

# Marriage and the Family

Bible texts from NIV unless noted (Message, NCV).

## THE LONELINESS BUSTER

Creation week was almost finished. Everything was great—well, almost everything. “God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him’” (Genesis 2:18).

God made Eve for Adam. Ta-da! They made the first love story—and the first marriage. God told the new couple to have children and make their family bigger (Genesis 1:28).

Families are God’s idea. He created them to bring us love and support.



## GUYS AND GIRLS

You may have noticed some differences between girls and guys. God made us different on purpose.

“God created human beings in his image. . . . He created them male and female” (Genesis 1:27, NCV).

Guys and girls have some of God’s characteristics in different ways. We need each other. (Yes, really.)



## WHAT FAMILIES TEACH US ABOUT God

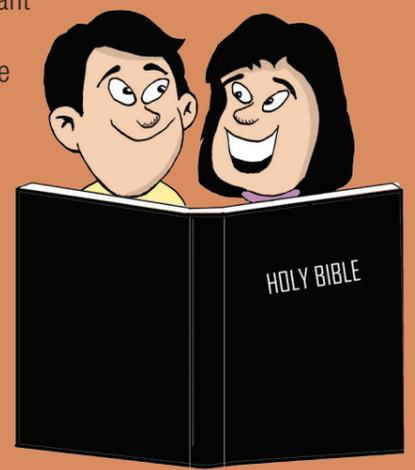
Husbands and wives commit to stay together for life.	God loves us “with a love that lasts forever” (Jeremiah 31:3). He never leaves us.
Husbands love their wives and sacrifice for them.	Jesus loves us and sacrificed Himself for us (Ephesians 5:25-33).
Wives respect their husbands and follow their lead.	We respect Jesus and follow His lead (Ephesians 5:22-24, 33).
Parents love and care for their children.	God cares for us like a loving parent (Matthew 6:31, 32).
Children obey their parents.	We obey God (1 Peter 1:14).



## GOD AT THE CENTER

If two people are going to be best friends for life, they need to have common goals and interests. The most important thing for a husband and wife to share is their faith in God.

“Do not be joined to unbelievers. . . . What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?” (2 Corinthians 6:14, 15).



## YOU’RE THE ONLY ONE FOR ME

A husband and wife share special love and affection with each other. God tells us not to share that kind of love with anyone we’re not married to (Exodus 20:14).

Being faithful to our spouse starts with keeping our thoughts and actions pure even when we’re not married (Ephesians 5:3).

$$1 + 1 = 1$$

In God’s plan for marriage, a math miracle happens. The

husband and wife are still two different people, but they act as one team. “A man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife. The two of them will become one” (Genesis 2:24).

God wants a husband and wife to stick as closely together as peanut butter and jelly in a sandwich. You can pull them apart, but it makes a real mess. “God has joined the two together, so no one should separate them” (Matthew 19:6, NCV).

Sometimes marriages break up, but that’s not what God intended from the beginning (Matthew 19:8, 9).



## DOES EVERYONE HAVE TO GET MARRIED?

Of course not! Jesus never got married. Paul said that staying single is a good idea for some people because single people can focus on doing God’s work (1 Corinthians 7:7, 32-35).

## OUT OF BOUNDS

People try other ways than God’s plan for a man and a woman to be a couple (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:26, 27; Ephesians 5:3). It’s not popular to say, but God calls this kind of behavior sinful.

We may disagree with someone’s relationship choices, but we should still treat them with kindness.

## BROTHERS AND SISTERS

The world’s first murder happened because a guy got mad at his brother. On the flipside, some siblings—such as Moses, Aaron, and Miriam—formed powerful ministry teams.

If you have brothers and sisters, keep your team spirit strong. “How wonderful, how beautiful, when brothers and sisters get along!” (Psalm 133:1, *The Message*).

## THE FAMILY OF GOD

Your family may be a total mess. Some family members may be missing from your life. Don’t lose hope. God cares especially for those who don’t have the family they need (Psalm 68:5).

Plus, you have your church family to help you out (see FUN-da-Mental #12). You’ve got millions of brothers and sisters around the world!

## THE BIG O WORD

Kids have a big job too. It’s right in the Ten Commandments: “Honor your father and mother” (Exodus 20:12). “Honor” means obeying your parental units by

- treating them with respect
- listening to their advice (Proverbs 1:8)
- doing what they ask you to do.

As a bonus, obedience increases your chances of living a long and happy life, especially if you don’t ride your bike off the roof of the house after your mom told you not to (Ephesian 6:1-3).

God likes obedience. Paul said, “Children, obey your parents in everything. That pleases the Lord” (Colossians 3:20).



## ADVICE FOR MOM AND DAD

Parents have a big responsibility! They have to make sure their children wear clean diapers, get to school on time, and learn how to wash dishes. They need to teach their children about God. And they’re supposed to do it in a kind and loving way, even if the children are whining and arguing.

“Fathers, don’t make your children angry. Instead, train them and teach them the ways of the Lord as you raise them” (Ephesians 6:4).

