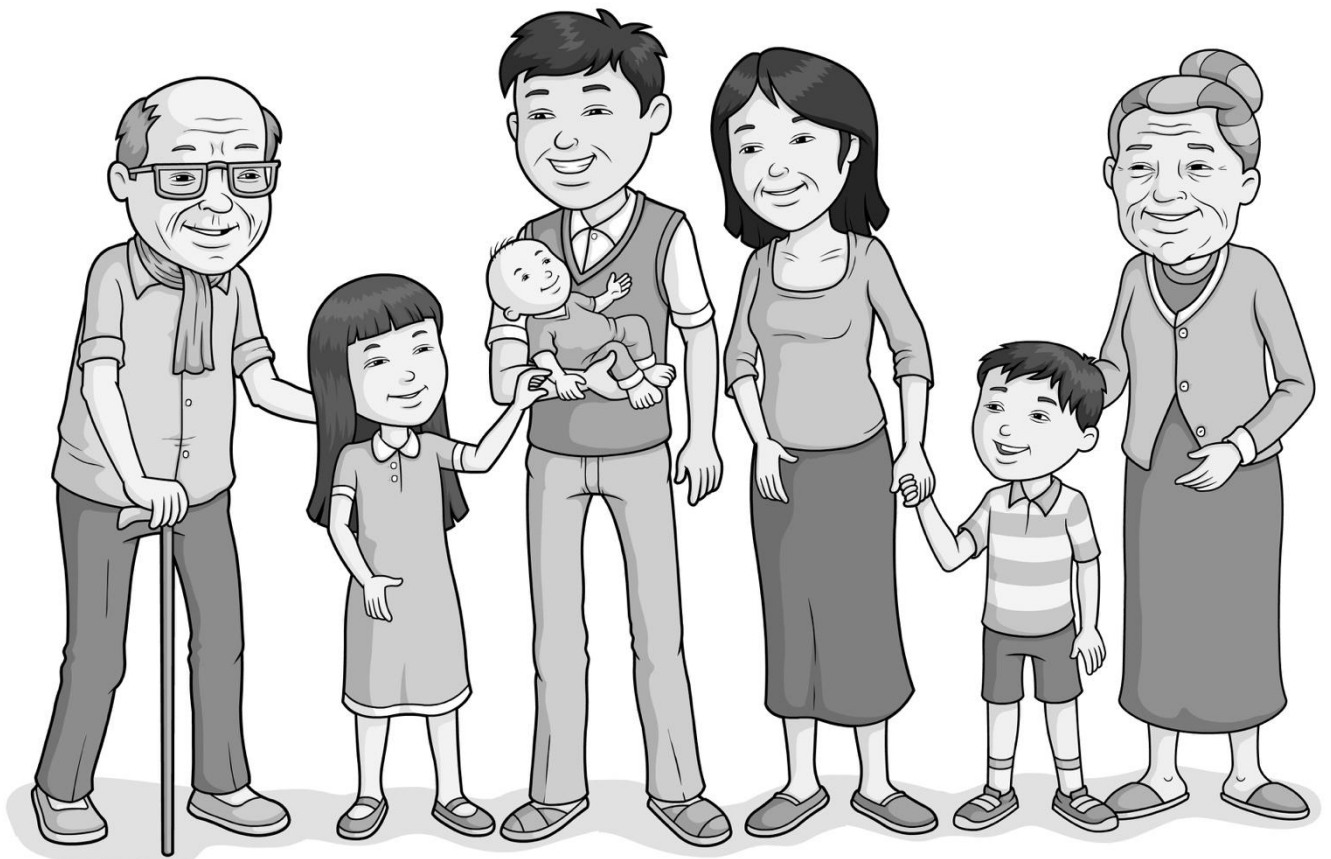


**TRUTH  
CENTERED  
TRANSFORMATION**

**MODULE**



# **MARRIAGE & FAMILY STUDENT GUIDE**

# Lesson 1: Roles of Husbands and Wives

## Role of the Husband

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and Philippians 2:1-8. Answer the following questions:

- 1 How do each of these verses describe God's love?
  - 1 Corinthians: 13:4-8
  
  - Philippians 2:1-8
- 2 How can a husband show love for his wife in these ways? In your groups come up with 10 practical things that a husband could do to demonstrate this kind of love for his wife.
- 3 If a husband treated his wife the way the Bible teaches, what effect do you think it would have on a marriage?

## Role of the Wife

- 1 What are some ways to be a 'helper' and show godly submission and respect to husbands? In groups try to think of 10 examples.
- 2 How would it affect a marriage if a wife did these sorts of things?

# Lesson 2: Recognise Our Differences

1. For each topic mark on the line with an "X" what **you** like.
2. For each topic mark on the line with an "O" what you think **your spouse** or friend would like.

<b>Disagreements</b>		
Sort it out immediately	_____	Keep the peace
<b>Money</b>		
Spend	_____	Save
<b>People</b>		
Spend time with others	_____	Spend time alone
<b>Planning</b>		
Make plans and stick to them	_____	Be spontaneous
<b>Punctuality</b>		
Arrive early	_____	Arrive just in time or late
<b>Relaxation</b>		
Go out	_____	Stay home
<b>Sleeping</b>		
Go to bed late	_____	Go to bed early
<b>Sport</b>		
Enthusiast	_____	Uninterested
<b>Clothes</b>		
Formal	_____	Casual

<b>Tidiness</b>		
Very tidy	_____	Messy
<b>T.V.</b>		
Keep it on	_____	Throw it out

3. Show each other what you have put on your paper and discuss:
  - a. Did you have a correct understanding of the other person's preferences? Were you surprised by anything?
  - b. Did you and your spouse/close family member always have the same answers for each of these topics?
  - c. In which areas are you the most similar and you find it easy to agree?
  - d. In which areas are you the most different?
  - e. Which topics create disagreements in your marriage or relationship?
  - f. Talk about how you could handle these areas of your differences.
  - g. How can you use each person's strengths to build your marriage or relationship?

If you have not been married very long, then it is likely that you are different on many of them. Instead of trying to change the other person, you need to look for their strengths and help them in the areas that they are weak.

4. Plan for how you are going to resolve the areas where you are very different. Choose 2 areas of difference and write down your plan for how you will resolve them.

**Example 1 – Money**

If your spouse likes to spend and you like to save, plan for how you will spend some money and save some money. Maybe agree together to save a specific amount, while your spouse can have an allowance each week/month to spend on the needs of the family.

**Example 2 – Relaxing**

If your way of relaxing is to be at home and your partner likes to go out, agree on a way you can both be happy. Maybe go out together one night a week and stay home together one night a week. Or agree that for 1 or 2 nights a week your spouse will go out and you will stay home.

Our Plan:

- 1.
- 2.

# Lesson 2: Resolving Disagreements

## Read each principle and the verse:

1. Make sure you recognise your faults first—do not be quick to point out the faults of others. (Matthew 7:3-5)
2. Discuss the issues in private, not in front of others, especially children. (Matthew 18:15)
3. Discuss disagreements calmly. Choose a time when you both are calm. If you are angry, postpone the discussion. (Proverbs 15:1)
4. State your points kindly without attacking each other. (Colossians 4:6)
5. Listen to each other. Try to see the other's point of view. Perhaps he is right, and you are wrong. (Philippians 2:3)
6. After stating your perspective, leave it. Do not argue or try to change the other person's thoughts. Sometimes you must respectfully agree to differ. If this is done lovingly you can keep the peace. (Ephesians 4:26)

## Discuss:

1. Which of these principles is easiest for you to do during a disagreement?
2. Which of these principles is hardest for you to do during a disagreement?

## Create A Role Play:

Choose a common disagreement in marriages and show how to resolve the disagreement using all these principles.

# Lesson 3: Identifying Hurts

*'Therefore, if you are offering a gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.'* Matthew 5:23-24

## Personal Reflection

Ask God to show you if there are any ways that you have hurt your spouse, or if you are not married, think about a close friend or family member instead. Think about the following areas and write down your thoughts:

- Is there anything that you have failed to do that you should be doing?
- Is there anything that you have done (or are doing) that you should not do?
- Have you failed to do something you know your spouse wants you to do?
- Have you said anything that has been hurtful?
- Have you failed to show love and encouragement?

*'If your brother or sister sins against you, go and show them their fault, just between the two of you.'* Matthew 18:15

## Personal Reflection

Are there ways that you have been hurt by your spouse? It may or may not be something that your partner realizes is hurting you.

## Application

Pray and commit to start discussing these things with your spouse this week.

# Lesson 3: Steps for Apologising

Steps for Apologising to restore relationships when I have caused hurt:

1. **Confess to God** – When we hurt our partner, we also disobey God. We need to go to God and ask for His forgiveness for what we have done wrong. Accepting God's forgiveness will give us a humble heart to confess and apologise to the other person.
2. **Confess to the other person without giving excuses** – Often when we confess, we want to explain why we did what we did. However, this can make it hard for the other person to forgive us.

## Example 1

*Blaming:* I know I criticised you in front of your friends yesterday, but I would not have if you had not made us one hour late.

*Proper:* I hurt you by criticising you in front of your friends yesterday; it was unkind of me.

## Example 2

*Blaming:* I know I was grumpy and rude towards you last night, but you should have remembered that your mother had been criticising me a lot lately and I am tired from all the work.

*Proper:* It was selfish and insensitive of me to be rude and grumpy towards you last night. I am sorry I hurt you.

Compare each of the examples above. Which way would you be more likely to forgive?

3. **Apologise** – Make sure that you are specific about what you are sorry for, and express your sorrow sincerely. Say something like, 'I am extremely sorry for what I did,' or 'I feel really bad about the way that I treated you.'
4. **Ask for forgiveness** – We need to realise that we need forgiveness. It may be that our partner is not ready to forgive us immediately, so we may need to be patient. Pray that God would help your partner to forgive you. You should not force them to say they forgive you against their will.
5. **Change your behaviour** – It is not enough to confess and apologise if we do not plan on changing and if we intend to keep making the same mistake. Part of restoring the relationship is making sure that you are willing and intent on changing your behaviour. To the best of your ability, you should try not to do it again.
6. **Accept the consequences** – The person may need time to forgive you. You need to be patient and ask God to help them to forgive you. Some hurts might destroy trust in a relationship. You need to realise that your spouse may not trust you as easily as they did before. This is a consequence of your action. Apologising does not automatically make everything new. Sometimes you have to live with the consequences of what you have done. It takes time for the hurt that you have caused to heal.

# Lesson 3: Steps to Forgiveness

If the hurt you experienced was small, then it might be easier to move through these steps. If the hurt was more significant, then this process may take more time.

1. Acknowledge that what was done to you was unjust.
2. Admit any anger and desire to hurt the person.
3. Ask God to help you forgive the other person.
4. Choose to take no revenge.
5. Let go of the desire to hurt the person.
6. Give the responsibility for judgement to God.
7. Ask God to remove any bitterness and resentment.
8. Ask God to heal your pain and all the consequences of the injustice in your life.

## Small Group Discussion

- Which steps to forgiveness are the most difficult for you?
- What could help you in making these steps easier?

## Practising the Steps of Forgiveness

What is one thing you need to forgive your spouse for?

If you cannot think of anything with your spouse, then think of anyone else that may have treated you unjustly. If you still cannot think of anything, then just pray quietly for those who are going through the process.

Close your eyes and listen and think about forgiving your spouse as each step is read.



# Lesson 4: Five Love Languages

## Five Different Languages

In Gary Chapman's book called *The Five Love Languages*, he explains 5 common ways that people feel loved. People are different and have different ways that they receive love. If we show love in a way that is different from how our spouse most feels loved, then it is like we are speaking a different language to them and they may not feel loved. We might be speaking, but they do not understand. If we want to speak to our spouse, then we need to speak their language. It is the same with love, we need to learn the other person's love language so that we can express love to them in a way that they can best understand.

There are 5 different love languages. Read each one and think of 2-4 specific ways you can do this in your own marriage.

1. **Serving Each Other** – Some people feel loved when we do things for them. These may be simple things like tidying the house, washing the dishes, or pulling the weeds.
2. **Words of Affirmation** – Some people feel loved when we say positive things to them. They may be compliments like, 'You cook so well' or 'You have beautiful hair' or 'You are a great mother.' They may be words of gratitude or appreciation: 'Thank you for cooking dinner' or 'Thank you for working so hard to provide for the family.'
3. **Gifts** – Some people feel loved when we give things to them. Gifts do not need to be expensive or even cost money. It may be as simple as a flower that you picked on the way home or a poem that you wrote.
4. **Physical Touch** – Some people feel loved through physical touch. This includes everything from holding hands, hugs, or stroking the other person's hair.
5. **Spending Focused Time Together** – Some people feel loved when we spend special time with them. This does not mean that we are in the same room but doing different things. It means that we give each other focused attention. In our busy homes, it may mean that we take a walk together and share about our days.

You might find that your spouse responds more favourably to one love language than others. Each person has their own preference. Try to discover which way of showing love means the most to your spouse and do more of that kind.

# Lesson 5: The Culture and Ways in the Time of Jesus

We are going to look at the way women were viewed during Jesus' time and the way Jesus treated women. Read this in your small groups and discuss the questions on the second page.

## The Culture in the Time of Jesus:

The Jewish and Roman laws and traditions gave little value to women. Women were seen as inferior to men.

- **Women were treated like possessions.** They were not independent. They either belonged to their father's house or to their husband's house. Jewish men were even forbidden to speak with all women on the street. Their presence was not recorded or recognised in important events.
- **Women were restricted in their worship of God.** Religious leaders had added new laws that meant that women were only allowed to go to the 'women's court' in the temple. (The women's court was never in the original design of the temple). They could not read the Word of God or participate in worship inside the temple.
- **Women were generally excluded from being educated.** Since education was given in the synagogue schools, girls were discouraged from participating.
- **Women had no legal rights.** They could not own land, receive an inheritance unless there were no men left in the family line, or divorce their husbands. Women were not allowed to testify in a court of law unless a man could confirm her story.

In general, in the culture of Jesus' time, women were seen as less trustworthy, less intelligent and less spiritual.

## Jesus' Ways:

Jesus' attitude toward women was radical in the culture of that time. He treated men and women with equal respect and dignity. Women at that time had never known a man like Jesus.


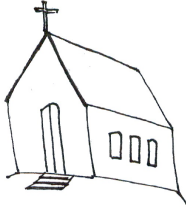
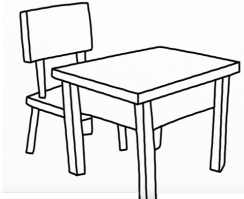

- **Jesus treated women with incredible respect and dignity.** He talked to women publicly. Jesus talked with the Samaritan woman who was both a foreigner and 'sinful' (John 4:7). He spoke with grace, truth and kindness to the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11).
- **Jesus ministered to women and treated each one as a person.** Jesus reached out to women as persons who were equally worthy as men to be both healed and saved. He ignored the laws given to Moses that said you cannot touch a woman who is bleeding (Mark 5:25-34). He healed a woman crippled for eighteen years by a demonic spirit and called her 'daughter of Abraham' (Luke 13:10-17). He helped a Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:22-28).
- **He taught women.** He took their questions and arguments seriously. Jesus entrusted important spiritual truths to both women and men. Jesus taught Mary, the sister of Martha (Luke 10: 38-42). Women were the first to see the risen Lord and were told to take the great news to the disciples (John 20:1-18). Many women travelled with Jesus and supported His ministry (Luke 8:1-3) as He taught His disciples and the crowds.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How would you describe the way women were treated during the time that Jesus lived on earth?
2. Are there any similarities between how your culture treats women and how the culture in Jesus' time treated women?
3. What are some differences between how Jesus treated women and how the culture at that time treated women?
4. How do you think women felt when Jesus treated them this way?
5. Are our churches acting more like our culture or like Jesus? What are some examples?

# Lesson 5: Our Community

Talk together about each area and fill in this chart. Consider the problems you see in your community with how women and girls are treated and think of 1-2 ideas for each area of what you can do to treat women and girls with dignity, respect, and value.

Area	Mistreatment & Inequalities	What we Can Do (1-2 ideas for each area)
 <p><b>Family</b></p>		
 <p><b>Church</b></p>		
 <p><b>School</b></p>		
 <p><b>Community</b></p>		

- What are two things you could do differently in your home to honour your wife and daughters?
- What are two things you could do differently in your community to honour women and girls?

Share with each other what you are committing to do. Pray for each other and ask God to help you to do these things.