

Study Guide

Monday, August 16– Read Acts 10:1-2. In just 2 short verses we find out this Roman officer AND his family were passionate about their relationship with God. The Bible tells us about men who were passionate about their faith, but never mention the family. Here we have both. If you read the rest of the chapter some interesting things happen to Cornelius. Were prayers answered because the WHOLE family believed? How much easier it is when the whole family believes in the one true God and his Son Jesus Christ. The earlier a family starts on their journey of faith, the more rewarding that journey will be. But it's never too late for anyone to begin being passionate about what they believe.

Tuesday, August 17. What are great attributes to have when trying to share your faith? It's not having a great speaking voice or being well prepared to share your story. It's loving unconditionally and listening. The primary place we are to share our faith is in our homes and with our families. When we are able to love without putting ANY conditions on that love, we are modeling the love Christ has for us. We have done nothing to deserve His love, yet we are told again and again we are loved!! **Read 1 John 3:1, Romans 8:35 & Ephesians 5:25.** And one way to show love is to listen. The writer in Proverbs tells us the wise listen. (**Proverbs 12:15**). By listening we are communicating we care, we are concerned. This also models the way we see God – as the one who cares and listens. Loving and listening are two ways we can strengthen our family. It's time to start or it's time to be better!

Wednesday, August 18. Read 2 Corinthians 5:18 and Ephesians 4:26. We fight. We argue. We disagree. And this might happen before breakfast!! The purpose of anger is to cause us to do evil in this world. But yet it must be possible to deal with it according to Paul. What can you do about misdirected anger? First, remember that most anger is caused either by hurt, fear or frustration. Deal with the initial cause rather than expressing your anger. Proverbs says, "He who is slow to anger has great understanding (14:29). Read Nehemiah 5:6-7. Do you slow down enough to think about the cause of your anger? It can make a difference. Talk within your family about how you can help each other control their anger.

Thursday, August 19 Read 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11. As you near the end of a long race, your legs ache, your throat burns, and your whole body cries out for you to stop. It's the same for soccer, football and hockey games and tennis matches too. Your body is very tired. This is when friends and fans are most valuable. Their encouragement helps you push through the pain to make it to the end. In the same way, Christians, and particularly family members, are to encourage one another. A word of encouragement offered at the right moment can be the difference between finishing well and collapsing before finishing. Be sensitive to your family's need for encouragement and offer supportive words or actions.

Friday, August 20. Read Mark 9:35, 10:43 and 1 Corinthians 9:19. All of our passages speak of being a servant. Do we find it easier to serve those outside of our family? To be great, we must be a servant. To spread the gospel of Christ, we must be servants. How well have you extended this concept to your family? How are you communicating with your family the idea of EVERYONE in the family should be a servant?

Saturday, August 21 Read Proverbs 13:10. How long have you been struggling, not knowing which way to turn? How many days or months has it been since you threw up your arms and said, "That's it – I can't do anything more, they are on their own." Christians were not put on this planet to go at life alone. Seek help. From the church. From the community. From friends.