

Module 3
Section 2

FAMILY LIFE

Families are the foundation of
society.

IN THIS SECTION YOU WILL:

Discover how important family is to the world.

Recognize the value in building strong family relationships.

Find ways to spend more time with your family and make them a priority.

Learn the difference between what is common versus normal family life.

FAMILY LIFE

Family is important to this world

What we are seeing in our culture today is the re-defining of what family means. The word “family” is being diluted or water-downed and thought of as not as important anymore. That's not true. It's really important to think about the power of family and how important it is in the world.



Gearing our hearts toward children

We need to focus on our children. How we spend our time is important, and our children need our attention. Sometimes we think we don't have enough time, but that's not true. Society makes us think we don't have enough time. We can get so busy that we miss opportunities to build strong relationships with our children. It's important to make sure we have extra time for them. Take a break from doing other things and help our children learn about relationships and the world around them.



Primary relationships

The most important relationships are the ones within a family. This includes husbands and wives, parents and children, and brothers and sisters. These relationships hold society together. When families are strong, the culture is strong too. Husbands and wives are the most important relationships, so we need to focus on them first. We should prioritize these relationships over other friends, other family members, or our jobs.

As parents, we need to make space for our children to be children. It might be inconvenient sometimes, but that's okay. We should expect that. Also, our children enjoy spending time with us. When we spend time with them when

they're 2, 3, or 4 years old, they will still want to spend time with us when they're 13, 14, or 15 years old. It's because we've made it a part of our family. It doesn't really matter what we do together, it just matters that we spend quality time together. There's a saying that love is spelled T-I-M-E, and it's true. Kids will connect with parents who have time for them.



Prioritizing Time

Spending time together as a family is really important. Some studies have shown that not many families eat meals together anymore. But when families do eat together, it helps kids feel less stressed and it helps build stronger relationships. It even makes a difference in how they feel mentally. It's not about what you eat, but about being together in a welcoming space. You don't have to wait for everything to be perfect. Other studies have shown that social media, cell phones, and computers can make it harder for families to connect. So, it's a good idea to have times when phones aren't allowed.



Play

It's important to have fun and do things together as a family. You can do activities that are available to you and make them enjoyable. You can play games, laugh, and even roughhouse in the backyard. It's all about creating family memories. You can even make work a part of your time together, so you have more time to play.

Protecting Children

The world can be a difficult place for children, and sometimes their minds aren't ready for everything they see and hear. The part of our brain that helps us make decisions and understand consequences doesn't fully develop until we're older, around age 25 for boys and men. That means children and teens have to deal with things that they might not be ready for, like adult issues and social media. They might see things about dating, physical intimacy, and sexuality before they're mature enough to handle it. As parents, we can protect our children from these things. Some conversations should be kept private and only for adults. We need to keep our children safe from dangerous things like parties, drugs, and alcohol.

Be Involved

One of the best things moms and dads can do is be involved in their children's lives. This doesn't mean being too controlling or always watching over them. It means knowing what your kids are doing, who their friends are, and what they're spending their time on. It's important to know what they're doing on their phones and computers, and what websites they're visiting. These are questions we should ask as parents. When we're involved in our children's lives, we're showing them love and doing our job well.



Covenant Eyes is a helpful tool for blocking inappropriate websites on computers and phones. It's important for parents, to be the ones to answer our kids' questions about sensitive topics like pornography. We don't want them to find harmful information online. Instead, we want to provide them with accurate and healthy information about sexuality and what it means to grow up as boys and girls. Let's take a proactive approach and not make these conversations awkward. Talking about sex is a natural and beautiful thing, and it's okay to discuss it in a healthy way.

Model healthy family

It's important for us to model what a healthy family looks like. Families can have different structures, like single parents or blended families, and sometimes things can get complicated. But what kids really need are healthy relationships. So, let's make an effort to have strong and positive relationships, and let's also spend time with other healthy families so our kids can see and understand what a healthy family looks like.

Communication

Communication is key. Many families make the mistake of not talking enough and not understanding each other's feelings and intentions. Family is all about relationships and being able to talk with one another is crucial. We can have meaningful conversations anywhere - in the kitchen, in the car, or even around a bonfire. Let's listen to each other's hearts and make communication a priority. Couples should especially make time to talk, have date nights, and find quiet moments to share with each other. This is the best thing we can do for our family.



Common verses normal

Sometimes, things that are common in society may seem normal, but that doesn't mean they are healthy or right. There are certain things about family relationships that should never change. We should protect and continue to promote healthy dynamics within our families. For example, sibling relationships do not need to be contentious or competitive. Parents should not speak rudely to each other. The stereotypes we see on social media and television, like dads being portrayed as bumbling figures or moms being overbearing, are not normal or healthy.



Sibling relationships are important for children's development. No one is more like you than your sibling, with similar genetics, values, and upbringing. We should nurture these relationships for long-term well-being.

Parents should appreciate every stage of their child's development. The "terrible twos" can actually be a chance to understand and support a child's

emotions as they grow. The teenage years also present an opportunity to help teens become responsible adults. Instead of ignoring or dismissing their behavior as normal, we should see it as a chance to guide them through different stages of maturity.

Healthy Family

Having a healthy family is becoming less common, but it doesn't have to be that way. We can focus on creating a healthy family environment. Once we have strong and happy families, the culture will take care of itself. We don't have to accept common problems as normal. Set boundaries and strive for healthy relationships between parents and children. If we encounter challenges, we can seek help from outside sources to support our family.

It's important to express love to our loved ones. Learn to feel comfortable saying "I love you" to our spouse, children, and siblings. Don't leave things unsaid. Children can never hear too often that they are loved. Spouses also need to hear that they are loved. We all need to feel loved.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

How does spending time with your family make you feel?

2

What are some ways you can show love to your family members?

3

Why do you think it's important to eat meals together as a family?

4

What are some activities you enjoy doing with your family?

5

How do you think communication can strengthen family relationships?

6

Why is it important to set boundaries within a family?

FAMILY FUN IDEAS

OUTDOOR PLAY

- Hold backyard races
- Do a fitness challenge
- Play freeze tag
- Make an outdoor obstacle course
- Go on a nature scavenger hunt
- Plant a tree
- Plan a picnic
- Birdwatch
- Play with mud
- Plant a flower or vegetable garden
- Backyard camping
- Go for a walk or bike ride
- Play cornhole or other games

WHAT'S COOKIN'?

- Play chef for a meal
- Make homemade pizza
- Bake bread together
- Bake something sweet
- Plan a fancy family dinner
- Host a barbeque
- Make homemade popsicles
- Make dog treats
- Make homemade ice cream
- Try new recipes for veggies
- Have a family cook-off contest
- Make flavored popcorn
- Make up a new sandwich

CRAFT TIME

- Make slime
- Build a birdhouse
- Make a family scrapbook
- Build a fairy garden
- Make handmade jewelry
- Design a family motto or emblem
- Make a fort
- Make musical instruments
- Decorate pots for plants
- Paint pictures or use finger paint
- Make paper shadow drawings
- Make origami projects
- Design a sculpture out of junk

FUN AND GAMES

- Play flashlight tag
- Play board games
- Have a family movie night
- Play “the floor is lava” game
- Put a jigsaw puzzle together
- Play charades
- Put on a puppet show
- Make shadow animals
- Play card games
- Put on a talent show
- Try to build towers out of cards
- Read a book out loud together
- Tell a story and each person adds to it

RESOURCES

FOR PARENTING & FAMILY LIFE

John and Amy Claussen are Co-founders of GoFam Ministries. They have eight children from 12 to 27 and 2 grandchildren and love all things family. Their website is: GoFam.org

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Christ Centered Corner

Extra encouragement from a Christian perspective.

But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:15, NIV)

Choosing to be a family that follows Jesus Christ means creating a home where God's love is shown, the Bible is respected, and God's name is praised. It means trying to live like Jesus in family relationships and everyday life. It's about having a loving, respectful, and spiritually growing environment.

Let's look at five main reasons why Christian family values matter:

1. Love and Compassion: Christian family values are based on love and compassion. Families that have these values create a caring environment where everyone takes care of each other no matter what.
2. Morals and Ethics: Christian family values help us make good choices and follow ethical principles. They act like a compass, guiding us through life's challenges with honesty and respect.
3. Growing in Faith: Families that focus on Christian values talk openly about their faith and practice it together. They pray, read the Bible, and have discussions as a family, which helps them grow spiritually and have a strong foundation in Jesus.
4. Strong Relationships: These values make family bonds stronger. When parents show love, respect, and kindness, children learn how to treat others the same way. This brings the family together and helps them support each other.
5. Positive Impact on Society: Families with Christian values make a positive difference in society. Their love, compassion, and commitment to doing what's right don't just stay at home. They also influence the communities they are a part of.

Families who follow Christ are all about creating an environment that reflects what Jesus taught, building healthy relationships, and making good moral choices.