

Becoming a Missional Family

Fulfilling God's Purpose in and
through Your Family

WORKBOOK

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A Publication of Urban India Ministries

Becoming a Missional Family

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through Your Family

Participant Workbook

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In order to ensure that this workbook accomplishes its objectives and retains
the quality intended certain instructions have been laid down in page 4 that are
abiding on all persons using this manual.

Printed in Bengaluru, India.

Published by Urban India Ministries

First Printing, May 2018

Second Printing, August 2019

Third Printing, February 2025

ISBN 978-819208061-1

www.urbanindia.org

While the author has made every effort to provide accurate internet addresses
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SOME IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

1. A parallel reading of the book “Becoming a Missional Family” would be a good way to understand the context of the book and will help see the practicality of the concepts.
2. The intention of the book is not to make anybody feel guilty or feel less important. There are no perfect families. The intent is to reflect on how we can move towards God’s expectation and obey His principles. Hence, please feel free to pass the questions that you are not comfortable to answer.
3. This work book is designed for families to do in small groups of 5 to 7 couples. The smaller the group, the interactions are better.
4. It is important for one person or a couple to lead the group. It only requires minimum amount of preparation to lead.
5. It is important for all couples to carry a Bible or to use digital Bible, as there are lots of Biblical references.
6. The group has the freedom to do one chapter in more than one session. It is good for the leader to be in control of the time.
7. A leader should have the humility rather than “a know it all” attitude. Appropriate self-disclosure of the leader will go a long way in helping people to open up in the group.
8. Maintain confidentiality at all times and make a covenant during this study not to quote or share anything without the person’s consent on any occasion.

9. It is good to encourage one another during the week to complete their homework or project.

10. It would be good for every family to go through every chapter till the end, as it culminates in a family mission statement based on all the chapters. So make sure you do not miss even one study as far as possible or complete the study as a couple privately for the week you missed.

This study would challenge you to apply God's Word in your family life radically and can move you out of your comfort zone, but press on till the end of the study. Encourage one another and live out the principles of Missional Family to see your generation blessed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank Mrs. Sunita Prasad and Rev. Maco Susai who labored with me in making this workbook available to the Church of Jesus Christ. My sincere thanks to the 2016-17 batch of MA students in Family Life Education of UIM-FRTI who gave their valuable comments in the working of this workbook. The proof readers, Sarah and Rachel – thanks a lot for your English input. My special thanks to Samuel, Abhishek & UIM Team for designing the workbook.

I am thankful to my family, my dear wife Ciby and our three children and my extended families who played a key role in making our home a “Missional Home”. All glory and praise to God who makes all things possible.

P R E F A C E

The book “Becoming a Missional family” has inspired so many to be intentional about fulfilling God’s purpose. Often good intentions do not translate into action because it is not backed by an accountability group. This workbook is intended for those families who feel the need to obey God in fulfilling God’s Mission in this world by living out God’s purpose within one’s own home and outside. It is always encouraging when families can discuss some of their challenges, their success stories, their failures and their joys to encourage one another in being a Missional Family. This study is very evaluative in nature and also a great tool for an obedience-based discipleship.

Many families desire to share their faith to others, they want to disciple their children, they want to be engaged in the needs of others, but because they do not have the right group of people within the body of Christ to be accountable, it only remains a desire. Often such families then get settled with a few Sunday activities and miss out on the mission that God intended for their family. Many companies have their mission statements today. Yet, some of these companies would not even exist for 20 years. But the unit of “family” will exist for generations and the families have to be intentional in their mission towards fulfilling God’s purposes. This study would enable families to come up with their own mission statement.

This book is intended to be an interactive group study that will help these godly desires to be fulfilled so that God’s Kingdom will spread through every home. Every Christian home needs to radiate the love of God to the members of the home and also to their neighborhood. This small group study intends to bring back the focus of the early church. The ministry of every Christian family will be brought back to focus which in turn will strengthen every local church. Hence, I would recommend this resource for any Christian home that is serious about God’s mission.

P. C. Mathew

CHAPTER ONE

Great Purpose To Grander Purpose For Families

I(Mathew) was gifted an expensive mobile phone by my brother one Christmas. It had several features, which I never used even once. I never made an attempt to understand them because I believed a mobile phone was just to make calls. However, the designer of the mobile had a grander purpose by which I could access my emails, save my presentations, store my favorite songs etc. Yet I did not use the mobile phone for the purpose my brother had intended for me. In the same way, our family lives may often fulfill certain great purposes for God but still miss the grander purposes of God. We are going to explore, through this study, how our lives can move from great purposes to grander purposes for the glory of God.

List three purposes for which your family exists and share with one another.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

There are at least four different ways by which God's great purposes are accomplished in our families. They are **(1)** Through our relationship with God, **(2)** Through relationship with one another, **(3)** By reproducing a Godly generation, and **(4)** Being a resource manager of all God's resources. To understand how well we are fulfilling God's great purposes let us analyse all four aspects in detail.

1. Relationship with God

God's plan to create human beings in His image has a greater implication of God wanting to be eternally connected to us. God's desire to multiply the joyful experience that the Godhead enjoy among each other could have been the reason for even creating human beings in His image. This desire is reflected in Jesus' high priestly prayer.

A. What kind of a relationship does God want to have with us? (Read John 17:21-23)

B. Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 since Jesus died to establish our relationship with him, what should we do to live in that relationship?

C. What are some of the common hindrances people face in their relationship with God?

D. What are some ways to overcome the above challenges?

E. What are some of the personal challenges you face as a couple/family to grow in relationship with God? Discuss ways to overcome them as a

family. (Do as a couple/family.)

2. Relationship with one another

God wants us to fulfill His purpose by also being interdependent and working harmoniously with each other and God.

A. What principles can we apply from the Trinitarian relationship of the Godhead in working with one another? (Gen 1:26-28)

B. Read Genesis 2:18-24 and discuss what you see as God's purpose in creating Adam and Eve.

C. In your relationship with your spouse, what are some of the changes you need to bring to fulfill the above purposes? Discuss specific changes and action plan. (Do as a couple.)

3. Reproduce a Godly generation

God wants to fulfill His purpose in this world by multiplying godly generations who will want to be obedient to His command to create a world that is filled with godly generation who are drawn to Him.

Gen 1:28

A. What should Christian parents do in fulfilling this multigenerational mission of God to see the world filled with a godly generation? Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9

B. What changes do you think is necessary in your life to fulfill His purpose in raising a godly generation?

There is a greater mission in procreation, than just multiplying. It is becoming partners with Him in creating a world that is drawn and attracted towards Him.

4. Resource manager

After creating human beings God put them in charge of His world. The task to nurture and facilitate growth by working and taking care of the garden was not limited to taking care of planet earth but it also extended to nurturing and facilitating growth in human relationships by working side by side to complement one another.

A. Read Gen 1:28; Gen 2:15. How does the word “subdue” or “rule over” translate today in taking care of God’s resources?

B. God wanted a ‘helper’ for Adam also to complete the task of God

(Gen 2:18). What are some of the tasks other than raising up kids that God has given to us as family to fulfill His mission?

C. As a resource manager what are some of the ways you and your spouse can become an effective partner to fulfil God's mission together?

God wants His work to be done in partnership with your family.

God's greater purpose to grander purpose

The great purpose of God was affected by sin. The fall of the first family had marred the image of God and the curse of God that accompanied, changed the equation drastically. But, thankfully God's experience of failure with the first family did not make Him give up working with human beings. God is absolutely persuaded to fulfill His mission, though it cost Him much to redeem mankind. He continues to give the redeemed human beings an opportunity to partner with Him in fulfilling His mandate for this world.

A. What affected the greater purpose of God and how was it restored? (Read Genesis 3: John 3:16, Romans 6:23)

B. God's grander purpose is to redeem the whole of humankind and all of His creation. (Romans 8:22-23) As redeemed people of Christ, what role do you see your family play in partnering with Christ to fulfill His desire for the world? (Read 2 Corinthians 4:6)

God's redemptive plan through His Son, Jesus, has the power to restore families. This good news needs to be shared and God has given us the opportunity to partner with Him again in His work of redeeming lost families unto Himself, Thus fulfilling His grander purpose to redeem humankind by partnering with your family.

CHAPTER TWO

What Is A Missional Family?

The mission of God (Missio Dei) is to reach human beings, and in His sovereignty, He accomplishes His work in His way. God uses individuals, families, strangers or anyone to establish His kingdom. He makes Himself known in various ways and even through direct revelation. Mission is rooted in the very nature of God and is not limited to a program or a wing of a church. When we understand mission from the perspective of the Trinitarian God and His involvement in the redemptive plan, it should motivate anyone (or any family) who has experienced God's redemptive love to become partners in His mission. Therefore, ministry as families and ministering to families cannot be limited to a local church's agenda but should be seen as a mission agenda from God to each family.

A. Discuss some of the methods that God uses to accomplish His mission in reaching human beings today? (Use these references for discussion John 4, Acts 8:36-40, Acts 9, Acts 10)

B. If "mission" is rooted in the very nature of God, (Missio Dei), discuss in what practical ways we can reflect God's nature in our mission engagement. (Read Col 3:5-14)

C. Evaluate your family in the light of the above verses and discuss as a couple the changes that you need to bring to reflect God's nature?

Craig Van Gelder sees the Missional Church as being led by the Spirit of God. It is not limited to what it 'does' but what it 'is'. Similarly, a Missional Family is not only about what it does but it is primarily about what the family 'is'. It is a Spirit-filled Home. It is a family with a deep intimate relationship with God and each other.

D. From the above statement, what do you see as some of the characteristics of a missional family?

E. Evaluate as a couple how close your home is to the above understanding. Write down few thoughts that need to be worked out.

'Missional' is becoming the presence of Christ to the community by being incarnational and attractional. Frost and Hirsch describe incarnational as, "it seeps into the cracks and crevices of the society in order to be Christ to those who don't yet know Him."

F. To be a light in order to draw others to Christ through your family life and to be the presence of Christ in the community, what are some of the

qualities of light that your family needs to possess as per Ephesians 5: 8-9?

G. In what practical ways can we live as children of light in the dark world, reflecting Christ's character such as goodness, righteousness and truth?

H. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Matthew 22:37-40. Based on the above passages, what do you see as the key motivation to be engaged in the mission of God?

I. If 'love' is the motivation to be engaged in God's mission, how would you evaluate your present state in demonstrating it on a scale of 0 to 10, with zero as the lowest and ten as the highest.

- a. Loving God

- b. Loving others

- c. Loving yourself

"Love" is the biggest motivator for a Missional Family. The three dimensions of LOVING GOD, LOVING OTHERS AND LOVING YOURSELF are very important in the pursuit of being a Missional Family.

J. State one action point that you would want to pursue to consistently increase your love in all three dimensions.

Loving God _____

Loving others _____

Loving yourself _____

Missional family reflects the Trinitarian God by exhibiting the very nature of God through their character. They live out the purposes of God in their home and in their community motivated by the love of God.

CHAPTER THREE

Missional Families Are Worshipping Families

Making your home a worship centre

Human beings are created in His image and help us to have a deeper bond and relationship with God than any other creature. The longing of human beings for God and their desire to worship Him has its root in being made in 'His likeness'. When a family seeks God in worship He descends through His Spirit among His people (Matthew 8:20). Worshipping God has always been a visible pattern for all the families that God has chosen to accomplish His purpose in His world.

Jesus always spent time with His Father worshipping Him (Mark 1:35). Jesus, interceding on behalf of the world, shows how the triune God is a praying family. If the family of the Godhead needs to be praying and sharing their longing for one another, how much more do we as fragile human beings need to pray and discern His voice. When we make our home a worship centre, God will be honoured.

Worship is Worth-ship. God is worthy of all praise and worship. He is the very reason for our existence and we ought to be in awe of Him. Our home is the primary worship centre after the Church.

In John 4:23, we see that Jesus moved focus from the place of worship to the attitude of the worshipper. So the place of worship is not the primary focus, but it is one's heart. A person who does not connect to God by worship with the right attitude at home will seldom be able connect to God and worship with the right attitude at church. God sees our heart and He knows our attitude.

A. What are some of the challenges in worshipping God in spirit and truth, which, Jesus said as the right worship?

B. How do we overcome the above mentioned hindrances in the context of worshipping at home?

C. Read Matt 18:19-20. How can this verse be applied to our family worship? Discuss.

David Kinnaman, in his book titled “Unchristian”, quotes a research done in the United States, that a “majority of the 18-29 year olds felt that Christianity was hypocritical. 85% who are not Christians, but who have had sufficient exposure to Christians and Church, conclude that present day Christianity is hypocritical. The negative perception has been expressed by similar churchgoers: almost 47% agreed that Christianity is hypocritical.”

D. Why do you think such negative perceptions were expressed? How different will it be if this study is done in your country? Discuss in your groups and write down.

Lifestyle that is not consistent with worship will not be contagious

E. In what ways as parents, can you make faith authentic to your children?

F. Read Matt 6:9-15 and pick up the key aspects of prayer that need to be focused on while you pray.

G. How much of these key aspects are covered in your family prayer? What are some of the commonly missing aspects that can be included in your family prayer?

It would be good to make a weekly prayer calendar to pray effectively, to pray for the various needs that surround us. For example on Mondays you could remember to pray for your extended families, on Tuesdays for the world and so on.

Activity

As a couple, prepare a weekly prayer calendar that can be followed during your family altar to have a consistent prayer life. (You can make a skeletal sketch which can be modified later).

| Weekly Prayer Calendar | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Days | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
| Prayer Needs | | | | | | | |

I. An old adage says “A family that prays together stays together.” In the light of this statement discuss how the family altar can deepen the family unity.

God is keen to listen to our needs and answer our cries when we call on Him. Family altar is a time for us as families to share our needs and supplications to the Lord.

J. One or two couples can share in your group how their family altar has empowered them to face a crisis or adversity as a family. Discuss your thoughts based on the sharing.

K. Read Mk 14:32-41, how did prayer help Jesus to overcome his agony and distress? What principles can we learn from Him on handling our crisis and agony?

L. Based on the above study, what specific changes would you like to bring in your family altar to be a worshipping family?

The pattern that one follows in family worship may not be age-appropriate to everyone in the family. This can make children bored or distracted. Hence following a creative plan that makes family worship relevant and exciting is needed for the participation of all. For example, Bible quiz, skits based on the passage, playing a video, using object lessons, singing contemporary songs are some ways to keep everyone engaged in family worship.

M. Suggest one or two creative ways to make family worship interesting and meaningful to all age groups. (Couples can divide themselves based on age group of the children. For couples who are empty nesters or do not have children, you could join any group or share thoughts to make their family altar more creative as a couple. Once it is done, please share it to all)

- a. Age 1-5
- b. Age 6-12
- c. Age 13-18
- d. Age 19 and above

(To have a creative family worship, there are many tools available today to help our children enjoy the family devotions. This can be introduced at least once in a week. www.famtime.com has lots of creative family time methods to teach scripture to our children).

To be engaged in the mission of God as a family, the prerequisite is to be a worshipping family. We become like what we worship and all we do will be an overflow of our worshipping experience.

CHAPTER FOUR

Missional Families Are Affectionate Families

Making your home a relationship centre

The greatest gift that a father and mother can give their children is to love one another deeply as husband and wife.

Affection in family

Home is a place where you are accepted and loved irrespective of who you are or what you have done. The parable of the prodigal son shows a home where he could return, even though he squandered all his riches. When everyone else had turned away from him, his father still welcomed him home with open, loving arms (Luke 15:11-24). This is an example of the “everlasting love” of God (Jeremiah 31:3) shown in Jesus’ death for us “while we were yet sinners” (Romans 5:8). A Missional Family needs to reflect the love of God in their home which is demonstrated in the love and affection that existed in the family of the Godhead.

In Genesis 1:26, we see God creating humankind by mutual discussion within the Trinitarian relationship, “Let us create”. This was unique to the creation of humankind where there was a conversation within the Godhead. It was also because they are to reflect the image of God. So humankind ought to reflect the love and oneness that was exhibited within the family of the Godhead in human family as well. Discuss some of the prominent hindrances couples face in reflecting the love and oneness of the God-head Family?

Four aspects that stand out in the relationship of the Trinitarian God signifying their love and respect for each other are equality, glad submission, mutual deference and joyful intimacy. Let's look at each of these as they serve as a good model for affectionate relationship in a missional family:

1. Equality: Equality does not mean equivalence but a healthy respect for each other and valuing of the various members of the family and their personhood. In the Trinity all three persons have equal worth, dignity and status but they complement one another in their functional roles.

A. Read these verses. Discuss in your groups what you understand about equality from these scriptures.

Genesis 1:26-27

Philippians 2:6

Equality is not determined by gender, money or any other factor; equality exists because of whom God made us to be. Valuing each person as being made in His image should be our only motivation.

B. Share some of the ways equality can be reflected in your home based on the above verses? How would this enhance your relationship?

2. Glad Submission: Glad submission calls for one's willingness to submit and be self-sacrificial for the sake of other family members. In the Trinitarian relationship we see how Jesus showed his willingness to go through this aspect of submission and self-sacrifice in order to fulfill the family mission of the Trinity to redeem mankind. Read Phil 2:6-8

A. What are some of the factors that motivated Jesus to gladly submit to His Father despite His hardship?

B. How can the above factors be applied in submitting to one another in our family relationships on a daily basis? (Ref: Eph 5:21)

3. Mutual Deference: In healthy relationships, members of the household do not cling to their role as a symbol of pride and authority or out of fear of losing their identity. Instead they mutually respect one another's role so that everyone is empowered for the welfare of the family. In the Trinitarian relationship when the Son of God was agonizing in the garden of Gethsemane, His Father sent an angel and strengthened Him to go forth (Luke 22:43). Similarly, in family relationships there needs to be intentional distribution of responsibility. Although they possess definitive

structures and provide consistency and stability, these structures are fluid and can be changed. Functional differences are only meant to complement our relationships and not to compete with one another.

A. Why do you think family relationships deflect from complementing one another to competing with one another?

In what practical ways can the mutual deference in the Trinity be applied in our family relationship?

4. Joyful intimacy: A Missional Family enjoys joyful intimacy in their marriage and family life. This joyful intimacy needs to be cultivated by prayer, love and truth. In the Trinitarian relationship of the Father and the Son, their union is made explicit in the high priestly prayer of Jesus. He prays for His disciples that "...the love you have for me may be in them, and that I myself may be in them," (John 17:26). Intimacy is one of the most fulfilling experiences of married life, and the deepest intimacy can be enjoyed only when both husband and wife fully give in to each other, withholding nothing.

A. In what way does prayers, play an important role in increasing joyful intimacy in family life?

Prayer opens up our soul to one another and increases transparency.

B. In what ways did the Trinitarian God exhibit their love for one another as a sign of joyful intimacy?

- a. The Father to the Son (Luke 3:22)
- b. The Son to the Holy Spirit (Mark 3:28-30)
- c. The Son to the Father (John, 17:1-10)

C. Read these verses Ephesians 4:15,25, 5:9-11 and discuss in what ways you think marriage would be affected in the absence of truth.

Couple Time (to be done at home and the highlight can be discussed in your next meeting)

In the research on Missional Families, it was found out that Missional Families exhibited seven skills and practices that enhanced their oneness.

How would you rate your family on a scale of 0-10 with 0 being the lowest and 10 being the highest for each of the seven skills and practices given? Discuss the same with your spouse.

1. Open communication

2. Ability to manage conflicts

3. Spending quality time as a family

4. Willingness to learn from each other _____

5. Support each other in crisis _____

6. Well established rules and roles _____

7. Fun and humor _____

A. In the areas that you lack, come up with one action point to enhance that area of your relationship. (Make it practical and practise it. Pray specifically that God would help you fulfill it for His Glory.)

B. Do you schedule time with your children where the family does some fun activities? If yes, how can you make it more fruitful? If no, can you fix a time every week and make a covenant to intentionally spend time with your family?

C. To be open and transparent in any relationship, one has to create a non-threatening atmosphere in one's relationship? Discuss as a couple as to how you could make your home a safe place to share your feelings without being judged?

Family time commitment (for couples with children)

To enhance family oneness and affection with our children, "Family time" would be a great way to be intentional about enhancing our relationship. You could fix a time once a week to spend time with your children to

have an informal time of games and fun by which much can be taught and learnt from our children. If you need help to plan your family time please refer to **famtime.com** or you can get creative ideas through the book “Family Falooda” by Rod and Ruthie Gilbert, published by Urban India Ministries.

A. Discuss and fix a time with your spouse to have weekly family time.

Day of the Week: _____ Time: _____

B. List some ways you can spend quality time with your family?

C. To be an affectionate family, forgiveness plays an important role. If there is need for forgiveness to be released in any of your relationships with parents, children, spouse, or between siblings, it is time to deal with it. Unforgiveness can hinder the work of God in your life and family. If there is anyone that you have to forgive or ask forgiveness please put down a time and a place to deal with it as soon as possible. (Eph 4:32-5:2).

Person _____ Place _____ Time _____

*The affection and love in the Godhead was demonstrated through the Cross.
To fulfil His mission and to affect the world around us, we need to start by
demonstrating affection at home.*

CHAPTER FIVE

Missional Families Are Incarnational Families

Making your home an outreach centre

The family of the Godhead is an incarnational family. The Father sent the Son and the Son sent the Spirit to fulfill the mission of God to save the world. Jesus' incarnational ministry was a costly mission and it cost a great deal to the deep relationship that existed within the Godhead (John 20:21). Similarly in a missional home, families make temporary yet painful sacrifices to become incarnational in their own context looking at the cross of Christ as the inspiration.

To establish God's kingdom, He has called all of us as His holy people and royal priesthood to be willing to make sacrifices for His kingdom to be established on earth. Incarnation is part of our call to serve Him. Jesus Christ, who is part of the family of the Godhead is truly our inspiration to do so to fulfil His greater purpose.

A. What were some of the motivations for the Trinitarian God to send Jesus Christ to incarnate into the world? (John 3:16, Romans 6:23, 1 John 3:8-9, 4:8-9).

B. As people who have experienced God's love, how do we help others understand His love through our lives? (1 John 4:10-21).

The biggest motivation to incarnate is LOVE.

Incarnation requires us to identify with people

Jesus identified with human beings as a human. Though He was God, in the limitation of being a human, He identified with the needs, pains and joys of human beings. He identified with us to help us realize His love and sacrifice.

A. Read 1 John 3:16-18 and discuss various ways as to how you can identify and exhibit Christ's love and sacrifice with others who are in need?

B. Can you list some of the opportunities that God has given you as a couple to identify with people in your community who need your support and comfort? (To be answered as a couple).

C. How and when are you as a couple going to act on the opportunity that God has given? Choose from the list of the previous question. (Please mention a date and time if possible.)

| Action | Date | Time |
|--------|------|------|
| | | |
| | | |

Incarnation involves moving out of your comfort zone

The missional family of the Godhead had to be separated momentarily from their joyful oneness and intimacy for the sake of redeeming humankind. The incarnation of Jesus was not a pleasant trip from heaven to earth or a “short term mission trip” but it was a painful journey of separation and hardship. It meant sacrifice. His mission to incarnate moved Him from the comfort of His Father’s bosom. Similarly, all who serve Him go through such sacrifices for the sake of God’s work. We read in the book of Acts, Aquila and Priscilla had to move to many unknown territories as they were not just concerned about their own comfort in this world but they cared much for the kingdom, and they also used their profession to support their ministry.

A. What are some of the fears that generally stop people from being an incarnational family?

B. Discuss ways to deal with those fears and overcome them to make Christ known to others.

Incarnation requires voluntary sacrifice

Jesus’ incarnation into the world is about the willingness of the Son to empty himself completely (Phil 2:7), taking the form of a slave. Jesus’ model of giving Himself has served as a model later for all his disciples who took their calling seriously.

A. What are some of the sacrifices that were involved in the incarnation of Jesus?

B. How can you apply the above truth of Jesus' sacrifice to fulfill His mission in your own family life?

Incarnation calls to us to count the cost

The cost of the incarnation for Jesus was to give His life. As a good shepherd, He lay down His life to fulfil the task of His calling.

A. Read Mark 8:34. What are the criteria that Christ laid down to be His followers?

B. Why do you think Christ has such criteria for us to be His disciple? (Mark 8:35-38, John 14:1-3)

C. Why do you think many today are afraid to bear the cost of discipleship? How can one overcome it?

Lack of eternal vision and faith of what Jesus has prepared for His children prevents many from taking up the cross.

Incarnation is doing the will of the Father

The incarnation of Jesus teaches an important lesson of being receptive to the Father's voice. Jesus' incarnation was not independent of the Father and Spirit. The Son did everything and spoke everything as directed by the Father. Jesus said, "I do exactly what my Father has commanded me" (John 14:31). Hence incarnation needs to be in the will of the One who sent us.

A. Read Acts 16:6-10, 21:10-14. Discuss how Paul and his companions were sensitive to be led by the Spirit of God to fulfill God's mission ?

B. Are there any stories that you would like to share with the group about Godly prompting in your life? (One or two families can share short incidents if any).

C. Have you sensed the Spirit of God nudging you to do something of late or through this session to fulfill His mission? If yes, can you list them? (Please discuss as a couple as to how you want to obey God's Spirit to do His will).

Incarnation calls us to identify with people, move out of comfort zones, sacrifice voluntarily to serve others, count the cost with an eternal vision, and to do the will of the Father.

In the research on Missional Family, the following were some of the methods missional families used to connect with other families, neighbours and friends with an intent to be “incarnational”

- Intentional visits to those in need, sick etc.
- Building rapport and being involved in the larger interests of the community
- Life witness and communication
- Availability in crisis
- Prayer (both secretly and publicly)
- Prepared, alert and equipped to share one’s faith
- Through outreach activities of the Church

Couple Activity

Choose from this list a minimum of three in order to make your family an incarnational family in the coming month, with at least one to be implemented in the next week (7 days)

| No. | Activity | Time | Date |
|-----|----------|------|------|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |

Pray together as a couple for the Lord to help you fulfill this desire of your family.

Missional families are sensitive to the needs of others by the prompting of His Spirit and are willing to move out of their comfort zones to become Christ in someone's life.

CHAPTER SIX

Missional Families Are Attractional Families

Making Your Home A Missional Centre

The family of the Godhead always attracted others. Jesus always acknowledged His Father and the Spirit throughout His public ministry. His life always attracted the ordinary, the sick, the pained, the rich, the lonely, and even the rulers of His time. Jesus, the true light, was always attractional and so are missional families.

Homes are God-given centers for us to reflect the warmth and love of Christ to others. The central nerve of Christian mission is one's home. A home that honours God in its relationship with Him, with one another, with neighbours, friends and the community becomes attractive.

In a time and era when homes are seen as private space for the family, in what ways can the light of Jesus shine forth from your home? Discuss some of the ways it can be done in your context and list down some of those thoughts?

God has a mission to accomplish through our home as a mission center. To see the Church as sacred and the home as secret is not a phenomenon of the Bible. The early Christian homes were the meeting place of Christians.

Attractional homes in the Bible

Attractional homes are open for Jesus and others.

The house at Capernaum (Mark 1:29,33; 2:1; 3:20; 9:33). Describe how this house at Capernaum became attractional.

Attractional homes honor Jesus.

A. Read John 12:1-9 The house at Bethany honoured Jesus and attracted many to their home. In what way was Jesus honoured and how did Jesus respond to that honour?

B. Is Jesus honoured in our homes today? How can we intentionally honour Jesus in our home through our relationships, through what we do and say?

Attractional homes have experienced Jesus.

A. In Luke 19:1-9, Jesus visited Zacchaeus' home. How did his home change after the visit of Jesus?

B. Discuss as a couple how much of your experience of Jesus can make your home attractional to :

- Your own family _____
- Your extended family _____
- Your neighbours and Friends _____

Attractional homes witness Jesus.

A. Read Mark 5:19-20; Acts 2:42 - 47 and discuss how our homes can witness Jesus.

B. From all the passages that you read about attractional homes highlight one or two aspects you would want to practice in your home in the next week. Also share why and how.

A missional home is a home on a public pedestal. The reactions and responses of a missional home get observed and watched. It plays a significant part in fulfilling the mission of God. The behaviour of every member, the hospitality practiced and the love and respect people have for each other reflect their deep beliefs and faith.

Beauty that flows out makes a home attractional. (To be done at home and discussed as a family)

Christian homes in the early church were attractional, and they had a unique role in fulfilling God’s mission. Many of the same characteristics in missional households are applicable even today. They are hospitality, the role of women at home, informal setting, love and openness, being open to children, using family occasions to invite others and being available for others’ needs.

A. In the early Church, ‘hospitality’ was crucial in the spread of Christianity among the early Christians. Discuss some of the ways you can practise hospitality to make your home attractional to others.

B. What are some of the ways you could use your special/family occasions to invite people to help explore Christ through your home?

C. Read Luke 10:29-37. Who are your ‘neighbors’ to whom do you need to respond with the love of Christ? List down a few of them and discuss with your spouse an action plan to make your home attractional to them.

| Name of family | Action plan |
|----------------|-------------|
| | |
| | |
| | |

Following Jesus as a family is a costly affair. Missional families use their home to reach out to others and are willing to bear the cost.

Beauty within makes a home attractional The beauty of a Christian home is not limited to what they do but who they are. They become attractional by observing the household ethics and codes advocated by His Word, by their perspective of home as a sacred place, by their family oneness and attitude towards others and by their prayer life.

Colossians 3:18-21 gives household ethics and practices to follow within the Christian home. How can the instructions for wives, for husbands, for parents and for children be practiced effectively in our home?

- For wives: _____
- For husbands: _____
- For parents: _____
- For children: _____

Missional families are attractional because Jesus lives in their home and every member lives to honour Jesus and each other.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Missional Families Are Nurturing Families

Making your home a discipleship centre

To be a nurturing family, the family must first have concern about everyone's growth in their own home and then nurture others. The Trinitarian family is a nurturing family. The Son was nurtured by the Father. The Spirit was nurtured by the Son. The Son always wanted to glorify the Father. The Son always spoke highly of the Spirit of God and the Father, and relied on their presence at every point of His need. Jesus never compromised on His time with His Father as He needed that nurturing strength to fulfill His mission on earth. The nurturing nature of the Godhead can be clearly seen in their relationship with one another through the scriptures. With the model of the Trinitarian family let's discuss on nurturing your own growth, the growth of your spouse, your children and others.

1. Nurturing your own growth:

Read Luke 2:52. Nurturing one's emotional, physical, spiritual and social aspect is important for a balanced well-ordered life. Discuss some ways you can nurture yourself in each of these areas? Write one or two action points that you would like to implement in your life?

Intellectual : _____

Emotional : _____

Physical : _____

Spiritual : _____

Social : _____

2. Nurturing the growth of your spouse:

Often the one who gets neglected in the busyness of life is the one who is closest to us – our spouse. A couple can often take each other for granted. It is time to take some action. A small act of sharing your day with each other and praying together can nurture your spouse. (Men and women can separate into two groups and discuss the following question and share the list to the group.)

A. Men only: Discuss various ways a husband can nurture the growth of his spouse in all the five areas of Intellectual, Emotional, Physical, Spiritual and Social?

B. Women only: Discuss various ways a wife can nurture the growth of her spouse in all the five areas of Intellectual, Emotional, Physical, Spiritual and Social?

C. Pick up one or two aspects from the above list and make plans to intentionally nurture your spouse in this coming week and discuss your plans with each other.

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Plans for intellectual nurture | |
| Plans for emotional nurture | |
| Plans for physical nurture | |
| Plans for spiritual nature | |
| Plans for social nurture | |

3. Nurturing the growth of your children

God's word must be taught to your children, and parents are called to be the primary faith trainers and are responsible to pass on their faith intentionally to their children. Mission and evangelism begin at home. Children at home should be evangelized before the family moves out to reach others.

Discipleship starts at home and to see one's own children coming to know the Lord should be the primary goal of any Christian parent.

A. Read Deut 6:4-9. Nurturing your child through the day is part of parental discipleship. Discuss various ways a parent can nurture their child as they wake up (when you rise), as they go to bed (lie down), as they go about their day at home (when you sit down) and as they travel (when you walk along the road)?

Wake up time : _____

Bed time : _____

Home time : _____

Travel time : _____

4. Nurturing the growth of others:

Missional families are concerned and are keenly involved in nurturing the growth of others.

A. Read Acts 18:24–28. What made Aquilla and Priscilla take Apollos into their home?

B. How can Christian homes today be engaged in nurturing the growth of others in all the dimensions of Intellectual, Spiritual, Physical, Social, etc?

C. List a few people whom you could nurture and write down a probable place and time to meet with them in the next couple of weeks?

| Name | Place | Time |
|------|-------|------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Families who have been engaged in nurturing others witnessed a great impact on their own children's growth in various levels.

Missional families are nurturing families as they model the Godhead family in facilitating holistic growth in oneself, their families and others.

CHAPTER EIGHT

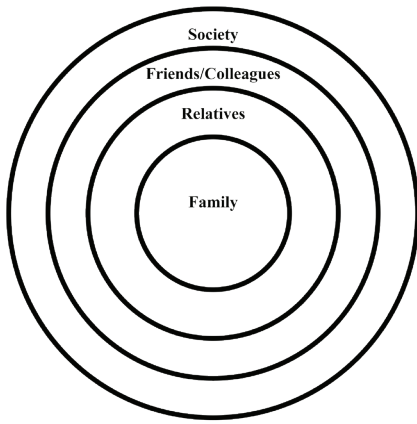
Model Missional Family: The Family of Cornelius

With rapid sociological changes where husband and wife are so caught up with their own careers and other priorities, Cornelius' family life serves as a model and challenge to us.

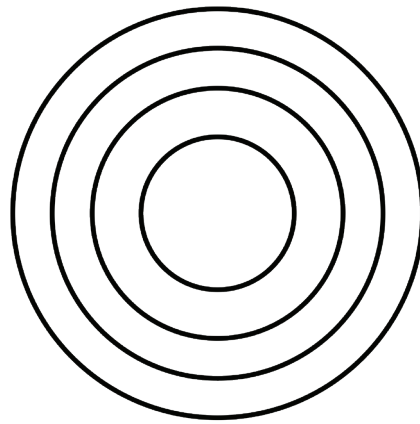
Being a person in the highest position of his career, we recognize his home had all the five criteria of a missional family. However, an interesting fact to note is that Cornelius' home, even before he encountered Christ, had missional characteristics. Cornelius' family truly became a missional family after his conversion. As a God fearer, his life and his influence around him was truly remarkable!

A. Read Acts 10 and list out the various kinds of people whom Cornelius had influenced?

Missional Families intentionally spend time at home to minister to people at home. Their ministry outside of their home will be an overflow of what happens inside of their home. Though Cornelius was a man of high position in his career he was careful in balancing home, career and ministry. His faith was so contagious that his circle of influence was moving from within his own home to the society at large as shown in the figure (next page). Based on your present priorities, fill in the order in which you think your life has been ordered. Please share this with your spouse, once you are done, ask your spouse to validate your order of priority and influence. Discuss how same or different it is from the life of Cornelius.



Cornelius' circle of influence



Your circle of influence

A. Acts 10:2 says “He and all his family were devout and God fearing.” How do you think Cornelius would have intentionally imparted his faith convictions to his family?

(To be answered by men and women separately)

B. As a husband and father, inspite of your career and busy schedule how can you intentionally influence your home in the area of faith? (Discuss with men in the group)

C. As a wife and mother, how can you intentionally impact your home in the area of faith in spite of your work/career and your busy schedule? (Discuss with women in the group)

(Please share after discussion with the whole group)

Cornelius' second circle of influence was among his relatives (Acts 10: 24). His thirst for his relatives to share the same spiritual experience of his family is noteworthy, when Peter visits them. In an individualistic society, when such concerns for relatives are fast disappearing, Cornelius indeed serves as a great model for a missional mindset.

D. In 1 Timothy 5:4,8, how does Paul warn about the one who does not care for the needy relative and why?

E. List down the names of your relatives whom you think need care or have not experienced salvation thus far? (Do it personally and do not share the names in the group.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

F. From the above list, pick a few with whom you can intentionally connect to influence them for Christ. (We recommend you to start praying for all the above before you make connections.)

The third circle of influence was his close friends and colleagues (Acts 10:7,8,24). Cornelius' spiritual experience was shared with his colleagues. Their testimony about Cornelius to Peter (Acts 10:22) was spontaneous and credible. His life definitely would have influenced his devout attendant and his close friends whom he invited when Peter came to visit.

G. What are some of the ways you can make your life as an influence to your friends and colleagues? Discuss this as a group and choose what best fits your situation to implement the same.

The fourth circle is his influence on the society around him. It is interesting to note that though Cornelius was a man in high position and of power, his generosity to the poor and needy was recognized by the heavens. When Jesus explained about dividing the sheep and the goats, he emphasized that deeds have a part in deciding one's eternity (Matt 25:32-46). Missional families cannot ignore the poor and the needy!

H. God has been so generous to us, how much of the generosity have we shown to the needy and the poor in our lives? Discuss in your group some of your experiences in helping the poor and needy and how it made

a difference in their lives.

I. Identify some of the ways you can be involved in sharing your resources to help the poor and needy and write down specific dates as to when you will implement the same? Share with the larger group if you are comfortable without disclosing names of people.

| Name | Date |
|------|------|
| | |
| | |

Finally we see Cornelius' influences went beyond the skies. His prayers and gifts went to God as a memorial offering. His family was a matter of discussion in heaven. He lived based on what he understood about God, and with that knowledge he could influence the heavens.

Take time in your group to pause and pray for each of your homes to be an influence for His Kingdom purpose. Pray that God would give you a generous heart towards the needs of the poor and needy of this world.

Cornelius' home was truly missional! How wonderful it would be if our homes become discussion points in heaven based on our life and deeds.

CHAPTER NINE

Fences To Guard Your Family

Missional home that is fully open to the mission of God should be fully guarded from the attacks of the evil one. A home that is engaged in fulfilling God's mission is vulnerable to all kinds of attacks. Unless clear boundaries and fences are applied to one's home, one will mess up sooner than later. We would look at five areas to protect our homes as we engage in fulfilling God's mission.

1. Guard against subtle intruders and time robbers

As we open our home to the needs of others, some of them could take advantage of our generosity and love.

A. Read 2 Timothy 3:6 and discuss how such intruders need to be kept away in missional homes.

B. What are some of the healthy boundaries to be put in place within one's home as we are engaged in helping others? (For example: Not counselling people of the opposite gender in private.)

2. Guard against media influences

Technology and media have become part of our lifestyle. To be missional and to fulfill God's purposes, it is important to set Godly boundaries and discipline in the use of technology. For example some homes have decided to switch off all data and wifi connections between 9 pm to 6 am. Such disciplines would help to guard our families.

A. What are some of the ways you can guard yourself to be protected from overuse or misuse of technology in your home?

B. How can you guard your children from being carried away by media influences? Discuss some of the guards that have worked in some families in protecting their children from technological influences. Example: Using parental control or child-lock to protect kids from adult content (a great time to learn from one another.)

3. Guard against ministry overtaking family priorities

Balancing family and work is a challenge for missional families, especially when both partners choose to work outside their home. With raging passion for ministry, some tend to go overboard by neglecting their own family and children. It is good to remind ourselves that judgement of Eli's family came as a result of neglecting his ministry at home. (1 Sam 2:27-36, 3:11-14)

- What kind of guard would you need to put in your life to make sure that you are not sacrificing your family on the altar of ministry? Discuss.

4. Guard against spiritual attacks

Paul talks about spiritual attacks to the Church at Ephesus in Ephesians 6: 11-13. He urges them to put on the full armour of God to stand against the devil's schemes, we need to be aware that the enemy who was active in destroying the first family at the Garden of Eden is still active to destroy Godly families who want to fulfill God's mission.

A. Read Ephesians 6:11-13 and discuss how each piece of the armour can be helpful in preventing the attacks of the evil one to guard your family. (To help in remembering the armour of God, an acronym on the word "TRAFFIC" can be followed.)

T – Truth as belt _____

R - Righteousness as breastplate _____

A – Alertness to share the gospel of peace _____

F – Fortification through the helmet of salvation _____

F – Faith as the shield _____

I – Intimacy with God in prayer _____

C – Commandments that needs to be obeyed _____

B. From the 7 armours, which one do you need to put on / or which ones do you lack to face the enemy? What would you like to do to strengthen that aspect of your spiritual life?

5. Guard against enemies of the Gospel

In many countries to be a Christian is challenging. The enemies of the Gospel both within and outside have been waging war against Christian faith. In such context to be sensitive and to be discerning is very important. To be a Christian is to carry the Cross as well as use wisdom and discernment in sensitive situations which is a must. Paul and Jesus had used discernment in every situation when confronted by the enemies of the Gospel.

- What are some of the challenges that you may face in your context from the enemies of the Gospel that require families to be discerning and sensitive? Discuss.

Couple Time: Pray together and ask the Lord to help you to put on the full armour of God for the needed courage and discernment against the evil one.

Missional families are constantly waging a war against the deceptive forces of darkness. They need to discern and decide every move by the leading of the Holy Spirit to fulfill His mission.

CHAPTER TEN

Family Mission Statement

Many companies and organisations have a mission statement. Yet many of these companies do not even last one generation. However family is the first and oldest institution that God created to be multi-generational. If such an important institution goes ahead aimlessly without a vision and a mission, it may end up leaving a godless and ruined generation. Hence using all that was learnt from five characteristics of a Missional Family, let us make our family mission statement. This statement can be a reminder to each member of the family to live out the missional purpose of His calling in our family life.

A Sample Family Mission Statement:

To make consistent time with God through regular family altar and to display God's love in our relationship by scheduling disciplined weekly time with each other and our children, to care for the needy by visiting our poor neighbourhood. To invite some lonely students for a meal thus helping them to explore Christ, help them grow in their love for God through monthly Bible study in our home, thus fulfilling His Mission through our family.

Working on your Family Mission Statement: (If you are a couple, do this exercise with your spouse)

What are some of the key learnings that you would like to implement in your family to improve your worship experience? (Refer to chapter 3)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Pick the most important or the essence of all the three and without using the term “Worshipping Family” make a short statement. This statement would become part of your family mission statement.

What are some of the key learnings that you would like to implement in your family to improve your affection and love between one another in your home? (Refer chapter 4.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Pick the most important statement or the essence of all the three and without using the term “Affectionate Family” make a short statement. This would become part of your family mission statement.

What are some of the key learnings that you would like to implement to see your home be an incarnational family? (Refer chapter 5.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Pick the most important statement or the essence of all the three and without using the term “Incarnational Family” make a short statement to make it part of your family mission statement.

What are some of the key learnings that you would like to implement to see your home become an attractional place for others to explore Christ? (Refer to chapter 6)

1.

2.

3.

Pick the most important statement or the essence of all the three and without using the term “Attractional Family” make a short statement. This statement would become part of your family mission statement.

What are some of the key learnings that you would like to implement to see your home become a place that nurtures your own family and others? (Refer chapter 7)

1.

2.

3.

Pick the most important statement or the essence of all the three and without using the term “Nurturing Family” make a short statement to make it part of your family mission statement.

Combine all your short statements which express your desire in the five areas of being a missional family and make a Family Mission Statement.

Read edit and personalize your statement by adding “We the _____ (Matthews, Jacobs family).....” and share it with your group.

We would recommend you to share it also with your children and friends and frame it in your home as a reminder to pursue God’s mission through your family.

This statement can be revisited annually to see the progress of your family. It can be modified as time goes by to be relevant to the times.

Missional families are eternally focused, and they want to make sure that they reach the home that God has prepared for them and their generations!

MISSIONAL FAMILY CHECK-UP

On a scale of 0 to 10 (with 0 as the least rating and 10 as the highest) please rate yourself. Do it individually and not as a couple. If you do not have children or your children are below the age of 4, then answer that question as it applies to you as a couple. The same would apply to empty nesters.

a. My family worship is very regular.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

b. We pray together often as a couple.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

c. We all participate very regularly in family worship including the children.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

d. We are highly satisfied with the experience of family worship in our home.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

e. Our family communication is excellent.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

f. The children love coming back home after school/university/work.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

g. As a couple, we are highly satisfied about the quality time we spend with each other every day.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

h. We have a good time of family humour and laughter at our home.

0__1__2__3__4__5__6__7__8__9__10

i. We often relate to our neighbors/relatives and friends.

0__1__2__3__4__5__6__7__8__9__10

j. We often have our neighbors/relatives and friends visit our home.

0__1__2__3__4__5__6__7__8__9__10

k. We often share the gospel with our neighbor/friends from other faiths.

0__1__2__3__4__5__6__7__8__9__10

l. We often visit homes of the sick, bereaved and people in need.

0__1__2__3__4__5__6__7__8__9__10

m. In our personal or family prayer, we often pray for the families in our neighborhood or the world beyond our home.

0__1__2__3__4__5__6__7__8__9__10

n. Our home is often approached by people to talk about their personal problems.

0__1__2__3__4__5__6__7__8__9__10

o. We have regular prayer meetings in our home with members outside of our family.

0__1__2__3__4__5__6__7__8__9__10

p. Our family is always connected to the needs of the poor.

0__1__2__3__4__5__6__7__8__9__10

q. We often use our home to disciple and nurture others.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

r. We spend adequate time in a week to nurture our children both spiritually and emotionally.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

s. I spend adequate time in a week to nurture my spouse spiritually and emotionally.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

t. I spend adequate time in a week to nurture myself spiritually other than the activities of my Church.

0 ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Add the scores of a,b,c,d | Worshipping family |
| Add the scores of e,f,g,h | Affectionate family |
| Add the scores of i,j,k,l | Incarnational family |
| Add the scores of m,n,o,p | Attractional family |
| Add the scores of q,r,s,t | Nurturing family |

| | |
|---|-------|
| If any of the scores have fallen below 10 in any of the above categories, treat it as | ZERO |
| If the total is between 11 – 20, treat it as | ONE |
| If the total is between 21 – 30, treat it as | TWO |
| If the total is between 31 – 40, treat it as | THREE |

After the above scores have been calculated, now multiply the digits you have obtained for each category.

- If you have a zero, you are not a Missional family as you are missing one or more key components of becoming a Missional family.
- If you have a single digit, then you are a nominal Christian family but with all the qualities of being a Missional one in place. Intentionally nurture all the five characteristics to be an effective Missional family.
- If you have a double digit, yes, you are moving ahead towards His purposes, but may be still struggling. Identify some of your key areas to become effectively Missional and work on them.
- If you have three digits, you are clearly a MISSIONAL FAMILY and you need to help others to become Missional.