

Lesson 1

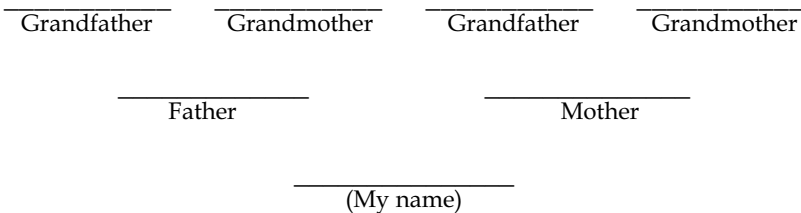
Personal Background

Introduction

Marriage is not a commitment to be made lightly. Marriage is for life. When two people marry, two families are brought together. An important part of learning to know one another, therefore, is learning to know one another's families. This lesson is designed to look honestly at the families from which you came in order to better understand the two people looking at uniting for a lifetime marriage.

Fill out the family tree and answer the questions below:

FAMILY TREE



Brothers: _____

Sisters: _____

My place in the family: _____

Family Relationships

1. Brother or sister emotionally closest to me: _____

2. Describe the relationship: _____

3. Brother or sister emotionally most distant from me: _____

4. Describe the relationship: _____

5. In each contrast, circle the number that best describes the way your family gets along. The number 1 indicates the description on the left; the number 5 indicates the description on the right; and the in-between numbers indicate varying degrees of overlap.

Distant	1	2	3	4	5	Close-knit
Limited communication	1	2	3	4	5	Lots of talking
Many bad memories	1	2	3	4	5	Many good memories
Hurtful interaction	1	2	3	4	5	Kind interaction
Rudeness	1	2	3	4	5	Respect
Argue over differences	1	2	3	4	5	Discuss differences
Spiritually weak	1	2	3	4	5	Spiritually strong
Insecurity	1	2	3	4	5	Security
Anger	1	2	3	4	5	Calmness
Harshness	1	2	3	4	5	Gentleness
No guidelines	1	2	3	4	5	Clear guidelines
No fun times	1	2	3	4	5	Recreational outings
Learn on your own	1	2	3	4	5	Helpful teaching

Personal Background

6. After doing the above rating, write a brief description of how your family interacted, clarifying points above, and filling in additional information: _____

7. Based on your own experience, what are some ideals you have for your own family relationships? How do you intend to achieve these ideals? _____

Personality and Character

1. In the following personality contrasts, underline the ones that describe you or check the nearest column to indicate whether you are, for example, more talkative or more quiet:

(In between)

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--------------------------|
| a. Talkative | | | | Quiet |
| b. Morning person | | | | Night owl |
| c. Hurry-up/get things done | | | | Methodical/slow-paced |
| d. Decisive | | | | Trouble making decisions |
| e. Emotions show | | | | Emotions don't show |

Before You Say Your Vows

f. Sensitive of others' feelings				Unaware of others' feelings
g. Optimistic				Pessimistic
h. Take-charge kind of person				Prefer to follow
i. Strong-willed				Passive/able to give in
j. Quick sense of humor				Serious-minded
k. Outgoing				Shy
l. Tolerant of mistakes				Perfectionist
m. Neat, orderly				Unorganized
n. Punctual, scheduled				Easy-going, flexible

2. In your relationships at home, what complaints have your family members had in relating to you? _____

3. Regardless of a person's personality traits, the following character qualities are necessary for everyone. Character is something that develops and grows. Which of the following are special areas of need in your life? For each one you identify, write a sentence saying why you need this.

a. Love _____

b. Honesty _____

c. Faithfulness _____

d. Kindness _____

e. Longsuffering _____

f. Consistency _____

g. Diligence _____

h. Humility _____

i. Helpfulness _____

j. Gratitude _____

Spiritual History

1. Describe how you received Christ. _____

2. Describe your present relationship with God. _____

3. Describe your personal Bible reading and prayer life. _____

4. Since you received Christ, what has been your biggest hindrance to spiritual progress? _____

5. What have you done about it? _____

6. What spiritual help do you expect from your partner? _____
