

FAMILIES OF HOPE

A series of radio messages and resources
to help believers to understand
what the Bible teaches about marriage, families and sexuality,
and to see how the good news of Jesus Christ
can bring hope, healing and happiness to marriages and families.
These resources were created to aid Christian radio producers,
but we hope they will also be helpful for other people for other people
involved in Christian ministry.

Written by *Dave Gifford*

Edited by *Paul E. Hostetter*



Published and Sponsored by

Words of HOPE, Inc.

An International Christian Radio and Print Ministry
of the Reformed Church in America

700 Ball Avenue NE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503 USA
Phone: 616.459.6181 • Fax: 616.459.3830

All rights reserved. Inquiries about use of these materials should be addressed to
Lee DeYoung, Vice President for Broadcasting Ministries
at the above address or e-mail: ldeyoung@woh.org

Grand Rapids, 2003

Dear Producers:

One of the pressing needs of our time is to help believers apply God's Word to their family life. We want believers to discover God's wonderful plan for sex, marriage and parenting. For this reason, we have developed Families of Hope as a series of message ideas and resources to aid you in your radio ministry.

The message series are arranged by topic. Each series contains at least one message and follows the same format:

1. First we list a **suggested message title and the topic discussed**.
2. If there is more than one message included in a series we provide a **table of contents** to help you find the page number of each message.
3. The **messages** are found in the left-hand column. The right-hand column is for **extra notes** we think you will find helpful.

The audiences and cultures our producers broadcast to are vast and different. Each society has vastly different ideas about families! Our hope is to provide you with helpful information and message ideas. But ultimately you know your audience best. You will know best how to organize your message, what to include and what to omit.

May the Lord richly bless you as you continue to proclaim good news of hope for families around the world.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Gifford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "G".

Dave Gifford

FAMILIES OF HOPE
TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Series # | Series Title | Topic |
|----------|--|---|
| 1 | WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE? | The nature and purpose of marriage (4 messages) |
| 2 | CHOOSING A MARRIAGE PARTNER | Arranged marriages, dating, choosing a spouse (3 messages) |
| 3 | BELIEVERS SHOULD MARRY BELIEVERS | Religious concerns when choosing a mate (2 messages) |
| 4 | WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT UNMARRIED PEOPLE? | Singleness and celibacy (1 message) |
| 5 | ONE PLUS ONE EQUALS ONE? | Polygamy (2 messages) |
| 6 | FAMILY POSSESSIONS: TROUBLE OR BLESSING? | Inheritances and family property (2 messages) |
| 7 | GOD OR FAMILY: WHICH COMES FIRST? | Balancing family and faith (1 message) |
| 8 | HOW CAN FELLOW BELIEVERS AND CHURCHES STRENGTHEN MARRIAGES? | Church support for married couples (1 message) |
| 9 | IN MARRIAGE WHO'S THE BOSS? | Husbands' and wives' roles in marriage (1 message) |
| 10 | WHEN LOVE TURNS INTO WAR | Conflicts in marriage (8 messages) |
| 11 | FAITHFULNESS AND FORGIVENESS | Adultery, forgiveness (2 messages) |
| 12 | WHAT DOES JESUS SAY ABOUT DIVORCE? | Divorce (2 messages) |
| 13 | RAISING CHILDREN WITH THE WISDOM OF CHRIST | Raising children (3 messages and an additional message outline) |
| 14 | PASS YOUR FAITH ON TO YOUR CHILDREN | Family worship and religious instruction (5 messages) |
| 15 | BROTHERS AND SISTERS | (Sibling relationships (1 message) |

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| 16 | HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE BELIEVER | Homosexuality (2 messages) |
| 17 | HOW BELIEVERS SHOULD HONOR ELDERLY PEOPLE | Caring for elderly people, especially parents (1 message) |
| 18 | WHEN A FAMILY MEMBER DIES | Grief, loss of a spouse (1 message) |
| 19 | WILL WE BE MARRIED IN THE LIFE AFTER DEATH? | The relationship between marriage and heaven (2 messages) |

How to Use Families of Hope Message Resources

The **titles** are merely guidelines so that you see what the topic is about. You should create titles that are appealing for your audience.

The **right-hand column** contains important notes to help you as you prepare your message. You may consider some notes helpful to include in a message. But many of the notes are simply background material for your benefit. They give you a deeper understanding of the topic you will be speaking about.

Basic Message of Hope – Hope for Families – What is the Purpose of Marriage? #

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE?

Series Title: What is the Purpose of Marriage?
Topic: The nature and purpose of marriage

Introduction:
 Marriage is a mysterious and wonderful thing. We all have many questions about it. Where did the idea of marriage come from? Why do people get married? What is the purpose of marriage? Is marriage based on love, or on something else? These are all very good questions. I would like to look at these questions with you in the next few messages.

Wouldn't it be nice if God would give us a handbook about marriage? Wouldn't it be nice to have our questions about marriage explained in a few short pages? Unfortunately, there's no such thing.

God's book, the Bible, is about this (message)

Explanatory Notes:

Producers: Below is a series of four messages on the meaning of marriage. Use this introduction to begin the first message of the series. The introductions to the other messages will need to remind your audience what the series is about.

Resources for producers:

Five Functions of Marriage:

1. To give us companionship.
 We were not made to be alone or independent. God made us in such a way that we need other people. A good marriage gives us the help, support and encouragement we need. A husband or wife is a friend who will love us and accompany us through life.

The **left-hand columns** contain actual messages on the selected topic. Usually there are two or three different messages on the same topic. If the messages are too long or complex for your audience, don't hesitate to divide them into smaller messages.