

God In Our Family Life

Psalm 127-128

MEMORY VERSE

PSALM 127:3

“Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is His reward.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Blocks (either wooden or cardboard).

A sheet of blank drawing paper, crayons or markers, 1” strips of construction paper, glue sticks and scissors.

Twenty Ping-Pong balls and masking tape

ATTENTION GETTER!

Building Strong Families

For this activity you will need some blocks (either wooden or cardboard). Have the children work together to build a “house” or tower out of the blocks. When the house is done introduce today’s lesson by reading Psalm 127:1. Talk about how that the Lord needs to be in everything that we do if we want our lives to be blessed. That includes our families. If we don’t build our families on the strong foundation of Jesus then we will have weak families and problems will come up.

As you are explaining this remove one brick at a time from the base. When you remove a few bricks the whole house will come tumbling down. It is the same for us. If we don’t build our families on the Lord and His word then our homes will be weak. **God wants to bless our families.**

LESSON TIME!

Have you ever wondered why you were born as a baby and didn't come into this world as an adult? And why do you live with your parents for at least the first 18 years or so of your life? Why do we have families anyway? We find the answers to these and many other questions about our family life in the Word of God. We see that we don't have to go very far in the very first book of the Bible, Genesis, to find families. Adam and Eve were married and had children.

God put children with parents because He wanted the moms and dads to train their children in the ways of Him. It is important to God that children are raised in the ways of the Lord and it is the parents' responsibility to do that. What is the children's responsibility? To obey their parents. When we obey our parents we are pleasing the Lord and allowing Him to teach us what we need to know for our lives.

God is very active in our families. Sometimes we might think that God is only interested in our lives when we go to church on Sundays. But that isn't the case. God wants to be active in every area of our life. He wants us to walk with Him in our church life, our family life, our school life, in choosing our friends and basically everything that we do. So God has a lot to say about families.

In today's lesson we are going to look at two Psalms that share with us about our family life and are a great reminder to us that God wants to make our families stronger. **God wants to bless our families.**

PSALM 127

Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep.

Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward.

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth.

Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but shall speak with their enemies in the gate.

Psalm 127 talks about the three most common pursuits of a family man: building, security, and raising a family. Each one of these areas of life is a source of major concern, sometimes anxiety. King Solomon was the man who probably wrote this little song. God gave him a great gift of wisdom and he was used by God to build an awesome palace and a temple for God's name. But it is amazing that Solomon didn't end up doing very well concerning family life. He ended up dishonoring God by his 700 marriages! The wives led him astray and caused him to worship other gods.

We don't know when Solomon wrote this psalm. But he certainly did find out in his life the truth of verse one. He had built his home on something other than the Lord and it ended up being vain or empty. He brought all kinds of problems into his life because he disobeyed God by marrying women who worshipped other gods.

The very first and most important thing in our family life is our relationship with God. Even in choosing whom we will marry we have to ask the question, does he or she have a relationship with God? A Christian should only marry a Christian; otherwise there will be problems and conflict. Then both the husband and wife need to remain as close as possible to the Lord in building their

home. Their relationship first should be based on Jesus and obedience to His Word. Then as they have children they need to make a commitment to raise them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. **God wants to bless our families.**

If we are not willing to allow the Lord to build our houses, then everything we do is empty and for nothing. Solomon is taking the opportunity to remind us that it is the Lord who should build the house. That means our dads should teach us the ways of God, His words and His principles for living a life that pleases Him. What did Jesus say in the New Testament? “Be like a wise man who builds his house upon the rock” (Luke 6). Jesus wants to be “the Rock” of our hearts. He wants to be the most important thing in the family's life. He said He would make us strong and give us peace if we talk about Him, talk to Him, and listen to His words.

Verse 2 says the Lord grants sleep to His beloved. What a wonderful thought when you lay your head on your pillow at night. The Lord doesn't tell us to “take it easy, don't work so hard.” Rather, He says, “You showed effort today, now rest. The outcome depends on Me, not on you working harder.” It is His delight to give good gifts to His children. He wants us to have restfulness in our lives, not worry or anxiety. If your parents lie awake at night with insomnia because they are troubled over finances or car trouble, respectfully remind them of this verse. It will show them how God wants to make their family stronger. **God wants to bless our families.**

Verses 3-5 reminds us of the great love the Lord has for children. It is one of His greatest gifts to a married couple that love Him. The Bible says children are a reward from Him and that He is the giver of life. He is the One who gives the gift of children. (See stories in Genesis 20:17-18; 21:1-2; 29:31; 1 Samuel 1:19-20; 2 Samuel 6:20-23; Luke 1:30-36 for background). In Old Testament times a father who had a large family was considered very blessed by God. We need to remember that children are a blessing from the Lord. God desired

to pour out His blessing on families of all sizes. **God wants to bless our families.**

We also see in these verses that children are a blessing to a father. It compares fathers with children to a warrior with arrows. A warrior uses his arrows to wage war. In the world we are in a battle and God has called us to put on His armor and be a warrior for Him. One of the ways that parents can do that is to train up their children in a godly way. Their children will then be warriors for Christ and affect their generation for the gospel of Christ.

Also in the Old Testament the city gate was the center of community life. It was where disputes were settled and business was transacted. A man with a large family had a position of influence there. A man with his life full of children had security that his sons would help take care of his wife and daughters and help him with the land or the flocks and herds. If you are fortunate enough to belong to a big family, praise the Lord for your brothers and sisters, and remember that God wants you to love them. We need to help take care of our families.

The Bible presents a very different picture about children than what we see so often in our society. Children are almost seen as a problem or inconvenience. So many children are unwanted, unloved and uncared for. How we need to see children and families the way that the Lord does! **God wants to bless our families.**

Family Portraits

For this craft you will need a sheet of blank drawing paper, crayons or markers, 1" strips of construction paper, glue sticks and scissors. Have the children begin by making the frame for their picture. Take 1" strips of construction paper (any color) and glue around the edges of the drawing paper. Only glue a 1/2 " width around the paper to leave more room for their picture. Next allow

the children to draw a “family portrait.” Have them include the whole family, including themselves. If they would like to they can punch two holes in the top and tie yarn or string to be able to hang the picture in their living rooms (or refrigerators).

PSALM 128

Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways.

When you eat the labor of your hands, you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.

Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house, your children like olive plants all around your table.

Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD.

The LORD bless you out of Zion, and may you see the good of Jerusalem all the days of your life.

Yes, may you see your children’s children. Peace be upon Israel!

Let's learn a little more about having God in our family life from Psalm 128. The Word says two times in these verses that we will be blessed if we fear the Lord and walk in His ways. What does that mean? Well, we see throughout the Bible that when we are obedient that we will have a blessed life. There are two paths that we can choose to walk on. We can either obey God and have a life of blessing or we can disobey God and have a life filled with problems. This is true of our families also. If our whole family follows God and His Word, then the whole family will be blessed. If we disobey

God and refuse to do what He wants, the natural consequence will be problems.

Verse 2 tells us what happens when we obey. It talks about how that when we sit down together as a family to share and enjoy God's blessings that we will be happy and all will be well with us. This is the result of walking in the ways of the Lord. Are our homes happy? Is all well with us. **God wants to bless our families.** When we are obedient our homes will be filled with peace and happiness.

The Word says your mom (or 'the wife') will be like a fruitful vine and the sons like olive shoots. The wine and oil throughout the Old Testament have been symbols of God's blessings. When a home is committed to following the Lord everyone will be filled with the joy of the Lord. Unfortunately there are many families that are miserable because they refuse to turn to the Lord and obey Him. The relationships in our homes will be a blessing when we are following the Lord with all our hearts. The family that is following God's ways will be loving towards each other and preferring the other person in the family as better than themselves. **God wants to bless our families.**

Verse 5 and 6 are a prayer that we can all pray for our families. Think about the Lord's plan for all mankind, how He made a great nation out of Abraham and how He brought all mankind a Savior out of that people. He wants every family to experience His peace, His blessings, and His prosperity. He wants to strengthen every family with His love and forgiveness so that we all may see our children's children. Let us learn to pray for our families. And let's spend more time with Him as we build our homes and families upon the rock, Jesus. **God wants to bless our families.**

Ping Pong Balls

For this game you will need 20 ping pong balls and masking tape. Clear the floor of the room. With masking tape make a line down the center of the room. Split the children into two teams equally. Have them on either side of the line. Place 10 ping pong balls on each side of the line. The object of the game is to be the team with the LEAST ping pong balls on your side of the line. The children may NOT touch the ping pong balls with their hands. They may only blow them to their opponent's side.

When you say "go" allow the children to blow on the ping pong balls. Allow 1 - 2 minutes of play. When you say "stop" have all of the children immediately stop blowing. Count the balls on each side of the line. The group with the LEAST amount of ping pong balls on their side wins. Continue play as long the children would like or as time allows.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer for our families. Pray that the Lord would strengthen them. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.