

*Come*  
HOME

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DON MACLAFFERTY



Come Home

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Jon Marc Balagtas, Teri Escullar, Marjanne Gutierrez, and Brent Ligsay.



# *Dedication*

**To my parents  
Merritt and Gail MacLafferty**

In the way you have both loved each other for the past 60 years and in the consistent way you have loved your children, your children's spouses, and grandchildren, you have painted an unforgettable picture of the eternal love of God.



## Objectives

To call young and old back to the **home** as the:

1. Foundational place to educate the young to walk with God in integrity and to respect themselves and others.
2. Central place to worship the Creator God;
3. Disciple-making center of the community.

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## Why I Wrote This Book

The home is the sacred place for family to live, love, educate, worship, and care for the community. No other entity on earth can substitute for the home. Governments, churches, schools, and businesses are called to support the home but never to replace it.

The primacy of the home has been under attack since God created it. However, it will soon face its most deadly deception: a global initiative dictated—not by the written Word of God—but rather by political and religious powers and authorities.

This book is not politically correct, comfortable, or calming. It is rather a clarion call to return to the heart-thumping vision of God for your home, to live this vision, and to teach it to all who live within your walls and to all whom you welcome at your table.

## How to Use This Book

This book is intended for anyone who longs for God's blessings on their home. The lessons are created in a small group format but also may be used individually. If you study this book together with others, groups of twelve or less are best. When groups grow too big, the personal growth of each person suffers, and the group may tend to focus more on the program instead of on the people.

Here are some tips for leading a small group to discover new life for their hearts and their home:

1. Be a daily disciple of Jesus yourself. Worship the Lord in His Word and in prayer. Thank Him. Praise Him! Confess to Him. Repent of what compromises Jesus from being your Lord. Ask for and receive the Holy Spirit so that He will transform your life and send you out to be a living witness for Jesus.
2. Pray daily for every person in your small group. Pray for the Holy Spirit to bless each one to receive the love and grace of Jesus, be in God's Word, live His Word, and share the good news with others. Pray that God gives you a heart of compassion for each one.

3. Prayerfully read through each lesson in preparation to lead the small group. Prepare a short story or testimony from your life to share at the end of each lesson right before you share the challenge for the next week. Your small group will appreciate knowing what the challenge has meant to you personally before you give them the same challenge for the next week.
4. Prepare the room. Place the chairs in a circle. If possible, enjoy some healthy snacks either right before the lesson or right after the lesson. Some groups begin or end with a light meal. The main point is creating an environment that encourages fellowship. This informal time is an effective time to “share life” with your small group members. Listen to them as they share their joys, successes, losses, dreams, and fears.
5. Come early so that you can personally welcome each person into the group. Learn each name as soon as possible. Welcome them by name!
6. Mentor someone younger than you to be your co-leader. Coach him or her to take part in the lesson each week. Help this person develop into an effective small group leader with a heart to encourage people as they grow, rather than train him or her to

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simply get through the material.

7. Ask your group about what God helped them do with the challenge from the week before. Ask with grace! Encourage them to be prayer partners with another parent/mentor and child team, and then invite them each week to report to each other what God did in their lives as they lived the challenges from the last lesson. Do not be discouraged when some have nothing to report. Be patient and pray much for God to grow in each one the expectation that His Word always leads to living the truth by faith!
8. Let God's Word be the last word in all discussions. When there is a difference of opinion, model to the group the importance of testing all things with Scripture, including what you share. Show a profound reverence for what God says in His Word. Let His Word be in the spotlight, not your insights.
9. Share your own testimony right before you give the challenge. Share how you live your faith in your personal life before you challenge your group to do the same. Share how you have made mistakes and have learned while implementing the challenge of this lesson in your own life. Share how Jesus has practically made a difference

in your life by living the challenge!

10. Depend on the Holy Spirit. He is the One who converts the heart, not you. He is the One who convicts, not you. Follow His lead. Add and subtract from what you have prepared as He directs you through the lesson.
11. Pray with confidence in Christ as you close each lesson. Pray for Jesus Christ to bless each one in living by faith in Him with the challenge ahead.
12. As you conclude the lesson, be available outside of the small group time for any divine appointments that God gives you to talk with someone and encourage them in His love.





*The First*  
**HOME**

# *The First Home*

## CHAPTER ONE

### CONNECT

#### ***With Each Other***

Ask each other's names and place of birth.

#### ***With God's Word Today***

Please describe something you remember from your first home. Discover today what God's Word says about the first home.

#### ***With God in Prayer***

Thank God for each one who is there with you.

### DISCOVER

The first memories I have of home are in our small apartment in Honolulu on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. My parent's love for God, each other, and for us three children made it a happy home. The most important piece of furniture I can remember was the kitchen table where our family would eat together. I remember papaya, guava juice, and one time, a huge pile of steamed peas on my plate that took me "hours and hours"

to eat. I remember the splashing colors of bird of paradise and hibiscus flowers right outside the door. There were mango trees in the big yard on the hill above us. I have delightful memories of that home: listening to my grandpa tell rabbit stories, eating my big brother's candy that he thought he had hidden from me, chasing my little sister around the room as she shrieked with laughter and scampered to safety, gathering together for meals at the table, and worshipping God together in our living room.

Your first memories of home may be full of laughter and love or tears and fear. We all grow up in such different homes. We all have a story to tell and lessons we can learn from each other.

God has a story to tell about the first home on this planet because He created this home with the passion of His own love and the breathtaking creativity of His soul. Here is His story of the first home on earth:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (*Genesis 1:1*).

On the first day, “God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light” (v. 3).

On the second day, “God said, ‘Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the

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waters...and it was so” (vv. 6,7).

On the third day, “God said, ‘Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear’; and it was so” (v. 9). “Then God said, ‘Let the earth sprout vegetation’... and it was so” (v. 11).

On the fourth day, “God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night’...and it was so” (vv. 14-15).

On the fifth day, “God said, ‘Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth.’...God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good” (vv. 20-21).

On the sixth day, “God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind’...and it was so...Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image’;...male and female He created them....God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good...” (vv. 24-31).

“By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified

it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made” (*Genesis 2:2,3*).

God simply spoke and it was done. Our Creator God created with profound attention to detail, symmetry, and startling beauty. There was nothing left undone.

God fashioned the first home with infinite thoughtfulness and love. This first home would be defined by His creation of marriage, His plans for education, and His crowning Presence in a remarkable celebration.

### **God Created Marriage**

God created the man with His own hands and said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a helper suitable for him” (*Genesis 2:18*). Who God created to be man’s partner would speak volumes about love and marriage for eternity. God could have created any creature He wanted to be the loving partner for the man.

Scripture says that God took a rib from the man and made a woman. He brought this woman to the man. God paired the man and woman together.

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

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And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed” (*Genesis 2:24, 25*). God intended that a husband and his wife would have nothing to hide from each other.

God gave this first married couple their mandate: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (*Genesis 2:28*).

### **God set the DNA of marriage:**

1. God created marriage between a man and a woman.
2. God Himself brought them together. God chose these two for each other.
3. God intended that marriage be “fruitful” and would involve multiplying--leading to children from that God ordained, sexual union. Marriage was not an end to itself. When a couple cannot have children, they continue to have great potential to bless the new generations around them with their love, mentoring, and support!
4. God instructed them about how to love each other. He created the first couple with two very complimentary bodies that fit well together and that would produce a family. He created them naked and without shame. They were to respect, appreciate, and enjoy each other, hiding nothing from one another.

## **The First School**

1. God was the first Teacher, Adam and Eve the first students. He instructed them in their first home, the Garden of Eden. God came to them in their home.
2. God taught them how to care for the earth. This was the first environmental school!
3. God told them to subdue and rule over all living creatures.
4. God placed them in the garden of Eden with the plan for man to “cultivate and keep it” (*Genesis 2:15*). Man was not just to use the earth, but rather to be a steward and “keeper of it.”

## **The First Celebration Together**

The first full day Adam and Eve experienced together was the seventh day after the six days of the creation of the world. The first couple celebrated the first Sabbath with God who, by His actions, modeled how to celebrate the seventh day. God did three things:

1. “God rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done” (*Genesis 2:2*).
2. “Then God blessed the seventh day” (v. 3).
3. Finally, God “sanctified” (made holy) the seventh day (v. 3). God makes things holy by His Presence. God was present right there in the midst of the garden with his people!

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This seventh-day rest was placed as the finale to creation to give all creatures and the earth itself a healthy pause created by God (see page 17). This is a day for all creation to remember its Creator. From the beginning, God planned for man and earth to have a day off, to rest, and to be restored by the Creator Himself.

## **How to Live It**

### ***Group Discussion***

1. What do you appreciate about the first home?
2. What do we learn about the following truths in Genesis 1 and 2?
  - God's love?
  - Love and marriage?
  - Caring for our environment?
  - Weekly rest?
3. How can we live with these truths today?



**LIVE**

### ***7-Day Challenge***

Evaluate your home by the DNA of the first home created by God.

Ask yourself: How is my home similar to the first home? How is it different?

Ask God: What would you love to do with my home?

Follow God's lead.



*Love like*  
**CHRIST**

# *Love Like Christ*

## CHAPTER TWO

### CONNECT

#### ***With Each Other***

What one word best describes your week?

#### ***With Last Week's 7-Day Challenge***

Here is the 7-Day Challenge from last week. Let's take a few moments to share how we lived out this challenge in our lives over the last seven days:

Evaluate your home by the DNA of the first home created by God (see page 17). Ask yourself: How is my home similar to the first home? How is it different? Ask God: What would you love to do with my home? Follow God's lead.

#### ***With God's Word Today***

Whose marriage do you admire in your community? What qualities does that marriage have? Discover today what God's Word says about love in your home.

#### ***With God in Prayer***

Pray for the love of Christ to bless each one.

## DISCOVER

My heart beat faster and faster as I watched the back door of the church. I looked at my watch and cleared my throat in nervous anticipation. The moment had arrived! Would she be on time? Was she ready? The back door swung open, and my bride, the queen of my heart, swept through the doors and down the aisle. As she came nearer, her smile lit up my face!

For years we had been friends, walking together, talking together, and sharing our love for Jesus together. Through much prayer, God had shown us that He had brought us together to love each other and to serve Him together as husband and wife. We had waited for this wedding day. We had prayed for it. We had lovingly planned the wedding from beginning to end--listening to each other, making notes, praying and preparing a celebration that would testify to the One who had authored our love.

Later during the wedding, the pastor turned to me and asked me if I would take April as my wife, to love in sickness and in health and commit my love to her for life. Now the pastor had coached me before about what to say. I was to simply respond, "I do." But, overwhelmed with my beautiful bride and how God had

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blessed me to find her, I joyfully blurted out, "I SURELY do!"

Thirty-two years later, I am even more sure today than I was on that wedding day that God led me to find April! We have become lovers, life companions, and faith partners. Marrying April is my second greatest decision of my entire life--second only to choosing to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Marriage, as created by God, was to be a union characterized by His great love. Within the very act of creating woman, God taught how Adam was to value her. The Scriptures state that "the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man" (*Genesis 2:21,22*).

God fashioned the first woman from one of the man's ribs, which protects his heart. God did not create the woman from the man's head, nor from his foot. Eve was not to be above nor below Adam as his wife. They were to cherish each other as partners in love.

The world has secularized love and denigrated it down to lust. The world promotes "love" that takes.

God champions love that gives.  
The world markets lust that uses men's  
and women's bodies as objects. God  
celebrates love that protects each other  
and builds each other up.

God loves every man and woman as His  
children (*1 John 3:1*). He is very familiar  
with all of our life experiences (*Psalms*  
*139:1-6*). God's Word says that we are  
"complete in Christ" (*Colossians 1:27*).  
Finding completeness in Jesus Christ is  
a gift for those married, never married,  
divorced, or widowed. What a precious  
message for us all to know! Finding our  
completeness in Christ forms the core of  
who we are and influences every other  
relationship in our life!

God openly promotes married love.  
He wants men and women to experience  
together what He created for them,  
to celebrate in a committed union of  
marriage. Scripture even has one whole  
book of the Bible describing the joys  
of God-given, sexual love between a  
married man and his wife. Read the  
Song of Solomon...and be in awe of the  
Creator!

A loving marriage is to be an illustration  
of how Jesus Christ loves His people,  
the church. In Ephesians 5:21-33, God  
teaches us how to have a Christ-like  
marriage:

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First, as believers in Christ, both should “be subject to one another in the fear of Christ” (v. 21).

Secondly, wives “be subject to your own husbands...” (v. 22).

Thirdly, husbands, “love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her...” (v. 25).

Fourthly, a husband is to “love his own wife even as himself...” (v. 33).

Fifthly, the “wife must see to it that she respects her husband” (v. 33).

What a different kind of marriage God intends for humans! He intends a marriage first to be characterized by the husband and wife surrendering themselves to each other out of awe for Him! Marriage is not to be a place of self-promotion but of partnership.

When husband and wife, as two reasonable people with differing viewpoints and insights, clash in decisions to be made, there should be a mutual humility in both to kneel together before the Creator God, to seek unity between each other and a unified decision under God. When a decision must be made, and both still disagree, there should be a foundational agreement that then, in a crisis, the husband will make a decision, bear the responsibility for it, and the wife should support the decision so that there is not a dangerous stalemate.

Today, to even breathe the words that the wife should be subject to her husband leads to heated debates. But that statement is sandwiched between God's call to be subject to each other, and His call for the husband to sacrificially love his wife. When a husband sacrificially loves his wife, placing her needs above his own, he becomes a much safer man for his wife to follow.

God challenges the man to love his wife like Christ loves His church. He challenges the woman to respect her husband. Timely counsel for 21st century marriages!

## **How to Live It**

### ***Group Discussion***

1. How does Jesus love? See Ephesians 5:25-27.
2. How can we possibly love like Jesus? See Luke 11:11-13 and Galatians 5:22,23.
3. How could this kind of love transform 21st century marriages?



**LIVE**

### ***7-Day Challenge***

#### **Husbands:**

1. Ask God, "How could I love my wife sacrificially?"
2. Ask your wife, "What could I do to love you sacrificially?"
3. Then ask God to give you the love for

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your wife as described in Ephesians 5:21,25-33, and start loving her with all that God gives you to love her!

### **Idea starters on how a man can love his wife sacrificially:**

- Give her a break: wash the dishes, sweep the floor, watch the kids.
- When you are hungry and no meal is ready, surprise her by making her a meal.
- Ask her for a list of what she would love for you to do for her. Do it!
- Encourage her to take some time just for her each week. While she takes this time, surprise her by buying the groceries for the week, washing the car, or fixing something in the house that has bothered her.
- When you feel affectionate and she does not, ask her if you could give her a back rub or massage her feet...with no agenda.
- Ask her where she would like you to take her for a date.
- Be loyal to your wife as the love of your life, second only to your love for God.
- Treat all other women as sisters: nothing more or less.
- Listen to her with your full focus. Put your phone down.

### **Wives:**

1. Ask God, "How could I love my husband through my respect?"
2. Ask your husband, "What could I do to

- love you through my respect?”
3. Then ask God to give you the love and respect for your husband as described in Ephesians 5:21-24,33, and start loving him with all that God gives you to love him!

**Idea starters on how a woman can show her love and respect for her husband:**

- Tell your husband what you most respect about him.
- Focus on expressing what you appreciate about him when talking with him or with others.
- Disagree with your husband in private, not in front of the kids.
- Be loyal to your husband as the love of your life, second only to your love for God.
- Treat other men as your brothers: nothing more or less.
- Join him in a hobby or sport outside your interest that is important to him.
- Recommend him as the right person to do something he is good at doing.
- Keep a picture of him in your purse, and when making new friends, show them this picture.
- Listen to him patiently without interrupting.





*The Family*  
ALTAR

# *The Family Altar*

## CHAPTER THREE

### CONNECT

#### ***With Each Other***

What value from your childhood do you still appreciate? Why?

#### ***With Last Week's 7-Day Challenge***

##### **Husbands:**

1. Ask God, "How could I love my wife sacrificially?"
2. Ask your wife, "What could I do to love you sacrificially?"
3. Then ask God to give you the love for your wife as described in Ephesians 5:21,25-33, and start loving her with all that God gives you to love her!

##### **Idea starters on how a man can love his wife sacrificially:**

- Give her a break: wash the dishes, sweep the floor, watch the kids.
- When you are hungry and no meal is ready, surprise her by making her a meal.
- Ask her for a list of what she would love for you to do for her. Do it!
- Encourage her to take some time just for her each week. While she takes this time, surprise her by buying the groceries for the week, washing the

car, or fixing something in the house that has bothered her.

- When you feel affectionate and she does not, ask her if you could give her a back rub or massage her feet...with no agenda.
- Ask her where she would like you to take her for a date.
- Be loyal to your wife as the love of your life, second only to your love for God.
- Treat all other women as sisters: nothing more or less.
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### **Wives:**

1. Ask God, "How could I love my husband through my respect?"
2. Ask your husband, "What could I do to love you through my respect?"
3. Then ask God to give you the love and respect for your husband as described in Ephesians 5:21-24,33, and start loving him with all that God gives you to love him!

### **Idea starters on how a woman can show her love and respect for her husband:**

- Tell your husband what you most respect about him.
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your life, second only to your love for God.

- Treat other men as your brothers: nothing more or less.
- Join him in a hobby or sport outside your interest that is important to him.
- Recommend him as the right person to do something he is good at doing.
- Keep a picture of him in your purse, and when making new friends, show them this picture.
- Listen to him patiently without interrupting.

## ***With God's Word Today***

What is the most meaningful thing you have ever built or created with your hands? Why?

Discover today what God's Word says about worship in your home.

## ***With God in Prayer***

Pray for each home to be a meaningful place to worship God.

## **DISCOVER**

I remember two main types of calls in my home: "Time to eat!" and "Time to worship!" We were expected to drop what we were doing and to come at both calls. As a child, I came into the living room when I heard the call to worship. I was never confused about where to go. Worship in our home was always in the same place.

Sometimes, my mom read a faith-building story. Other times, my dad read a Bible story. The Word of God was the main word for worship. Then my mom played hymns on the piano, and our whole family crowded around her and sang. Finally, we knelt together and prayed.

I would not trade those daily times of worship in my childhood for silver or gold. There was a strength, a peace, and a quiet that came to my heart from gathering together as a family to seek and praise God. Worship was all about connecting--to each other and with God!

The word “worship” often brings to mind pictures of a church, synagogue, mosque, or temple. We think of corporate worship organized by paid professionals in the community.

The story of Abram in Scripture paints another picture of worship. This man left his friends, city, and country because God called him. As he followed God’s command, he made sure that his home, the camp, would always be a place of worship.

Scripture says, “The Lord appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I will give this land.’ So, he built an altar there to the Lord who had appeared to him. Then he proceeded from there to

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the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord” (*Genesis 12:7,8*).

Abram did three things when he arrived in Bethel:

1. He pitched his tent.
2. He built an altar to the Lord.
3. He called on the name of the Lord.

These three priorities defined the stops along his journey. The worship of the true God was in sync with the establishing of the home. The tent was set up, and then the altar was built. However, it was not enough to have the altar built! Abraham called on the name of the Lord beside that altar. Family, staff, and travelers passing through the camp were powerfully impacted by the Presence of God.

Isaac grew up with this worship, watching his father build many altars to the living God and most likely assisting him. He heard his dad pray beside that altar every day of his life.

Years later, after Isaac had a home of his own, Scripture testifies of Isaac: “So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac’s servants dug a well” (*Genesis 26:25*). Abraham had died

some time before, and yet Isaac carried on the priority of making his own home a place to worship the living God!

## **How to Live It**

### ***Group Discussion***

1. When you think of worshipping God, what place first comes to mind? Why?
2. What place in your home could become a place of worship with minimal distractions?
3. What time of day could become a time to gather the people in your home to worship God?

## **Family Ideas for Worshipping God**

### **Together:**

1. Keep the time short. The younger the child, the shorter it should be. Three to five minutes that connect a child with God is better than 15-20 minutes that leaves a child bored and unengaged. The length of worship can grow with the age of the child.
2. Focus your family time together on God. Do not use the time to correct family members, but rather to celebrate who God is and what He longs to do in and through your family!
3. Make the time together interactive rather than only reading or lecturing.
4. Consider the following ways to make the worship of God interactive:
  - Share what God did during the day, and thank Him.
  - Praise God for what you love about Him.

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- If your family likes to sing or play instruments, praise God through song.
- Ask God to send the Holy Spirit to bless what you read in the Bible.
- Create a simple, fun activity that would connect the minds and hearts of the family members with the theme you will explore in the Bible. For example:

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5,6

**Theme:** Trust

**Connect Activity:** Trust Fall: Have a family member stand with arms at their side. Place two family members behind them with arms out ready to catch them. Invite the person to fall backwards without bending their knees.

**Discussion:** Discuss what it means to trust each other and what it means to trust God.

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:105

**Theme:** God's Word

**Connect Activity:** Follow the Light: Appoint one person to hold a flashlight. Line up behind that person. Turn out all the lights in the house. Turn on the flashlight and follow the leader who holds the light.

**Discussion:** Discuss how God's Word is like a light in the darkness.

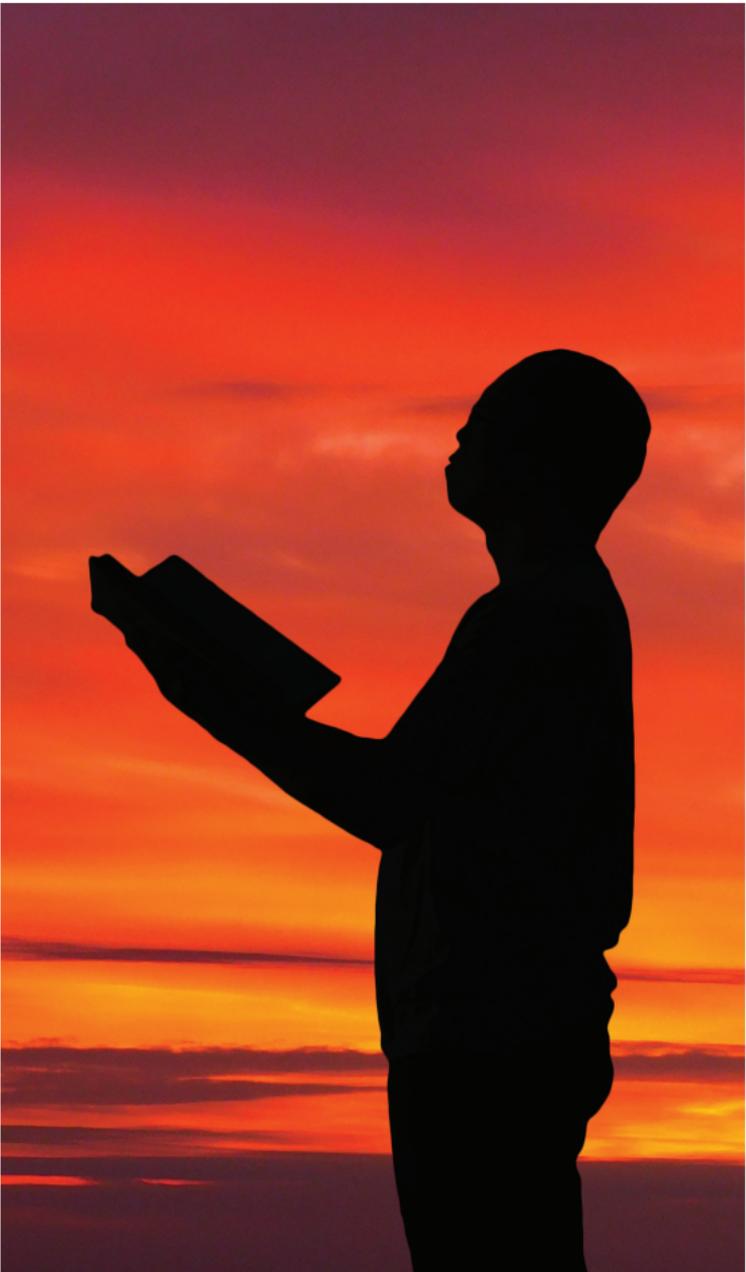
*For more resources, please go to  
[www.indiscipleship.org](http://www.indiscipleship.org)*

### ***7-Day Challenge***

Have you built your altar to the living God? If not, make your home a place to worship God with your family.

1. Choose the best spot in your home to worship God together.
2. Clear that spot of unnecessary distractions.
3. Choose a time of the day to worship God together.
4. Make the worship time interesting to all ages in the family.





*The Deuteronomy*  
**MODEL**  
*Part 1*

# *The Deuteronomy Model, Part 1*

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONNECT

#### ***With Each Other***

Who did you trust the most when you were a child? Why?

#### ***With Last Week's 7-Day Challenge***

Have you built your altar to the living God? If not, make your home a place to worship God with your family.

1. Choose the best spot in your home to worship God together.
2. Clear that spot of unnecessary distractions.
3. Choose a time of the day to worship God together.
4. Make the worship time interesting to all ages in the family.

#### ***With God's Word Today***

What is your favorite way to learn something new? Why?

Discover today what God's Word says about you and the Deuteronomy Model.

#### ***With God in Prayer***

Pray to discover God's way of helping the new generations to develop their

personal faith in God.

## DISCOVER

As a child, I watched this man's every move: how he carefully ate everything he placed on his plate with nothing wasted, how he treated his wife with kindness and respect, how he washed his car, studied his options when making a purchase, listened to those who did not think like him, and talked with those and cared for those who did not share his values.

I watched how this man chose a tree in the forest for firewood, calculated the path he intended the tree to take when it fell, cut a notch in the side with his chainsaw, and started cutting on the opposite side. He cut until the tree began to slightly move and then stopped the chainsaw and jumped back out of the way. I listened with him for that "crack" that splintered the silence and joined in as he cried out triumphantly, "Timber!" as the tree came crashing down.

I tried to walk like this man walked. When I realized that this man had a secret strength, I wanted what he had found. Day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year, I have watched this man open the Word of God to study it to know, love, and live for God.

# C O M E H O M E

This man is my father and my dad. What he has taught me, he has lived.

God has a model for spiritually educating our children. His plan is well thought out, flawless, and eternal. God's strategy for growing our children in the faith, when implemented, influences the generations to come!

Over the years, we have drifted far away from the plans God has for mentoring the young. We have created systems of spiritually educating the young that look nothing like God's original plan. And, we have paid the price.

When it comes to transmitting the faith of God to our children, we have often indoctrinated our children, flooded them with religious knowledge, and expected them to memorize, but not to think, apply, and do. The results have been catastrophic.

Our children have often grown up without a personal, life-changing experience with God. They may have a religious form, but may lack the power of the Christ who lives within them (see Colossians 1:27). What have we missed?

## **God's Model Is a Command**

In Deuteronomy 6:1-3, we learn that God's plan for keeping our children in the faith, is a divine command. God's model is not

a suggestion or a recommendation. It is His call for obedience.

“Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it, so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the Lord your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey” (*Deuteronomy 6:1-3*).

### **God's Model Has Promised Results**

Three generations of walking with God: “that you, your son, and your grandson might fear the Lord your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments” (v. 2)

1. Longer life: “that your days may be prolonged” (v. 2)
2. God-given success: “that it may be well with you” (v. 3)
3. A growing family: “that you may multiply greatly” (v. 3)

### **God's Model: Deuteronomy 6:4-9**

“Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord

# C O M E H O M E

your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates” (*Deuteronomy 6:4-9*).

In these six verses, the Lord God provides a strategy to keep us, our children, and their children walking with God. This divine plan is simple, yet comprehensive. It strikes at the very root of why we often see our children lose their faith--we have bypassed the home as the discipling center for our children. We have replaced parents as their children’s primary disciple-makers with programs.

## **God’s Model, Part 1: Deuteronomy 6:4-6**

In part 1 of the Deuteronomy Model, verses 4-6 focus on each individual’s personal revival with God.

### 1. “Hear, O Israel!” (v. 4).

God’s model addresses Israel as a whole--young and old. God’s people of all ages must own their responsibility to support parents in discipling their children. Children, youth, young adults,

middle aged, retired--all are included in God's plan.

2. "The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!"  
(v. 4).

God's model is created and defended by Himself--the living God! He is OUR God. He longs for us to know Him personally, just as He knows us.

3. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart" (v. 5,6).

God's model calls for all generations to have a revival with the living God before addressing the education of the young. This revival with God is to involve the entire person! This experience with God is to be a complete turning back to God with everything the person is and with all he or she has.

## **How to Live It**

### ***Group Discussion***

How can we develop a love for God beyond any other love?

What difference would it make in our life to have God as our greatest Love?

**LIVE****7-Day Challenge**

Take steps to have a daily, personal revival with God. Practice these four steps this week according to the chart below (day 1 begins this evening before you go to bed; by day 5, you should be doing all four steps every day):

**Days:** 1-7

**Bible Reading:** Isaiah 50:4

**Challenge:** Make a covenant with God each night before you sleep: Ask God to wake you up whenever He wants so that you can have unrushed time alone with Him in His Word and in prayer. Commit to God that you will get up and meet with Him when He awakens you.

**Days:** 3-7

**Bible Reading:** Matthew 28:18; Philippians 2:5-11

**Challenge:** Before you do anything else, surrender to Jesus as Lord FIRST thing in the morning with:

1. ALL you ARE as a person
2. ALL you HAVE and
3. Your WHOLE ATTITUDE

**Days:** 4-7

**Bible Reading:** John 5:39; Matthew 7:24

**Challenge:** Search the written Word of God to discover a fresh picture of Jesus. Ask God to help you practice what you read the rest of that day!

**Days:** 5-7

**Bible Reading:**

1. Luke 3:17,18
2. John 7:37-39, John 14:6
3. Acts 2:38,39
4. Acts 5:32
5. Luke 11:11-13

**Challenge:**

1. Receive a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. The daily baptism of the Holy Spirit transforms your character and gives you power to be a living witness for Christ. See Galatians 5:22,23; Acts 1:8.
2. Come to Jesus with your thirst. Drink up who Jesus is as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Believe in Jesus.
3. Repent. Be baptized with water as Jesus was. If you have already been baptized like Jesus was, you may simply recommit your life to Jesus as your Savior.
4. Obey God.
5. Ask God for the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

*For more resources, please go to  
[www.indiscipleship.org](http://www.indiscipleship.org)*





*The Deuteronomy*  
**MODEL**  
*Part 2*

# *The Deuteronomy Model, Part 2*

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONNECT

#### ***With Each Other***

Share a time when someone in your family or extended family invested their time to teach you a positive lesson.

#### ***With Last Week's 7-Day Challenge***

**Days:** 1-7

**Bible Reading:** Isaiah 50:4

**Challenge:** Make a covenant with God each night before you sleep: Ask God to wake you up whenever He wants so that you can have unrushed time alone with Him in His Word and in prayer. Commit to God that you will get up and meet with Him when He awakens you.

**Days:** 3-7

**Bible Reading:** Matthew 28:18; Philippians 2:5-11

**Challenge:** Before you do anything else, surrender to Jesus as Lord FIRST thing in the morning with:

1. ALL you ARE as a person
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**Days:** 4-7

**Bible Reading:** John 5:39; Matthew 7:24

**Challenge:** Search the written Word of God to discover a fresh picture of Jesus. Ask God to help you practice what you read the rest of that day!

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1. Luke 3:17,18
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**Challenge:**

1. Receive a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. The daily baptism of the Holy Spirit transforms your character and gives you power to be a living witness for Christ. See Galatians 5:22,23; Acts 1:8.
2. Come to Jesus with your thirst. Drink up who Jesus is as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Believe in Jesus.
3. Repent. Be baptized with water as Jesus was. If you have already been baptized like Jesus was, you may simply recommit your life to Jesus as your Savior.
4. Obey God.
5. Ask God for the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

*For more resources please go to  
[www.indiscipleship.org](http://www.indiscipleship.org).*

***With God's Word today***

Who was your favorite teacher growing up? Why?

Discover today what God's Word says about investing in your children.

***With God in Prayer***

Pray that God will call each one to be a teacher of the new generations.

**DISCOVER**

The rain beat like drumsticks on our roof. I must have been around twelve years old and my little sister Lauree, about seven. We both looked out the window as it rained and rained and rained. It was not stopping.

Mom came by and cheerfully said, "Let's go out in the rain!"

"Should we get our umbrellas?" we asked her curiously.

"No. We won't need them."

"Where are we going?" we quizzed her.

She looked at us and smiled, "We are going to walk in the rain." She stated this fact as if it was the most normal thing for people to do every day when it rains.

So we stepped outside in our jeans and

shirts and tennis shoes and in a couple seconds we were soaked. Mom chuckled. We laughed softly as we followed her down our rough driveway through the woods and out onto Boiling Springs Road. We walked along the road until Mom spied a huge tree that had fallen over.

“Let’s climb up on that tree and sing in the rain.” Mom suggested. Lauree and I were excited! All three of us climbed up the tree and sat down with our legs dangling above the ground.

Mom said, “Let’s sing!” We sang about Jesus and His love for us. As the rain came down in torrents, we sang at the top of our lungs. As the cars went by below us, we laughed and waved as people stared at us in disbelief. We imagined that they were thinking: “What kind of mother would be singing with her children up on a fallen tree in the rain?”

Singing with mom in the rain was a grand and delightful life lesson for us as children. We learned that it is more than okay to get soaked in the rain, that rain was something to love, not hate. We learned that we could sing praises to Jesus even when the rain poured out on us like a river. What an awesome mother we have!

In the last lesson, we learned that God calls us in the Deuteronomy model to

personally live our faith in Him. This requires a daily, personal revival with God through His Word and prayer. If we are not living our faith in God personally, there is no power in our words to inspire our children to live their faith in God.

### **God's Model, Part 2: Deuteronomy 6:7-9**

“You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates” (*Deuteronomy 6:7-9*).

1. “You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up” (*Deuteronomy 6:7*).

God's model calls parents to teach His Word to their own children in their own home. This is a model we have largely forgotten. We have fashioned another way to teach our children values.

Today, we often look to the school system to teach our children lasting principles. If we have faith, we may turn to the programs of the church, mosque, or synagogue to pass on life principles to our sons and daughters. We may gladly pay extra to hire someone to personally

teach our offspring how to play a violin, paint, or excel at a sport, yet never seem to have time to teach them something of eternal value ourselves!

Notice the times of day mentioned in God's strategy to teach the children:

- a. "When you sit in your house" When may a family sit together?
  - Meal time
  - Commuting
  - Worship
  - Playing a game
  - Watching something on a screen
  
- b. "When you walk by the way"
  - Nature hike
  - Exercise
  - Walking from your car, taxi, bus, or subway to your appointment
  
- c. "When you lie down"
  - Going to sleep at night
  - The end of the day is a great time to ask your children about their day: "What did you love most about today? What was the most difficult part of your day? How can I pray for you?"
  
- d. "When you rise up"
  - Getting up from sleep in the morning
  - The beginning of the day provides you with the opportunity to pray with your children, to tell them you love them and to give them a hug.

2. “You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead” (*Deuteronomy 6:8*).

God’s model calls all ages to keep His Word in both their mind and in their actions. God’s Word, as it is read, studied, prayed through, memorized, sung, and applied, will guide both thoughts and actions.

**Ideas:**

Find Bible passages that have been put to song. Sing along!

Take favorite Bible texts and create your own tune to sing with the text or sing God’s Word to a known tune.

List questions the children have about God and the Bible. List key words that may help you find Bible texts that would address the questions. Look up your key words in a Bible concordance and read any Bible texts listed under your key word. List any discoveries you make together.

Take a Bible promise, and pray the promise back to God. For example: Look up James 1:5: “But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”

To pray this promise back to God, you may say something like:

“God, thank You for promising us that You will give us wisdom when we ask

You for it. We are asking You for wisdom right now, so we know what we should do about (State the issue. For example: Sarah's missing homework, Tom making new friends, Mom's job etc.). Thank You for hearing and answering our prayer for wisdom. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Memorize a Bible promise together. Ask the children to find a text in the Bible they want the family to memorize. Recite it together once a day for a week. Talk together about what it means to each one.

Read a short Bible teaching together. Give each one a blank sheet of paper with a pen or colored pencils or crayons. Invite each one to draw a picture of what the Bible passage means to them and write a short caption on how they plan to practice it. Hang up the pictures in the house.

Think of someone who needs some encouragement. Pray together, and ask God to remind you of a Bible promise that would encourage this particular person. Call the person on the phone. Read the promise to him or her, and then pray that God will fulfill that promise.

3. "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates" (*Deuteronomy 6:9*). God's model is to be the testimony to all who enter your

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home or pass by your house on the street. Every home is a testimony. Some homes testify to the power of money or position. Some homes testify to the pain of brokenness.

What is the testimony of your home?

A home can be elegant or simple and have the Presence of God. The size of the house does not dictate the influence of the home. Neither wealth nor poverty limit the Presence of God when the people are surrendered to Him. God is present in grand rooms as well as in cramped quarters.

The loving way you speak to each other in your home is a signpost of God's Presence. The simple acts of service done with kindness point the guest to a far greater Presence. It is not the absence of hardship or loss in a home that makes it a place of grace and peace, but rather the love, faith, and forgiveness lived and expressed, even in the worst of times.

## **How to Live It**

### ***Group Discussion***

1. What times of the day and during what activities do you find your children most open to discovering more about God?
2. How can you best help your children to discover and grow with God?

## LIVE

### **7-Day Challenge**

Teach God's Word to your own children. Here is how to teach your children how to study the Bible for themselves with maximum benefit:

1. Before you open your Bible, pray for God to send you the Holy Spirit to guide you to the Truth. See John 16:13. Who is the Truth? See John 14:6.
2. Study a Bible passage with the focus on Jesus. Search the passage for anything that would help you know more about Jesus and His character, His ways, His life, and His sacrifice. See John 5:39.
3. Immediately practice the lessons you have read in your own life throughout that day. See Matthew 7:24.
4. Share what you have learned with someone each day! Be a light to others. See Matthew 5:14-16.
5. Every day, ask each family member what they have learned about Jesus in His Word. Ask, "Who did you share this good news with today?"





*The River*  
STONES

# *The River Stones*

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONNECT

#### ***With Each Other***

What is one of your favorite memories from when you were a child?

#### ***With Last Week's 7-day Challenge***

Teach God's Word to your own children. Here is how to teach your children how to study the Bible for themselves with maximum benefit:

1. Before you open your Bible, pray for God to send you the Holy Spirit to guide you to the Truth. See John 16:13. Who is the Truth? See John 14:6.
2. Study a Bible passage with the focus on Jesus. Search the passage for anything that would help you know more about Jesus and His character, His ways, His life, and His sacrifice. See John 5:39.
3. Immediately practice the lessons you have read in your own life throughout that day. See Matthew 7:24.
4. Share what you have learned with someone each day! Be a light to others. See Matthew 5:14-16.

5. Every day, ask each family member what they have learned about Jesus in His Word. Ask, “Who did you share this good news with today?”

***With God’s Word Today***

Act out something you enjoy collecting. See who can guess what you like to collect. Share why you like to collect this item.

Discover what God’s Word says about remembering Him.

***With God in Prayer***

Pray that each one will remember what God is doing for them right now.



**DISCOVER**

It’s easy to forget. What is seen as life-changing one moment can be swept aside in the next second by an avalanche of information, choices, and opportunities. We quickly forget what warmed our hearts.

God intervenes in our lives in countless ways. Most of the time, we do not even notice. Even while conscious of His Providence, we may dismiss what He just did for us when faced with some new crisis that seems out of our range to handle.

## C O M E H O M E

Litisha\* was super excited to go to Taiwan to teach English and Bible class. She was in a desperate situation. It was late Friday. Her flight was scheduled to depart on Tuesday from Chattanooga, Tennessee, but her visa that had been promised to arrive on Friday had not come. When calling UPS, Litisha was told her package had been mistakenly sent to Louisville, Kentucky. On Monday, the package turned up in Jackson, Mississippi. Her family joined her in praying for God to work a miracle.

On Tuesday, Litisha's family drove her and her luggage to the Chattanooga airport without a visa. She knew she could not fly without the visa and her flight was one hour away! It looked hopeless.

God loves to do the impossible at the most improbable times! At the last possible moment, in through the front door of the airport strode a man in a UPS uniform carrying a package. He was the UPS Manager from Jackson, Mississippi. He personally flew with Litisha's package and hand-delivered it to ensure that she would make her flight! Before she ran to her gate, he gave her a UPS keychain and pin.

Many years have passed, and Litisha still has that keychain and pin. It bears testimony to a time years ago when a young lady saw an act of God.

*\* Not her real name.*

Scripture describes the time when Israel assembled by the border of the promised land of Canaan. For forty years, they had looked forward to going home. They were so close and yet so far from their goal.

Between them and Canaan was the river Jordan. This river would have been a nuisance to cross any time of the year, but at the moment that Israel camped beside it, it was flooding. Transporting thousands of men, women, children, and livestock across the churning current must have looked completely impossible. But God had a way!

Now the Lord said to Joshua, “This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you. You shall, moreover, command the priests who are carrying the ark of the covenant, saying, ‘When you come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.’”

Then Joshua said to the sons of Israel, “Come here, and hear the words of the Lord your God.” Joshua said, “By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will assuredly dispossess from before you the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perizzite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, and the Jebusite. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the

## C O M E H O M E

Lord of all the earth is crossing over ahead of you into the Jordan. Now then, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man for each tribe. It shall come about when the soles of the feet of the priests who carry the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan will be cut off, and the waters which are flowing down from above will stand in one heap” (*Joshua 3:7-13*).

What kind of strategy was this? God’s plan confronted every sense of logic and every thought of safety. God simply commanded the priests to go and step into the rushing river waters while holding that heavy ark--trusting that He would immediately part the waters and provide a dry path to cross. Who would want to do that?

The priests took God at His word. They knew that a promise from God was a promise kept. They acted on God’s Word. They risked their reputations and their lives to act on the promised Word of God.

“So when the people set out from their tents to cross the Jordan with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant before the people, and when those who carried the ark came into the Jordan, and the feet of the priests carrying the ark were dipped in the edge of the water (for the

Jordan overflows all its banks all the days of harvest), the waters which were flowing down from above stood and rose up in one heap, a great distance away at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan; and those which were flowing down toward the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. So the people crossed opposite Jericho. And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan while all Israel crossed on dry ground, until all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan” (*Joshua 3:14-17*).

Wow! An amazing act of God! What God said He would do, He did. The priests acted on their faith in the Word of God, and God honored their faith.

It could have been the end of the story, but it wasn't. God wanted to provide His people, specifically future children, a way to never forget what He had done for them. He gave them a memorial, a visual reminder of the miracle--the river stones.

“Now when all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the Lord spoke to Joshua, saying, “Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe, and command them, saying, ‘Take up for yourselves twelve stones from here out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the

## C O M E H O M E

priests' feet are standing firm, and carry them over with you and lay them down in the lodging place where you will lodge tonight” (*Joshua 4:1-3*).

Scripture states that Israel obeyed God's command about the stones. One man from each of the twelve tribes stepped forward. Each man chose one stone from the very place where the priests stood in the middle of the river. They carried these twelve stones to the eastern side of the river.

When all of Israel had crossed over the Jordan and the twelve men had carried the stones across, God said to Joshua, “Command the priests who carry the ark of the testimony that they come up from the Jordan” (*Joshua 4:16*).

What happened next was the other half of the miracle from God! The moment the priests' feet stepped up the river bank, the Jordan river rushed back to flood the river bed and overflow its banks as before. All Israel must have stood along the river banks watching with awe!

Why did God command Israel to save some of the stones from the middle of the river? Joshua declared, “When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What are these stones?’ Then you shall inform your children, saying, ‘Israel crossed this Jordan on dry ground.’”

For the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed...that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty, so that you may fear the Lord your God forever” (*Joshua 4:21-24*).

For generations to come, the stones were to be a reminder of what the living God had done to part the flooded Jordan for His people! The stones were to be a teaching tool, especially for fathers to use to teach their children that God is mighty! The story of the river stones was to inspire each generation to be in awe of God and to serve Him forever!

## **How to Live It**

### ***Group Discussion***

1. What do you have in your house that reminds you of when God blessed you in some way? What is the story?
2. What positive results could happen if you would display small reminders of God’s faithfulness throughout your home and talk often about what God has done for you?



**LIVE**

### ***7-Day Challenge***

Put up one memory marker this week. Begin the practice of collecting a small stone or some other memory marker from the spot where God has provided

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and intervened for you. Place these memory markers in a prominent place in your home. Gather your family often to view these “river stones” and to recount the stories of what God has done for you!



*Tell Your*  
**STORY**

# *Tell Your Story*

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONNECT

#### ***With Each Other***

What's your favorite room in your home? Why?

#### ***With Last Week's 7-day Challenge***

Put up one memory marker this week. Begin the practice of collecting a small stone or some other memory marker from the spot where God has provided and intervened for you. Place these memory markers in a prominent place in your home. Gather your family often to view these "river stones" and to recount the stories of what God has done for you!

#### ***With God's Word Today***

Who was your favorite storyteller when you were a child? You have up to 30 seconds to tell what made this person a great storyteller. God is the Storyteller of all time. He tells His stories through you! Discover how God's Word calls you to become a storyteller.

#### ***With God in Prayer***

Pray that God will bless each one to become a storyteller for Him.

## DISCOVER

“Tell me a story, Grandma!” I yelled, as Grandma Mac came through our door for a visit. There were hugs and kisses, and I helped Grandma get her teeny-tiny suitcase into our guest room. Then again, I pleaded, “Grandma, tell me a story.” She went out to the living room, sat down on the sofa, and patted the place beside her for me to sit. I leapt onto the spot beside her and away she went with a story to remember! Her stories were full of lions and tigers, God-followers, and angels.

When Grandma told stories, I could “see” the tiger crouching behind the rock with its tail twitching. I could “hear” the drumbeats in Africa for the tribal dance. I could “taste” the mangos and papaya. I loved the action in her stories and the unmistakable leading and power of God.

As I grew up, Grandma increasingly told me stories of her own life. She did not stop with telling stories of answered prayer. She told stories of when she wondered where God was...and how she believed in Him anyway. She told stories of forgiveness as well as stories of bitterness...and how God healed her heart.

Grandma taught me much through her stories of faith. They put “skin” on

## C O M E H O M E

principles from the Word of God; they were faith deposits in my small, yet growing, spiritual bank account.

We often hide our personal stories of what the living God has done in our life! We say we are not storytellers, yet we tell stories of that great, big fish we caught. We tell stories of what our favorite sports team just accomplished. We tell stories of terrible traffic, exciting new jobs, or meeting fascinating people. We tell all kinds of stories, except stories about what God has done for us.

Psalm 78:1-4 calls us back to being storytellers of the power of God in our lives. God's Word tells us not to neglect passing our stories of faith on "to the next generation." It's time!

"Listen, O my people, to my instruction;  
Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable;

I will utter dark sayings of old,

Which we have heard and known,

And our fathers have told us.

We will not conceal them from their children,

But tell to the generation to come the praises of the Lord,

And His strength and His wondrous works that He has done."

Psalm 78:5-8 tells us what will happen when we share our stories of faith with the new generations.

“For He established a testimony in Jacob  
And appointed a law in Israel,  
Which He commanded our fathers  
That they should teach them to their  
children,  
That the generation to come might know,  
even the children yet to be born,  
That they may arise and tell them to their  
children,  
That they should put their confidence in  
God  
And not forget the works of God,  
But keep His commandments,  
And not be like their fathers,  
A stubborn and rebellious generation,  
A generation that did not prepare its heart  
And whose spirit was not faithful to God.”

What does God say will be the results of telling our faith stories to our children?

1. They will in turn tell these stories to their children.
2. They will put their confidence in God.
3. They will not forget His works.
4. They will keep His commandments.

## **How to Live It**

### ***Group Discussion***

1. Read Psalm 78:6-8. Which promised result of telling stories of God's faithfulness to your children is most special to you. Why?

2. Have everyone partner in twos.  
Give everyone two minutes each to share a story when God revealed His faithfulness to them.

**LIVE*****7-Day Challenge***

Tell the following types of personal stories to your children:

1. Times when God showed you His grace when you were in the wrong.
2. Times when God helped you make the right choice.
3. Times when God did not answer your prayer as you wanted.
4. Times when God provided for you in impossible situations.
5. Times when God revealed something new about His love.
6. Times when God showed you His kindness from unexpected people.
7. Times when God gave you power to be free from something that seemed like a chain.



*The Elijah*  
MESSAGE

# *The Elijah Message*

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONNECT

#### ***With Each Other***

Give one word to describe something that is very important to you.

#### ***With Last Week's 7-Day Challenge***

Tell the following types of personal stories to your children:

1. Times when God showed you His grace when you were in the wrong.
2. Times when God helped you make the right choice.
3. Times when God did not answer your prayer as you wanted.
4. Times when God provided for you in impossible situations.
5. Times when God revealed something new about His love.
6. Times when God showed you His kindness from unexpected people.
7. Times when God gave you power to be free from something that seemed like a chain.

#### ***With God's Word Today***

If you could share up to ten words with the leaders of the world right now, what would they be? Discover how God's Word provides the Elijah message.

### ***With God in Prayer***

Pray that we can speak with the urgency of God.

## **DISCOVER**

I remember calling a university campus to a revival with Jesus. Everyone was busy. No one had time for a revival. But God had time!

Early each morning, I went out under the stars and cried out to God to bring revival--starting with me. I then turned and faced the campus with arms lifted up to the sky and pleaded with God to call His people to Him.

God heard. Every day, He called me to surrender to Him and repent. Every day, He called His people to do the same. As the Holy Spirit was poured out on that campus, students and faculty started reprioritizing their walk with God. They searched the Scriptures to know Jesus more. They prayed for a new heart for God and for each other.

God started turning the hearts of children to their parents and the hearts of parents to their children. Students who held bitterness against their fathers or mothers were empowered by the Holy Spirit to forgive the unforgivable. People who had held grudges against each other

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for years found healing and forgiveness.

Young and old were freed from addictions, fears, and cherished sins. They found the peace of walking with God in His freedom. They found the joy of sharing this good news with their friends and family through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Torry\* clenched his massive fists on top of the café table and gritted his teeth. “My father beat me every day of his life,” he told me. “As I grew up, he would beat me with anything he could grab at the moment. Often, he hit me until I fell to the ground. I hate my father, and I am a slave to that hate!”

“Do you want to be free?” I asked.

Torry leaned over his plate of food and whispered hoarsely, “Every day of my life I have waited to be freed! My hate hurts everybody else in my life. It holds me back with God!”

“Jesus offers you a gift,” I quietly responded.

“Come over to where I work and tell me about it,” Torry said.

That day, Torry had heart surgery! No, not surgery at the local hospital, but

\* *Not his real name*

surgery from Jesus. Torry got down on his knees and asked Jesus to take out his hate and bitterness and to give him a new heart. The Holy Spirit gave him the power to surrender all his hurt to the Healer. Jesus called him, and Torry opened up his heart to the Heart Surgeon.

As we prayed, tears ran down Torry's cheeks. He opened his tight fists and quietly lifted his hands up to God. Time seemed to stand still as God did His work. Moments later, Torry slowly stood up. There was a new light in his eyes. "Finally, I am free!" he breathed.

What Jesus did for Torry He desires to do for all of us! The Word of God says, "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you" (*Ezekiel 36:26,27*).

God calls His people not only to live but also to share the message of revival.

The Old Testament tells of a prophet named Elijah whom God sent to call Israel back to His heart. At that time, the worship of Baal, a Canaanite god, was supported and promoted from the top down in Israel, and the majority of the people of Israel had traded in the living God for Baal. The countryside was strewn with altars to Baal.

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Elijah gathered his countrymen to the top of Mount Carmel. Eyeing the crowd, he boldly challenged the entire throng: “How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him” (*1 Kings 18:21*). No one out of the entire crowd said a word.

Later that same day, Elijah gathered the crowd around him and the broken-down altar to the living God. Quietly, he rebuilt the altar from the scattered stones. The altar completed, he set the wood and the sacrifice in place.

Elijah risked everything to cry out to the God whom the crowd no longer worshipped. He prayed, “O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and I have done all these things at Your word. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that You, Lord, are God, and that You have turned their heart back again” (*1 Kings 18:36,37*).

The second Elijah finished his prayer, God sent fire to consume the sacrifice and the altar itself. The people were in awe. They shouted, “The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God!” (*1 Kings 18:39*).

The work of Elijah was repeated centuries later in the mission of John, son of Zacharias. Scripture says of John, “It is he

who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (*Luke 1:17*).

In 1999, on a cold, winter night in Michigan, I heard Elijah’s call to turn my heart back to our children. I did not hear this call through the preaching of a sermon or from a chapter in a book. I heard Elijah’s call through the cries of our children.

I was gathering my papers and briefcase so that I could run out the door to an important meeting to plan the building of a larger church. I was in a rush. Jason and Julie were 6 and 3 years old. They heard me getting ready to leave. They ran up to me questioning, “Where are you going, Daddy?”

“I am going to a meeting,” I replied factually.

“Daddy, stay home tonight!” They pleaded. “You are always gone! Daddy, you never play with us anymore!”

I leaned over to give our son and daughter quick hugs and kisses. Their little arms wrapped around me tightly. When I tried to stand up, they would not let me go! They clung to me with desperation. They were trying to keep their over-committed

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daddy home.

I had to gently pry their arms off my neck so I could go. They started crying. “Daddy, just tonight! Please stay home!”

I backed out of the house and closed the door. As I walked out into the snow, the picture of our children crying and reaching out to me lingered heavily on my heart. As I trudged through the snow, God spoke to my heart. He called me by name. I stopped in my tracks. On that night, as the snow silently fell around me, God called me back to our children. He had first spoken through the cries and the love of our children: “Daddy, stay home!”

That was a very difficult call for me. I was out often seven nights a week, helping others while neglecting our own children. It was a painful call, yet a call of mercy that led to healing between me, Jason, and Julie.

From that day forward, I began to say no to many requests, so I could say yes to my family. It was not easy! God helped me to begin to safeguard time with each child just as April and I had prioritized our time together.

At first, our kids were not interested in spending time with me. I had said no to their requests to play with them too many times. Often, I felt like a failure. But the call

of Elijah comes with the healing power of the Lord. The Lord helped our children to forgive me. He literally turned my heart to them and their little hearts to me! Praise God!

John, with the same Holy Spirit power of Elijah, prepared the people for the coming of the Messiah. John, like Elijah, called for revival. He preached, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (*Matthew 3:2*).

Elijah called the hearts of the fathers back to their children. John did the same. Today, we are commissioned to do likewise.

John prepared the people of the first century to receive Jesus as the Messiah. Today, we are called to prepare people to receive Jesus as the King of kings who will come in the clouds!

The healing of the family is a pivotal part of revival. Revival must be the daily heartbeat of our homes. As our families experience a daily revival with Jesus through His written Word and prayer, the Spirit of God prepares us to meet Jesus soon!

Now is the time to live the message of Elijah for these last days!

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## 1. Return to God.

a. “‘Yet even now,’ declares the LORD, ‘Return to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, weeping and mourning; and rend your heart and not your garments.’ Now return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness and relenting of evil” (*Joel 2:12,13*).

b. Jesus’ words to the church of Ephesus challenge us today: “But I have this against you, that you have left your first love” (*Revelation 2:4*). Make Jesus Christ your first Love!

## 2. Prepare to meet Jesus when He comes.

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (*1 Thessalonians 4:16-18*).

a. Read John 14:1-3 and Philipians 2:5-11. Believe in Jesus as your Savior and Lord. Surrender to Jesus as Lord.

b. Read Revelation 3:20.

Invite Jesus to come into your heart to LIVE there! Focus on Him.

- c. Read Hebrews 10:25.  
Invest your life weekly in fellowship with other God-believers.
  - d. Read Matthew 24:42.  
Be on the alert! Be vigilant!
  - e. Read Ephesians 4:32.  
Forgive anyone who has wronged you.
  - f. Read Romans 13:8.  
Get out of debt, except your debt to love others!
  - g. Read Matthew 24:14 and 28:18-20.  
Go tell others about the good news of Jesus. Go make disciples for Him. Risk to prepare young and old to meet Jesus!
3. Turn your heart back to your parents, children, and family.
- a. Read Ezekiel 36:26,27.  
Ask God to give you heart surgery to remove any hard places in your heart towards any family member and to give you His Spirit towards them.
  - b. Read Ephesians 4:29-32.
    - Only say what builds them up.
    - Put away all bitterness towards them.
    - Practice kindness.
    - Forgive as Jesus forgives you.

## How to Live It

### ***Group Discussion***

1. What part of Elijah's message is most timely for you? Your family? Your community? Your nation?
2. What is God calling you to do with this message?



**LIVE**

### ***7-Day Challenge***

Ask God every morning this week to:

1. Help you return to the Lord fully-- holding nothing back.
2. Help you to prepare to meet Jesus when He comes.
3. Give you His grace to turn your heart back to your parents, children, and family.
4. Share this Elijah message with someone!



*Church at*  
**HOME**

# Church at Home

## CHAPTER NINE

### CONNECT

#### ***With Each Other***

What is a favorite pet you have had?

#### ***With Last Week's 7-Day*** Challenge

Ask God every morning this week to:

1. Help you return to the Lord fully--  
holding nothing back.
2. Help you to prepare to meet Jesus  
when He comes.
3. Give you His grace to turn your heart  
back to your parents, children, and family.
4. Share this Elijah message with  
someone!

#### ***With God's Word Today***

In whose house did you feel the most at home? Why?

Discover what God's Word says about church at home.

#### ***With God in Prayer***

Pray that we can value our home as a place of worship.

### DISCOVER

Our family of five got down on our

knees in our little living room and prayed for God to bring the neighbors and community friends we had invited to our home. We were ready. We had prayed and prepared music, an intergenerational message from God's Word as well as a simple lunch to share. We stared at the front door...and waited. "Would anyone come?" we wondered.

Then we heard footsteps coming up to our home. Our children were excited. We listened as the footsteps came up to our porch, and when there was a knock at the door, we all jumped up to see who was there!

In the next few minutes, our living room filled up with the neighbors down the street, the neighbor next door, and new friends in the community. We laughed together as we shared about the week, sang together, discovered God's Word together, and prayed. Children, teens, and adults all took part, sharing and leading out.

Afterwards, we gathered around our table for lunch. We pulled up our good chairs, our not-so-good chairs, and finally anything that looked like someone could sit on it. We blessed the food and ate together as a family. It was our first day to have church at home with our neighbors. Over the months that followed, our neighbors became a family

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of faith. Our family has happy memories of those unforgettable months when we had church at home.

I have enjoyed visiting church buildings around the globe: cathedrals with spires towering above the street, which cause you to whisper when you enter; country chapels with windows open so you can hear the songbirds, feel the breeze, and soak up the sunshine; urban sanctuaries that are an easy step off the frenzied sidewalks, providing a quiet place to pray; and simple, shelters with dirt floors, hard, wooden, backless benches, no walls, and singing that soars out across the maize fields.

However, church is first of all people, not buildings--people called out to worship God, fellowship together, hear the written Word preached, grow as disciples, and be sent out to serve the community and make disciples for Christ. Over the centuries, we have increasingly believed that the church meets in buildings dedicated to a religious purpose.

The first church was made up of one couple, Adam and Eve, and God. They met in their home, the garden of Eden. There were no pews, aisles, stain-glassed windows, platforms or pulpits. The first church was a couple meeting with the Creator God surrounded by the green of towering trees, the sweet scent of

flowers, and the sounds of countless animals and birds chattering in a thousand tongues.

The first church met in a home. Could it be that the church will return to the simplicity of the home as the central place to worship God before Jesus comes?

After Jesus died on the cross, was resurrected from the dead, and returned home to Heaven, the first-century church gathered in an upper room to pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as promised by the Savior. After ten days of praying together, “suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit” (*Acts 2:2,3*).

*Acts 2:46* reveals that as the early church began to form in the first century, the early believers met in both the temple and in their homes. “Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart.”

After Peter and John healed the cripple at the temple (*Acts 3*) and the priests

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jailed them for healing the cripple in the name of Jesus Christ, the church appears to have increasingly met in the homes of the believers. Scripture testifies, “And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ” (Acts 5:42).

In fact, when the deacon Stephen was stoned to death, Scripture says that “on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles” (Acts 8:1). Where was the church to be found?

Again, Scripture says, “But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison” (Acts 8:3). Notice that Saul of Tarsus found the church in the homes of the believers, not at the temple.

When Peter was released from jail by an angel, he did not go to the temple to find the believers. Acts 12:12 states that “he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.” The prayer meeting was in the home.

When Paul was met with persecution in the synagogue of Corinth while

proclaiming Jesus as the Christ, he went to a home. Acts 18:7 states, “Then he left there [the synagogue] and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue.” What was the result? “Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized” (*Acts 18:8*).

In Ephesus, Paul met with the believers. His personal testimony of how his ministry operated speaks volumes: “I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house” (*Acts 20:20*).

House churches became a common occurrence in the first century. Notice Paul’s mention of churches that met in the homes of believers:

“Greet Priscilla and Aquila...also greet the church that is in their house” (*Romans 16:3,5*).

“Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house” (*Colossians 4:15*).

“Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved brother and fellow worker, and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus

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our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house” (*Philemon 1,2*).

Today, many believers in Jesus Christ meet only in their own homes. These churches meet in living rooms and around kitchen tables, their members breaking bread, feasting on the Bread of Life, and discovering the living God together.

In places of great freedom, the thought of the church being forced to meet in a home may seem like a very sad situation. However, this is not the case. Often, when persecution or economic hardship forces it to operate from the home, the church rediscovers her purpose, her calling, and her mission.

Stripped of the trappings of success, the pride of beautiful edifices, and the crush of complex programming, the church is reminded that it is simply made up of people called out by Christ to worship, fellowship, serve others, and make disciples.

Could it be that soon the church will return to live and operate in the homes of the people? Could it be that the days of the first century will be repeated-- that worship will be dictated from world powers and authorities, that persecution will arise in a global way, and that the church of the living God will once again flourish in the homes of God’s people?

## How to Live It

### ***Group Discussion***

1. How has church changed since the church in the book of Acts?
2. What are the advantages of church at home? What are the advantages of church in a church building?



## LIVE

### ***7-Day Challenge***

1. Pray every day this week for God to guide you to those you could invite to your home to study the Word of God.
2. Make a list of friends, extended family, neighbors, and others you know in the community.
3. Circle the names on your list that God impresses you would most benefit to come to your home to enjoy God's Word.





*The Welcome*  
**TABLE**

# *The Welcome Table*

## CHAPTER TEN

### CONNECT

#### ***With Each Other***

Who was your favorite cook when you were a child?

#### ***With Last Week's 7-Day Challenge***

1. Pray every day this week for God to guide you to those you could invite to your home to study the Word of God.
2. Make a list of friends, extended family, neighbors, and others you know in the community.
3. Circle the names on your list that God impresses you would most benefit to come to your home to enjoy God's Word.

#### ***With God's Word for Today***

At whose home did you like to eat as a child? Why?

Discover what God's Word invites you to experience at your kitchen table.

#### ***With God in Prayer***

Pray that we can welcome people to our table.

## DISCOVER

There is nothing like sitting down to a good, homecooked meal served in a loving home! Recently I was invited to supper in the home of an elderly couple living in a tiny cabin in a country with declining religious freedom.

A friend and I trudged in the snow through the woods. I shivered as the temperature fell. Ahead, through the trees, warm light splashed through the windows out into the darkness. As we stomped the snow off our boots at the base of a wooden ladder leading up to the cabin, the front door burst open, and our hosts cheerily welcomed us inside where the wood-burning stove was warming up the kitchen. The savory scents of fresh garlic, onions, and potatoes made my mouth water.

We sat and talked for an hour with the husband while a few feet away, his wife prepared the meal. Living there was simple and sparse. There was no plumbing nor outdoor toilet, only a pail in a cold side room.

I watched as the kind-hearted, white-haired grandmother placed a fresh tablecloth on the tiny table. She gathered her best dishes of all types and conditions and set the table. We

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watched as she brought out fresh bread, homemade soup, and a platter of stuffed, stewed apples. She invited us to sit down at her table. After thanking God for the food, we began the meal. The couple joyfully kept offering us everything they had to eat. We felt like much-loved family members. We were home!

Eating in a home other than your own is increasingly rare. Why is this? Why are we bypassing a great blessing?

The pace of life quickens as access to real-time information increases. We expect to hear the latest news now. We want to be served now. We want to hear back from our friends now.

In this rush, a meal prepared and served at home often seems like a pleasant, yet distant memory. Meals are eaten on the run. Meals are picked up at restaurants. Meals today often have had the blessing of fellowship sucked out of them!

Abraham knew the value of welcoming guests to his table. He did not stop with those he knew. He welcomed strangers to his table.

Genesis 18:1-8 provides a beautiful picture of Abraham's hospitality. Read it for yourself. See how many times Abraham ran or hurried to take care of and feed the strangers. Abraham was passionate

and enthusiastic about welcoming others to a meal in his home.

What a surprise for Abraham when he discovered the identity of his three guests! (See *Genesis 18:1,13*). What a blessing his household received!

Scripture says, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it” (*Hebrews 13:2*). “Practicing hospitality” is listed along with other spiritual gifts (*Romans 12:13*). I Peter 4:9 challenges us to be “hospitable to one another without complaint.”

## How to Live It

### **Group Discussion**

1. What keeps you from inviting friends, family, neighbors, or strangers to a meal in your home?
2. What blessings would you receive by sharing a meal with others in your home? What blessings are you missing?
3. What are ways you can simplify providing meals for guests in your home?



**LIVE**

### **7-Day Challenge**

1. Invite the people God has placed on your heart from last week to come to

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your home for a meal.

2. Pray for God to greatly bless each one you invited.
3. Make a simple meal, and welcome them to join you at your table!
4. During the meal, invite your guests to join you next week to study God's Word about His plan for the home.



*Your Divine*  
APPOINTMENT

# *Your Divine Appointment*

CHAPTER ELEVEN

## CONNECT

### ***With Each Other***

What was your best surprise of last week?

### ***With the Last Week's 7-Day Challenge***

1. Invite the people God has placed on your heart from last week to come to your home for a meal.
2. Pray for God to greatly bless each one you invited.
3. Make a simple meal, and welcome them to join you at your table!
4. During the meal, invite your guests to join you next week to study God's Word about His plan for the home.

### ***With God's Word for Today***

If you could make an appointment with anyone for one hour, who would it be? Discover what God's Word offers as unforgettable, life-changing appointments.

### ***With God in Prayer***

Pray that we can keep our best appointments with God.

## DISCOVER

My favorite appointment every day is with Someone I have never seen. This appointment unfolds every day whether I am in the deep snows of Canada, on the bustling streets of Jakarta, in downtown Los Angeles, beside the rice fields of Cambodia, or below the banana plants in the Philippines. I used to be the one to set the appointment and the one to make it clear when I needed to leave.

But the One I meet every morning has shown me another way. This Unseen One has shown me that He is much more interested in meeting with me than I am with meeting Him. He wants an unrushed appointment with me.

So, every day, He sets the appointment as early or as late as He wants. I don't have to nervously check my watch to see where I need to run to next. He sets the time early enough so I do not need to rush out of our time together. I am discovering a different way to live!

This Holy One, the Creator of the universe, teaches me by the Holy Spirit through His written Word who the real Jesus Christ is! He listens to and cares about whatever I have to share--worries, fears, joys, and sorrows. He breathes His new life into me every day, giving me

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hope, peace, love, joy, and a purpose that motivates me every day!

I was sharing this truth with some new friends in a difficult place where sharing one's faith is not seen as even a remote possibility. One young man listened attentively to the idea that God would love to have an appointment with him every morning. He did not say a word and quietly left the room, deep in thought.

The next morning, he stopped by to chat. A look of wonder flooded his usually impassive expression. With barely concealed excitement, he whispered, "God awakened me this morning to spend time with Him!" With joyful tears, he said, "I have waited all my life for such an encounter with God in His Word and in prayer! I am amazed that He would want to meet with me!"

What about your daily appointments? You have appointments for all kinds of reasons with all kinds of people. Sometimes it is difficult to keep all of your appointments in mind. Like juggling oranges, bananas, grapes, or melons, some appointments are heavier than others, and when you miss one, you have a mess!

Your relationship with God is not something you need to juggle! Just

surrender to God's daily plans for your relationship with Him. He is ready to make and keep an appointment with you every day of your life!

Now let's review and reinforce some life-changing principles mentioned earlier in this book!

### **Do this every day!**

1. Before you go to sleep at night, ask God to wake you up so you can have unrushed time alone with Him. God the Father did this for Jesus every day He was on earth. Jesus testified, "The Lord God has given Me the tongue of disciples, that I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word, He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple" (*Isaiah 50:4*).

What God did for Jesus, He is ready and able to do for you! God is deeply interested in meeting with you every day. You are not a number to Him. He knows you well. David wrote, "O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thoughts from afar. You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways" (*Psalms 139:1-3*).

2. When you wake up in the morning, do this one thing first: Drop to your knees. Surrender all you are and all you

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have, including your attitude, to Jesus as the Lord of your life. “Why do that?” you might ask. Because of who He is. Scripture says, “Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth” (*Matthew 28:18*). Jesus is above all powers and authorities. That means that He is Lord over you... whether you recognize His authority in your life or not.

A day is coming soon when followers of God and those who do not follow Him, will all honor Jesus. Difficult to believe? Scripture testifies of that day to come: “So at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (*Philippians 2:10,11*).

Surrendering to Jesus as Lord means giving up your position in the driver’s seat of your life. You invite Jesus to drive your life. You ask Him to take you where He wants you to go. You trust Him to get you there as fast or as slow as He wants.

Honoring Jesus as Lord means listening and following His lead concerning our priorities, our lifestyle, and our choices. We choose to please Him above pleasing ourselves. We give Him the keys to our life and say, “Drive!”

3. After you surrender to Jesus as Lord

each morning, talk to God and discover Him in His Word:

- a. Thank God for what He did in your life yesterday.
- b. Praise God for who He is.
- c. Confess your sins and know that you are completely forgiven and clean!
- d. Pray for God to send the Holy Spirit to guide you to the truth.
- e. Read Scripture to discover the truth.
- f. Live the truth you discover throughout the day.
- g. Share the truth with someone else each day.

4. Ask God to baptize you with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives you a new life. He gives you power to run away from what causes destruction and to run to what brings love, joy, and peace. He gives you courage to stand up and be known as a Christ follower and wisdom to know how to share Jesus, what to say, and whom to say it to!

Here is how you can have this gift every day of your life:

- a. Come to Jesus with your thirst and belief (*John 7:37-39*).
- b. Repent from your sins and be baptized (*Acts 2:38,39*).
- c. Obey God (*Acts 5:32*).
- d. Ask God to give you the Holy spirit (*Luke 11:11-13*).

# C O M E H O M E

The appointment you keep with God each day prepares you to meet with Him the next day. As you meet with God throughout the week, you will find yourself thirsty for more. This is such good news, but there is even better! God has created yet another appointment with you in mind, one that is the high point at the end of each week.

## **Try this every Friday evening to Saturday evening!**

There is only one day mentioned in Scripture that is blessed and made holy by God. Why not celebrate this blessed day!

1. Rest from rush and work every Saturday, the seventh day. Enjoy the blessings of God's Presence. See Genesis 2:2,3.
2. Remember the Creator God...and the world He made. Dedicate time to appreciate the great outdoors He made! See Exodus 20:8-11.
3. Worship the Creator God. See Revelation 14:7.
4. Bless others. See Mark 3:1-4.

Your home can be a place to celebrate daily, divine appointments with God and a place to celebrate the Sabbath rest provided by your Creator God. Every Friday evening, when the sun has set, you have the opportunity to celebrate God as your Creator, your Redeemer, and the

One who transforms your entire life!

## How to Live It

### **Group Discussion**

1. What Biblical principle discussed would make the most difference in your current daily appointments with God? What is your next step?
2. What difference would honoring the Biblical seventh-day Sabbath make to your relationship with God? Your family? Your health? Your service to the community? Your environment?



**LIVE**

### **7-Day Challenge**

1. Invite God every night to awaken you each morning for His appointment with you!
2. Invite God next Friday sunset to Saturday sunset to bless you with a Sabbath rest in His honor as the Creator.
3. This week begin a small group in your home to study the life-changing, Biblical principles in this book *Come Home*.





*Come*  
HOME

# *Come Home!*

## CHAPTER TWELVE

**CONNECT*****With Each Other***

What one thing would you give your family and friends if you could?

***With Last Week's 7-Day Challenge***

1. Invite God every night to awaken you each morning for His appointment with you!
2. Invite God next Friday sunset to Saturday sunset to bless you with a Sabbath rest in His honor as the Creator.
3. This week begin a small group in your home to study the life-changing, Biblical principles in this book *Come Home*.

***With God's Word Today***

Who do you wish you could never be separated from?

Discover God's final invitation in His Word.

***With God in Prayer***

Pray that we can be ready to go to our final home.

## DISCOVER

Nearly three months had passed since I hugged my wife and daughter good-bye for what I thought would be a two-week trip to the Philippines. Two days after I landed in Manila, I experienced a lockdown on a university campus due to the pandemic. My flight home was cancelled ten times.

God quieted my heart each day as I read and claimed His promises in His written Word. Did I face fear and frustration? Absolutely! Every day God invited me to trade in my fears and frustrations for His peace and His power. God never failed to deliver on His promises to me!

In the early mornings, I walked out in the fields under the stars and asked, “God, when can I go home?” Repeatedly, God said, “Not yet. There is a work for you to do here before you go home.”

God had a work for me to do on that campus at that specific time. During my nearly three months of lockdown, I saw God call the students, faculty, staff, and their families to a revival with Jesus. I saw God raise up champions from young and old to disciple the new generations for Christ.

Then one morning, I walked out in the

## C O M E H O M E

cool breeze before the sun rose above the mountain and again asked God, “When can I go home?” He told me that my work there was finished, and it was time to go home! I was excited!

A few days later, I was able to fly out on one of the last flights from Manila to JFK Airport and from there to Canada! I was so excited to see April and Jessica again, even though we had to keep 10 feet away from each other!

When my 14-day mandatory quarantine was almost over, I told April the exact hour she could pick me up. “I will be all packed up and ready to go!” I told her the night before.

The next day, she arrived at my quarantine trailer a few minutes early. For the first time in over three months, we hugged and kissed each other and held each other for a long time. “Come home, Don!” she said.

Somewhere, far away, God has prepared a place for you called Heaven. He longs for you to call it home. Someday soon, God, who has been waiting for a long, long time to come and get us, will tell Jesus to bring His people home.

Jesus loves to connect with you through prayer and His written Word! Yet He longs for more, much more with you! He wants you to live where He lives forever with nothing to ever separate you from Him.

### **Jesus says to you:**

“Behold, I am coming quickly...” “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also” (*Revelation 22:12; John 14:2,3*).

My friend, very soon Jesus will come again to take you to where He is! Where you are right now is your temporary home. Soon Jesus will say to you, “Come home!” Prepare now for that day!

### **How to Live It**

#### ***Group Discussion***

1. How can you keep your final home with Jesus ever on your mind and heart?
2. What needs to change so that you are ready for your eternal home with Jesus? What is your next step?



**LIVE**

#### ***The Forever Challenge***

Every day, honor Jesus as your Friend, Savior, and Lord.

Every day, live with readiness to meet with Jesus when He comes. Hold nothing back from Him.

Every day, help prepare someone else to “come home.”





*A Blessing for*  
**YOUR**  
*Family*

# *A Blessing for Your Family*

Dear Father in Heaven,  
Long ago, You created the heavens and the earth, the birds of the air, the fish in the sea, and all the animals that walk on the earth. You made man and woman and blessed them to be husband and wife. You walked with them in the garden they called home. You talked with them face to face, friend to friend. This first home was a happy place, this first marriage, a pure delight! What You created so long ago, You are ready to create again.

O Lord of all creation, come and create a new heart in us! Invite us to walk with You as Your people did in days of old. Give us a living experience with You daily.

Re-create our homes to be like a little heaven on earth. Make our homes a refuge, a place of peace and rest in You. Heal our marriages with Your grace and forgiveness. Restore what has been lost.

Give us courage like Elijah to rebuild the altar of worship in our homes, simply making our homes a house of prayer. Bless the reading and study of Your written Word as we meet together as a

family. May young and old know You and Your Son Jesus Christ.

Turn our hearts back to our children and their hearts back to us. Help us slow down, so that we may teach the new generations to trust, follow, and share You with all their hearts. May our children and their children after them know You personally. May they rise up and be a voice to the nations that their Redeemer lives.

O God, may the light of Your Presence spill out of our homes. May our homes be a place to worship, educate, and disciple. May our friends, our neighbors, and the stranger in our gates find a welcome at our table, a lasting faith in You, and an eternal hope in coming home to You when Christ comes again in the clouds. This is our prayer in Jesus' name, amen.



