

# The Old Paths

Volume 11, Issue 29

September 26, 2004

## “What Is A Family?”

Jarrod Jacobs

Lord willing, on Wednesday night (9/29), we will begin a series of lessons concerning the family. Why is this a necessary series? First of all, it is necessary because the home and family are Bible subjects! God speaks about the home beginning in Genesis two, and continues to speak of the necessity of the family all the way through the Bible. Secondly, our study is necessary because society has no idea what constitutes a family in the eyes of God. With so many who are ignorant of the Bible, it is apparent these folks have no idea what God’s standard is for the family. Third, it is a necessary study because if we do not teach our children ***the truth*** about the home and family, no one else will do it! Who is it that will show our little ones how parents act if we don’t? Will it be the TV? Will it be those in places of “higher” education who have ungodly morals? Will it be your child’s friend who has a set of divorced parents, and therefore has two “moms,” two “dads” and a grand number of “steps” in between?

### ***There Is A Bible Answer***

Friends, let us realize that there is a definite, concrete answer to the question in our title. The problem with many today is that they have allowed the wrong ones in our society to answer the

question, “What is a family?”. If we are going to get the correct answer to this question, doesn’t it make sense that we ask the Author of the family what He thinks constitutes a family? It makes sense to me, too! What is God’s definition of a family?

God’s definition of a family is revealed in Genesis two. After seeing that man was alone, He said, “*I will make an help meet for him...*” (Gen. 2:18). In making this helper, God created a woman for the man (Gen. 2:21-22). In seeing her, the man said, “*This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh*” (Gen. 2:23-24). Please take note that at this early point in the history of man, we have already learned about a man marrying a woman. We also have here mentioned for the first time “father” and “mother.” In the first century, Jesus spoke about this event as He taught the Pharisees and others in Matthew 19:4-6.

Yes, there is a Bible answer to this question of “What is a family?”. A family constitutes a man married to a woman, who within this relationship may bring forth and raise children (Heb. 13:4; Eph. 6:4; Titus 2:4; etc.). Yes, some folks cannot physically have children and never

do. Others may adopt children. However, this does not negate God’s definition for the family! They are still living according to God’s will.

Having said this, the fact remains that what folks in our country have termed “the nuclear family” (husband, wife, children) is not a product of western society. It is not the product of America in the 1950’s. Rather, this is what God expected from the beginning!

### ***Men’s Perversions Of The Bible Answer***

Some who have tried to define a “family” absent of God’s definition, have said that a family is any group of people who love one another. While loving people is a wonderful thing, is this what constitutes a family? What is their relationship to one another? How are they connected? Just because two men (or three or four) decide to live in the same house, this does not make them a family any more than if the same number of women decided to do that. A group of strangers (men, women, children) living under the same roof does not constitute a family! In addition to this, homosexual relationships do not fit God’s definition of marriage and family. In fact, that relationship is diametrically opposed to God’s will (Rom. 1:26-27).

### ***Conclusion***

In the last quarter of this year, we will be studying on the family. Make sure you are here for each class. Be sure you study with your children during the week and bring them to their classes as well. If we expect God’s plan for the family to be respected by future generations to come, teaching must take place today!

## Successful Evangelism

Larry Ray Hafley, Baytown, TX

**W**hat is the key to success in converting the lost? If I knew a secret formula, if I had an unfailing plan, I would be a millionaire. Multitudes of saved people would hover around me, but alas, I do not have a magic system, a guaranteed program. No one else does, either. (The ones who claim they do usually have their system for sale. Does that tell you anything?) No, I am not opposed to literature, CDs, films, and tapes that are neatly arranged, attractively presented and scripturally sound. But the answer is not to be found, bound, and sold. It cannot be packaged. We are used to instant oatmeal, instant coffee, instant pudding. Just plop it in the oven and presto, there it is. But there is no microwave gospel conversion kit.

The answer is not to be found in better buildings or more dynamic preachers. A "good depression" is not the solution, either. What, then?

*"And daily in the temple, and in ever house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:42). "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine" (Acts 5:28). "They lifted up their voice to God ... And when they had prayed ... they spake the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:24, 31). "It is not reason (fitting, suitable) that we should leave the word of God and serve tables ... But we will*

*give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:2, 4). "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly and from house to house ... For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:20, 27).*

Do you see the answer in the passages cited? It means more work, more preaching, more home Bible studies, more gospel meetings, more debates, both public and private, more efforts to initiate conversation about spiritual matters. The work will not be done by merely attending every service. It will not be done by increasing your contribution. It will not be done by subscribing to a gospel paper or any other periodical. There are no short cuts. Success is not to be found in less controversy. Conversions to Christ are products of pointed preaching and teaching. Bigger, broader smiles may gain access, but they do not save a soul from death. Confrontation with error and evil was at the heart of all successful New Testament preaching. Check and see, if you doubt it. Conviction and conversion is always personal and often

painful.

The following is not a slap at churches that have excellent personal work programs. There are some good ones, and there ought to be more. However, there is no substitute for plain old vanilla personal work. Sometimes, we unwittingly make "Personal Work" into an institution itself, into a "Church Program." That defeats the basic concept which is truly individual, personal work. Again, see the verses quoted earlier.

The need for greater, intense teaching is apparent. Generally, it is as simple as doing it. Talk to a neighbor, a friend, or a relative. Tell them. Awaken them. Shake them, if necessary. Teach them what the Bible teaches about sin, their soul, and their Savior. That is the essence of "successful evangelism."

(From: *Eastside Examiner*, Morgantown, KY, Vol. 3, No. 36, 9/5/04)

### Editor's Note:

Brother Hafley brings some very important points to our attention. Let's examine our attitudes and then be looking for opportunities to speak the truth to people. Let's keep lost souls in our prayers, and may we show the same concern for the lost that the apostles did!!

-JJ

**Have You Read Your Bible Today? Bible Reading Calendars Are Found At:**  
[www.southside-churchofchrist.com](http://www.southside-churchofchrist.com)



***I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!***

Come and meet with the church at Southside.  
 Our address is: 2920 New Hartford Rd. Owensboro, KY 42303.

### **MEETING TIMES:**

**Sunday Morning Bible Study** \_\_\_\_\_ **9:30 am**  
**Sunday Morning Worship** \_\_\_\_\_ **10:20 am**  
**Sunday Evening Worship** \_\_\_\_\_ **6:00 pm**  
**Wednesday Evening Bible Study** \_\_\_\_\_ **7:00 pm**

Our call-in radio program is on **WBIO, FM 94.7**, Sunday afternoon from 12:30-1:00 pm. **Call: 683-9246 (WBIO)** with your Bible question.

**Preacher/Editor:** Jarrod Jacobs  
**Elders:** Paul Dubois & Jeff Lankford  
**Phone:** (270) 683-5386

**Website address:** [www.southside-churchofchrist.com](http://www.southside-churchofchrist.com) (Updated weekly!)

**"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." (Jer. 6:16)**