

## Surviving the Summer

*A series on surviving...and even thriving!*

*"I know how to survive..." Philippians 4:12a Voice*

### "Surviving an Imperfect Family"

*"Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, 'With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man.' Later she gave birth to his brother Abel." Genesis 4:1-2*

#### A. There is no perfect family...

*"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails." 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a*

A dysfunctional family isn't a new thing...

1. Consider God's first family; it wasn't perfect! And God was the first parent!
  2. Consider their children...Cain and Abel!
  3. Consider Abraham and Sarah!
  4. Consider David...a failure as a father and husband!
- And the story continues...

#### B. Concerns that might destroy a family...

1. Abuse of control and power
2. Estrangement – when family members do not talk or communicate
3. Anger – explosive anger expressed or even repressed
4. Lack of trust
5. Deception or lack of truth telling
6. Unhealthy secrecy
7. Unpredictability and fear
8. Abuse and abuse patterns
9. Perfectionism

#### C. Characteristics that a healthy family might have in common...

*"But if you refuse to serve the LORD, then choose today whom you will serve...But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD." Joshua 24:15*

"A 'perfect family' is just an imperfect group of people who refuse to give up on each other!"

1. Encourage more than criticize: There needs to be a healthy atmosphere of warmth and affirmation. Share mutual respect.
2. Strong communication: There need to be times of family sharing that are established. Trust, honesty and support must be practiced. Everyone does not need to agree but

disagreements should be handled openly. Unity is a priority, not uniformity. Separate identities are healthy.

3. Healthy values, priorities, convictions, and morals: Make sure you live what you believe. Fairness and equality are vital.
4. Good coping skills: Establish communication as a priority no matter what you face. Keep a positive outlook in spite of challenges.
5. Play together: Make it a priority for the family to share time together and to play together. Laugh often, remembering "The best things in life aren't things!"

*"...God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons and because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" Galatians 4:4-6*

#### D. So, what do you do about your dysfunctional background, or the dysfunctional home in which you seem to be?

You may have been treated unfairly!  
You may have been betrayed by loved ones!  
You may have been falsely accused!  
You may have been forgotten by those you counted on!  
Or...a host of other unfortunate circumstances!

You can be a survivor!

"So, by the time Joseph is about 10 years old, here's the family situation. The father is a polygamist, fathering 12 sons from 4 women (two of whom were sisters), who lived in the same household; as did all of the brothers and half-brothers. His only sister had been raped. His older brothers were guilty of murder, plundering, theft and gross immorality. His mother, Rachel, and his grandfather Isaac are dead. Now, that's messed up."

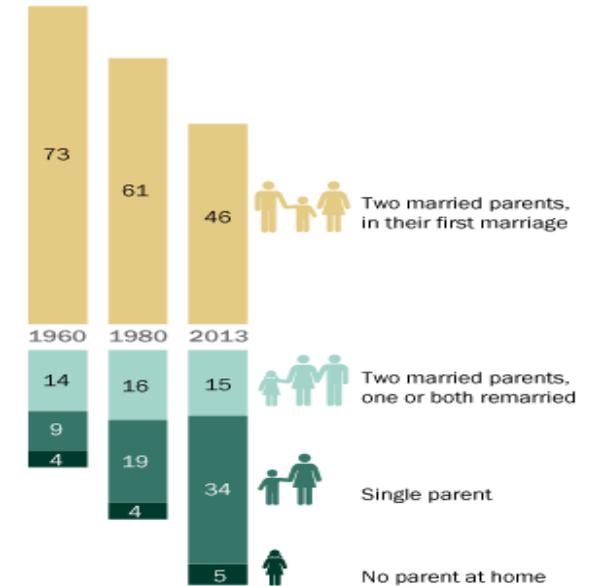
1. Don't quit! Trust God with His timing. Don't use your family background as an excuse for your behavior.
2. Keep faithful! Keep faith in knowing that God knows what He is doing, even when we don't understand. Keep believing God will use all that is in our lives...even our poor choices or the poor choices of others!
3. Break the cycle! You don't have to repeat the cycle of an unhealthy family...you can change. Be honest. Admit your failure. Own your responsibility. Forgive those in your life who have offended you!
4. Trust God! God has not forgotten you! He sees and knows all things and has perfect timing.
5. Get busy! Don't sit back and wait. Allow God to use you right where you are!

*"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." Ephesians 2:10*



### How the American Family Has Changed

% of U.S. children living with ...



Note: Based on children ages 17 and younger. "Married parents" refer to those in a heterosexual marriage only. In 2013, the "single parent" category includes the small share of children living with two parents who are cohabiting or in a same-sex marriage. Data on same-sex marriage and cohabitation is not available for earlier years.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 1960 and 1980 Decennial Census (1% IPUMS) and 2013 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS)

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- Next week: June 19 - Surviving Suffering  
 June 26 – Freedom Fest – Celebrating our Freedom Part 1  
 July 3 – Freedom Fest – Celebrating our Freedom Part 2  
 July 10 - Surviving Disappointment  
 July 17 - Surviving Loneliness  
 July 24 - Surviving Your Doubts  
 July 31 - Surviving Unhealthy Relationships  
 August 7 - Surviving Hurts from Others  
 August 21 - Surviving Your Past Failures  
 August 28 - Surviving Conflict  
 September 4 - Don't Just Survive But Thrive