

# The Family

The first book of the Bible is called the book of Genesis. The word Genesis by definition means beginnings or origins. It is from this book that we can gather much understanding as to the original intents of God regarding the creation that he has established on this Earth.

One of the things that we realize early in the scriptures is that placed within the genetics of every living species, whether plant or animal is its ability to reproduce itself.

Genesis 1: 11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

Genesis 1:21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

So we understand from the scriptures today that it was God's original intent for each species that He placed on this Earth to reproduce itself.

- He did this with the trees and plants.
- He did this with the great whales and fish of the sea.
- He did it with the birds and fowls of the air.
- And He did this with the beasts of the field, cows, oxen, horses etc.
- But He did not stop there...

Genesis 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

(Now let me stop right there for a second. Just in case you've been wondering about this, this is why the Devil does not like you. You have been made in the likeness of God. And you look like Him and have His traits because you are a child of God. Satan is jealous of you because you are a part of the family of God.)

So we understand from the scriptures that everything that God had created up to this point was created for the purpose of reproduction.

- Reproduction was and is very important to God. It is evident from His creative acts that it was not His intent to spend the next several thousands or billion of years making apple trees, but rather that these trees would continue making apple trees.
- Everything was designed to reproduce itself.

However, this Man that He created was not created to reproduce himself. By Himself, he never would have procreated another generation.

- Adam needed a Wife... Adam needed a helpmeet that would enable him to reproduce after his kind like all the other species.
- Gen 2: 21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;
- 22 And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.
- 23 And Adam 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.

- 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.
- Gen 4: 4 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.

And so we now see the institution of the Family.

- Family you see is important regardless of what Species you are.
- The family you come from to a large degree will determine what kind of reproduction you are...
- Regardless if you are a tree or a human being.

Oak trees produce Oak trees and only Oak trees.

- Now there are families of Oak trees.
- There are Red Oaks
- And White Oaks
- And Swamp White Oaks
- And Saw Tooth Oaks
- And Burr Oaks
- Many various families of Oaks within the Species of Oak trees.
- But understand something, they all reproduce after their own kind.

This reproducing “after it’s kind” is a law of nature.

- It is the means that God would use to populate the earth whether it is fish or animals or plants or human beings.
- What started out with one man and one woman are now 7.2 billion people on planet Earth.

What has taken place for the last several thousands of years has been one family after another reproducing another family.

- Each family somewhat unique, and yet quite like the family it came from.
- Now you may or may not like the family you came from, but the truth is, you and I are a lot like those we came from regardless of whether we like it or not.

- Genetically, we are tied to the ones who bore and raised us.

But soon after the family institution was established, God began doing something He had never done before.

- He began teaching His laws to the heads of families.
- Noah was a preacher of righteousness because God placed within Noah's heart the concept of righteousness or right living if you will.
- His 3 sons and their families would be the recipients of God's grace along with their father Noah all because Noah found grace in the Eyes of the Lord.

God would later speak to Abraham as a friend and ultimately Abraham's son and grandsons in order to place within the hearts of the fathers of the Jewish nation His laws and teachings.

A few generations later, God would call Moses into the mountain and there He would write upon tablets of stone with His own finger His commandments so that the Children of Israel would forever know and understand God's Word.

God would tell Moses and the other leaders of Israel to write these sayings upon the gates that lead to and the doorposts of their homes.

- He told them to teach their children these sayings.
- He said to meditate upon them on their beds so that the next generation would know and understand the Word of God and his will and purpose for their lives.
- He said in Proverbs to bind them upon your neck, bind them upon your fingers and to write them upon the tables of your heart.
- Even in the book of Hebrews much later, he said that He would write them upon their minds.

And all this memorization was for the purpose of repeating it in the ears of the next generation so that in them, would be replicated what the previous generation knew and understood about God.

Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

- God's will and purpose of the parent is not only to provide shelter and food and nurturing, but it is also to teach their children about Him.
- Hillary Rodham-Clinton once made the statement that "it takes a village to raise a child."
- Mrs. Clinton was speaking in reference to the State.
- She felt that the government could do a better job of raising your children than you could.
- I do believe that her statement is true when we understand that the Village is indeed the family unit that God ordained to raise their children.

**Romans 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?**

Why do so many people in this world not know of or have a relationship with God?

- It is simply because no one has told them about Him.
- No one took them to Sunday School.
- No one picked them up in their car and drove them to church.
- I'm thankful for a grandmother who was able to pick me up at least a few times and take me to Sunday School.
- I'm so thankful that Ron and Anke Humphrey swung by on their way to church to pick me up for church when I didn't have a ride.

You see, Children need an example.

- Young people need someone to show them the way.

**Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.**

Now this is not a guarantee that someone is going to live for God, as they get older, but it is a guarantee that they will never ever get away from His love either.

- I've met people and so have you who as backslid as they were, were able to tell you about the grace of God.
- As messed up as their lives had become, they still understood that God passionately loved them and cared about them.

Hear me mom and dad, there are no guarantees when raising your kids except this...

- If you will show them and teach them that God loves them, they will never forget it as long as they live.
- That will be the last thing they think about when they draw their last breath if you will tell them it when they are young.
- And there is nothing greater that you can teach your children but that Jesus passionately loves and cares for them more than anyone ever could, no matter where they are or what they are doing.
- His love and His grace are sufficient to save them as long as they will turn their hearts toward Him.

You see mom and dad we have to reproduce ourselves.

- Our kids will be a reflection of who we are regardless if it is good or bad.
- This is why I have to be the best Me, I can be.
- This is why I can't behave like some men do.
- This is why I can't go where some men go.
- This is why I can't act like some men act, because those who are coming after me are watching me and to a large degree, they are going to be like me, whether they know it or like it or not.
- They will learn to have faith if you have faith.
- They will learn to pray if you pray.
- They will learn to love God, if you truly love God.
- They'll learn to worship Him by watching you worship.
- This is why it's important for me to come to church for all the right reasons.
- This is why it's important for me to go to a church that is doing church for the right reasons.

We're teaching them something.

- We're showing them an example.
- We're replicating ourselves in them whether we know it or not.

And don't think that your kids will never know the difference.

- They absolutely will.
- And some day, they will ask the question although probably silently, "Why did no one teach me the right way!"
- Why did no one tell me about Him!"

The purpose of the Family is not only to populate the world, but it is to allow a righteous man or woman the opportunity and the influence to speak Truth into the next generation and even the generation after that.

Someone might say, "It's too late!" "I've made too many mistakes raising my kids."

- Please... listen to me. "It is never too late to speak to your kids."
- I don't care how old they are.
- Make amends.
- Apologize.
- Sincerely ask for forgiveness for the things you've done wrong in their lives and start all over.
- It doesn't matter how old they are!

Old Harvey Paul was the oldest man I've ever baptized.

He was 83.

- 2 years after I baptized him, I stood in the hospital room with him as he told his wife of over 50 years good bye.
- 1 hour later I sat with him on the couch in his living room.
- He started to speak and I listened expecting him to tell me how he felt about his wife's death.
- But instead of talking about Doris, Harvey began to tearfully tell me the sad story of how his father had abandoned him as a small child during the Great Depression.
- He told me how he walked across the country as a teenager to reunite with his father in California in an attempt to connect with the one who was supposed to be his example.
- However after walking all that way and being introduced to him, his father neither recognized him nor wanted to have a relationship with him.

This was what was on the mind of an 85 year old man on the day his wife of over 50 years passed away.

- Harvey was trying in his mind to draw from his past for strength.
- He was reaching back as far as he could for an example of strength and faith, but all he could find was a memory of a father who did not want to know him.
- At the age of 85, Harvey was still a wounded child standing by the mailbox waiting for the mailman to come pick him up and take him from the home that did not want him.

If it were possible for Harvey's dad to be there on that couch the day that Doris died, that man could have made amends with his son and could have been a strength to Harvey on the worst day of his life.

- It is never too late to love your kids.
- It is never too late to show them the way.
- You might have to make some things right, but if you do, you will make some things right.

Grandparents don't let anything stop you from speaking to your grandchildren.

- They need to hear what you have to say.
- They need to know what you believe in.
- They need to understand your convictions.
- They may never totally "get you", but you will be passing on to them the tools they are going to need to get through this life.
- Mistakes with our kids may very well be the reason God gives us Grandchildren.
- They are a second chance to get it right.

Some of you here today don't have children or grand children.

- But that's no reason that you can't have a spiritual family of your own.



I was driving by the Boys and Girls club a few weeks ago and out in the yard was a sign asking people to be a mentor to one of the kids there.

- If you don't have children, ask your neighbors if you can take theirs to church with you next week.
- If you don't have teenagers, get to know a couple of the ones who live near you and bring them with you to church.

Allow God to use you to reach the next generation.

I pray that we would be a Light for those who are following us that they would be able to see God.