

REAL HELP FOR THE FAMILY

Note to the speaker:

Warm, loving family relationships require time and effort, but they are achievable. Present a realistic view of challenges to family happiness. Instill confidence that problems can be solved by applying Bible principles

GOD WANTS YOUR FAMILY TO BE HAPPY (3 min.)

All families yearn to be happy, yet some are plagued by hurtful speech, disrespect, disloyalty, and a lack of warmth

Such problems reflect common traits of “the last days” (2Ti 3:1-5)

Jehovah God has provided guidance for families because he wants them to be happy (Isa 48:17, 18)

When Bible counsel is applied, even difficult family problems can be overcome

UNSELFISHNESS IS THE KEY TO A HAPPY FAMILY (8 min.)

Selfishness is at the root of many family problems

Satan promotes the idea that self-interest leads to happiness

In reality, greater happiness comes from giving (Ac 20:35)

Unselfish love is a powerful uniting bond **[Read Colossians 3:14]**

Genuine love is not merely an emotion; it is displayed by unselfish actions (1Co 13:4-7)

An unselfish husband puts his family’s needs and interests ahead of his own **[Read Colossians 3:19, 21]**

In public and in private, he treats his family with dignity, being gentle and kind

An unselfish wife supports her husband and works hard for the welfare of the family

[Read Colossians 3:18]

Children who are not self-willed but obedient contribute to a peaceful, happy home

[Read Colossians 3:20]

CHALLENGES TO FAMILY HAPPINESS CAN BE OVERCOME (16 min.)

A household may be religiously divided, or perhaps not all family members apply Bible counsel

Jehovah will bless those who promote peace despite unfavorable circumstances (Col 3:23, 24)

A believing mate can influence the unbelieving spouse positively (1Pe 3:1, 2; w10 5/15 13-14 ¶6-10)

At times, children may be slow to respond to parental training or even rebel against their parents

Maintain open communication with children, be a good listener, and reason patiently (g 10/11 16-20; g 8/07 8)

Parents should not give up but patiently and firmly continue assisting their children (Ga 6:9)

Some families have deeply entrenched bad habits, such as arguing and using unkind speech

Such habits can be overcome by applying Bible principles **[Read Colossians 3:12]**

Learn to handle disagreements and problems in a peaceful way (w08 5/1 10-12; g 2/13 4-5)

Be patient, recognizing that forming new habits takes time

Resolve to let go of resentment over past wrongs **[Read Colossians 3:13]**

If trust between marriage mates has been damaged, it may be possible to restore it

Perhaps one mate has viewed pornography or has developed an inappropriate emotional bond outside the marriage

To begin repairing the damage, the offending mate needs to change his or her behavior and apologize (Col 3:5, 9)

Marriage mates can continue to rebuild trust by cultivating openness and honesty

Adultery is a serious betrayal of trust

An innocent mate must weigh carefully the decision whether to forgive or to divorce (Mt 5:32)

If forgiveness is extended, both mates must work together to strengthen the marriage (w12 5/1 12-15)

STRENGTHEN YOUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR FAMILY (3 min.)

By words and actions, show that you are committed to making your family life a success (g 6/15 8-9)

Strong commitment provides a firm foundation for resolving problems

Jehovah God will bless your efforts (Pr 16:3)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]