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MAY 2010

## LIFE FOCUS PARENT NEWSLETTER

THIS MONTH IN BIBLE STUDY: THE RIDE OF YOUR LIFE

### SESSION 1: DISTINCTIVE DESIGN

Where did the idea of marriage come from?

### SESSION 2: COVENANT COMMITMENT

What makes marriage marriage?

### SESSION 3: RELATIONSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

When I get married, what is my responsibility?

### SESSION 4: BENEFICIAL BOUNDARIES

Why be faithful?

### SESSION 5: MARRIAGE MAINTENANCE

What helps a marriage grow strong?

This study is important because of the weakening of marriage in our society. The evidences of society's effort to redefine marriage can be seen on the nightly news. What does marriage—an adult topic—have to do with teenagers? Statistically, 90 percent of the teenagers in your church will eventually get married. Although teenagers aren't married yet, these are the pivotal years for laying a foundation of what their future marriages will be like.

#### What parents can do:

- Use the suggestions on the other side of this newsletter to engage your teenager in a discussion about what he or she has learned each week.
- Consider planning a small group or individual Bible study using the book *Pure Parenting: Teaching Your Teen Why True Love Waits* by Lynn Pryor.
- Listen to [www.lifeway.com/StudentBSFL](http://www.lifeway.com/StudentBSFL) for insights into this month's study.

### MUSIC REVIEW: CASTING CROWNS

A Grammy and Dove Award winning Christian band, Casting Crowns, employs a soft rock music style. It was created in 1999 by youth pastor and lead vocalist Mark Hall. Led by this singer/songwriter, the group initially included guitarists Juan DeVevo and Hector Cervantes, and violinist Melodee DeVevo. The group relocated to McDonough, GA, in 2001, adding Chris Huffman on bass, Megan Garrett on keyboards and accordion, and drummer Brian Scoggin. Hall pointed out that the song, "Slow Fade," a surprise sonic feast (don't miss the flute!)—marks the regression that happens when Christians aren't living intentionally. "People don't crumble in a day. You don't fall, you fade," Hall explains. "In your mind, there's that pride that says 'I'd never do that'... but you don't just do it, it's a slow, series of compromises, little ones that go there eventually, until you're sitting in a place you'd never go, doing something you'd never do... and yet the way you're living totally makes sense to you somehow because you're so numb." Mark calls the band's work a ministry akin to what the world would call "preaching to the choir." In keeping with the Great Commission, Hall describes their music as a "ministry of discipleship." To learn more, visit [www.castingcrowns.com](http://www.castingcrowns.com).

## FAMILY BIBLE TIME

Sunday School affirms the home as the center of biblical guidance. Family Bible Time is a strategy for you, as a parent, to discuss with your teenager—and the whole family—the biblical truths and principles discovered in their small group Bible study.

Each week during this month, plan some intentional time alone with your spouse. Consider a “date night” and make it a reality this month with your spouse. During your intentional time together, spend time enjoying each other and talking about all the positive things that you love about your family.

### MAY 2: GENESIS 1:26-28A; 2:7,15-22

When a marriage follows God’s design, it is good for everyone — men, women, children, the community, the country, and the world. Every civilization in history is built upon the institution of marriage. It is the foundation of human social order. The welfare of children, the propagation of the faith, the well-being of society, and the orderliness of civilization are all dependent upon the stability of marriage according to the divine pattern. When this God-given pattern is undermined, the whole superstructure of society becomes unstable. Any deviation from the divine pattern invites disaster.<sup>1</sup> Provide paper and pens for family members to list the characteristics and benefits of a God-designed marriage.

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from “Stand for Marriage” by Kenyn Cureton; The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

### MAY 9: GENESIS 2:23-25; MALACHI 2:13-15; MATTHEW 19:3-12

Many students today are a part of a single or blended family situation. Perhaps this is even your second marriage and your children are now in a single parent or blended family situation. Help your children understand that God’s design for marriage is a lifelong commitment. Prepare a poster with the word *commitment* and its definition written on it. Invite your teenager to read aloud the word and definition. Explain that the goal of marriage is physical, emotional, and spiritual lifetime oneness. Say: **God’s intention for marriage is for it to be a lifetime commitment.** Help your teenager not to feel shame or guilt, but to understand that God hates divorce. Say: **God loves people who may be divorced, and He deals with them graciously and redemptively.**

### MAY 16: EPHESIANS 5:22-33; 1 PETER 3:7

Secure a copy of the 2000 *Baptist Faith and Message Statement*. Read aloud the statement under “Family.” Say: **What do you think the word *submit* means?** Ask each family member to give an illustration of what it means to submit. Help your teenager understand the biblical concept of voluntary submission, love, respect, and honor in marriage. Point out that *love* in these verses refers to more than affection or romantic feeling. This is a higher form of love concerned with the well-being of one loved and characterized by sacrificial self-giving. Explain that marriage comes with responsibilities.

### MAY 23: MATTHEW 5:27-30; PROVERBS 5:15-18; 6:23-32

Christian marriages are under attack by Satan’s forces and must stand strong in the Lord’s power. God calls for faithfulness in marriage. Talk to your teenager about the consequences of unfaithfulness and the rewards of faithfulness. Play the song “Slow Fade” by Casting Crowns, and discuss the meaning of the lyrics. Talk about how the road to sin begins with small temptations, such as a glance, thought, idea, or feeling. Encourage your teen to join you in a daily time of Bible study and prayer.

### MAY 30: PSALM 51:6-10; SONG OF SONGS 2:15; ACTS 18:24-26; ROMANS 16:3-5A

This month’s Bible study has helped Christian teenagers begin to think about their future marriages. Say: **A marriage grows strong when you have a willingness to forgive your spouse, identify and resolve potential problem areas before they are bigger, and desire to serve Christ together.** Discuss with your teenager characteristics that he or she thinks his or her ideal future spouse should have. Promise your teenager that you will pray daily for him or her. Mention that you will also be praying for his or her future spouse and their godly marriage.

