**Fruitful Family Habits (John 15:5)**

***Pastor Tan Moy How***

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)

**Introduction**

The long hours at work we spend at work deprive our children of our attention. However, to help our children grow into well-balanced and well-adjusted individuals, we need to be intentional and develop fruitful family habits.

The big idea is this: Remain in Jesus and obey Him, and you will be fruitful!

**7 Habits of a Highly Fruitful Family**

Fruitful Habit #7: Discipline Children Consistently

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far away. (Proverbs 22:15)

It is necessary to have discipline in all aspects of life, including children. We must remember that all of us are born sinners, thus it is only natural that children can be stubborn and willful. There will only be disorder if children were made to be the kings of the household.

In order to instill discipline into children, Paster Moy How share some pointers with the congregation:-

1. Consequences to actions must be laid out properly to the children
* Children will need to learn that there are consequences to their actions, and that they are responsible for what they do
1. Never disagree in front of the children when enforcing disciplinary action
* Instead of learning that they are responsible for their actions, they will learn that they can get away with breaking the rules.
* If you disagree with your spouse’s way of disciplining the child, talk about it out of the child’s presence.
1. Use your hands only to love, and a rod to discipline
* Use your hands to dispense hugs, and not to hit them. Use alternative objects (such as a rod or a cane) for administering physical punishment.
1. Send the child for “time out”
* It gives you time as a parent to calm your emotions as well as collect your thoughts on how you should discipline your child.
* It allows time for your child to reflect on his/her actions and anticipate to receive discipline from you.

Fruitful Habit #6: Wise Money Management

The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender. (Proverbs 22:7)

Bad finances can derail a marriage, so aim to live with zero debt. Have financial discussions as a family, especially for big purchase items like a house. Try to live in the 10:10:80 principle where 10% of what you earn goes to God, 10% goes to savings, and live with the remaining 80%.

Fruitful Habit #5: Treat Others Kindly

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

Jesus told his disciples to “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31)

In this season of Chinese New Year, it is a good time to demonstrate Christ’s love by treating our family kindly and lovingly by serving them first. As Mark Twain aptly put it, *“*Kindness *is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.”*

Fruitful Habit #4: Coping with Adversity

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

Jesus himself foretells us that in this world, we will face many challenges. Jesus himself gives us hope that we can forge ahead if we hold onto Him who has overcome the world. Families will experience heart-wrenching issues, but we can hold on to Him and face problems and survive through the pain.

Fruitful Habit #3: Intentional time together

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones. (Proverbs 17:22)

One of the things Jesus loved to do was to eat in a community, be it with his disciples, his followers, even “sinners”! In Revelations 3:20, Jesus says, “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.” The reason is because when people share a meal together, they are in a relaxed mode and are willing to share more on their life.

In this world, families do not just “have” family time; they “make” family time. Be intentional in spending time together as a family: have a laugh together, play together, eat together and ultimately, grow together. Build memories which are priceless and timeless, rather than buying stuff which rusts and become insignificant over time.

Fruitful Habit #2: Express regular love

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” (John 13:34)

Christ commanded us to love one another. It is the act of love for one another, especially in the family, that helps distinguish us as believers in Christ.

The best way to teach love to the children is for the parents to always express love to the children and to each other as spouses. John Wooden, in his book *Wooden: A Lifetime of Observations and Reflections On and Off the Court* said that *“The best thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother.”*

Fruitful Habit #1: Keep Christ Centre

Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat —
for he grants sleep to those he loves. (Psalm 127:1-2)

**Conclusion**

The Lord invites us to have a personal relationship with us. He knocks on our doors and wants to dine with us. As believers in Christ who aim to be Christ-like, let us show love in our expressions to one another, whether in affection or in discipline, so that we may live the fruitful lives God intended us to have, which will continue to bear fruit for eternity.

Sermon summary contributed by Adeliyn Lim

Prayer points contributed by Ngui Yuen Loong





SERMON: Forward 2016: **Fruitful Family Habits**

**Pray:**

* Parents will raise their children right and instil in them good values.
* Husbands and wives will work hard on their marriage and not take it for granted.
* Families will intentionally spend time with one another instead of being distracted.
* Everyone will learn to be good stewards.
* Everyone will live a Christ-centred live.

***Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it. (Proverbs 22:6)***

**MINISTRIES & EVENTS: Marriage Course**

**The next Marriage Course will begin on 27/03/2016.**

**Pray:**

* Many will sign up.
* Facilitators will provide essential guidance to participants..
* Participants will truly be humble to learn.
* Participants will pick up important lessons to build strong families.
* More will volunteer for this ministry.

***“But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.” (Mark 10:6-9)***

MALAYSIA MY NATION: Responsible Spending

***The Malaysian Budget 2016 has been revised to ensure the nation is better suited to face the economical challenge.***

**Pray:**

* Money will be spent wisely on essential areas.
* Resources will be distributed fairly to all based on need and not any other criteria.
* Leakages will be plugged. No lavish spending on unnecessary projects that do not benefit the people.
* The people will learn to spend within the means and save up for rainy days, which many people think is already here.
* Christians will be contend in life and be generous in giving.

***But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. (1 Tim 6:6-8)***

* **A TRANSFORMED WORLD: Taiwan Earthquake**

***On 07/02/2016 (Saturday) at 0400, a magnitude 6.4 earthquake strike Tainan city, collapsing a 17-storey building, killing at least 26. 1200 firefighters are working hard. They have successfully save 170 people and it is believed there are still more than 100 trapped in the rubble.***

**Pray:**

* People who are trapped are saved in time.
* Safety for the emergency team working at ground zero.
* Those injured will get the medical attention that they need.
* Law enforcements will be put in place to protect the victims and those affected.
* Victims will receive aids that they need.
* The local council will work hard to prevent future disasters.

***I lift up my eyes to the mountains - where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. (Psalms 121:1-2)***