___4. Building each other up _____

LOVE

Level

___1. Giving up precious possession to help other’s needs _____

___2. Helping others to advance ahead of me _____

___3. Living to serve others _____

___4. Dying so others may live _____

REMEMBER:

Do this in full dependence on God’s grace through His Holy Spirit.

God is exerting His energy in you.

God is giving you the desire for His will

God is giving you the power to do His will
Your part is to work out (put into practice) your
salvation by using the PPL METHOD.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Begin to use the PRAYER-PRACTICE LADDER
Method.

MEMORIZE

Philippians 2:12-13: ¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you
have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but
now much more in my absence, work out your own
salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who
works in you both to will and to do for *His* good
pleasure. Philippians 2:12-13

Review Galatians 4:19;

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic
outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 5

RELATIONSHIP

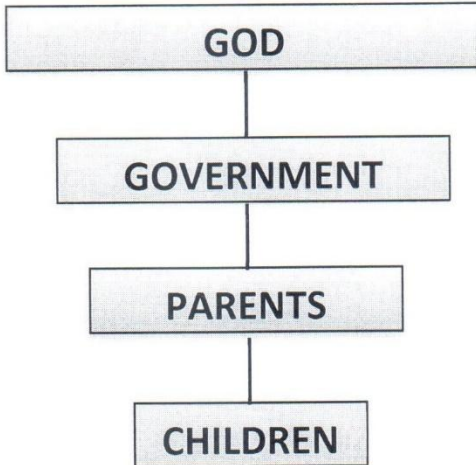
TO PARENTS – Part 1

(Note: For those who completed Book 6-A,
this lesson will be a review but also an opportunity
for deeper understanding.)

This area of relationship causes so many of the confusions and conflicts which young people experience. Many adults who have never resolved their conflicts in this area continue, even as adults, to labor under emotional strains which they could no longer understand or trace to their real source. Both parents and children need to study this lesson in order to establish a healthy relationship with one another other.

The development of a Christ-like character requires that we must have a healthy relationship to parents and other authority. A healthy relationship in this area has the following characteristics.

First, there must be submission to God's order of authority. The order of authority looks like this:



Let us note the following facts about God's order of authority:

God is the sovereign Ruler over all. Please summarize the following verses:

Daniel 4:17 _____
Matthew 28:18 _____

God sets up governments to maintain law and order. Please summarize the following verses:

Romans 13:1-4 _____

But governments may sometimes oppose God. When that happens what should a Christian do, according to Acts 5:29? _____

When a Christian disobeys the government for the sake of God, the right of the government to punish disobedient subjects still operates. In view of this, what should be the attitude of the Christian when he is punished for disobeying the government in order to obey God?

Acts 5:41 _____
1Peter 4:16,19 _____

God sets up parents as authority over their children. From Ephesians 6:1-4 please answer the following questions:

Give reasons why children should obey their parents. Ephesians 6:1-3

According to Proverbs 30:17, what will happen to a child who continues to disregard parental authority?

According to the following verses how does a person obey parents “in the Lord”? Ephesians 6:1 with Luke 14:26-27.

To obey parents IN THE LORD means to obey them to the extent that their wishes and commands do not conflict with true love and loyalty to God. Christian children must, however, be careful to discern true love and loyalty to God. True love and loyalty do not mean attending all kinds of religious or church activities.

Sometimes parents ask their children to stay at home instead of attending certain religious activities. The parents’ intention must be discerned. Are they telling the son or daughter, “You are neglecting your responsibilities in the home. Perform these responsibilities instead of going to that church meeting”? Or are they saying, “Give up Christ”? Only when parents are directly and definitely demanding that the child should deny Christ, that the child has the right to disobey them. But if it is just a matter of staying home to do a neglected household chore, then the child should obey the parents.

A Reminder to Parents

But the Lord also gives an important reminder to parents. According to Ephesians 6:4, how does God want parents, particularly fathers, to exercise their authority?

Provoke not your children to wrath. This is a real and constant danger for parents. This provoking is a big source of confusion and conflict in parent-child

relationship. Unresolved conflict between the parents and children will cause the children to rebel against parental authority, causing hurt to both sides.

A Brief History of Conflict

We present here a brief history and analysis of parent-child conflict. If you are a young person, you may be currently undergoing this painful process. You need to study this to help you handle that conflict. If you are a grown-up who has never resolved (when you were younger) this conflict in your life, you may be experiencing the results of your unresolved conflict. You need to study this in order that you may find deliverance for yourself and to help you deal with your own children and other young people. Parent-child conflict generally follows the following stages:

STAGE 1: DISAPPOINTMENT

A child is disappointed when . . .
A promise made to him is not fulfilled;
There is favoritism, or signs of favoritism, and he is not the favorite;
His expectations of his parents are not realized, particularly in the area of economic and material comfort;
His parents do not take time to understand or share his struggles or triumphs.

STAGE 2: DISILLUSIONMENT

Every child has a high image (illusion) of his parents. The child is disillusioned when . . .
Parents discipline him erratically or inconsistently. Sometimes he gets punished, at other times ignore, for the same act.

He discovers a moral problem or failure on the part of his parents.

Parents themselves, by example or by command, force the child into a life of sin or illegal activities.

When he discovers (without previous preparation) that his parents are not the “super-people” he has imagined them to be. Parents are not to be blamed for being human, but unless the child gets timely and adequate counseling, he gets disillusioned just the same.

STAGE 3: DISTANCE

Disappointment and disillusionment create a gap between the parents and the child. Distance is evidenced by . . .

The child being uneasy in the house. If he is in the house he hides in his room; but he prefers to stay out of the house as often and as long as possible.

The child seeking and enjoying other people’s company, specially his peer group, to the exclusion of time with his own family members.

The child showing reluctance or refusing to communicate with his parents about his condition, interests, activities, friends, etc.

The child seeking a substitute parent. This poses a special danger when the substitute parent is an unscrupulous opportunist.

STAGE 4: REBELIION

Rebellion is shown in the following ways:

The child treats the parents merely as a provider of financial and material resources.

The child consistently ignores the requests, commands, or advice of parents, and lives in habitual disobedience.

The child develops the habit of stealing from or cheating his parents and feels that he is justified in “punishing” his parents in that way.

STAGE 5: HATRED

At this stage the child seems to enjoy hurting his parents.

STAGE 6: BITTERNESS

Bitterness may be defined as the combination of all the negative attitudes of disappointment, disillusionment, distance, rebellion, and hatred, held and allowed to ferment in the child’s heart for a period of time.

STAGE 7: UNFORGIVING SPIRIT

The end result and final stage of unresolved conflict between parents and child is an unforgiving spirit on the part of the child toward his parents. This is the most destructive stage of all. The child’s unwillingness to forgive will hinder him from fully experiencing God’s forgiveness, and this will also prevent him from fully accepting and forgiving other people who wrong him.

Honest Self-Evaluation

As a single person or a married one you need to make an honest self-evaluation. Do you have an unresolved conflict in any of the stages mentioned above? Please prayerfully look at yourself and describe the nature of your unresolved conflict. You need to do this for two reasons. First, you must know what is causing confusion in your life, second, you need to know what to cast out and remove from your life with the help of Christ’s forgiveness.

STAGE 1: DISAPPOINTMENT

STAGE 2: DISILLUSIONMENT

STAGE 3: DISTANCE

STAGE 4: REBELLION

STAGE 5: HATRED

STAGE 6: BITTERNESS

STAGE 7: UNFORGIVING SPIRIT

Note: In the next lesson we shall study how you may be delivered from your negative feelings toward your parents.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Prayerfully fill out your self-evaluation above.

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 6:1-3: Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²“Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: ³“that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” Ephesians 6:1-3

Review Philippians 2:12-13;

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 6

RELATIONSHIP TO PARENTS–Part 2

(Note: For those who completed Book 6-A, this lesson will be a review but also an opportunity for deeper understanding.)

IN the previous lesson we saw that our relationship to our parents must be based, first, on submission to God’s order of authority. In that lesson we also surveyed the history of parent-child conflict. At the end of that lesson you were asked to evaluate honestly your relationship to your parents.

The question now is this: “How do you resolve your conflict with your parents?” This leads us to the second characteristic of healthy parent-child relationship.

Forgiveness – The Key

A healthy relationship with parents requires that you forgive – and forget – whatever fault or wrong you think your parents may have done against you. Forgiveness is the key to all healthy relationships, whether the relationship be with God, with friends, or with parents.

But some Filipino friends may ask, “But what is there to forgive? I really do not have anything against my parents?”

At this point we need to understand a characteristic of how we Filipinos treat our parents and family members. Since it is true that we have very close family ties, and (as shown in the Filipino personality Hand) the family is the biggest value in our life, we do not really think or admit that we ever come to hate our parents or even rebel against them. Our parents, too, do not think of our attitude against them in terms of rebellion or hatred. We have a different classification for strained feelings between close family members. We call the strained feelings as “tampo.”

“Tampo” is very difficult to define. A person hates an enemy, but he shows tampo to family members. The two feelings may have the same attitude and actions – you cut off communication with other person; but hate is for the enemy and tampo is for a family member. The only difference perhaps lies in the fact that when that family member is involved in a fight with a non-family member, I will defend that family member against the outsider, no matter how much tampo I feel toward him. “Blood is thicker than water.”

Because tampo is not strictly looked upon as hate, the person who shows tampo may not feel really guilty about it. Tampo may not be looked upon as a sin. But this distinction is false and deceiving. Tampo has in it the same negative feelings contained in hatred; tampo is hatred, a sin that must be repented of and forsaken.

Now, let us look at the biblical commands and standards regarding forgiveness. Please summarize:

Matthew 6:14-15 _____

Matthew 18:21-22 _____

Luke 17:3-4 _____
Ephesians 4:32 _____
Psalm 103:8-10 _____
Isaiah 43:25 _____
Matthew 5:44-47 _____
Matthew 5:48 _____

This is God's standard of forgiveness.

We must forgive in the same way that He has forgiven us. God's forgiveness is continual and unlimited, and he forgets what He forgives. God knows how deeply you have been hurt, but He commands you to forgive. This is for your own spiritual good. If you do not forgive you make it impossible for you to experience fully God's forgiveness of your own sins.

Look at the unforgiving spirit as poison. The longer you keep the poison in your heart, the more widely its deadly venom will spread in your life.

We must also forget what we forgive. When God forgives us He looks at us as if we have never sinned. When you forgive someone, including parents who have hurt you, you must look at them as if they have never done anything to disappoint, disillusion, or wound you.

When we forgive we must also restore full relationship. Again this is how God forgives us. He accepts us back into His favor. This is the true sign of forgiveness, full communication is restored between you and the person you have forgiven.

Are you ready to obey God in this matter of forgiving those who have hurt you? Let's do something concrete to dramatize this process of forgiveness. This "little

drama” has been used in other situations illustrate forgiveness.

Write... Tear... Burn

STEP 1: WRITE.

Take a piece of paper and write down all the hurts and disappointments your parents have caused you. Write down everything you could remember, especially those things which have been a load on your mind over the years.

STEP 2: TEAR

After making your list, lift the paper up to God and pray something like this: “Father God, these are the things that have hurt me deeply. Because you have forgiven me and you have commanded me to forgive in the same way, I do forgive my parents for what I have been holding against them for a long time. I ask you Father, forgive them, too. In the name of Jesus who shed His blood for our forgiveness. Amen.” After your prayer, tear up the piece of paper into very small bits.

STEP 3: BURN

Put the bits of torn paper in a pile and burn them in a place where it is safe to light a fire.

Honor Your Parents

Now you are ready to experience the third characteristic of a healthy relationship to your parents. The third characteristic is that we take definite steps to honor our parents.

Please study Ephesians 6:1-3 again and then write the thought of the passage in your own words.

Two commands are actually contained in Ephesians 6:1-3, to obey and to honor our parents. Obedience controls our relationship to our parents when we are still young and are still under their full authority.

Honoring our parents controls our relationship to them when we are already mature, grown-up persons, who are living our own independent life. This does not mean that we do not honor them while we are still young. What this means is that as long as our parents live, even if we no longer live with them, we have a life-long obligation to honor them. How?

ACTION 1: THANK GOD FOR YOUR PARENTS.

Thank God for everything that came about in your life because of who your parents are and what they have done. Having forgiven and forgotten the things they have done which hurt you, can you mention two or three good things for which you especially thank God concerning your parents?

ACTION 2: EXPRESS YOUR APPRECIATION TO YOUR PARENTS.

Tell them that you are thankful to God for giving them to you as parents. Learn to tell them "I love you." Parents need the love of their children, too. Here are ways you can tell them your love and appreciation: personal visit, telephone, letter. Which of these three

ways can you do at this time? Please write your plan of action below.

I PLAN TO (TALK PERSONALLY/CALL/WRITE)
MY FATHER/MOTHER ON THIS DAY

DATE _____ TIME _____
NUMBER OF TIMES _____ A MONTH

**ACTION 3: HONOR YOUR PARENTS
MATERIALLY.**

The Bible, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, commands that we honor our parents in a material way. Some religious people in Christ's day tried to avoid their material obligation toward their parents by giving the money instead to the temple and then informing the parents that what should have been given to them was been given to God instead (Mark 7:9-13). Please read this passage carefully and then write down below what Jesus said about such an action.

To honor our parents materially we must give something toward their support in old age.

Some questions arise concerning this.

Question 1: With a limited income, how much should I give to my parents? Of course, you should give only what you can afford, without neglecting your own primary responsibility toward your own family. You may also suggest a plan to your brothers and sisters (if you have any) to pool your resources to support your parents in their old age.

Question 2: My parents are well off, do I still need to give them materially? Parents enjoy token gifts which prove our love to them. Give them something meaningful, though not expensive.

Question 3: My parents are already dead, how can I honor them materially? Obviously you can't. Here a subtle danger must be avoided. Satan may use this lesson to disturb your peace of mind or make you feel guilty. Satan may say something like this to you, "You really failed. You'll never be able to make up to your parents. You're a no good Christian." Don't let Satan bother you. Action 1 is sufficient to honor a dead parent.

Question 4: Is it only material support that I should give? Of course, not. Elderly parents have a need for assurance and companionship. They need to be assured most of all that they are loved. Regular visits or letters or phone calls are a way of honoring them. If they live with us, having regular times to talk with them gives them the assurance of being loved. Certainly, don't forget their special days, birthdays and wedding anniversaries.

Below, write down your plan to honor your parents in a material way.

Summary

Please write down the three characteristics of a healthy relationship with parents.

PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

How can you use this lesson to resolve parents-children conflict in your own family?

MEMORIZE

Matthew 6:14-15: ¹⁴“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
Matthew 6:14-15

Review Ephesians 6:1-3.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 7

RELATIONSHIP TO FRIENDS

(Note: For those who completed Book 6-A, this lesson will be a review but also an opportunity for deeper understanding.)

This area of friendship must also be placed under the complete control of the Lord Jesus. For us Filipinos this is difficult for us to completely submit to Christ. As we have seen in the Filipino Personality Hand, the value of social acceptance or “pakikisama” exerts a very strong

Proverbs 9:6 _____

Please note the three warnings given in Psalm 1:1.

WARNING 1: Do not walk in the counsel of the ungodly.

WARNING 2: Do not stand in the way of sinners.

WARNING 3: Do not sit in the seat of the scornful.

THE UNGODLY. The ungodly person is someone who breaks or twists God’s law. We should never follow the advice of this person. We should never pattern our life according to his ideas. Very often we ask ourselves, “What will people say?” We should decide not to ask this question again. Rather, we should always ask, “What will God say?” Once we discover what God says, let’s go on and do what He wants us to do, no matter what other people say.

Please evaluate yourself. In what ways have you been allowing other people’s opinions to dictate your decisions and actions?

What is God telling you to do in spite of what other people may do to you?

THE SINNERS. Sinners are people who miss the mark, people who fall short of God’s standard. These are the half-way people. They will obey God half-way. They will be honest half-way. They will be committed to God half-way. The Bible tells us not to take our stand with them, we should not take the same position that they take. We should be people who go with God all the way. We should seek to fulfill God’s perfect plan for our life.

Please evaluate yourself. In what ways have you been tempted to follow the Lord Jesus only half-way?

In what way is God calling you to follow the Lord Jesus all the way?

THE SCORNFUL. The scornful or the scoffer is the person who is not serious about anything. The scoffer does not treat spiritual matters with respect. To the scornful everything is a joke. He makes fun of those who are serious about following God. The Bible warns us never to sit with the scornful. We should be serious with God, and we should mean business in following Christ.

Please evaluate yourself. In what ways have you allowed yourself to be affected by the ridicule of non-Christians?

What does the Lord Jesus want you to do even if non-Christian laugh at you?

Please write down the first principle in relating to friends.

NO MORE FRIENDS?

A question arises. Does this mean that Christians should not become friends with non-Christians? No, this is not what it means at all. Psalm 1:1 simply tells us to avoid people who draw us away from Christ, and to avoid joining them in their sinful activities. Avoid getting involved with people in their sins.

Still there are many areas of life which are neutral, things in which Christians and non-Christians may freely participate. Christians should make friends with non-Christians in these neutral places.

Please list some neutral places and activities in which you can make friends with non-Christians.

Build Right Friendship

A second principle in relating to friends is this: Build the right friendships.

How do you build friendship?

Ephesians 4:15 gives the starting point. Please summarize this verse.

There are three essentials of right friendship, according to Ephesians 4:15 – truth, love, growth.

- 1) First, truth must guide all that we say and do with our friends. Second, there must be love.
- 2) Truth without love is brutal frankness and destroys friendship. Only truth spoken and done in love builds up.
- 3) Thirdly, there must be growth. Growth depends on a mutual commitment to a common goal, the goal of becoming Christ-like, becoming all that God wants us to be.

Let's analyze Filipino friendship in the light of love, truth, and growth. Filipino friendship is determined by “pakikisama” (smooth interpersonal relationship) and by

the avoidance of “hiya” (shame to oneself and to others). Because of “pakikisama” and “hiya” we may describe Filipino friendship as very loving.

We love so much we do not tell our friend the truth, if the truth will hurt his feelings. We try as much as possible to speak only what is pleasing, what we think our friend wants to hear. When the truth is hurting or embarrassing we usually soften it, water it down, or tell a lie (a “white” lie, maybe, but still a lie). A pleasant lie is preferable to an embarrassing truth.

Please evaluate your relationship to friends. Do you know how to tell the truth to your friend even when the truth will hurt or embarrass him?

Another strong influence upon our friendship is the value called “leveling.” Leveling refers to the effort made to remove or soften differences in status, economic, social, educational, etc. It is a sin to become different, and this sin is described as being “mayabang” (proud). We try to maintain some kind of friendly uniformity. To be different is to give the impression that we are better than our friends. Leveling results in an attitude of mediocrity, being half-hearted, half-baked, and half-committed to pursuits other than what the group wholeheartedly supports and participates in. Leveling causes us to adjust to the average mentality and maturity of the group, instead of adjusting to the highest ideal, the goal of being like Christ.

Again, please evaluate your relationship to your friends. How much pressure does leveling exert upon your Christian life?

We see that our friendships tend to be shallow and superficial. Being nice does not help a person to know where he really is, and not knowing this he will not be challenged to grow. And leveling discourages a person from striving to be better than he was before. In fact, those who strive to be better end up as loners.

Please mention the three ingredients of right friendship.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

How can you apply the two principles of friendship?

PRINCIPLE 1: AVOID WRONG FRIENDSHIP

PRINCIPLE 2: BUILD RIGHT FRIENDSHIP

MEMORIZE

Psalm 1:1: Blessed *is* the man
Who walks not in the counsel of the ^[a]ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful. Psalm 1:1

Review Matthew 6:14-15; all the verses of the Victory Hand.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 8

LOVE, COURTSHIP, AND MARRIAGE—Part 1

In order to help the Filipino Christian to develop a Christ-like character, we need to help him/her overcome the many pitfalls presented by this area of love, courtship, and marriage. This area is especially filled with spiritual dangers. You could experience the wiping out of all your discipling efforts in a very short time through unresolved problems in love or courtship or marriage.

What are some of the pitfalls in Filipino love, courtship, and marriage?

PITFALL 1: LACK OF DEVELOPMENTAL PREPARATION

The first pitfall is lack of developmental preparation. By developmental we mean that every person goes through definite stages of development from birth through childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age, and death. By preparation we mean that a person may be taught and trained at each stage in such a way that he functions efficiently at his present stage of development and he is learning skills which prepare him for the next stage.

This pitfall of lacking developmental preparation is caused primarily by parents and authority persons who wrongly believe that matters relating to love, courtship, and marriage will naturally resolve themselves. In fact, many parents do not like to entertain the idea that their

children will someday be involved in love and courtship. The usual advice is “Wala munang ligaw-ligaw” (“Don’t get involved yet in courtship”) and “Huwag munang mag-aasawa” (“Don’t think of marriage yet”). And this negative form of counseling is about all that parents give to their children! Few parents know how to give positive instruction and training to their children about the right way to handle emotions.

Children contribute to the dangers of this first pitfall by their quiet submission to authority. They do try to keep their emotions under control for a while. Then they give in to their emotions little by little but in ways not noticed by their parents. But because they lack positive guidance, they eventually get involved in wrong pre-marital activities, which result in problems for everybody.

This is the first pitfall: lack of developmental preparation in the area of love, courtship, and marriage.

Please evaluate yourself by answering the appropriate question.

FOR THE SINGLE PERSON: What kind of preparation have you received regarding the proper way to handle emotions related to love, courtship, and marriage?

FOR PARENTS: What preparation are you giving to your teenage children regarding the proper way to handle emotions related to love, courtship, and marriage?

PITFALL 2: ROMANTIC FIRST LOVE

Many Filipino teenagers have a romantic idea of first love. “First love never dies,” so they say. Instead of looking at first love as something like the baby talk of the heart or as the first wobbly steps of their emotions, many young people think of their first love as the perfect and most ideal form of love.

This is a pitfall for at least two reasons. First, a person makes an immature form of love as his standard for all his succeeding experiences of love. This is like considering the baby as the ideal man. Second, the person who keeps looking back at his first love will tend to live in the past instead of living in the present and facing life as it comes to him now.

Please evaluate yourself. Are you in any way affected by your experience of love in the past? If so, how can you use the principle of a healthy self-image (for example, the principle that God was in control of everything in the past) to transform your negative past so that it will become a positive factor in your present experience?

PITFALL 3: “TUKSUHAN” (TEASING)

Another pitfall in the area of love and courtship is the habit of “tuksuhan” or teasing someone to another. The effect of teasing is that the friends are actually doing the courting in behalf of the guy and the girl. Through teasing the guy gets to express his feelings and the girl gets to convey her response without their having talked face to face.

Many courtships begin with teasing. Some relationships, begun in teasing, end up in marriage, but such marriage tends to be shaky as they are dependent on the continued support of friends. The most painful result of teasing is that most relationships, which have been developed

through teasing, get broken up leaving many broken hearts on the way.

Please evaluate yourself. What have been your experiences regarding this habit of teasing? Why do you think teasing should be discouraged or completely avoided?

PITFALL 4: “TANAN” (ELOPEMENT)

“Tanan” is a kind of short-cut to marriage. It is a formula for instant marriage. It is somewhat based on the Filipino “bahala na” (come what may) attitude. “Bahala na” at its best is a happy-go-lucky optimism; at its worst, a hopeless fatalism (what will be will be and there’s nothing we can do about it anyway).

What situations bring about the motive to elope? Usually, when authority figures oppose the relationship of a guy and a girl, the young lovers elope to force the issue.

When the guy or both the guy and the girl can’t wait for the acceptable time, acceptable that is by their families, they rush up matters by eloping.

When the guy and the girl have limited resources and it is too expensive for them to get married in the traditionally accepted manner, they elope and get married in an inexpensive way.

The results of elopement are highly unpredictable. They could range from very supportive parental attitude – “The deed’s done let’s go ahead and pronounce the blessing” – to very vindictive – “We don’t ever want to see them again!”

But even with vindictive parents there can be a sudden change of attitudes when the first grandchild is born. Parents will continue to feel bad against their disobedient children, but they cannot punish their innocent grandchild. So little by little there is healing, and this healing may take years to complete. Sometimes complete healing never occurs at all.

From what you have personally observed regarding elopement, why do you say that it is not in accord with biblical standards of love?

PITFALL 5: “PIKOT” (FORCED MARRIAGE)

“Pikot” refers to the situation in which the girl and her family want, for some reason or other, to get the girl married off to a guy; so they set up a situation in which the guy and girl are caught in a compromising situation that demands a wedding to be performed as soon as possible.

“Pikot” may happen to a clean-living, straight-going, innocent guy, simply because he is a most promising husband. But “pikot” usually happens to a guy who keeps an intimate relationship with several girls at the same time. The girl with the most interest and determination to marry the guy will set up the “pikot” situation.

You may find yourself in a position where you have to disciple a couple who have gotten married through “pikot.” Forced marriages are usually unhappy and unsatisfactory to both parties. Your main objective is to help the couple to establish a Christian marriage and a Christian home.

From your observation, how can a person best avoid the “pikot” situation?

PITFALL 6: COMMON LAW MARRIAGES

By common law marriages is meant the situation in which a man and a woman decide to live together as husband and wife without benefit of a legal marriage ceremony. There are at least three types of common law marriage.

TYPE A: MARRIAGE WITHOUT LEGAL IMPEDIMENTS

Both parties were single and unmarried when they decided to live together. Some cases of elopement end up in this type of common law marriage, because the parents refuse to receive back their errant children. Still other cases result from financial and social hindrances.

TYPE B. MARRIAGE WITH LEGAL IMPEDIMENTS

This situation has all kinds of complications, with the major ones mentioned below.

Complication 1: One party is legally married but estranged; the other party is single.

Complication 2: Both parties are legally married but both estranged; however, their legal spouses remained unmarried and are taking care of their legitimate children.

Complication 3: Both parties are legally married but estranged; and their legal spouses have taken their own common law partners.

Complication 4: In rare cases, legal separation (short of divorced) is granted to quarreling couples. Once legally separated, one or both spouses take up common law partners.

Complication 5: This complication complicates the other complications. The legal spouses and legitimate children contend for their rights to the support and inheritance against the claims of common law partners and illegitimate children.

NOTE: Since this study was first written Filipino marriage norms have become increasingly influenced by Hollywood culture. In the 21st century living together without benefit of marriage is becoming more and more tolerated if not accepted.

TYPE C. MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE

This involves a widow who chooses a common law marriage for fear that she will lose her pension and other benefits accrued from the death of her first husband, once she gets legally married to a second husband.

In discipling and church planting, if you are not careful, you will end up baptizing and appointing as church officers people who are involved in common law marriages. It is most advisable for you to check on marriage relationships of baptismal candidates during the period of baptismal instruction. Do this with all confidentiality and compassion but with faithfulness to the scriptural standards of holiness and right living.

Is there a common law marriage within your church or fellowship which the church has not properly dealt with? What do you think God wants you to do about it?

PITFALL 7: “QUERIDA” (MISTRESS) SYSTEM

This situation is an illustration of what sociologists describe as the “double standard” of morality. According to this double standard, a man may maintain one or more mistresses, have families by them, and still be a respectable husband and father of his legal wife and family. But a woman, be she legal wife or mistress, should be faithful to her husband. The “querida” system is approved by the general male population and tolerated by the female

Faithfulness to one wife is taken by the general male population as a sign of weakness on the part of a man and a proof of a wife’s mastery over him. Such a man is looked down upon as “under the saya” (literally, under the skirt, henpecked). A man, therefore, may be tempted to get involved to certain degrees in the “querida” system if only to prove his masculinity and preserve his pride. Of course, at the root is the problem of a sinful, lustful heart.

Those from the well-to-do and affluent class are usually the ones who are deeply involved in the “querida” system, because of their financial resources. For these affluent men Christianity demands radical changes.

A special problem is posed by the Gospel for those involved in the “querida” system. If the man becomes thoroughly converted, what will happen to his mistresses and their children? The same problem presents itself when the mistress gets converted.

A question for the Christian to answer: How can we best present the Gospel to those involved in the “querida” system?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Which of the pitfalls discussed in this lesson do you need help on, whether for yourself or someone close to you?

MEMORIZE

1 Corinthians 13:1-3: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ² And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body ^[a]to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Review Psalm 1:1; Hebrews 4:12.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 9

LOVE, COURTSHIP,
AND MARRIAGE—Part 2

IN our previous lessons we saw some of the pitfalls of love, courtship, and marriage in the Philippines. These pitfalls ought to impress upon us the absolute importance of placing this area of life under the full control of the Lord Jesus Christ. Falling in love, courting or getting courted, and getting married should not only be motivated by our feelings and emotions but, rather guided by the will of God.

To know the will of God we must go to His Word, the Bible. What does God's Word teach regarding love, courtship, and marriage? We shall be looking at key scripture passages. From these passages we shall discover some truths which we shall call
FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

As you study these foundations you may take one or combination of the following perspectives:

Perspective 1: If you are a single person, you may study these foundations to guide you in your love, courtship, and marriage.

Perspective 2: If you are a married person, you may study these foundations to enrich and redirect your marriage so that it will follow the biblical pattern.

Perspective 3: If you are a parent with children who are teenagers or older, you may study these foundations to help you counsel with your children more effectively in this area.

GENESIS 2:18-25

The first key scripture passage we shall study is Genesis 2:18-25. Please read this passage carefully. Then answer the following questions.

What did God say about man's being alone? Gen 2:18.

What did man need? Who decided to supply that need? Gen 2:18.

Please describe how God made man and woman. Genesis 2:21-22.

After God had made the woman, who presented the woman to the man? Genesis 2:22.

Describe the relationship which existed between man and woman in the first marriage. Genesis 2:24.

What was the condition of Adam and Eve before each other? How did they feel toward one another? Gen 2:25.

From Genesis 2:18-25 we discover the following truths, which we call FOUNDATION FOR CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

FOUNDATION 1: GOD IS THE AUTHOR OF MARRIAGE

As its author God alone knows how marriage works, and He tells us how in the Bible. The Bible is the handbook or manual which God has provided, and it shows how we may have a successful marriage. In the Bible we see the principles that should guide the relationship of husband and wife, and principles that should determine the management of the family.

APPLICATION . . .

For Single Persons

The best preparation for marriage you can have is to be a true disciple, who faithfully studies and practices the Word of God in your daily life.

During the period of engagement, study with your future life partner what the Bible teaches about Christian marriage and the Christian home.

For Married Couples

Study together the biblical teaching on Christian marriage and the Christian home.

Decide to make the Word of God as the absolute authority in your marriage relationship and in your home. You should ask, "What does God want us to do in this matter?" rather than "What do I want or think about it?" Stand on the common foundation of God's Word, instead of fighting a tug of war. Tug of war in marriage means that I do my best to pull you over to my ideas and desires, while you also do your best to pull me to your ideas and desires.

SELF-EVALUATION . . .

In what way do you need to apply FOUNDATION 1 in your life beginning today?

FOUNDATION 2: GOD CARES ABOUT YOUR MARRIAGE MORE THAN YOU CAN CARE ABOUT IT.

Note Genesis 2:18 again. The Lord God saw Adam's need for a life partner long before Adam could define his need. Remember that at that time Adam did not even have an idea what a woman looked like. But already God knew and cared Adam's need. This proves that God cares about marriage more than we can care about it.

APPLICATION . . .

For Single Persons

Commit your marriage plans to the Lord. Thank Him for His concern and care for this area of your life.

Claim God's grace for your emotional needs as a single person.

For Married Couples

God cares so much about your marriage. He makes available to you all the resources of His love, wisdom, and power. In prayer claim these resources from God.

As a married couple God plans for you to meet each other's needs in all three aspects of body, soul, and spirit. Claim James 1:5 for the wisdom to know what

these needs are and how to best help your partner to meet them.

SELF-EVALUATION . . .

In what way do you need to apply FOUNDATION 2 in your life beginning today?

FOUNDATION 3: MARRIAGE IS NOT AN END IN ITSELF BUT A MEANS TO A HIGHER END.

In instituting marriage, God gave Eve to Adam to be a helper fit for him. A helper in what? Eve was to be a helper to Adam in accomplishing the will of God. This does not mean that woman serves a secondary role. In the New Testament we will see that man and woman in marriage are mutual helpers to each other in order for God's will to be fulfilled in their lives. Please read 1 Corinthians 11:11-12; 1 Peter 3:7; Galatians 3:27-28; Luke 20:34-36. This will of God has to do with the eternal kingdom of God, and in that kingdom marriage is no longer necessary. The Lord plainly stated that marriage belongs only to this present age. This means that marriage is not an end in itself, but a means to a higher end. The higher end is the will of God.

APPLICATION . . .

For the Single Persons

God's will for you is to become conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:29). Everything that you do in your love, courtship, and marriage should enable you to become more Christ-like.

God's will also includes the kind of life work – calling and service – which God wants you to do. Your choice of a life partner must be determined by this consideration: Will your future life partner help or hinder you in doing your life work?

For Married Couples

You should have a clear plan and program of spiritual growth. Above anyone else, you are to minister to each other in the process of becoming Christ-like. This program of spiritual growth includes your children as well; parents have the primary responsibility of teaching and training their children in God's ways.

You must be clear about the life work which God wants you to do as husband and wife. Faithfully help each other and unitedly use your gifts and talents in order to accomplish your calling and service.

SELF-EVALUATION . . .

In what way do you need to apply FOUNDATION 3 in your life beginning today?

FOUNDATION 4: GOD MAKES YOUR LIFE PARTNER TO BE A SUITABLE HELPMATE FOR YOU.

God gave Adam a suitable helpmate, someone who corresponded him, who completed him. This principle of suitability is clarified further in the New Testament as the principle of no unequal yoking. Please read 2 Corinthians 6:14. Unequal yoking means the following:

One partner is Christian, the other is not a Christian.

Both are Christians but they are so far apart in their spiritual maturity so that they are not capable of working together effectively.

Both are mature Christians but their life works are not compatible. For example, one feels called to work among the mountain tribes; the other feels called to work in the city.

APPLICATION . . .

For Single Persons

Lay down as your conviction that you will never marry a non-Christian.

Do not establish a love relationship with a Christian who is spiritually immature. Wait and pray until that person is sufficiently mature.

Trust God absolutely, that he is preparing your suitable partner for you. God prepared Eve while Adam was asleep. Likewise, you can “sleep” on this matter of your future life partner by concentrating on your own spiritual growth and on preparing to do your life work. This means finishing all the necessary studies and training which you need and for which God gives you the opportunity.

For Married Couples

If you have a non-Christian spouse, continue to pray for his/her salvation, while at the same time maintaining an exemplary Christian life in your married life and in the home.

If you and your spouse have unequal spiritual maturity, do four things: (1) recognize the difference in spiritual maturity; (2) plan a program for helping each other spiritually; (3) get involved in a growing church or Christian Bible study group; (4) work together on the PPL Method (see Lesson 4).

For married couples, the life work of the husband always takes priority. The wife should give him all her support. However, the husband should also see to it that the wife will express her calling and service in ways compatible and not competitive or disruptive of his life work.

SELF- EVALUATION . . .

In what way do you need to apply FOUNDATION 4 in your life beginning today?

CHRIST'S TEACHING ON MARRIAGE

Before we go on to the next foundations let's study carefully Matthew 19:1-12, then answer the following questions.

What was the first question which the Pharisees asked the Lord Jesus? Matt.19:3

What answer did the Lord give? On what did He base His answer? Matthew 19:4-6; Genesis 1:27; 2:24.

What was the second question of the Pharisees? Matthew 19:7.

What was the answer of the Lord to the second question?
Matthew 19:8-9.

What did the disciples say to the Lord Jesus? Matthew
19:10. _____

What answer did the Lord give to the disciples?
Matthew 19:11-12.

NOTE: Homosexuality has become a serious matter of public discussion in many societies throughout the world. This issue will be studied more fully in a special article.

FOUNDATION 5: GOD PLANNED FOR HUSBAND AND WIFE TO BE COMPLETELY ONE AS LONG AS THEY LIVE.

As God originally planned it, marriage was for life. The Pharisees brought up the question of divorce, a practice permitted by the law of Moses. The Lord Jesus clarified that divorce was not in God's original plan. Divorce was permitted because of the hardness of people's heart. This means that the law on divorce was not intended to encourage divorce, but rather to limit to a certain extent the destructive consequences of this evil practice.

The Lord Jesus emphasized that from the beginning God planned for husband and wife to be completely one as long as they lived. When a couple get married according to the FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE divorce would never even come into the picture.

Christian marriage requires that before a couple marry they must make sure of their unity. Unity should exist in all three aspects of personality: spirit, soul, and body in that order, with the unity of spirit and soul already experienced BEFORE marriage and the unity of the body enjoyed only AFTER marriage.

UNITY OF SPIRIT means that the man and woman are one in their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They are both born again spiritually, and together they are growing in Christian discipleship.

UNITY OF SOUL means, at least, that before they get married the couple have already learned to communicate effectively at the levels of their mind, emotion, and will (the three major areas of the soul). We may call this as “naked communication,” based on the symbolic description in Genesis 2:25 of Adam and Eve as being naked before each other but not ashamed. This means that before a couple decide to marry they must know each other well in what they think, feel, and plan, and they are able to be completely honest with each other in all these things. And being completely honest, they still accept and love each other and, together, they can agree on a united course and direction for their life together.

UNITY OF BODY refers to the coming together physically of husband and wife after marriage. This physical union expresses the total self-giving of their life to one another.

In a marriage where this three-fold unity is maintained the problem of divorce does not have a chance to arise. Without this threefold unity the most promising

marriage could end in tragedy or in what someone described as “a life of quiet desperation”.

APPLICATION . . .

For Single Persons

Practice the skill of developing right friendship (explained in Character Hand: Middle Finger) in your relationship with everybody, most especially with your prospective life partner. If you are praying for someone as your prospective life partner, find out first of all if you can become good friends with that person. A successful marriage is essentially the most intimate kind of friendship.

If you are already related to someone in a love relationship, practice and develop unity of spirit and unity of soul.

Always avoid pre-marital sex.

For Married Couples

Keep on developing unity of spirit and unity of soul. Give special effort to enriching your communication with each other.

Many times the pressure of work and family responsibilities leave you very little time solely for each other. Schedule regular times when you can be alone together.

SELF-EVALUATION . . .

In what way do you need to apply FOUNDATION 5 IN YOUR LIFE BEGINNING TODAY?

FOUNDATION 6: GOD HAS PLANNED FOR CERTAIN SPECIAL PEOPLE TO REMAIN SINGLE FOR LIFE

Although it is God's usual plan for people to get married, the Lord Jesus made it clear in Matthew 19:11-12 that certain people will remain single for life. There are three reasons why some people become "eunuchs" (unmarried).

Some are born incapable of marriage.

Some are made incapable of marriage by human operation; for example, the harem guards of Eastern kings in ancient times were castrated. In mentioning this practice, the Lord Jesus was not giving his approval of it, nor of the practice of maintaining a harem.

Some decide to remain single for life for the sake of the kingdom of God. These people feel called to a ministry, which makes marriage very difficult or even a hindrance to fulfilling God's will. Paul was such a person (1 Corinthians 9:7).

In Matthew 19:11 the Lord Jesus said, "not all men can accept this statement, but only those to whom it is given." By this He implies that the ability to remain single is given by God, and it is given to those who are called to this state of singleness. Paul called this state of singleness as a "gift," indicating that along with the gift there is the corresponding grace granted to the person

gifted with singleness to remain pure and satisfied in the Lord.

There is a limited application of this divine plan for single life, which applies to every person. Although God may include marriage in his plan, the Christian still needs to wait for the right timing for marriage. This means that until God's time has come, the Christian must learn to live a pure, victorious, and happy life as a single person.

Application . . .

For Single Persons

Have you faced this question honestly: Are you willing to stay single for life, if that is God's will for you?

As a single person, do you know how to live a pure, victorious, and happy life in the Lord?

For Married Couples

Some couples, who are going through difficulties in their married relationship, are tempted by the devil to ask this question: Did God really plan for me to remain single for life? As a result of this questioning, they become vulnerable to the more dangerous temptation of wishing themselves unmarried. Such persons should never entertain questions about whether God wanted them to remain single. They are married, and it is God's will for them now to make that marriage successful with the Lord's help.

Some married persons, for some reason or other, are separated from their legal spouses. They must learn to

live pure, victorious, and happy lives in the Lord while separated from their spouses. They must also trust the Lord to help them solve the problem of separation, so that true Christian reconciliation and healing will come to the broken relationship.

SELF-EVALUATION . . .

In what way do you need to apply FOUNDATION 6 in your life beginning today?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Which of the FOUNDATIONS FOR MARRIAGE studied in this lesson needs to be established in your life as soon as possible? Why so?

MEMORIZE

Matthew 19:4-6: ⁴ And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made *them* at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ ⁵ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? ⁶ So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.” Matthew 19:4-6

Review 1 Corinthians 13:1-3; Hebrews 4:13.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 10

LOVE, COURTSHIP,
AND MARRIAGE—Part 3

IN order to have a truly Christian marriage, we need to study traditional Filipino courtship practices in order to come up with a Christian pattern. Filipino courtship may be classified into four types.

TYPE A: ROMANTIC PATTERN

Boy and girl are mutually attracted to each other.
Boy and girl establish a love relationship.
Boy and girl get married.

TYPE B: TEASING PATTERN

Boy and girl are teased to each other.
Boy and girl develop a love relationship, with the support and encouragement of friends.
Boy and girl get married.

TYPE C. PERSISTENCE-PITY PATTERN

Boy persistently courts girl, who does not feel initially attracted to him.
Girl pities boy because of persistence and a love relationship is established.
Boy and girl get married.

TYPE D. PARENTAL CHOICE PATTERN

Parents set up situations for boy to meet girl.
Parental pressure leads boy and girl to establish a love relationship.
Parents succeed in getting the boy and girl married to each other.

PLEASE, EVALUATE . . .

Please evaluate the four patterns of Filipino courtship by checking the descriptions which you think are appropriate, below:

- 1. Mainly motivated by human feelings.
- 2. Primarily based on human decision.
- 3. Provides little opportunity for emotional and spiritual growth for the boy and girl.
- 4. Treats marriage as an end in itself, not as a means to a higher end.

Towards a Filipino Christian Courtship Pattern

In view of the foundations of Christian marriage, which we have studied in the previous lesson, we need to ask: What should be a Filipino Christian courtship pattern?

Before we suggest such a pattern, let us study 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 Please read this passage carefully; then answer the following questions.

From 1 Thessalonians 4:2, 3, and 7, how does God want guys and girls to relate to each other?

How should guys and girls treat their bodies in all their relationship, especially during courtship? 1 Thes 4:4

According to 1 Thessalonians 4:5 what should girls and guys avoid in their relationship?

Please study 1 Thessalonians 4:6. According to this verse, what two sins should be avoided?

What warnings are given to those who disobey God's commands regarding relationship with the opposite sex? 1 Thessalonians 4:6-8.

God's standard for His children is purity and holiness in all relationships, specially in regard to the opposite sex. To maintain holiness in courtship the following steps in courtship are suggested:

STEP 1: FAMILY OF GOD RELATIONSHIP

The basic principle of relationship should be the principle that we are in the family of God. According to 1 Timothy 5:1-2, how should Christians treat each other?

STEP 2: CHRISTIAN FRIENDSHIP

When a guy has a "crush" or a girl feels attracted to someone, the thing to do is NOT to express that special feeling right away. Rather, that feeling should be kept to oneself, to be prayed over and tested. Genuine attraction is tested by friendship. Develop Christian friendship with the person in order to get to know the person and

find out if that person does have the qualities of a God-prepared life partner. In developing this friendship, follow the guidelines given in Lesson 7 on Friendship. From Philippians 2:1-5 please enumerate some qualities of Christian friendship.

STEP 3: KNOWING GOD'S WILL

This is listed as a separate step but actually it is a process which goes on from the time you feel attracted to someone to the time a proposal is made. Follow the guidelines in seeking to know the will of God, Book 5, Lesson 5. The guideline regarding asking for counsel is very important during this process. What does the word of God command us to do in Ephesians 5:15-17?

STEP 4: PROPOSAL AND RESPONSE

After the guy has received definite leading from God that it is His will for him to court a certain girl, and after he has received his spiritual leader's blessing, he should go ahead and propose to the girl.

How should the girl respond? Whether or not she has any feelings toward the guy, she should: (1) thank the guy for his proposal; (2) assure him that she will think and pray about his proposal; (3) give him an approximate time (for example, after six months) when he can see her again to know her answer.

The girl then will also go through the process of seeking God's will about her answer, following the guidelines already learned in a previous lesson.

According to Ephesians 4:15 how should the guy propose and how should the girl give her response?

STEP 5: SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP

If the guy and the girl agree that God is leading them to each other as future life partners, they enter the relationship of special friendship. During this stage of relationship they seek for further clarification and confirmation of God's will for their relationship. They should start developing unity of soul and unity of spirit. They should be careful to avoid the dangers (to be discussed later in this lesson) of such a relationship. Please summarize guidelines from 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6 which special friends should follow.

STEP 6: ENGAGEMENT

When the guy and girl have definitely planned to get married, it is helpful for them and everyone in the fellowship if their engagement is announced at an appropriate Christian fellowship event. The announcement may be made by the pastor or a respected spiritual leader, announcing that the guy and the girl are engaged to be married soon (the exact date of the wedding may or may not be announced). Both the guy and the girl may give brief testimonies of how the Lord has led them in their relationship. After the announcement, the guy and the girl will start preparing for their wedding. At this time they should work more consciously on unity of soul and unity of spirit. But the high standards of purity and holiness should be maintained; petting and pre-marital sex should definitely be avoided. During this time of preparation what should

the guy and the girl always remember from 1 Corinthians 6:18-20?

STEP 7: WEDDING

In summary, here are the suggested steps for Filipino Courtship Pattern:

- Step 1: Family of God Relationship
- Step 2: Christian Friendship
- Step 3: Knowing God's Will
- Step 4: Proposal and Response
- Step 5: Special Friendship
- Step 6: Engagement
- Step 7: Wedding

PATTERNS COMPARED . . .

Please compare and contrast this suggested Christian courtship pattern with the other Filipino patterns studied in the first part of our lesson. In what way is the Christian pattern different?

SPECIAL DANGERS DURING COURTSHIP

There are certain dangers which guys and girls must beware of during the period of courtship, most particularly when they are already at the stage of special friendship. Those who have a relationship as special friends feel so much confidence with each other, without realizing that they are allowing themselves to go beyond the limits of propriety, modesty, and purity.

DANGER 1: SIGHT

GUYS are easily tempted by what they see. Sight leads to imagination, imagination leads to lustful thoughts, and lustful thoughts lead to impure actions.

According to Matthew 5:27-29, what sin should guys avoid?

According to Matthew 5:29, how can guys avoid sinning with their eyes?

What the Lord Jesus means is that a person should learn to be master over his eyes. Guys can do this by doing the following:

Avoid looking at lustful pictures, shows, movies, or pornography on the internet.

Avoid reading lustful books and magazines.

When they are tempted with lustful thoughts, they should substitute Bible verses in their minds.

You may not be able to avoid the accidental first look.

You must certainly resist and avoid the second lustful look.

GIRLS should dress and act in a way that is modest and in a way that does not become a temptation to men.

From the following verses, please summarize the Christian standard for women's clothing.

1 Timothy 2:9-10 _____

1 Peter 3:3-4 _____

DANGER 2: HEARING

GIRLS are easily deceived by what they hear. They usually become emotionally involved with guys:

Who flatter their beauty, talents, and other qualities. Who make them feel very, very important. This weakness is probably related to a woman's mother instinct. When a man tells a woman, "I cannot live without you, you are my only hope, I'll die if you leave me", she is tempted to become involved with him emotionally.

According to Colossians 3:16, whose words should a girl always have in her heart so that she would not be deceived by the flattering and deceiving words of men?

GUYS should be careful in expressing verbally their thoughts and feelings to girls.

They should avoid giving a false impression that they are emotionally attracted to the girl.

If a guy has an attraction toward the girl, he should avoid expressing his feelings too soon, before he has determined God's will. A hope planted in a girl's heart when unfulfilled can result in a broken heart.

According to Colossians 4:6, how should Christians, particularly guys, speak?

DANGER 3: TOUCH

GUYS and GIRLS are both in danger in this area of touch. The most important advice for guys and girls is **KEEP DISTANCE!**

Limit your physical contact with the opposite sex to the usual acts of courtesy –shaking hands, friendly taps, assisting someone in crossing the street, getting on or off buses and jeeps, helping someone to get up when physically weak, and the like.

Physical closeness even during Christian fellowships can be a source of danger, if people are not careful.

SPECIAL FRIENDS must guard against the temptation of petting – physical activities that tend to awaken emotional and sexual desires. Analyze the progression of petting:

Starts with holding hands;

Leads to embracing and kissing;

Progresses to very intimate touching;

A point of no return is reached when the guys and girls are so emotionally and physically aroused they forget themselves completely. This results in sexual immorality.

PETTING can be avoided by the following steps:

At the very beginning of their relationship, a guy and girls ought to recognize the temptation and set for themselves this rule: No unnecessary physical contacts beyond the usual acts of courtesy.

They should avoid going to secluded, private places by themselves.

They should engage only in activities that they can freely do even with people around.

They should determine that the period of special friendship is for developing unity of soul and unity of spirit.

They should lay down as their principle that sex is only for marriage.

According to Matthew 5:30, what is the best way to avoid the temptation of sinful touching?

What does the Lord Jesus mean by “cutting off your hands”?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

What areas of your relationship with the opposite sex do you need to correct in the light of this lesson? How do you plan to correct these areas?

MEMORIZE

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4: ³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4

Review Matthew 19:4-6; Galatians 4:19.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

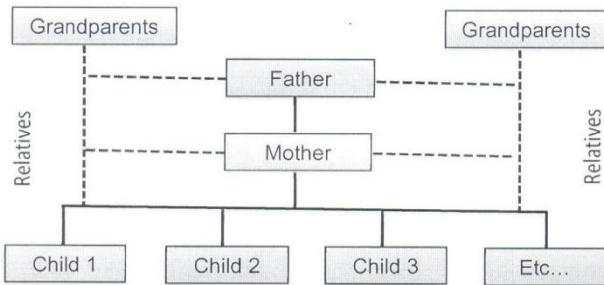
Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 11

CHRISTIAN FAMILY – Part 1

THE process of Christian Character Building includes the building of a Christian family. Before we deal with the Christian family, let's try to understand a typical traditional Filipino family. Obviously, the characteristics mentioned below are more typical of families who live in more or less close-knit communities in the province; those who live in more urbanized areas may show a relaxing of these characteristics due to increasing western influences. Please carefully look at the diagram below:

TRADITIONAL FILIPINO FAMILY



FATHER

He is considered the primary authority in the home. He makes the big decisions; for example, things that affect life and death, such as weddings, a move to another place of residence, etc.

He is looked upon primarily as a bread winner, who faithfully turns in the whole paycheck to mother.

He does not bother about the routine management of the home (this is in the care of mother or her proxy, an

elderly relative who lives in the house or the housemaid).

After breadwinning, his next activity is in pursuing his ambition or leisure time with his peer group. If he gets too involved in his “good time” this is his right, as long as he faithfully supports his family financially.

Because of detachment from the day-to-day affairs of the home, he ends up being a mere figurehead. When he realizes this, he and mother become secret competitors for their children’s loyalty.

When as figurehead he wants to be heard he resorts to outbursts of temper, sometimes, while under the influence of alcohol. The alcohol becomes his scapegoat (he can always deny saying certain things because he was drunk at the time). The outbursts relieve his pent-up emotions, but they only lessen the respect his family has for his authority.

MOTHER

She holds the purse and the power in the home. She administers the day-to-day discipline, which sometimes puts her in an unfavorable light, when father shows more flexibility and leniency toward the children. In effect, she sometimes insulates father and children from each other; she plays go-between, conciliating or covering-up father and children to each other. Her job as “home manager” makes Filipino society predominantly a matriarchal rule.

GRANDPARENTS

We refer to the parents of the father and mother of a family, the grandparents of the children from both the paternal and maternal sides.

As the diagram shows, broken lines connect the grandparents directly to father and mother and the children. This means that grandparents believe they have the right to exert direct authority over their children and grandchildren.

This sets up a conflict as to which authority the children will obey. Even father and mother come into conflict with each other, depending on which in-law seems to be meddling too much in the family.

Sometimes the family is caught in the crossfire of a conflict between paternal grandparents and maternal grandparents. Usually the grandparents who live closer to the children and who give more material favors win the loyalty of the family.

CHILDREN

They are expected to obey their father and mother and all older persons in the home.

The oldest child is respected and obeyed by the younger children. He/she is expected to act as a second father or mother. He/she is usually burdened with home chores. Later on when he/she gets employed, he/she will help in supporting the family.

The youngest child is usually considered the family favorite, and often grows up a spoiled brat.

The middle children sometimes feel less loved than the oldest or the youngest child.

Every child is expected sometimes to obey all the older siblings.

Male children tend to copy father; they spend more time outside the home, living a happy-go-lucky life. They are slow to learn the sense of responsibility and accountability.

Female children usually stay at home and help mother. They usually learn the skills of mother in home

management, and as a result they develop their sense of responsibility and accountability better and faster than their brothers do.

When the different authority figures in the home (parents, grandparents and older relatives) are obviously competing for the children's loyalty, the children learn to play one authority figure against another in order to get what they (the children) want, or get away with a mischief through the protection of a more lenient authority figure (usually the grandparents).

RELATIVES

Every family is expected to be loyal to all relatives. Loyalty to relatives depends on distance and mutual exchange of favors. The nearer your blood relation, the closer you live to each other, and the more often you exchange favors, the more loyal you are to one another.

PLEASE, EVALUATE...

Please, evaluate your family and describe in what way your family is typical or different.

MY FATHER

Typical in these ways _____

Different in these ways

MY MOTHER

Typical in these ways

Different in these ways

MY GRANDPARENTS

Typical in these ways

Different in these ways

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Typical in these ways

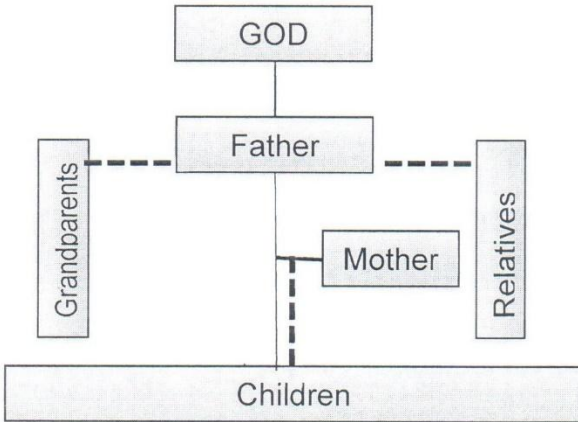
Different in these ways

MY RELATIVES

Typical in these ways

Different in these ways

CHRISTIAN FILIPINO FAMILY



Please study the diagram above. With the help of this diagram, we may draw from Ephesians 5:18-33 the following guidelines for the Christian Filipino family. Please carefully read Ephesians 5:18-33.

GUIDELINE 1: GOD IS THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY.

According to Ephesians 5:18-21, what should be our relationship to each of the Three Persons of the Triune God?

The Holy Spirit (v 18) _____

God the Father (verse 20)

Jesus Christ (verse 21)

Ephesians 5:18-21 describes the normal Christian life in all situations and relationships.

First, the normal Christian life is Spirit-filled (Ephesians 5:18). The Holy Spirit is the God-given power, who will enable the Christian to live the Christ-like life inside the outside the home. The most effective way to have a Christian home is for every member of the family to be Spirit-filled.

Please evaluate yourself. If you are Spirit-filled, how should you live as (husband/wife, father/mother, son/daughter, brother/ sister)?

Be sure that you are Spirit-filled. Please review Youth Hand: Palm. What do you need to do at this time in order to be sure that you are filled with the Holy Spirit?

Secondly, the normal Christian life is God-centered (Ephesians 5:20). The Christian always relates everything to God. This means three things:
He will thank God for everything that happens;
He will seek to know God's purpose in every situation and circumstance;
He will claim from God the wisdom, power and love, which he needs for every situation and circumstance.

Please evaluate yourself. What is your first response when anything goes wrong in the family and in the home? Is this response according to Ephesians 5:20? If not, how can you make your response follow the guideline of Ephesians 5:20?

Thirdly, the normal Christian life is Christ –directed (Ephesians 5:21). The Christian relates to people for the

sake of Christ and in order for Christ to be obeyed and glorified. Colossians 3:23-24 explains the Christ-directed life; please summarize these verses in your own words.

If you were living as directed by Christ, how would you live differently as (husband/wife; father/mother; son/daughter; brother/sister)?

GUIDELINE 2: THE NEWLY MARRIED COUPLE SHOULD SEEK TO ESTABLISH A FAMILY COMPLETELY UNDER THEIR AUTHORITY.

Please summarize Ephesians 5:31 in your own words.

This guideline must be understood in relation to the couple's parents and all other relatives. Please see the diagram of the Filipino Christian family. Grandparents (the couple's parents) and relatives are connected to the father of the new family by a broken line; this means that they may give counsel, rebuke, and warning, but they have no right to exert direct authority over any member of the family. This is the meaning of a man leaving his father and mother and cleaving to his wife. This does not mean that the newly married couple may totally ignore their parents and relatives. This does mean that God gives the man full authority and responsibility over his new family.

Please evaluate your family. Who exercises authority over your family? How much do grandparents and relatives share in the authority? How should you make the exercise of authority follow the biblical pattern?

The reason for the sharing of authority is usually economic dependence. The couple and their children are not economically independent of the couples' parents; hence, the couple's parents exercise authority to the extent of their financial power. If this is the situation of your family, what should you do in order to become economically independent?

GUIDELINE 3: THE HUSBAND (FATHER OF THE FAMILY) HOLDS AUTHORITY OVER THE WIFE (MOTHER OF THE FAMILY) AND OVER THE CHILDREN.

Please study the diagram again. Notice that the direct line of authority from the father to the mother and to the children. The biblical picture of the family is patriarchal. Also notice that the mother's authority over the children is symbolized by a broken line. This means that she exercises this authority subject to the over-all authority of the father of the family; she must always uphold and magnify the father's authority, and she must always seek to be one with the decisions of the father. This does not mean that the husband is a dictator, and that the wife is a silent slave. From Ephesians 5:22-33, list the responsibilities of the husband toward the wife.

From Ephesians 5:22-33, list the responsibilities of the wife to the husband.

Please evaluate yourself. As husband and wife, what responsibilities should you do more faithfully toward your life partner?

(For further study, please read and discuss with your partner the article “Save Your Marriage –ACT:” at the end of this book.)

GUIDELINE 4: IN DECISION-MAKING, THE FATHER IS NOT A DICTATOR; HE SHOULD INVOLVE THE WHOLE FAMILY IN THE PROCESS OF DECISION-MAKING.

In decision-making, the husband and wife must work as a team, and they must agree on a system of making decisions. There is the mistaken concept that because the husband is the head that he can make decisions by himself without consulting his wife or his children. This is not the idea or ideal of the Bible. In fact, before you come to Ephesians 5:22 (“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord”) you must first pass Ephesians 5:21 (“Submitting to one another in the fear of God”). The over-arching principle of God in His family is that there must be mutual submission among Christians. And under this over-arching principle comes the subordinate principle of wife submitting to her husband. Under the over-arching principle we derive the principle that in marriage, decision making must involve both the husband and the wife, as well as the children, according to the level of their understanding.

I suggest the following steps:

STEP 1: INFORMATION.

BRAINSTORMING. Getting all the facts and ideas from the whole family. In brainstorming all ideas are welcome; there are no right or wrong ideas. This is not the stage for judging the merits of the ideas.

STEP 2: GUIDANCE.

Prayer, Bible study & godly counsel - Prov. 3:5-6; 12:15; 15:22; Romans 8:14; 2 Timothy 3:16-17. This is the stage where you sift your ideas, valuing and judging the merits of each idea, and retaining only the good ones.

STEP 3: OPTIONS.

Prioritizing your best options: For example: Option A, Option B, Option C. Make a "Pro & Con List" for each option. This is the stage where you make your tentative decisions. Continue to pray and study the Bible and (if necessary) ask for counsel from godly people. Then together as a team (husband, wife, and children) you may write down, as crystal clear as you can, your top three options.

STEP 4: DECISION.

The Head (Husband/Father) must make the final decision. Of all the options that the family has decided on, the husband/father must choose one.

STEP 5: IMPLEMENTATION.

The whole family (husband, wife, children) must unite behind the Head's decision. With faith and determination, they must all work hard to make the decision work. No doubting, no second-guessing, no blaming; the family must present a united front to the

whole world – win, lose or draw. I say this because there are wives who say (and maybe they have the right to say this because they have not been involved in the decision making process): “Well, that’s his decision, not mine.” Couples, if you want your marriage to last long and be happy, make your decision as a team effort. And together as a family, stand by the decision whatever might be the result.

GUIDELINE 5: PARENTS AND CHILDREN SHOULD RELATE TO EACH OTHER IN THE LORD.

From Ephesians 6:1-3, please write down the responsibilities of children to their parents.

From Ephesians 6:1-3, please write down the responsibilities of parents to their children.

The discipline and nurture of the Lord is further explained in Deuteronomy 11:18-20. Please list from this passage the duties of parents (particularly fathers) toward their children.

GUIDELINE 6: THE CHRISTIAN HOME SHOULD FUNCTION AS THE NUCLEUS OF THE CHURCH, WITH THE FATHER SERVING AS PASTOR-TEACHER AND MOTHER AND CHILDREN AS MEMBERS.

In the New Testament, the home was the usual place of meeting for the Church. Again, let us remind ourselves

that the Church is not the building but the people of God gathered around the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Book of Acts, where did the first Christians celebrate the breaking of bread (the Lord's Supper)?
Acts 2:46

From the following verses mention the families in whose homes the Church met in New Testament times.

1 Corinthians 16:19 _____
Colossians 4:15 _____
Philemon 2 _____

Family Devotions

The Christian home functions as the nucleus of the Church primarily through the activity usually called Family Devotions or Family Altar. Here is a simple pattern for the Family Devotions.

Opening Hymn or Gospel Song

This is led by a musically inclined member of the family.

Opening Prayer

The father (or, in his absence, the mother) leads in the opening prayer.

Bible Reading

Any member of the family may be requested to read. It is best to read through the Bible consecutively, one chapter at a time.

Teaching

The father (or, in his absence, the mother) will point out at least one truth from the Scripture, read, explain its meaning, and suggest some applications.

Praises and Requests

Family members are requested to share their praises and requests.

Prayer

The family will proceed to prayer. The whole family may pray around, or several may be requested to lead in prayer, mentioning the praises and requests which have been shared.

Closing Expressions of Respect and Love

Some families give each other a loving hug at the end of the family devotions; traditional families maintain the practice of kissing the hands of parents and older folks in the family.

FELLOWSHIP IN THE HOME

If there is one place where the six functions of church fellowship should be done, it is in the home. The father and the mother should train their children and all the other people in the household to practice the six functions of the fellowship. Review Book 3, Lesson 4.

Evangelistic Home Bible Study

As the nucleus of the Church, the Christian home should be actively engaged in reaching out people for Christ. The most effective way a Christian home can do evangelism is to open its living room to hold a regular evangelistic home Bible study, to which neighbors, relatives and friends are invited.

Please evaluate your home. What do you need to do in order for your home to function as a nucleus of the Church?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

In order for your family to become truly a Filipino Christian Family, which guidelines (from those studied above) should you apply in your home as soon as possible? _____

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 5:25-27: ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:25-27

Review 1 Thess 4:3-4; Phil 2:12-13.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 12

CHRISTIAN FAMILY – Part 2

The family is God's primary workshop in raising up and shaping a godly generation. Human society is always one generation away from falling away from God. If the parents, particularly fathers, do not faithfully pass on to

their children their faith in God, they effectively cause the next generation to fall away.

In Deuteronomy 6:1-9 God gave the most comprehensive process of passing on the faith to the next generation through the family:

⁴“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God,
the LORD *is* one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God
with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your
strength.

⁶“And these words which I command you today shall be
in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your
children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your
house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down,
and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on
your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your
eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your
house and on your gates.

The process involves:

Deep personal devotion to God and to His Word; parents themselves must have deep personal faith in and commitment to God;

Consistent demonstration by the parents of godly, loving, righteous living that serves as a continual living example to their children; parents must “walk” the faith before they “talk” about it;

Faithful and regular verbal instruction to their children of God’s Word; this happens during scheduled family devotions and the family’s involvement in the life and activities of the church;

Continual reminders to their children through symbols as well as through “incidental” instruction during “teachable moments” which occur in daily life.

“PICTURE OF OUR FAMILY”

Let’s look closely at the importance of “symbols” or “pictures”. Deuteronomy 6:8-9 refers to binding a sign in the hand, putting a frontlet between the eyes, and writing God’s laws on doorposts and gates; in other words, constant visual reminders. The Jews literally made little boxes containing scripture (specifically Deuteronomy 6:4-5), and tied these boxes to their hands and on the foreheads and on the doorposts and gates.

But I suggest the following picture of the Christian family. As far as I know, nobody has ever drawn or used a similar picture before; but I believe it is a picture that we can hold up as a reminder and symbol before our children, to remind them what the Christian family is all about; it is also a picture of what every individual life should look like. The family (and by extension, every individual life) is pictured as a house whose components consist of the very words of God in the Ten Commands (please see diagram below):

**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS:
GOD’S BLUEPRINT FOR LIFE, FAMILY &
SOCIETY**

TEN COMMANDMENTS: GOD'S BLUEPRINT
FOR A HEALTHY & HAPPY FAMILY
EXODUS 20:1-17

ROOF:

Commandment #5: Obey & Honor Parents – Authority & Protection
Parents: Protector, Feeder/Nurturer, Teacher, Example, Counselor, Priest-Intercessor

FOUR WALLS

Com. #6: Don't Murder –
Sanctity of Life
Com. #7: No Adultery –
Sanctity of Sex & Marriage
Com. #8: No Stealing –
Sanctity of Ownership
Com. #9: No False Witness –
Sanctity of Words & Promises



DOORS
&
WINDOWS

Com. # 10: Don't Covet –
Value System:
What you keep in,
What you keep out.

FOUNDATION:

GOD'S GRACE – CREATION, REDEMPTION, COVENANT (GENESIS 1:1; EXODUS 20:1-2)
FOUR CORNER PILLARS –

FRONT PILLARS:

Commandment #1: No other God – Worship & Serve the Triune God
Commandment #2: No Idols – Worship in Spirit & Truth (Bible-based)

BACK PILLARS:

Commandment #3: Honor God's Name –
Know God, trust & obey Him; No cursing, no false promises
Commandment #4: Honor the Sabbath Day – Work, Rest & Worship

INTRODUCTION

Please notice how the different parts of the Ten Commandments serve to build particularly the Christian family. From early childhood and on through the different stages of their development, teach, explain, emphasize, explain the figure above and its different parts, using language appropriate to the level of your children's understanding.

Warning!

You have a very limited time! Ages 1-13 are the most receptive and impressionable years in which to inculcate these biblical truths in your children's minds and hearts.

Something completely mysterious about teenagers that suddenly makes their hearts and minds inaccessible. At the most, the parents' opportunity to teach their children will be from birth until they graduate from high school. By college age or if they begin to work after high school, the influence of friends, the school or workplace, and the general social environment will become more powerful than your voice as parents.

In the 21st century, Christian parents must exercise firm and wise authority wisdom in managing their children's exposure to the most subtle but overwhelming ubiquitous influence of the digital culture through smartphones and the many digital devices, apps and sites.

Your own example of personal discipline in using digital devices and programs is of utmost importance. "Do what I say, don't follow what I do!" won't work in making your children follow rules you set for the online activities.

Maximizing your teaching moments with your children during these years from birth through high school will give you reasonable confidence in God's promise in Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." If you do the best you know how with God's help, no matter what happens, you can leave everything in God's hands and not feel guilty about your parenting.

Let's study our figure more closely.

There are times in each child's life (at the different junctures of their development) that you will explain the

whole picture, to give them an overview. You need to do this as needed throughout their growing-up years.

In your regular devotions, as you read the scripture for the day, there is always one or more aspect of the figure, which you can emphasize from the passage. Also, during the “teachable moments” of daily life, one or other aspect of this figure will also become relevant; always be sensitive to those teachable moments in order to take advantage of them.

You will regularly say to your children, “This is who we are as a Christian family, and as individual Christians. This is God’s plan for us. This is what we value in our family; this is what we do (or not do) in our family.”

FOUNDATION OF THE HOME:

GOD’S GRACE. Originally, the Ten Commandments were given to the people of Israel on the basis of God’s gracious work of delivering them from Egypt. Even so, as Christian parents you must continually hold up before your children that your individual lives and your family exist and continue because of God’s grace. God shows His grace toward us creation, redemption, and faithful providence.

PERSONAL FAITH. Make it your goal to lead each of your children to personal faith in Christ, as soon as they are able to understand their sinfulness and their need of the Savior. This personal relationship is the absolute requirement for genuine spiritual growth and character development.

FAMILY CELEBRATIONS. Family celebrations are excellent teachable moments for emphasizing this foundational relationship with God.

Wedding Anniversaries. Share your love story with your children, how God guided in your courtship and marriage, and how God alone continues to give you the love and strength and understanding and patience to stay together.

Birthdays. Take time to remind the celebrant of the divine significance of his/her birthday from Psalm 139:13-16. Have your children memorize this passage as soon as they are able and make it a family ritual to recite this passage every time you have a family birthday celebration. Even after they have flown from the nest to college or to their career, when you call them on their birthday recite with them this passage.

Child Dedication. Write down in your family Bible the date when each child was dedicated to the Lord. Someone famously said, "Give me a child from one to five and you can have him/her for the rest of his/her life." Tell and retell the story of Hannah and Samuel in one way or another at different ages of each child's life from one to when they begin first grade, emphasizing that you also have dedicated each of your children to the Lord, for God's special purpose; emphasize that God has a special purpose for each one.

Believer's Baptism. Write down the date when each child received believer's baptism. Celebrate this date as your child's spiritual birthday, as much as you celebrate his/her physical birthday. Take time to remind the whole family what this baptism means from Romans 6:1-4 & 12:1-2.

Success Celebrations (Graduations, Getting a Job, obtaining something specially precious, for example, a

bicycle, a car, etc.). Always try to have a family thanksgiving prayer, to acknowledge that life and all the things we enjoy are God's gifts; have your children memorize Psalm 103:1-5 as soon as they are able, and during your success celebrations recite this passage together and use it as the basis of your thanksgiving prayer.

FOUR CORNER PILLARS OR POSTS

Pillar #1-Commandment #1: No other God:

Pillar #2-Commandment #2: No Idols: Worship in Spirit and Truth.

Worship & Serve the Triune God.

Point out one attribute of God that stands out from your daily scripture reading.

Cultivate meaningful worship (the attitude of praise and thanksgiving) in your family devotions.

Faithfully involve the family in the worship services of the church.

Pillar #3: Honor God's Name

Know God, trust and obey God.

Keep Promises. In biblical times, whenever Israelites made agreements, they asked God to be witness; in this context, to honor God's name meant to be faithful to one's promises and commitments. Hence, continually emphasize the importance in your family of keeping promises.

No Curse Words. The modern, secondary meaning of this commandment is not to use God's name as a curse word. You must also teach your family the importance of avoiding such language that dishonors God; also, avoiding all words that hurt and demean other people (see Matthew 5:22, also connected to Commandment #6).

Knowledge and Worship of God. To honor God's name, in a most inclusive sense, means to increase in knowledge of God, who He is (His attributes) and what He does (His works in creation, in history, and in our individual lives and situations) and to worship Him worthily, accordingly.

Pillar #4: Honor the Sabbath Day – Work, Rest & Worship.

REST. Literally, the sabbath was a day of absolute rest from work, not a day for religious activities. This principle holds for all time. You must set aside time for family being together for rest and relaxation; you must intentionally schedule one such time weekly for the family to be together. It may be difficult in our modern day of busyness to spend one whole day; but set aside at least a good portion of the day for family fun, food, fellowship, and bonding.

WORSHIP. For Christians, this commandment has come to mean a day of worship as well, which is Sunday. As pointed above, train your children from childhood to enjoy joining in the worship activities of the church.

WORK. The command to rest on the sabbath is preceded by the command to work. Hence, under this

commandment, make it part of your family character building to teach your children the importance and dignity of work. Every member of the family must be taught and assigned to do chores as part of the team; of course, assign chores appropriate to the ages and development of your children. Everyone must be trained from childhood to clean up their own mess, make their beds, tidy their rooms, keep their things arranged neatly, and put their dirty linens in the laundry hamper, and not leave these scattered on the floor. If possible, teach them to wash and iron their own clothes, cook some basic foods, do work in and out of the house, such as gardening, etc. Teach your children responsibility; for example, a child is assigned to take care of the family pet dog or cat. Later on, try to get them to find some income-generating employment appropriate to their age (in high school or college). Make it a family rule: In this family, each one has an assignment and work to do.

THE ROOF

Commandment #5: Obey & Honor Parents – Authority and Protection.

FAMILY APPLICATION: Parents are set as “roof” over their children as protector, feeder/nurturer, teacher, example, counselor, priest-intercessor. In these various roles they serve as protection over and around their family.

OBEY & HONOR PARENTS. Your exercise of authority over your children must be done in such a way that they will never doubt that you love them and will always have their good in mind. The administration of discipline will always be a tricky thing. Always try to discipline with the family rules and boundaries being

clearly explained beforehand. Never administer physical punishment (spanking) in anger or in excess, and always in the right area (in the behind).

You teach your children how to obey and honor you as parents by the way you treat your own parents and parents-in-law. Honoring includes properly taking care of your parents and in-laws in their time of need, especially in their old age.

BROAD APPLICATION: This commandment teaches the truth that God has set the order of authority in the universe. As Christian parents, you must provide the example of what it means to honor and respect authority. Often parents speak negatively about the government, criticize government officials, their own superiors at work, the teachers of their children. This requires a lot of wisdom and self-restraint. We cannot teach our children respect for authority if we do not show respect for those in authority. Doubtless, there are situations when the authority figures are clearly in the wrong, and we should be able to talk openly in the family about these failings of leaders while still maintaining the attitude of respect, first, toward God who ultimately is responsible for putting people in authority; second, toward the office of authority as distinguished from the personal failings of the person filling that position.

FOUR WALLS

WALL #1 – Commandment #6: Don't Murder – Sanctity of life.

SPIRIT OF THE LAW. The commentary of the Lord Jesus on this commandment is very relevant. Whenever necessary, explain the spirit of this law as presented in

Matthew 5:21-26. Following Jesus' explanation, this commandment requires parents to teach their children (1) anger management (see also Ephesians 4:26-27; 1 John 3:15); (2) process of reconciliation and forgiveness (see also Matthew 18:15-35); and (3) as already hinted above, self-control in avoiding hurtful and demeaning language (curse words).

DISCRIMINATION OR SIMPLY MAKING FUN OF SOMEBODY. Modeling and teaching respect for the intrinsic value of persons is included under this commandment. Simply making fun of others (for being lacking or handicapped in some way physically, economically, educationally, socially; or for just being different) is included under this prohibition. All forms of discrimination (because of color, race, social & economic background) are violations of Commandment #6.

MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE. The overarching principle for the prohibition against murder is the truth that every person is created in the image of God; most importantly, add to this the amazing truth that Christ died for all humanity. As your children mature in understanding, your family discussions will deal with sensitive questions such as those about abortion and euthanasia, cloning, AI and transhumanism and related issues.

WALL #2 – Commandment #7: No Adultery – Sanctity of Sex & Marriage.

SEX EDUCATION is now being taught in the schools even to very young children. The LGBTQ agenda has even succeeded in promoting their own brand of sex education. There seems to be nothing that we can do to influence what's being done in the schools.

But Christian parents have the authority and responsibility to give biblical and proactive sexual education to their children.

RESPECT FOR THE OPPOSITE SEX. Sex education begins by modeling and teaching respect for every person, especially toward the opposite sex. In the family, the children learn this respect from the way parents treat each other and how they express affection toward each other.

BIBLICAL TEACHING. At the appropriate age, parents should discuss one-to-one with each son or daughter (mother to daughter, father to son) the biblical teaching regarding: (1) love in relation to sex; (2) distinction between lust, infatuation, love; (3) the proper place of sex in marriage; (4) sexual sins (in body and mind): lustful thoughts, pornography, masturbation, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, human-animal sex, prostitution; (5) overcoming sexual temptations.

RESEARCH. There are age-appropriate ways that parents can explain the differences between the sexes. We encourage Christian parents to do research online on “Christian sex education”. Also, they can get together with their pastor and other parents from church for a serious study of how to go about teaching this delicate subject to their children.

WALL #3: Commandment #8: No Stealing – Sanctity of Ownership.

OWNERSHIP. Under this commandment, parents need to teach their children **RESPECT** for what belongs to others, such as, things, time, privacy. No one should

take for his/her own what belongs to others, that's stealing. A person must ask permission to borrow and then promptly return what was borrowed. Nobody should waste somebody else's time; and a person's privacy and personal space must be respected.

BORROWING money must be discouraged at all times. But if circumstances make borrowing unavoidable, then repaying promptly what was borrowed must be the corollary principle.

WALL #4: Commandment #9: No False Witness – Sanctity of Words & Promises.

TRUTHFULNESS. This has been alluded to in Commandment #3, but Commandment #9 specifically involves truth-telling in our words. Truth has been defined as that which corresponds to reality; therefore, untruth or falsehood is that which contradicts or distorts to some degree the reality.

Parents must model as well as teach truth-telling to their children. Everyone in the family must tell it like it is, not to tell the opposite, not to exaggerate it, not to tell half-truths (omitting important aspects of the truth) or “white lies”, not to mislead (tell an aspect of the truth that gives the wrong impression), or to be silent when the right thing to do is to speak up.

Also, as alluded in Commandment #3, truth telling in Commandment #9 involves faithfulness to ones promises and commitment. Christ's standard is “Let your yes, be yes; and your no, be no”, and there's no need to even swear or make a solemn oath that invokes the name of God (Matthew 5:33-37).

Absolutely, as a parent you should not instruct your child to say an unwanted caller, “Tell him/her I’m not home”; otherwise, your child might tell the caller, “My dad said I should tell you, he is not home”!

It is often asked, “Should I tell a murderous pursuer, ‘Yes, the person you are looking for is here in my house’?” This is not the place to discuss such a hypothetical issue, but we only need to say that God promised that the Holy Spirit will tell us exactly what to say in such life and death situations, if ever they occur.

DOORS AND WINDOWS

Commandment #10 – Don’t Covet – Value System:
What you will allow into your house (family, life), and what you will keep out of your house (family, life).

ATTITUDE TO THINGS.

Commandment #10 deals with our attitude to things or possessions that others have and we wish we had. In the Christian family, parents must warn their children of the corrosive attitudes of covetousness, greed, and envy. By example and by exhortation, they should teach their children godly contentment. But they should also encourage godly ambition coupled with persistence and hard work in order to pursue those things of real value. Matthew 5:1-16 & 6:19-7:28 are good starting scriptures to use to teach true Christian values.

CONCLUSION

The figure above of the Ten Commandments is a picture we need to hold up continually before the eyes, minds and hearts of our children, the picture of the family and

of the life that is grounded in the eternal truths which God provided to serve as our User's Manual in building godly lives, lifelong marriages, healthy and strong families, mutually caring communities and just, peaceful, prosperous and happy nations.

SUGGESTIONS:

Make it a long-term project for the whole family to memorize Exodus 20:1-17.

Make a copy of the figure to be placed inside your Bible so that it is always handy to show to your children when doing your family devotions.

Make a copy of the diagram to be framed in order to be displayed on a prominent wall in your house, a constant reminder of the biblical principles that hold together your family and your lives.

Make a copy of the diagram for each of your children to place inside their Bibles or fold and carry in their wallet, which they take with them when they leave the home to go to college or to work in another place or to start living on their own.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

SUGGESTED FURTHER STUDY:

In building a Christian family, parents need to be educated about the stages of development that every child goes through. There are at least four areas of development:

Physical
Psycho-social
Mental
Spiritual

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Our previous lesson, on building the home around the principles laid out in the Ten Commandments, dealt with the SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT.

MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

We will not deal with the MENTAL DEVELOPMENT here because this area will be automatically dealt with through the usual educational process that children go through, from pre-school to kindergarten to elementary to high school then college and, for some people, to graduate school.

EMOTIONAL & PSYCHO-SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

SPECIAL ARTICLES:

At the last part of this book, please study SPECIAL ARTICLES #3 & #4 on THE STAGES OF HUMAN EMOTIONAL & PSYCHO-SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. Particularly helpful is the article by Dr Erik Erikson quoted from Wikipedia.

BOOKS:

Dr. James Dobson's books on family and parenting are generally very helpful.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 13

TIME, WORK, MONEY – Part I

IN developing the Christ-like character, the Filipino Christian needs to learn to rightly value time, work, and money.

TIME

Filipino Time

What do you think of the so-called “Filipino Time” – the habit of coming late for appointments, starting behind schedule, taking long coffee breaks, stopping for extended friendly conversation, and procrastinating?

God and Time

According to Genesis 1:14-15, who planned the movement and divisions of time?

According to the following verses, how important was time and schedule to God?

Genesis 6:3 _____

Genesis 15:13-16 _____

Genesis 17:21; 21:1-2 _____

Jeremiah 29:10; 2 Chronicles 36:20-21

Christ and Time

How important was correct scheduling in the birth of Christ? Galatians 4:4

According to the following verses, how much value did Christ put upon time and proper timing?

John 2:4; 7:6,8 _____

John 9:4; 11:9-10 _____

John 12:23, 27 _____

John 13:1; 17:1 _____

People and Time

According to the following verses, what importance should people (specially Christians) place upon time and proper schedule?

Ecclesiastes 12:1; 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 _____

Ephesians 5:15-16 _____

Romans 13:11-12 _____

Galatians 6:5 _____ Colossians 4:5

1 Peter 4:1-3 _____

Proverbs 27:1; James 4: 13-16 _____

Prayer Regarding Time

From Psalm 39:4 and Psalm 90:12, what is a good prayer in regard to time?

How to Use Time Wisely

In order to use time wisely we must learn to do the following things:

Set a Goal.

Make a plan of activities, which will help you to accomplish your goal.

Schedule your activities according to a timetable.

Follow a “do list” on a daily and weekly basis. A “do list” contains the things you determine to do during a certain day or week.

Eliminate activities that do not contribute to the accomplishment of your goal.

Keep working to accomplish the goal you have set for yourself within the time you have set for it to be accomplished.

WORK

Related to time is work. A Christ-like character treats work from the biblical perspective.

Your Idea of Work

Please evaluate yourself. Look over the items below and check which ones you prefer to do, then give a reason for your choice.

ITEM A

Your father is a millionaire businessman. He wants to make you the sole heir of his business and fortune on one condition, you will study to become a businessman. However, your ambition is to become a medical doctor. What will you do?

_____ Study to become a businessman.

_____ Study to become a medical doctor.

Why? _____

ITEM B

Which of the two jobs will you apply for?

_____ Work in an air conditioned office in Manila at P10,000.00 a month.

_____ Work in a farm in the province at P15,000.00 a month.

Why? _____

ITEM C

Suppose you unexpectedly inherit P1 million pesos. Will you...

_____ Stop working

_____ Continue working

Why? _____

The Filipino Idea of Work

Under the influence of 400 years of Spanish domination, the Filipino has developed the idea and attitude toward work which have the following characteristics:

Office work (white collar job) is preferable to manual work (blue collar job).

The ideal economic and social status is one in which a person does not need to work but rather orders others to work for him.

Leisure is the goal of work. Filipinos generally work so that a time will come when they can afford not to work any longer, but spend their time in leisure and pleasure.

Many Filipinos adopt the “asa” (dependent) mentality when they have a generous rich relative to whom they can look to for material support. Having such a relative becomes for them as an excuse for not striving to support themselves.

From your experience and personal observation, how true are the four observations made above? Please write down your comments.

Work before the Human Race Fell into Sin

Let’s take a look at the place of work before the Fall, before sin came into the world.

In relation to the earth, what work did God give to man?
Genesis 1:28

In your opinion, what were some things included in the work of “subduing” and “ruling” over the earth?

On a more limited level, what work did God give man to do in the Garden of Eden? Genesis 2:15

Is it correct to describe Adam's life in the Garden of Eden as a life of blissful and lazy inactivity? Please explain your answer.

One specific work that Adam performed was the naming of animals. Please read Genesis 2:19-20. In your opinion, what effort (physical and mental) did Adam exert in order to name the animals?

The work God gave to man before the Fall, during the Age of Innocence, was great - - he was to be the ruler over all earthly creation. This work demanded the full exercise of his equipment – all the powers and faculties which he received as part of the image of God implanted in him. Let's notice some aspects of man's work as ruler of creation.

Man had to "subdue" the earth. To subdue means "to make to serve, by force if necessary" (Theological Wordbook of the OT). This implies that even in the Age of Innocence man could not exist in blissful and lazy inactivity. Man could not expect the earth to supply his needs without exerting a certain amount of effort to obtain the things he needed.

Man had to "rule" or "govern" the earth. This word "rule" is used in Joel 4:13 for treading grapes. The picture of treading underfoot is often related to the idea of ruling or governing. In telling man to rule the earth, there was also implied the idea that earthly creation had to be kept underfoot, under authority. Even during the Age of Innocence, plants and animals had the tendency to keep on growing and multiplying. And man, the ruler who alone possessed intelligence, was given the work of

maintaining order and balance among the various creations.

We see this double task of subduing and ruling in the work of man in the Garden of Eden as described in Genesis 2:15.

Man was to “work” (till, cultivate) the garden. He was also to “keep” (watch, guard) it. We might ask, “Why should man cultivate it at all? Couldn’t he, like Juan Tamad in our folk story, just wait for the ripe fruit to fall into his mouth?” Another question, “And why guard the garden? Against whom did it need to be guarded?”

Interestingly, the word for “keep” in Genesis 2:15 is exactly the same word for “guard” in Genesis 3:24. A question which may add light to the serpent’s presence in the garden is this, “Did Adam fail in his duty to guard the garden against the serpent?”

The important point for us to notice in this section is that work had a necessary place in the original perfect creation. God planned for man to be actively and meaningfully involved in a work uniquely designed for him as the ruler of all earthly creation. Even in the Age of Innocence work was not something to be avoided or tolerated. Work was an integral part of man’s normal functioning as a perfect being.

Work After the Fall

The Fall of man into sin brought tragic changes to the earth, to work, and to man himself. Please carefully read Genesis 3:17-19, and then list the punishment which God put upon the earth, upon work, and upon man.

Sin brought changes upon the earth. After the Fall the earth would grow thorns and thistles, and only after toilsome labor on man's part will the earth yield sustenance.

Sin brought changes upon work. Instead of his work as ruler of creation, man would labor for survival, and his labor would be accompanied by sweat, symbolizing hard work.

Sin brought changes upon man; he became subject to death. His life would be characterized by slow physical deterioration and finally in the dissolution of his body in death.

It is important that we understand the implications of the curse, "By the sweat of your brow you shall eat," as this applies to the work that we human beings need to do in our fallen world. We will mention two implications, which are related to each other:

IMPLICATION 1: Man must work in order to eat.

IMPLICATION 2: Every man must learn to work for his own food.

These two implications are brought out in the New Testament in 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12. Please study this passage carefully, then answer the following questions:

What did Paul and his fellow missionaries do in order to give the Thessalonian Christians a pattern of work? 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9

What command regarding work is given the Christians?
2 Thessalonians 3:10

What command is given to people who are lazy and dependent on others? 2 Thessalonians 3:11-12

The “Asa-Mentality”

The Bible forbids “Asa-Mentality” (dependent attitude). God commands every person to work and eat his own bread. God gives all the resources needed by the Christian in order that he would be able to work. God gives the abilities, opportunities, and blessings, which enable Christians to become materially self-sufficient.

Of course, this rule applies with some qualifications to children, old people, and the handicapped. Children should be trained to do house chores, and they should be made to understand that those chores are their part in the family effort to become materially self-supporting. Old people deserve the “honor” (financial support) which God commands children to give to their parents. And handicapped persons can contribute their share in ways that they can by using talents and abilities which they have, which are not affected by their handicaps. Please evaluate yourself. How could you overcome the dependent mentality in your personal life?

Work and the Filipino Christian

The coming of Christ begins the work of renewal in a person’s life. This means that this person’s attitude to work is also renewed. There are three aspects of a renewed Christian attitude to work.

The Christian accepts the responsibility of working in order to provide for himself and his family. Please summarize 1 Timothy 5:8

In place of the dependent mentality or the attitude of taking advantage of others, the Christian works so that he may have something to share with others who are in need. Please summarize Ephesians 4:28.

Most important, the Christian will work for the glory of God; this means that he will never continue in a work that does not positively glorify God. Please summarize 1 Corinthians 10:31

Please evaluate yourself. Which of the three aspect of the Christian attitude to work do you need to develop in your life?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

What is the most important lesson you have learned:

About TIME? _____

How can you apply this lesson in your life?

About WORK? _____

How can you apply this lesson in your life?

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 5:15-17: ¹⁵ See then that you walk ^[e]circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Ephesians 5:15-17

Review Ephesians 5:25-27; Ephesians 6:1-2.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 14

TIME, WORK, MONEY – Part II

THIS lesson continues our study on the little finger of the Character Hand. To develop a Christ-like character, we must develop Christ-like attitude not only toward time and work, but also toward money, which is the symbol of time and work.

YOU AND MONEY

Please evaluate your attitude toward money by answering the following questions:

As a treasure, how valuable is money compared to other kinds of treasures? _____

As a reward for work, how powerful is money in motivating people to work?

As basis for security, how reliable is money in providing people with peace of mind?

GOD AND MONEY

In the Bible God gives his valuation of real treasure, reward, and security. Please study the following verses and answer the corresponding questions.

Real Treasures

From Matthew 6:19-21, describe two types of treasures.

Which type of treasure should you accumulate? How do you accumulate such a treasure?

According to Matthew 6:21, why is it important to know where your treasure is?

Honestly, where is your heart? Is that the right place where your heart should be?

Real Rewards

According to Luke 10:7 and 1 Timothy 5:18, what law does God lay down for work and wages?

According to 1 Peter 5:2, how much value should a Christian place upon money or material reward as a motivation for working?

What should be the Christian's primary motivation for working? Colossians 3:23-25

Real Security

According to 1 Timothy 6:17, why should we not make money as our security?

Also according to 1 Timothy 6:17, why should God alone be our security?

To make God our security does not mean that we should stop earning money. Rather, according to Matthew 6:33 it means that (please complete the sentence)...

Please evaluate yourself. What attitude do you have toward money that you need to change in order that you can really make God your security?

THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL

In seeking to develop a Christ-like character, we are warned by the Bible that money can become the cause of failure or success. As already pointed out in our lesson on stewardship, wrong attitude toward money will lead into all kinds of sins.

Please study 1 Timothy 6:9-10 and then write the meaning of these verses in your own words.

From your own experience or from your observation of others please prove (or disprove) that LOVE OF MONEY is a root of all evil.

The Lord Jesus exposes the danger of the love of money by using the picture of master and servant. Please explain the meaning of Matthew 6:24 in your own words.

From Matthew 6:24 let's note several things taught by the Lord Jesus:

God or Mammon. There are only two possible masters which people may serve, and you may choose only one – God or Mammon. In the Bible, Mammon represents money and other forms of material wealth.

Serve Only One. The Lord Jesus declared that it is impossible to serve two masters. If you are serving God you are not serving Mammon; if you are serving Mammon you are not serving God.

To Serve is To Love. When you serve God, you prove that you love God. When you serve Mammon, you prove that you love Mammon.

You Have a Master Now. At this very moment, you are serving and loving one of these two masters. You must therefore answer this question, “Which master are you serving – God or Mammon?”

SELF-EVALUATION

You are probably employed in a certain job. Please answer this question:

“What motivates you to keep on working everyday, the joy of doing your job or the salary you will receive at the end of the month?”

If your primary reason for working is the salary, you are working for Mammon.

But you reply, “Does not the Bible say that the laborer is worthy of his salary?”

Yes, that is true. God himself has laid down this law about just compensation. But if you are working only because of the salary you will receive, you are saying that you are serving Mammon, and therefore you are not serving God.

Again you reply, “Do you mean that I should no longer expect a salary?”

No, that is not what the Bible means at all. The Bible means that you must make sure that in all things, which you do, you must always seek to glorify God. Your

salary is not your main reason for working. Your main reason is that by means of your work you are serving God.

The point is this: When you do any piece of work you must dedicate it to the Lord. You say, “Lord, I am doing this work for you. Help me to do my best.”

This is the meaning of the following verses. Please study these verses and then summarize their meaning in your own words.

1 Corinthians 10:31 _____

Ephesians 6:5-8 _____

Think about this. Suppose you decide to do everything for God’s glory from now on, how will this decision affect your style and pattern of working? Please explain very honestly.

A second way to evaluate whether you are serving God or Mammon is by answering this question:

What is the first thing that you plan to do upon receiving your salary at the end of the month? (Please answer frankly and honestly.)

Did you answer, “First, I will set aside my tithes and offerings”? If not, you are serving Mammon – you are putting your material desires, comforts, and values first ahead of God’s kingdom.

STEWARDSHIP – regularly giving a portion of your earnings to God’s work – is the most effective way to

cut the root of all evil, love of money, from your heart. Stewardship is also the most effective way to prove three things – that you love God, serve God, and trust God.

You prove that you love God not money. When you give your tithes and offerings for the Lord’s work you are declaring that you love God because you give the first portion of your income for his work.

You prove that you serve God and not money. When you give your tithes and offerings you are declaring, “The money which I give to God’s work represents my time, talent, and energy, which I want God to use for this work.”

You prove that you trust God not money. The Christian who gives his tithes and offerings is saying, “I trust God as the one who will provide for my needs. I trust him to fulfill his promises to me. He says that if I give my tithes and offerings, he will open the windows of heaven and pour out blessings so that I will not have enough room to contain them.”

Please answer this frankly: How can you prove that you love God, serve God, and trust God in your life?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

What truths from this lesson do you need to apply right away in order to overcome the love of money?

MEMORIZE

2 Corinthians 9:6-8: ⁶ But this *I say*: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ *So let* each one *give* as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may have an abundance for every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Review Ephesians 5:25-27; Matthew 6:14-15.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

LESSON 15

SUCCESS, LIFE GOALS, CONVICTIONS

WE come to the final lesson, which deals with success, life goals, and convictions.

God Gives Success

In developing the Christ-like character we must know and believe that God wants to give us success. Please study the following verses and write the idea of success contained in each verse:

Joshua 1:8

Psalm 1:2-3

John 10:10

Romans 8:37

The kind of success which God wants to give to his children is not only spiritual. God-given success also includes material blessings. Of course, spiritual success and material prosperity should be held in proper balance. From the following verse describe this balance:

Mark 8:36-37

Mark 10: 29-30

Philippians 4:19

2 Corinthians 9:8

3John 2

Revelation 2:8-9

Revelation 3:17-18

We should keep the following truths in balance.

Spiritual success is more important than material success.

Material success is part of God's blessings upon his obedient children.

Physical suffering and material poverty do not necessarily mean that a Christian is disobedient; suffering and poverty may result from persecution which Satan and the world throw against God's children.

Two Extremes

There are two extremes which we should avoid. One extreme is the idea that Christians should remain poor materially in order for them to enjoy spiritual prosperity. The other extreme is the idea that if you are spiritually victorious then you should also be materially prosperous.

The Bible does not measure success by possessions, popularity, and power. Rather, the Bible measures success by the accomplishment of God's will for a person's life.

The successful Christians is one who is able to say at the end of his life (please summarize the following verses):
John 17:4

2 Timothy 4:7-8

Life Goals

Hence, in this lesson we shall study the biblical basis for formulating personal life goals. In order to develop the Christ-like character, you must have clear goals in life, and you must keep working on those goals until they are accomplished.

Two Unbiblical Views

There are two unbiblical views concerning goal-setting. The eastern view is expressed in these popular sayings, "Bahala na" – "Come what may. "Kung di ukol, di bubukol" – "What's not destined for you, you will never get." "Kapalaran ma'y di hanapin, dudulog, lalapit, kung talagang akin"—"Good fortune that's fated for me, even when unsought, will surely come to me."

The eastern view, which predominates in Filipino thinking, is rooted in the fatalistic concept of the

universe. What Fate wills, that is fulfilled. Therefore it does not matter very much whether you set goals and make plans, or not.

The western view is expressed by this line from an English poem, “I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.” Therefore a person must set goals and make realistic plans to accomplish those goals. If a person does not succeed, it’s all his fault.

The Biblical View

The Biblical view in goal setting is expressed, for example, in Ephesians 5:15-17: “Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

The biblical view includes these elements:

Seeking God’s will;

Setting goals and making plans in accordance with God’s will;

Striving with all your God-given ability to accomplish your goals and to implement your plans.

God’s Will for Our Time

Can we know God’s will for our time? Yes, the Bible clearly tells us that God’s will for our time may be summarized in two goals, which are included in what is usually called the GREAT COMMISSION:

GOAL 1: To proclaim the Gospel of Christ to the whole world;

GOAL 2: To build Christ-likeness in those who believe in the Gospel.

Please study the following scripture passages and indicate in the blank space whether the passage refers to GOAL 1 or GOAL 2, or BOTH.

Matthew 28:18-20 _____
Mark 16:15 _____
Acts 1:8 _____
Romans 8:29 _____
Ephesians 4:13 _____
Colossians 1:28 _____

The GREAT COMMISSION is God’s will for our time. When we realize this, we shall also realize that our personal goals should contribute to the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Paul was one Christian whose personal goals conformed and contributed to the fulfillment of the Great Commission. Please summarize the following verses:

Acts 20:24 _____
Romans 1:14-16 _____
Philippians 1:21-25 _____
Philippians 3:8-10 _____

Which of Paul’s statements of his personal goals above challenges you most? Why?

Two Helpful Questions. In formulating your personal goals, there are two helpful questions which you should ask:

Question 1: How will this goal or plan make me more Christ-like?

Question 2: How will this goal or plan enable me to proclaim the Gospel to more people?

Jesus said in John 5:17, “My Father is working until now, and I myself am working.” Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 3:9, “For we are God’s fellow workers.”

We also need to say, “God is busy fulfilling the Great Commission, and I am working as God’s co-laborer to help fulfill the Great Commission.”

Please evaluate yourself.

Please write down your two or three most important ambitions in life?

How will these ambitions contribute to the Great Commission?

Life Convictions

Closely related to your life-goals are your life-convictions. Convictions are principles which determine how you think, decide and act.

Many foreigners seem to think that Filipinos have no convictions or principles. This is because Filipinos follow the social rule of “pakikisama” (smooth interpersonal relationship). Filipinos compromise their principles of right and wrong in order to give in to the wishes of relatives and friends.

It is very important for Filipino Christians to establish and hold firmly to their convictions. The truths and areas of life discussed in the Character Hand have been designed to help you to develop your personal life-convictions as a Christian.

*“Where Jesus Christ is, there anything can happen.
And He is with me!” E. Stanley Jones*

PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

Please review the diagram of the Character Hand.
Which area of life in the Character Hand did this book
give you the most help in? Describe how you were
helped.

Scripture Memory

Memorize

Acts 20:24: But none of these things move me; nor do I
count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish
my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from
the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of
God. Acts 20:24:

Review 2 Corinthians 8:6-8; Psalm 1:1

THE PRAYER OF AN OLD SLAVE

Father,

I ain't what I want to be;

I ain't what I ought to be;

I ain't what I'm going to be;

But thank you, Father, I ain't what I used to be.

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

Encourage your disciples to:

Continue their PRAYER PARTNER evangelistic
outreach, using Book 1 with their prospects.

Continue their own study of their current NewLife Book.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Your next book of study will be *NEWLIFE BOOK 9*.

SPECIAL ARTICLE #1

A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE
ON LOVE, SEX, MARRIAGE & FAMILY:
SUGGESTED RESPONSE TO THE ISSUE OF
TRANSGENDERISM

By Pastor Bien Llobrera

PART ONE

GOD'S ORIGINAL DESIGN FOR MEN AND
WOMEN

A LOOMING THREAT

A massive threat is facing everybody!

Children and teenagers threatened. They are being indoctrinated by the spreading ideology of transgenderism. They are being told they can change their sexual identity just by IDENTIFYING which sex they choose. This is being promoted as a legal right. They just have to say, "I identify as male" or "I identify as female" or "I identify as bisexual", or whichever they choose to be... AT ANY MOMENT!

As a result, this threat is having a domino effect.

Parents, families, churches, communities, and very soon the whole nation will experience an overhauling of all traditional Bible-based moral values.

THE LAWLESS ONE IS HERE!

But, first, we must know WHO is behind this ideology of transgenderism.

It is no other than the Antichrist, whom the Bible calls THE LAWLESS ONE or the Man of Sin. He is not yet physically visible on the world stage, but the SPIRIT OF THE LAWLESS has been progressively at work.

The LAWLESS ONE was first prophesied by Daniel in the Old Testament. The apostle Paul clearly describes him in 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12. His main objective is to oppose God, persecute believers, and attempt to change times and law. This means he will try to reverse all of God's laws, both in morality and in nature and in lifestyle and in culture.

Daniel 7:25:

²⁵ He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

2 Thessalonians 2:8-12:

⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. ⁹ The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all

unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

The SPIRIT of the Lawless One has steadily gained control of the culture in the USA, beginning in the Sixties.

It began with the SEXUAL REVOLUTION, free love, free sex, co-habiting with no benefit of marriage.

Followed by LEGALIZED ABORTION, to get rid of unwanted babies produced by free sex.

Then followed by legalized SAME SEX UNION which upgraded to legalized SAME SEX MARRIAGE.

Some historical Protestant churches have bought into the lie and now ordain practicing homosexuals and lesbians as clergy, and are performing same-sex marriage ceremonies.

And now, TRANSGENDERISM, which gives you freedom to choose your preferred SEX IDENTITY anytime, depending on how you feel at the moment.

The scary part is that Satan will endow the Lawless One with miraculous powers in such a way that majority of the people will be deceived.

But WHO are the people who will be deceived? People who do not love the truth. People who reject the truth.

People who choose to believe and follow lies in order to indulge in the pleasures of unrighteousness.

2 Thessalonians 2:10b-12:

. . . those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

TRUTH OUR ONLY DEFENSE

God's Word, the Bible, is THE TRUTH, and it is our only defense against the deceptions of the Lawless One.

John 8:32:

You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

We must know the truth about GOD'S DESIGN FOR MEN AND WOMEN.

BACK TO CREATION

First, we must go back to creation. At creation God established His design for men and women.

Genesis 1:26, 27, 31:

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over ^[a]all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷ So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

³¹ Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

God created humans in His image.

This image includes the following characteristics:

Spirituality. God created the physical body of humans from the dust of the ground; but He breathed into humans the breath (breath, spirit, same word RUACH) of life. This breath/spirit of life imparted to humans a non-material, spiritual component which partakes of the nature of God's Spirit, enabling humans to connect with God.

Personality consists of mind, emotion, and will; enabling humans to have self-conscious identify and a consciousness of another person such as God is. Along with these three faculties, humans also have language, memory, imagination; these all equip humans to have communication, communion, and cooperation with God.

Morality – God gave humans free will or the power to make choices, along with conscience, which gives them the ability to distinguish between right and wrong; this makes humans morally responsible and accountable.

Authority – God installed humans to be His co-regents over all creation, beginning at the Garden of Eden, giving them the task of maintaining, guarding, developing and expanding the garden with the goal of subduing the whole earth and transforming it into a global garden.

Perfect – God created everything perfect in the beginning (Genesis 1:31). Humans were created sinless, though with their free will, God gave them the freedom and ability to make choices whether to say YES or NO to His commands. Unfortunately, humans chose to say NO to God, and thus brought disorder to the perfect divine design God set for the whole creation. All sexual sins, and all other sins, are the result of the disorder brought into the world by human disobedience.

But God's divine design has not changed. Through Jesus Christ God is in the business of restoring all of creation back to its original perfection and beyond, to that new heaven and new earth, in which the possibilities of the original creation would finally be fully realized (Revelation 21:1-5; 22:1-5).

God created humans male and female.

For Continuance – Through marriage man and woman would procreate and reproduce themselves and thus insure the continuance and enlargement of the human race.

For Companionship – Humans were created for life together, first as husband and wife, then as a family, then as a community, and eventually a nation and a multiplying families of nations.

For Co-laborship – Men and women were assigned respective roles in marriage, in the family, in the community and in the nation. They had separate assignments according to their distinct sexual identities and functions, but they also had cooperative assignments where their distinctive gifts and equipment were to be used in unity and harmony to accomplish one ultimate

end in glorifying God and blessing humanity and the world.

Therefore, there was always the need to maintain this divine design to maintain unity and diversity in continual synchronous working relationship.

CHRIST'S TEACHING

Christ affirmed and confirmed God's original design at creation. We will insert our comments within the scripture text:

Matthew 19:3-12:

³ The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?"

⁴ And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who ^[a]made *them* at the beginning 'made them male and female,' ⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? ⁶ So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

COMMENT 1: Christ confirmed that there are only TWO SEXES – MALE AND FEMALE.

This is a fact of CREATION (vs. 5).

This is a fact of BIOLOGY. The sexes have their respective biological anatomy and bodily functions.

Feelings or emotions do not determine sex. This is where the LAWLESS ONE attempts to change the

TRUTH and replace it with the LIE that your feelings or emotions determine your sex.

To overcome the LIE, we must insist on the TRUTH that biology and anatomy establish the sex of a person, and feelings or emotions CANNOT change that truth.

Regarding FEELINGS and EMOTIONS, we will discuss how to deal with them below.

COMMENT 2: Christ confirmed:

That MARRIAGE is between one man and one woman (vs. 5)

That marriage is a UNION established by God Himself (vs. 5)

That marriage was designed by God to be a LIFELONG UNION (vs. 6).

⁷ They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”

⁸ He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. ⁹ And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

COMMENT 3: DIVORCE

Divorce was NOT part of God’s original design (vs. 8b)

Divorce was ALLOWED in the Law of Moses as a concession to human weakness and wickedness (vs. 9a)

Divorce is allowed ONLY when there is sexual immorality (marital unfaithfulness) (vs. 9b).

Re-marriage for persons divorced for reasons other than sexual immorality is an act of adultery (vs. 9c)

¹⁰ His disciples said to Him, “If such is the case of the man with *his* wife, it is better not to marry.”

¹¹ But He said to them, “All cannot accept this saying, but only *those* to whom it has been given: ¹² For there are ^[ε]eunuchs who were born thus from *their* mother’s womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He who is able to accept *it*, let him accept *it*.”

COMMENT 4: REASONS FOR STAYING SINGLE

Christ is completely realistic. A large percentage of people will not have the opportunity or ability to get married. The Bible term for people who remain unmarried is “eunuch”. He mentions three reasons:

REASON 1: INBORN (vs, 12a): Some are born with some handicap (physical, psychological) which renders them unable or unfit to marry.

REASON 2: MAN-MADE (vs. 12b): Some cultures practice castration (mostly for males, but in some cases, for females as well), rendering castrated people unfit for marriage. Reasons may include requirements of religion or job; for rare individuals, it may be a personal choice.

REASON 3: MISSIONARY CALLING (vs. 12c): For Christians, some are led by God to stay unmarried for

the sake of a special missionary calling, wherein having a wife and family may prove to be an unnecessary risk or responsibility. Missionary singleness is a gift from God that comes with the promise of God's grace.

Note what the apostle Paul said about the single missionary life:

The apostle Paul had the gift of being a single missionary; and he taught others to determine if they had this gift from God or not (vs. 7)

1 Corinthians 7:7, 32-35:

⁷For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.

The apostle Paul made clear that a married person must make his/her spouse the priority (vs. 33, 34).

³³ But he who is married cares about the things of the world—how he may please *his* wife. ³⁴ There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may please *her* husband.

The apostle Paul also made clear that the single missionary's exclusive priority is to serve the Lord without distraction (vs. 32, 35).

³² But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried ^[c]cares for the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord.

³⁵ And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.

GOD WILL PUNISH ALL SEXUAL SINS

The Bible is uncompromising. God will punish ALL sins, including ALL sexual sins. Sexual sins violate the original design God established at creation for the right place and practice of sex, and that is within the bonds of holy matrimony between one man and one woman united for life.

Below are the clear scripture verses where God warns people about the consequences of violating His design for sex and marriage.

HOMOSEXUALITY: MALE WITH MALE,
FEMALE WITH FEMALE SEX

Leviticus 18:22

²² You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.

Leviticus 20:13

¹³ If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor ^[b]homosexuals, nor ^[c]sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor

covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Timothy 1:9, 10

⁹ knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for *the* lawless and insubordinate, for *the* ungodly and for sinners, for *the* unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, ¹⁰ for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is ^[c]contrary to sound doctrine.

Romans 1:26-27

²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their ^[w]women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the ^[m]men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

COMMENT: Romans 1:27 makes clear that even before homosexuals are thrown into hell in the future, in the present life they are already receiving just penalty from God in their physical bodies as a natural consequence of unhealthy and unnatural homosexual practices. For example, the AIDS epidemic began in the homosexual community, although it has spread to the general heterosexual population as well.

BESTIALITY: HUMAN & ANIMAL SEX

Leviticus 18:23

²³ Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It *is* perversion.

CROSS-DRESSING

Deuteronomy 22:5:

⁵ “A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman’s garment, for all who do so *are* ^[c]an abomination to the LORD your God

GOD’S VERDICT IS UNCOMPROMISING:

1 Corinthians 6:9:

⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?

The “unrighteous” people are listed, and they include those who practice homosexual sins and perversions. God’s verdict on them is that they will NOT inherit the kingdom of God, they have no hope of going to heaven if they do not repent of and forsake their sins, not only of homosexuality but all the other sins in the list.

The verse below in Galatians 5:19 also gives a list of people who will surely NOT inherit the kingdom of God. Homosexuality is not specifically mentioned, but it is certainly included in this phrase: “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness” (verse 19a).

Galatians 5:19:

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, ^[c]fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions,

dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, ^[f]murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

BUT GOD PROMISES SALVATION TO THOSE WHO REPENT

But God is the God of love and grace. The reason He sent His Son to the world was to save even the worst of sinners. The Corinthians are a prime example of God's power to save.

1 Corinthians 6:11:

¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were ^[d]sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

In ancient Greece, during the time of the apostle Paul, the city of Corinth was notorious for being the most wicked example of "sin city". In fact, when someone was described as "living like a Corinthian", that meant he was a very wicked, immoral person.

From 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, list the kinds of sinners that the apostle Paul found in Corinth.

⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

But according to 1 Corinthians 6:11, when the Gospel of Christ came to Corinth many of these sinners believed

and were transformed. Please notice the gracious actions of God upon their lives:

They were washed: cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Please read 1 John 1:7.

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

They were sanctified: chosen out of the sinful world and set apart specially for God. Please read Ephesians 1:4.

Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

They were justified: all their negative standing in sin was forgiven and they were given a positive standing in Christ. Please read Ephesians 1:7.

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

All these divine gracious actions were made possible in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

As a result, these former Corinthian sinners have become a temple of the living holy God! Please read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought

at a price; therefore glorify God in your body ^[g]and in your spirit, which are God's.

HOW TO TREAT GAY PEOPLE

We are to love them with Christ's love, always remembering Christ died for them.

We should not condemn them, but neither should we compromise with or condone their lifestyle.

With the Holy Spirit's help, we must seek to communicate with them, understand them, sympathize with them.

We must lovingly and clearly explain to them the Gospel of salvation as involving genuine repentance and sincere faith which leads to a changed life.

Jude 22-23 is always a good advice as we seek to reach out to all kinds of sinners, including homosexuals: we must always make sure of our spiritual health, and we must exercise godly wisdom in dealing with sinners. ²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. ²² And on some have compassion, making a distinction; ²³ but others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

SPECIAL ARTICLE #2

PART TWO

COUNSELING THE CONFUSED

A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN SEXUALITY

NOTE: THIS ARTICLE WAS PREPARED AS A STAND-ALONE LESSON AND MAY BE USED SEPARATE FROM PART ONE (ABOVE).

The issue of same-sex marriage has recently come into focus again through a statement made by Pope Francis in a documentary on his life. We quote from USA Today (October, 2020):

“Homosexual people have the right to be in a family. They are children of God,” Francis said in an interview for the documentary "Francesco." “What we have to have is a civil union law; that way they are legally covered.”

This quote seems to show that Pope Francis is going against a long-standing Roman Catholic Church position regarding homosexuality.

No matter what any so-called Christian church (Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Evangelical) may teach or say about homosexuality and homosexual relationships and activities, God’s Word, the Bible, is unequivocal:

Leviticus 18:22: You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It *is* an abomination.

Leviticus 20:13: If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

1 Corinthians 6:9,10: ⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor ^[b]homosexuals, nor ^[c]sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

Romans 1:26,27: ²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their ^[i]women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the ^[j]men, leaving the natural use of the ^[k]woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

Deuteronomy 22:5: “A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman’s garment, for all who do so *are* ^[c]an abomination to the LORD your God.

In this connection, the old legal maxim holds true:
DURA LEX, SED LEX.

God’s law is hard, but it is God’s law.

God, the Creator, has established laws for His whole creation (both human and non-human). For example, in the inanimate world the law of gravity is hard and unforgiving. In the world of human relationships, God’s laws are equally hard and unforgiving, but they have been established by God for the proper ordering of life

and society. All violations will receive their due penalties; first according to the natural principle of “what you sow, you reap”; every sin has in it the seeds of its own self-destruction. Second, according to the moral principle that God will judge and punish all sin in due time.

God's law is hard.

But, thank God, He has also given us the Gospel through His Son Jesus Christ. This Gospel offers forgiveness and a new beginning to anyone who believes in Jesus Christ and submits to His lordship.

WE MUST SHOW COMPASSION

Declaring God's law does not mean we do not show compassion and understanding towards people who are truly struggling with the reality of homosexuality in its various forms.

Let's be clear about the following:

Sexuality is probably one of the most powerful desires that humans deal with. Along with the desire for food, the sexual instinct is the engine that drives the continuation of the species.

Human sexual desire is normally directed toward the opposite sex. But for reasons which we do not fully understand, some people possess sexual desire toward the same sex.

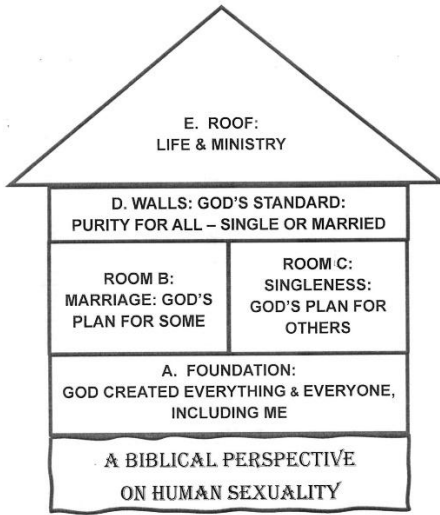
The presence of sexual desire (heterosexual or homosexual) does not mean automatic license to satisfy the desire. Here is where God's laws come in. Sex is

God's gift; He made humans (as well as animals and plants) as sexual beings for the continuation of the species. Animals and plants perform their sexual functions by instinct. In contrast, God imparted a higher moral nature to humans, by which nature they are to govern the proper use of their natural instincts (for food, sex, etc.).

God's law specifically set the boundary for human sexuality: Sex is only between a man and a woman within the bond of marriage. Hard as this law may seem, all sexual activity outside of the bond of heterosexual marriage is condemned by God and will receive due penalty. This law applies to all single people, whether they have heterosexual or homosexual feelings.

TOWARD A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

This article seeks to provide you with a loving and biblical answer. However, we suggest that the best way to give this answer is not to "throw the book" at the person saying, "Here, read this!" Rather, you may suggest to the person, "Can we read and study this article together and find out God's answer from the Bible?" Once the person agrees with your suggestion, go ahead and read the article together.



First of all, let us lay down the foundation of all reality.
Please study the diagram.

A. FOUNDATION: GOD CREATED EVERYONE &
EVERYTHING, INCLUDING ME.

God is building a house on a sure foundation (please see
diagram).

Let's read some key scriptures:

*Genesis 1:1: In the beginning God created the heavens
and the earth.*

*Genesis 1:27: So God created man in His own image, in
the image of God He created him; male and female He
created them.*

Matthew 19:4: And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning, ‘made them male and female’.

We see from the above scriptures, that the foundation of the house that God is building is this truth: GOD CREATED US ALL. God created only two sexes, male and female, whether we think of ourselves as normal men or women, or whether we *think* or *feel* that we are gay.

Please note the words *think* or *feel*. Many times, what we *think* or *feel* does not necessarily represent what we really *are*. But it is important to acknowledge and respect the fact that some people may think or feel a certain way.

ROOM B. MARRIAGE: GOD’S PLAN FOR SOME

The house that God is building has two rooms: one room is for marriage; the other room is for singleness.

The Bible teaches clearly that marriage is between a man and a woman as proved by the following facts:

Creation – God created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve; not Eve and Bev;

Design – maleness and femaleness are based on physical and biological design;

Purpose – God’s purpose for marriage is two-fold:

Procreation – marriage is necessary for the continuance of the human race;

Completion – for most men and women, marriage brings completion; through marriage the spouses supply what each other lacks, physically, emotionally, spiritually, even materially and financially.

ROOM C. SINGLENESS: GOD’S PLAN FOR OTHERS

However, in God’s plan marriage is not for everyone. Whether we explain it as God’s directive or permissive will, only a certain portion of the human population get married.

It follows, therefore, that God’s plan is for some people to live a life of singleness. Let’s read a key scripture:

Matthew 19:4-12:

4 And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning, ‘made them male and female,’

5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?

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

7 They said to him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”

8 He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

9 And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

10 His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry."

11 But He said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given:

12 For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it."

Based on this scripture we will use the term EUNUCH to refer to people that God calls to a life of singleness. There are three types of eunuchs.

Type 1: Born Eunuch

A born eunuch is someone who possesses inborn qualities (maybe physical, maybe emotional) that prevent him/her from having a normal heterosexual relationship. A gay person who feels attracted to the same sex may be described as a born eunuch. We are not debating here the genuineness of such same-sex attraction; we are not making judgment whether such same-sex attraction is right or wrong.

We are simply saying that if a person claims to have this same-sex attraction, it means that marriage is not for him/her, since marriage, according to the Bible, is between a man and a woman.

Type 2: Man-Made Eunuch

A man-made eunuch is someone who is rendered incapable of normal marriage because of some human procedure or accident. In ancient times, males, particularly those who were assigned to serve as security

guards of the king's harem, were castrated to make them incapable of sexual relations. But even apart from such an aberrant cultural practice as castration, accidents happen that result in a disability which hinders a person from fulfilling the sexual functions required by a normal marriage.

Type 3: Missionary Eunuch

A missionary eunuch is a person who possesses the abilities and opportunities for marriage but who decides to live a single life to devote himself/herself completely to missionary service. This single state may be temporary or permanent, depending on the person's missionary calling.

D. WALLS: GOD'S STANDARD – PURITY FOR ALL

This house that God is building has walls, representing His standard: purity for all, single or married.

PURITY means God planned sex to be enjoyed only within the bonds of marriage between a male and a female.

For married people, PURITY means sex only with your spouse. It means no adultery, whether in actual physical relationships or "in the heart" towards other people not your spouse; purity also means no involvement in pornography of any kind (Matthew 5:27-30)

For single people, PURITY means no sexual relations with another person, whether it be with the opposite sex or with the same sex.

(a) According to God's standard, all SINGLE PERSONS (straight, gay, divorced, separated) must maintain PURITY in body and mind. Purity in the body means no physical sexual relations with another person outside the bonds of marriage. Purity in the mind means no sexual fantasies and no dwelling on sexual thoughts, and certainly no involvement in pornography.

OBJECTION: How can single people find fulfillment, satisfaction and completion?

Answer: 2 Corinthians 12:9: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." God will give the grace needed to fulfill His call either to marriage or singleness.

DISTINGUISH BETWEEN PERSONALITY AND PRACTICE

We must distinguish between PERSONALITY and PRACTICE. If a person believes he/she is gay (PERSONALITY), he/she is NOT sinning against God for feeling that way. It simply means that the gay person is not able to enter into normal marriage; as a single person he/she must maintain God's standard of purity. Let's always remember: straight persons, single or married, are equally required to maintain God's standard of purity at all times.

How about feelings? When people say "I am gay" they mean "I am emotionally and sexually attracted to someone of my sex." This feeling is similar to straight people saying "I am emotionally and sexually attracted to someone of the opposite sex." The same rule applies to both straight and gay feelings: Maintain purity in thought and action; God designed sex to be enjoyed

exclusively within the marriage relationship of a man and a woman.

OBJECTION: But straight people can marry, whereas gay people cannot marry; how then can gay people enjoy sexual happiness?

Answer: Many straight people do not have the privilege of marriage, either. So, again we say: God's rule for all single people (straight or gay) is purity.

As we stated above, having a certain PERSONALITY is not a sin. What God prohibits is the sinful PRACTICE of sex outside of marriage (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 20:13; Romans 1:26-27).

However, FRIENDSHIP that does not involve sexual activities is not sinful, whether it's friendship between opposite sexes or friendship between same sexes. In most western cultures, it seems that same-sex friendship of the platonic (non-sexual) kind is now subject to all kinds of misunderstanding. In former centuries same-sex friendships were accepted, even idealized. For example, in the Bible, David and Jonathan had a friendship of this kind, which did not include sexual involvement (1 Samuel 18:1-4).

The Bible prohibits males from dressing and acting like females; and vice versa (Deut. 22:5).

However, this doesn't mean that you submerge or deny your normal personality expression. In Tagalog we have a term "mahinhin" (meaning, refined, as opposed to masculine roughness). Some males are more refined in their expressions; that is not a sin. Some females are more rough and masculine-like in their ways; that is not

a sin. It is the sexual practice outside of marriage that is sin.

E. ROOF: LIFE AND MINISTRY

The roof of the house that God is building represents our life and ministry.

God made us exactly as we are for a purpose – whether straight or gay. If you believe and feel that you are a Type 1 Eunuch, God made you that way for a purpose. Like Type 2 or Type 3 Eunuch, you are called by God to sacrifice the sexual joys of marriage. There is NOTHING SINFUL or SECOND-CLASS about being a life-long single person. Rather, there is a special reward for such single people.

We best express our response in a prayer that goes something like this:

"God, thank you for making me exactly as I am for a purpose. Help me to live in purity in order that I might fulfill your purpose for my life."

2 Timothy 2:20-22: "In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful for the Master and prepared to do any good work. Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

We should all learn to give as much love, respect and acceptance to GAY singles as we do to STRAIGHT

singles, and let us all encourage one another to live in purity whether in marriage or in singleness.

As you build your life on these biblical principles for marriage and singleness, you will build a "house" (LIFE AND MINISTRY) that will become a blessing, a refuge, a shelter, for others, where they can find love, compassion, understanding and meaning.

And what is your reward, if God has given you the special call to a life of singleness?

You will have the rare joy and privilege of fully devoting yourself to a life of love and service with and for the Lord Jesus Christ who lived the pure single life.

“An unmarried man [or woman] is concerned about the Lord’s affairs – how he [she] can please the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:32). The apostle Paul was among these select servants of God. Look at what God accomplished through his total devotion to the Lord! Throughout history, so many men and women have accepted their single life as a gift from the Lord and they have been mightily used of God to accomplish great things to build and extend God’s kingdom here on earth.

This doesn’t mean that one state is better than the other. God calls some to MARRIAGE, God calls others to SINGLE LIFE. The important thing is to know what your calling is and to be faithful in that calling.

Let’s memorize:

1 Corinthians 7:23-24: You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called.

SPECIAL ARTICLE #3

Below, we will extensively quote from a couple of on-line resources, which deal with the physical and the psycho-social development of children. Sadly, many parents enter marriage and start having children with little or no clue about these stages of development. The material below is offered to introduce them to these stages of development. Hopefully, parents will go on to learn more about these topics from other resources (such as books on Christian parenting, available in bookstores, as well as online).

PART ONE: PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Here's a brief overview from Biology Online:

The Newly Born Child

Depending on the nutrients available to the child within pregnancy and the genetic make up of the child, most healthy babies weight between five and eight pounds. Since the placenta is absent, which previously provided the baby with nutrients, food is required for the metabolic processes and the continued growth of the baby.

Its nutrients derive from feeding of liquids by the parents to begin with, as the young baby's digestive system cannot cope with more complex solid foods. This provides the nutrients to begin with for continued growth and development

The Toddler

Through learning and development , by the end of the first year the baby can feed on solids and perform basic functions such as crawling and walking. The dependence on growth from food from the mother is now switched to the production of hormones in the young child, which now has a developed endocrine system for hormone secretion.

At this stage the young child is at a period of accelerated growth, which will continue into early childhood

Depending on the genetics of the baby, the hormones secreted will determine the height of the child in its future years. As a general rule of thumb, the size of the child at 2 years is roughly proportional to its final height barring unusual factors.

Puberty and Adolescence

After early childhood, the child continues to grow steadily in its single figure years up until it becomes a teenager. At this point, puberty begins.

Puberty is the point in time where the development of sexual characteristics begin, and will allow these humans to become sexually active and be able to produce gametes for reproduction.

Puberty in Females

On average, most girls tend to reach puberty before boys.

Oestrogen, a female hormone is secreted by the ovaries, begins to enlarge the breasts which will be later used by the baby to feed on.

Growth is increased and accelerates over the teenage years as a result of increases in the secretion of growth hormone.

On average, 20 centimetres are gained in height from puberty

The menstrual cycle is initiated by the thickening of the uterus caused by the cyclical changes in the presence of oestrogen. This is shed every 28 days and is known as a period. At this point, the female is fertile and able to reproduce

Puberty in Males

On average, most boys tend to reach puberty after most girls have developed, though puberty lasts longer

As with girls, a growth spurt occurs

Testosterone is produced by the male testes, which initiates the growth spurt, and does so more effectively than oestrogen, making most males on average taller than females

After secretion of prolonged testosterone, the male shows secondary sex characteristics such as increased bodily hair, deepening of the voice and increased development of muscularity

The initial secretion of testosterone initiates sperm production, giving the male fertile gametes available for reproduction

By the end of the teenage years puberty ceases and maturity has been reached. At this point, no more true growth occurs (an increase in cell number) and new cells are solely used for regeneration purposes.

Women cease to be fertile on average in their 50's where no more eggs are produced by the ovaries. It is interesting to know that a female baby already has over 1

000 000 follicles for eggs to develop in, which decreases to 100 000 by puberty. By the 6th decade of life in the female, this supply will have run out.

Longevity

Better living conditions have led to people in modern societies living to a ripe old age. In light of this, increased study has went (sic) into longevity in humans (how long we live) and how we can combat the degenerative nature of aging.

Over time our bodies become less efficient, and the homeostasis of an efficient body becomes less able to maintain the favourable conditions. This leads to degeneration of our body, until death.

CONCERNS REGARDING PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

What are the main concerns of parents in relation to the physical development of their children?

- (1) Proper diet, exercise and rest, and basic guidelines for personal hygiene and grooming.
- (2) How do deal with the usual illnesses, specially during infancy and childhood.
- (3) Safety rules to prevent injuries and accidents must be provided by parents, especially for growing boys and girls.
- (4) Girls have unique needs upon the onset of puberty, and the mother is the best parent to give them the help and advice needed at this time.

(5) Parents must prepare a talk about “the birds and the bees” for sons and daughters respectively as they hit the age of puberty. This talk must include a physical briefing about male-female differences as well as a briefing regarding the emotional and spiritual aspects of puberty (also discussed under psychosocial development); for example, how to handle romantic emotions, how to avoid the dangers of wrong sexual and emotional involvements, and how to maintain sexual purity in obedience to Commandment 7.

SPECIAL ARTICLE #4

PART TWO: PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The most well known treatment of this subject seems to be that of Erik Erikson. Below is a description of Erikson’s psychosocial stages of development, quoted from Wikipedia:

Hope: trust vs. mistrust (oral-sensory, infancy, 0–2 years)

Existential Question: Can I Trust the World?

The first stage of Erik Erikson's theory centers around the infant's basic needs being met by the parents and this interaction leading to trust or mistrust. Trust as defined by Erikson is "an essential truthfulness of others as well as a fundamental sense of one's own trustworthiness."^[6] The infant depends on the parents, especially the mother, for sustenance and comfort. The child's relative understanding of world and society come from the parents and their interaction with the child. A child's first trust is always with the parent or caregiver; whoever that might be; however, even the caregiver is

secondary where as the parents are primary in the eyes of the child. If the parents expose the child to warmth, regularity, and dependable affection, the infant's view of the world will be one of trust. Should the parents fail to provide a secure environment and to meet the child's basic needs; a sense of mistrust will result.^[7] Development of mistrust can lead to feelings of frustration, suspicion, withdrawal, and a lack of confidence.^[6]

According to Erik Erikson, the major developmental task in infancy is to learn whether or not other people, especially primary caregivers, regularly satisfy basic needs. If caregivers are consistent sources of food, comfort, and affection, an infant learns trust- that others are dependable and reliable. If they are neglectful, or perhaps even abusive, the infant instead learns mistrust- that the world is an undependable, unpredictable, and possibly a dangerous place. While negative, having some experience with mistrust allows the infant to gain an understanding of what constitutes dangerous situations later in life, yet being at the stage of infant or toddler; it is a good idea not to put them in situations of mistrust, the child's number one needs are to feel safe, comforted, and well cared for.^[7]

Will: autonomy vs. shame and doubt (early childhood, 2-4 years)

Existential Question: Is It Okay to Be Me?

As the child gains control over eliminative functions and motor abilities, they begin to explore their surroundings. The parents still provide a strong base of a security from which the child can venture out to assert their will. The parents' patience and encouragement help

foster autonomy in the child. Children at this age like to explore the world around them and they are constantly learning about their environment. Caution must be taken at this age while children may explore things that are dangerous to their health and safety.

At this age children develop their first interests. For example, a child who enjoys music may like to play with the radio. Children who enjoy the outdoors may be interested in animals and plants. Highly restrictive parents, however, are more likely to instill in the child a sense of doubt, and reluctance to attempt new challenges. As they gain increased muscular coordination and mobility, toddlers become capable of satisfying some of their own needs. They begin to feed themselves, wash and dress themselves, and use the bathroom.

If caregivers encourage self-sufficient behavior, toddlers develop a sense of autonomy—a sense of being able to handle many problems on their own. But if caregivers demand too much too soon, refuse to let children perform tasks of which they are capable, or ridicule early attempts at self-sufficiency, children may instead develop shame and doubt about their ability to handle problems.

Purpose: initiative vs. guilt (locomotor-genital, preschool, 4–5 years)

Existential Question: Is it Okay for Me to Do, Move, and Act?

Initiative adds to autonomy the quality of undertaking, planning and attacking a task for the sake of just being active and on the move. The child is learning to master

the world around them, learning basic skills and principles of physics. Things fall down, not up. Round things roll. They learn how to zip and tie, count and speak with ease. At this stage, the child wants to begin and complete their own actions for a purpose. Guilt is a confusing new emotion. They may feel guilty over things that logically should not cause guilt. They may feel guilt when this initiative does not produce desired results.

The development of courage and independence are what set preschoolers, ages three to six years of age, apart from other age groups. Young children in this category face the challenge of initiative versus guilt. As described in Bee and Boyd (2004),^[7] the child during this stage faces the complexities of planning and developing a sense of judgment. During this stage, the child learns to take initiative and prepare for leadership and goal achievement roles. Activities sought out by a child in this stage may include risk-taking behaviors, such as crossing a street alone or riding a bike without a helmet; both these examples involve self-limits.

Within instances requiring initiative, the child may also develop negative behaviors. These behaviors are a result of the child developing a sense of frustration for not being able to achieve a goal as planned and may engage in behaviors that seem aggressive, ruthless, and overly assertive to parents. Aggressive behaviors, such as throwing objects, hitting, or yelling, are examples of observable behaviors during this stage. **

Preschoolers are increasingly able to accomplish tasks on their own, and can start new things. With this growing independence comes many choices about activities to be pursued. Sometimes children take on

projects they can readily accomplish, but at other times they undertake projects that are beyond their capabilities or that interfere with other people's plans and activities. If parents and preschool teachers encourage and support children's efforts, while also helping them make realistic and appropriate choices, children develop initiative-independence in planning and undertaking activities. But if, instead, adults discourage the pursuit of independent activities or dismiss them as silly and bothersome, children develop guilt about their needs and desires.^[8]

Competence: industry vs. inferiority (latency, school age, 5–12 years)

Existential Question: Can I Make it in the World of People and Things?

The aim to bring a productive situation to completion gradually supersedes the whims and wishes of [play](#). The fundamentals of technology are developed. The failure to master trust, autonomy, and industrious skills may cause the child to doubt his or her future, leading to shame, guilt, and the experience of defeat and inferiority.^[9]

"Children at this age are becoming more aware of themselves as individuals." They work hard at "being responsible, being good and doing it right." They are now more reasonable to share and cooperate. Allen and Marotz (2003)^[10] also list some perceptual cognitive developmental traits specific for this age group. Children grasp the concepts of [space](#) and time in more logical, practical ways. They gain a better understanding of cause and effect, and of calendar time. At this stage, children are eager to [learn](#) and accomplish more complex skills: reading, writing, telling time. They also

get to form [moral values](#), recognize cultural and individual differences and are able to manage most of their personal needs and grooming with minimal assistance.^[10] At this stage, children might express their independence by talking back and being disobedient and rebellious.

Erikson viewed the [elementary school](#) years as critical for the development of [self-confidence](#). Ideally, elementary school provides many opportunities to achieve the recognition of teachers, parents and peers by producing things- drawing pictures, solving addition problems, writing sentences, and so on. If children are encouraged to make and do things and are then praised for their accomplishments, they begin to demonstrate industry by being diligent, persevering at tasks until completed, and putting work before pleasure. If children are instead ridiculed or punished for their efforts or if they find they are incapable of meeting their teachers' and parents' expectations, they develop feelings of [inferiority](#) about their capabilities.^[2]

At this age, children start recognizing their special talents and continue to discover interests as their education improves. They may begin to choose to do more activities to pursue that interest, such as joining a sport if they know they have athletic ability, or joining the band if they are good at music. If not allowed to discover their own talents in their own time, they will develop a sense of lack of motivation, low self-esteem, and lethargy. They may become "couch potatoes" if they are not allowed to develop interests.

Fidelity: identity vs. role confusion (adolescence, 13–19 years)

Existential Question: Who Am I and What Can I Be?

The adolescent is newly concerned with how they appear to others. Superego identity is the accrued confidence that the outer sameness and continuity prepared in the future are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for oneself, as evidenced in the promise of a career. The ability to settle on a school or occupational identity is pleasant. In later stages of Adolescence, the child develops a sense of [sexual identity](#). As they make the transition from childhood to adulthood, adolescents ponder the roles they will play in the adult world. Initially, they are apt to experience some role confusion—mixed ideas and feelings about the specific ways in which they will fit into society—and may experiment with a variety of behaviors and activities (e.g. tinkering with cars, baby-sitting for neighbors, affiliating with certain political or religious groups). Eventually, Erikson proposed, most adolescents achieve a sense of identity regarding who they are and where their lives are headed.

Erikson is credited with coining the term "[Identity Crisis](#)."^{[11]:39} Each stage that came before and that follows has its own 'crisis', but even more so now, for this marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. This passage is necessary because "Throughout infancy and childhood, a person forms many identifications. But the need for identity in youth is not met by these."^[12] This turning point in human development seems to be the reconciliation between 'the person one has come to be' and 'the person society expects one to become'. This emerging sense of self will be established by 'forging' past experiences with anticipations of the future. In relation to the eight life stages as a whole, the fifth stage corresponds to the crossroads:

What is unique about the stage of Identity is that it is a special sort of synthesis of earlier stages and a special sort of anticipation of later ones. Youth has a certain unique quality in a person's life; it is a bridge between childhood and adulthood. Youth is a time of radical change—the great body changes accompanying puberty, the ability of the mind to search one's own intentions and the intentions of others, the suddenly sharpened awareness of the roles society has offered for later life.^[11]

Adolescents "are confronted by the need to re-establish [boundaries] for themselves and to do this in the face of an often potentially hostile world."^[13] This is often challenging since commitments are being asked for before particular identity roles have formed. At this point, one is in a state of 'identity confusion', but society normally makes allowances for youth to "find themselves," and this state is called 'the moratorium':

The problem of adolescence is one of role confusion—a reluctance to commit which may haunt a person into his mature years. Given the right conditions—and Erikson believes these are essentially having enough space and time, a psychosocial moratorium, when a person can freely experiment and explore—what may emerge is a firm sense of identity, an emotional and deep awareness of who he or she is.^[13]

As in other stages, bio-psycho-social forces are at work. No matter how one has been raised, one's personal ideologies are now chosen for oneself. Often, this leads to conflict with adults over religious and political orientations. Another area where teenagers are deciding for themselves is their career choice, and often parents

want to have a decisive say in that role. If society is too insistent, the teenager will acquiesce to external wishes, effectively forcing him or her to ‘foreclose’ on experimentation and, therefore, true self-discovery. Once someone settles on a worldview and vocation, will he or she be able to integrate this aspect of self-definition into a diverse society? According to Erikson, when an adolescent has balanced both perspectives of “What have I got?” and “What am I going to do with it?” he or she has established their identity:^[11]

Dependent on this stage is the ego quality of *fidelity—the ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of the inevitable contradictions and confusions of value systems*. (Italics in original)^[13]

Given that the next stage (Intimacy) is often characterized by marriage, many are tempted to cap off the fifth stage at 20 years of age. However, these age ranges are actually quite fluid, especially for the achievement of identity, since it may take many years to become grounded, to identify the object of one's fidelity, to feel that one has "come of age." In the biographies [*Young Man Luther*](#) and [*Gandhi's Truth*](#), Erikson determined that their crises ended at ages 25 and 30, respectively:

Erikson does note that the time of Identity crisis for persons of genius is frequently prolonged. He further notes that in our industrial society, identity formation tends to be long, because it takes us so long to gain the skills needed for adulthood's tasks in our technological world. So... we do not have an exact time span in which to find ourselves. It doesn't happen automatically at eighteen or at twenty-one. A *very* approximate rule of

thumb for our society would put the end somewhere in one's twenties.^[11]

Love: intimacy vs. isolation (early adulthood, 20-39 years)

Existential Question: Can I Love?

The Intimacy vs. Isolation conflict is emphasized around the age of 30. At the start of this stage, identity vs. role confusion is coming to an end, though it still lingers at the foundation of the stage (Erikson, 1950). Young adults are still eager to blend their identities with friends. They want to fit in. Erikson believes we are sometimes isolated due to intimacy. We are afraid of rejections such as being turned down or our partners breaking up with us. We are familiar with pain and to some of us rejection is so painful that our egos cannot bear it.^{[14][15]} Erikson also argues that "Intimacy has a counterpart: Distantiation: the readiness to isolate and if necessary, to destroy those forces and people whose essence seems dangerous to our own, and whose territory seems to encroach on the extent of one's intimate relations" (1950).

Once people have established their identities, they are ready to make long-term commitments to others. They become capable of forming intimate, reciprocal relationships (e.g. through close friendships or marriage) and willingly make the sacrifices and compromises that such relationships require. If people cannot form these intimate relationships – perhaps because of their own needs – a sense of isolation may result; arousing feelings of darkness and angst.

Care: generativity vs. stagnation (adulthood, 40–64 years)

Existential Question: Can I Make My Life Count?

Generativity is the concern of guiding the next generation. Socially-valued work and disciplines are expressions of generativity.

The adult stage of generativity has broad application to family, relationships, work, and society. “Generativity, then is primarily the concern in establishing and guiding the next generation... the concept is meant to include... productivity and creativity.”^[16]

During middle age the primary developmental task is one of contributing to society and helping to guide future generations. When a person makes a contribution during this period, perhaps by raising a family or working toward the betterment of society, a sense of generativity—a sense of productivity and accomplishment—results. In contrast, a person who is self-centered and unable or unwilling to help society move forward develops a feeling of stagnation—a dissatisfaction with the relative lack of productivity.

Central tasks of middle adulthood

Express love through more than sexual contacts.

Maintain healthy life patterns.

Develop a sense of unity with mate.

Help growing and grown children to be responsible adults.

Relinquish central role in lives of grown children.

Accept children's mates and friends.

Create a comfortable home.

Be proud of accomplishments of self and mate/spouse.

Reverse roles with aging parents.
Achieve mature, civic and social responsibility.
Adjust to physical changes of middle age.
Use leisure time creatively.

Wisdom: ego integrity vs. despair (maturity, 65 – death)

Existential Question: Is it Okay to Have Been Me?

As we grow older and become senior citizens we tend to slow down our productivity and explore life as a retired person. It is during this time that we contemplate our accomplishments and are able to develop [integrity](#) if we see ourselves as leading a successful life. If we see our life as unproductive, or feel that we did not accomplish our life goals, we become dissatisfied with life and develop [despair](#), often leading to depression and hopelessness.

The final developmental task is retrospection: people look back on their lives and accomplishments. They develop feelings of contentment and integrity if they believe that they have led a happy, productive life. They may instead develop a sense of despair if they look back on a life of disappointments and unachieved goals.

This stage can occur out of the sequence when an individual feels they are near the end of their life (such as when receiving a terminal disease diagnosis).

Wikipedia quote ends here.