

6. You and Mom



Over the first five lessons in the Fathering in 15™ program we largely focused on you, but in these next two lessons we're going to be looking at one of the most important relationships in your life and in the lives of your children. We're talking about your relationship with the mother of your children, and it should not surprise you that the Lord has much to tell us about that through his word, the Bible. In fact, some of the most important ideas that the Lord wants us to know appear in the first few pages of the Bible, in the book of Genesis. You've probably already heard some of them.

The first two chapters of Genesis describe how God created the world and, in particular, how he created the first man (Adam) and the first woman (Eve). God created Adam first, and then He said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him", and then He created Eve. God then instructed them to "be fruitful", that is, to have children. In those same two chapters we can also read about another idea that you've probably heard quoted from time to time during wedding ceremonies, that is, "a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh."

These two simple ideas form a strong foundation for how God designed the family, and the role of the parents in the family. Think about this for a moment. God made Moms and Dads to be different, He gave them different jobs to do, and those jobs are supposed to work together to make strong families and strong homes. A Mom can't be a Dad, and a Dad can't be a Mom. This describes God's ideal plan for a family. Unfortunately sometimes circumstances prevent us from reaching that ideal, for instance if the Mom or Dad passes away. But it's still the goal we should all shoot for if at all possible.

So what does it mean to be "united", and to "become one flesh"? Clearly God wants a man and a woman to be committed to each other and to their family; and what better way to demonstrate commitment than to be married. When a man and a woman are joined in marriage they are each saying, "I believe in us, that I want to "team up" with you to make our family a success. And if children are part of that family that I'm committed to do my part to be a good partner with you, and to be a good Dad or Mom for our children."

In addition to all of the advantages that come with doing things according to God's plan, there have been many statistical studies done that show that people who are committed to their marriage are happier, are more successful, raise happier children, etc.

Will there be "bumps in the road" as you go along in your marriage, difficult times to get through? Almost certainly. After all, we are still human and we each have shortcomings and weaknesses. But it says in Psalm 46, verse 1, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble." He wants your marriage and family to succeed, so He will give you help when you need it.

And if, for some reason, it is not possible for you and your children's Mom to be married, then you should still try to work with her as much as possible to be good parents for your children because that is what is best for them! As we learned in the first Fathering in 15™ lesson, your family history was a major factor in what kind of an adult you turned out to be, so the environment that you and Mom create for your children will shape what kind of adults they will become. You can show them what a great Dad looks like!

As you work with the mother of your children keep in mind another bit of God's wisdom:

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:2-3

Questions for thought and discussion:

- a. What are some of the unique abilities and strengths that God has given you to bring into your marriage partnership with your children's Mom? What abilities and strengths has God given her for your partnership?
- b. What obstacles are in the way of building a successful partnership with your children's Mom? Do you believe that God's truths can help you to overcome them?
- c. How can you learn more about God's design for a happy and successful family? How can you take the lead on making that happen?
- d. What are some simple steps you can take now to improve your relationship?