

*The*

FAMILY  
LIFE

*of a*

CHRISTIAN  
LEADER

AJITH FERNANDO

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**Michael Oh**, Global Executive Director, the Lausanne Movement

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“Ajith Fernando faithfully handles the truth of the Scriptures and humbly shares the wisdom of his experiences to encourage Christian leaders to carefully lead and love their families in a way that brings glory to God.”

**Ed Stetzer**, President, LifeWay Research; author, *Subversive Kingdom*

“It’s often the families and spouses of those in ministry who feel as though they are suffocating under the weight of missional calling. Ajith Fernando reminds us that God’s love breathes fresh air back into our lives as we serve him in the manner for which he made us. This book is both compelling and practical. It is biblically based, inspiring, and helpful in ways that will change the trajectory of ministry families around the globe.”

**Dan Wolgemuth**, President/CEO, Youth for Christ

*The Family Life of a Christian Leader*



# The Family Life of a Christian Leader

Ajith Fernando

*The Family Life of a Christian Leader*

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To my dear friends  
Lokki and Mohini Abhayaratne  
Anbahan and Sylvanthi Ariyadorai  
Timothy and Surendrani de Alwis  
Ceramam and Sureshini Moses  
Emmanuel and Sugantha Gunaratnam  
Austen and Radhika Mascranghe  
Douglas and Shiranthi Ponniah  
Andrew and Rhoda Sunder Singh  
whose marriages have stood the test





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## Preface

Most of my books have come directly out of my ministry and my attempts to respond biblically to the challenges I've faced in ministry. That is true of this book also. In the past few years, I have been spending lots of time counseling couples before and after marriage, most of whom are involved in ministry in a full-time or volunteer capacity. I also mentor several Christian leaders and pastors who have shared with me about their family life.

My thirty-nine years of marriage have also taught me a lot. In Sri Lanka, student drivers need to have a prominent board with the letter L (for "Learner") attached to the front and back of the vehicles they are driving until they get their licenses. I need to say that after thirty-nine years, I am still driving my marriage vehicle with an L-board. Many of the things about which I write here I learned through mistakes I made. Some of those things will be lifelong struggles, to which we apply God's sufficient grace. I am so grateful that God gave me a patient wife who has accepted me with all my weaknesses. She is the primary human reason we have an enjoyable life as a family. I believe one reason why God gave us a happy family life is so that we can help families who are struggling. But our happiness also was won through struggle—struggle that was accompanied by God's grace.

For many years, I have been teaching, mainly Christian leaders, on biblical principles that undergird a Christian home; principles such as the priority of God, love, joy, and unity. However, in my

personal ministry, I have encountered serious challenges to what I have taught. For instance, I have seen very unhappy families where the parents seem to be very committed to God and to biblical principles. I have had to grapple with these anomalies and see how we could respond to them biblically.

So you will see that after a discussion on a major affirmation about family life, I have inserted a discussion that reflects biblically and practically how to respond to challenges to that affirmation. Following the chapter on God, there is a chapter on crucifying self. Our discussion on love includes discussions on complexities of loving. The discussion of sex includes discussions relating to sexual problems. We have a chapter on disappointment and pain after the chapter on joy, and a chapter on the love fight after the chapter on unity. There is a call to delight in children and another call to discipline children.

This book seeks to be solidly biblical while being specific in applying Scripture to concrete situations in the home. You will see that I don't deal only with texts in the Bible that specifically address family-related issues; rather, I take basic biblical principles of behavior and seek to apply those to family life. This buttresses the conviction that if we practice biblical Christianity in a thoroughgoing way in the home, we will arrive at God's beautiful plan for a loving, joyous, and holy home.

I want to thank those who have shared their life journeys with me and helped me sharpen my understanding of the dynamics of Christian living. I also want to thank the many pastors and Christian leaders who have urged me to put into writing the material they were introduced to in seminars I have led on the topic of family. Special thanks go to Youth for Christ board member Andrew Sunder Singh, who kept bugging me about the need to write a book like this. I also want to express my gratitude to my wife, Nelun, and children, Nirmali and Asiri, who have taught me more about family life than anyone else. They demonstrated the biblical practice of patience with a husband and father with

so many weaknesses. I have consulted my wife more on this book than on any other I have written, and her perspective has added much richness to these pages. I also want to thank my father and mother, who demonstrated that two highly incompatible people who refuse to give up on each other can give their children a happy and secure home in which to grow up in every way, especially in the ways of God. So much of who their five children are (all believers with hearts for service) has been mediated through their influence upon our lives.

When I started preparing the series of talks that ended up in this book, there was no book that was as helpful to me as *God, Marriage, and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation* by Andreas J. Köstenberger with David W. Jones.<sup>1</sup> This excellent book gives biblical bases for different aspects of Christian family living. I am surprised and embarrassed that I quote it so little in this book. I think the reason is that I got many biblical principles from it and then pursued my own applications of those principles. Still, I acknowledge my indebtedness to this book. I also wish to place on record my gratitude to Crossway's Greg Bailey for his expert editing of this book.

I am convinced that one of the greatest gifts the church can give to the world today is a healthy and practically fulfilling understanding of family life. But if we are to make this contribution to our nations, we must first get our act together! I pray that this book will serve many by being a source of encouragement to them to follow the biblical way of family living.





# God

Christian leaders naturally accept that the most important factor in their family life is God; that is, their commitment to God and God's commitment to them. But while we tend to take this for granted, it is necessary for me to say some things about God's role in our family lives right at the start of this book.

## **God Is Committed to Our Marriages**

We often quote Joshua's statement of commitment to serve God with his family: "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Josh. 24:15). But more important than our decision as families to serve the Lord is God's decision to bless our marriages and families.

About marriage, Jesus said, "What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate" (Matt. 19:6). That statement has become a major proclamation given at Christian wedding services.

When a couple plans a wedding service, they look into many things: Who should be invited? What should they wear? Who will decorate the church? Who will perform the music, preach the homily, and solemnize the marriage proper? Who will sign as

attesting witnesses? Will there be a separate reception or merely some refreshments outside the church after the service? These are important things to think about. However, rarely does the couple think seriously about the vows they will make before God. The vows are viewed as a necessary part of the ritual, but not a part that requires much preparation.

Yet the vows are the key to the marriage. They are part of the covenant that is made that day, a covenant of which God is the primary partner. He comes to bless, seal, and protect the marriage. And Jesus says that because God joins the couple together, no human being or human agency must separate them. This is so even when the persons who have married do not seem to be suited for each other. Once God has joined the couple together, he can provide them with the grace to stay together and develop a good home.

Indeed, the couple may encounter huge problems that seem to be impossible to resolve. But the fact that God has joined them together gives them the confidence that he has the ability to keep them together. They will need to work hard to solve their problems, but they can do so with the confidence that, if they are obedient to God, God will see them through. So they do not talk about getting divorced. Neither one tells a person who is not their spouse, "You are the kind of person I should have married." I have heard of Christians who have told a person of the opposite sex, "My husband/wife does not satisfy me," implying that this other person could give them the satisfaction they miss from their spouses. Such statements have no place in a Christian marriage. These statements are indications that the couple does not believe that God will help them succeed in their marriage.

Belief is one of the basic values of Christianity, and it applies to every area of life. When it comes to marriage, we believe that the God who has sealed our marriage covenants will help us keep our marriages safe and growing until the end. This belief gives us the strength to battle for a happy home without giving up when

the problems become huge and complex. Believing Christians refuse to yield to the temptation to throw up their hands in despair or self-pity when there is a problem. Trusting in God's ability, they fight the fight of faith for their marriages with humility, knowing that their sinful attitudes can hinder God's healing grace (more on that in the next chapter).

The assurance that the God who is committed to our families is bigger than every problem we face is also a source of great peace and security. The Bible promises that "for those who love God all things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28). This is the assurance with which we face every crisis that our marriages and families encounter. We believe God can turn a crisis into something good.

At the start of our marriage, my wife and I decided that, in keeping with Paul's instruction, "Do not let the sun go down on your anger" (Eph. 4:26), when we have a disagreement, we will not go to sleep until it is solved and unity is restored. My wife and I have such different personalities that we took some years to adjust to each other. So in those first few years, we had many "love fights" that extended late into the night until a resolution came. I learned an important lesson during that time. With my mouth, I spoke to my wife, and with my ears, I listened to her. But in my heart, I prayed to God. My prayer was usually something like this: "Please! Oh, please, God, help us!"

The knowledge that God was involved in our issues changed our whole perspective on them. Deep down, we experienced that "peace of God, which surpasses all understanding" (Phil. 4:7) that comes as a result of letting our "requests be made known to God" (v. 6). That peace rules in our hearts (Col. 3:15). As such, it moderates our arguments. How can we say unkind things to our spouses and children or use obscene language when God is right there as part of the conversation? Why should we panic when we have the peace of realizing that God is there to see us through to a resolution? Knowing that God is committed to our marriages markedly influences our attitude to the problems we face.

### **Work for All in the Family to Be Committed to God**

It goes without saying that the greatest desire of Christian leaders for the members of our families is that they become God's children and follow him. God's desire for Israel is surely our desire for our families: "Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!" (Deut. 5:29).

I am not going to spend much time with the fact that it is absolutely essential for a committed Christian to marry a committed Christian. The strong denunciation in Ezra 9 and 10 of the practice of marrying those who do not follow God serves as a serious warning against considering such a step. Yet, sadly, many Christians have done this. The force of love or parental pressure was so irresistible that they chose to disobey God and marry unbelievers. Thankfully, God does not abandon those who repent of wrong decisions they have made. Paul teaches that a person married to an unbeliever should remain faithful to him or her (1 Cor. 7:12–13). He even says that, because of the believer, the unbelieving spouse is, in a sense, made holy, thus making the children born to that marriage holy (v. 14).

What can we do to encourage the members of our families to follow God? Let me mention two powerful actions we can take.

### *The Power of a Beautiful Life*

Peter shows how important it is for Christians to work toward bringing their unbelieving spouses to Christ. He implies that the beauty of their lives rather than their words is most powerful in challenging unbelieving spouses. He says, "Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct" (1 Pet. 3:1–2). He goes on to show the power of a beautiful life: "Let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's

sight is very precious” (v. 4). Today there is a lot of emphasis on people being beautiful when they are outside their homes. Peter is teaching here that being beautiful to our spouses in the way we behave is far more important. Song of Solomon does commend outward physical beauty. However, there the husband and wife are beautiful for each other, not for the world outside to see. How countercultural is the biblical approach to family! We aim to be beautiful primarily in order to bring joy to our spouses!

The evangelist Rodney “Gypsy” Smith (1860–1947) served for a time with the Wesleyan mission in Manchester, England. One of the women in that ministry frequently requested prayers for the conversion of her husband, John. Sadly, she also had a terrible temper. Sometimes when her husband would be close to surrendering to the claims of Christ, she would upset him by having a temper tantrum. Her husband would say, “Well, Mary, if that is religion, I don’t want it.” She would later apologize and ask his forgiveness, but he made a habit of using her temper as his reason for not following Christ.

One day, Smith talked to the woman frankly and told her that she must learn to overcome her temper. He assured her that Christ would give her the grace to enable her to curb her habit. Believing in God, she made a commitment to start a new chapter in her life. It happened to be at a time when they were fixing up their house. Mary had just put in new carpet and a new ceiling lamp, which she had hung in the hallway. John, not knowing about the new lamp, came home carrying something on his shoulder. As he turned the corner, he hit the lamp, and it all came crashing down in shattered pieces.

John braced for his wife’s usual response, a torrent of angry words and berating comments. But rather than the typical response, John was surprised to hear nothing. Instead, his wife looked down over the stairs at him and simply said: “Never mind, husband! It is all right; we can get another lamp.” Confused and surprised, John looked up at her.

“Mary, what’s the matter?”

She calmly replied, “O, my dear, I have trusted Jesus to cure me of my temper.”

John, still amazed at his wife’s unexpected response, said: “Well, if he has cured you, come right down and pray for me, for that’s what I want. If there is enough in religion to cure your temper, I want the same religion.” After years of prayers, John was converted that very day.<sup>1</sup>

Later we will see how important words are within the home, but without the beauty of a loving life, words are powerless. How many stories there are of rebellious children who, unable to shake off the loving example of their mothers’ lives, finally yielded to Christ.

### *The Power of Prayer*

Along with a beautiful life, prayer also goes a long way in bringing salvation to family members. Epaphras was probably the one who took the gospel to Colossae (Col. 1:7). He was with Paul when the apostle wrote his letter to the Colossian church. Of him, Paul writes, “Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God” (Col. 4:12). This spiritual father was struggling or “wrestling” (NIV) in prayer on behalf of his fellow Colossian believers while he was separated from them. Likewise, shortly after expressing deep sorrow over the fact that his own people, the Jews, had not accepted Christ’s salvation (Rom. 9:1–3), Paul says, “Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved” (10:1). Whatever one’s theology of election is, we must accept that God uses prayer as a means of bringing people to salvation.

Often there is a huge battle going on for the souls of our family members. Though sometimes we cannot talk to them about God, we can talk to God about them. Augustine Aurelius (354–430),

bishop of Hippo in North Africa, was one of the most influential theologians in the history of the church. He was deeply influenced by the piety and example of his mother, Monica, who was a Christian. But that was not sufficient to lead to his conversion to Christ or to prevent him from living an immoral life. It was only at the age of thirty-three that he finally yielded to Christ. In his autobiographical *Confessions*, he speaks glowingly of the influence his mother's prayers had in his conversion. Interestingly, it was not only her prayers, but also her exemplary life and her persistent pleas for him to change his ways that had a deep influence upon him. Her work on earth complete, she died a few days after his conversion.

The name Scudder is an important one in South Asian mission studies. Dr. John Scudder came from America to Sri Lanka as a missionary and then went to India. All of his seven children became missionaries. John said that his seven children were prayed into the kingdom by their mother, Harriet. She had the habit of spending the birthdays of each of her children fasting and praying for that child. John and Harriet's granddaughter, Ida Scudder (1870–1959), founded the famous Vellore Medical College and hospital in Tamil Nadu, South India.

Every Christian parent needs to develop a way to pray for his or her children. I mention “a way” because such things can slip from our minds and we can forget to pray. So we need to develop disciplines that ensure that we pray for our children. When parents pray together, prayer for their children should surely be an indispensable ingredient of that prayer time. Paul mentions praying for the recipients of ten of his thirteen letters. But for his spiritual child, Timothy, he says that he prayed “night and day” (2 Tim. 1:3). Our physical children and our spouses, as well as our spiritual children, should occupy central places in our prayer lives. We should be praying for them daily, perhaps many times a day. When our children have left home, one of the ways we can fulfill our parenting responsibilities is by praying for them. We can



follow their schedules with our prayers and bring up their needs. And if they are not yet converted, we can pray for their salvation.

In chapter 13, I will discuss the important part that instruction in the Word has in the lives of children.

### **God First**

Jesus's statement, "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matt. 6:33), applies to all Christians, including leaders. The principle behind Paul's advice to children relating to the care of aged parents—"Let them first learn to show godliness to their own household" (1 Tim. 5:4)—relates to parents too. When leaders practice Christianity in their homes, this brings credibility to their leadership and ministry. We urge our family members to be totally committed to God, and those we minister among see this. In his famous speech to Israel, like a good leader, Joshua urged the people to total dedication to God: "Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD" (Josh. 24:14). He buttressed that challenge by stating his own commitment to do the same along with his family: "But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (v. 15).

Yet leaders are not immune to the temptation to make decisions for the family that are influenced by the world's standards and that violate God's will. How easy it is for us to ignore the fact that, if we follow God's way, he will provide everything we need for the best life possible. We can have ambitions for ourselves and our children that take us and them backward spiritually. Under the influence of desires for earthly success, we can forget Jesus's questions: "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26).

We cannot assume that leaders will automatically practice Christianity with their families. Let me mention a few examples that highlight some of the challenges leaders face.

When a son is studying for an exam and needs some special instruction, the parents don't mind sending him for a class that clashes with worship services on Sunday—the Lord's Day. They might stop the son from going to the youth fellowship at church because he has to study. Indeed, when the exam is close, he may miss youth fellowship meetings while continuing to go for worship on Sunday. But this neglect of much-needed fellowship sometimes takes place long before the exam time. The child gets the impression that studies are more important than spiritual health. D. L. Moody says: "I would rather, if I went tonight, leave my children in the hope of Christ than leave them millions of money. It seems to me as if we were too ambitious to have them make a name, instead of to train them up for the life they are to lead forever."<sup>2</sup>

Let's take an example from the Christian discipline of giving. A young couple is planning to buy a house. They have saved money for several years to do so. They discover a house that is just the kind of place they want to have as their home. They calculate how they will pay back the loan they will have to take in order to buy this house. They realize that they will be able to make the payments only if they reduce their giving to God's work and to the poor. There is their tithe, which would usually be considered a non-negotiable commitment. There is a child from a poor home, for whose education they had decided to give a substantial monthly payment. Are they going to give up this dream house by continuing with their giving? As giving is part of a Christian's basic non-negotiable expenditure, this couple decides to forgo what looked like a beautiful opportunity.

Some of the most enjoyable television programs are during the times the children are at home, which could be good family times. Prime-time television can be during prime family time. It is nice for family members to watch good television programs (I personally relish an opportunity to watch a good cricket match or a detective program), but it is very important for a family to establish that

watching a favorite program is of secondary importance. It must not get in the way of family prayers and other important activities, such as meetings at church or meetings of the small group to which the family belongs. Parents may be forced into missing an important game that is being broadcast on TV because they have to visit a needy person in the hospital. Sometimes a visitor comes right in the middle of an exciting episode of a favorite program. The parents decide to turn off the TV. When the children see their parents making such sacrifices, they get the message about what is important in their home.

If we forget that the work of Christ broke human barriers, we can deny the great biblical teaching of equality by preventing our children from having friendships with people we consider to be of a lower class than ourselves. Moody tells a sad story that a lady told him about her only son. The boy was involved in the evangelistic work of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and would go out in the streets to distribute tracts. The mother was ambitious that he should make a name for himself and wanted him to make connections with people in high society. She thought it was below his dignity to associate with the poor youth of the YMCA. She wanted him to stop going there, but he did not give up. So she packed him off to a boarding school. From there, he went to a prestigious university, Yale, where he lost his faith.

When she realized this, she wrote to him often, trying to summon him back to the faith. But it was to no avail. The parents did not hear from him for two years. Then they heard that he was in Chicago. After resuming contact with him, the father gave him a large sum of money to start a business. They thought that this would change him, but it didn't. The last they heard of him was that he had drowned in Lake Michigan. What remorse that mother had; but it was too late!<sup>3</sup>

Parents make a similar mistake when they object to their son's choice of a partner in life because she comes from a family that is considered socially inferior to them. She is a fine Christian

and is suitable for him in every other way. But bondage to social status has blinded the family from seeing a key biblical principle. The decision to oppose that principle gives the message that social status is more important to this family than God and his principles.

## **Prayer**

One of the most obvious signs of the primacy of God in the Christian home is prayer. Yet prayer usually does not happen naturally. We must make it happen. I had wanted to write “Take time to pray” here; instead, I am saying, “Make time to pray.” We must proactively pursue the priority of prayer in the home and somehow make the time for it.

The most basic type of prayer in a home is individual prayer in private. This is the context Jesus used when he wanted to teach about genuine prayer. He said, “When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret” (Matt. 6:6). During this time, we pray for our family members, as I have mentioned above. The habit of individuals being alone and praying to God is a signature of a Christian home. When I was a child attending a Bible camp with my family, I heard Herbert Epp speaking about his father, Theodore Epp, the founder of the Back to the Bible Broadcast. He said that there were times when his father would be in his room with the door closed. The children knew that he should not be disturbed during these times because he was praying. I have a similar memory of my mother and grandmother. When I went to stay at the home of my grandparents, sometimes I would need to use the restroom early in the morning before dawn. I had to go through my grandparents’ room, and I would see my grandmother kneeling in prayer beside her bed with her head covered. It was the same with my mother, whom I would see on her knees every morning.

I believe praying is the most important thing we do on earth. Our children recognize this when they observe the seriousness

with which we approach the task of praying. This encourages them to respect and honor God.

Mothers with little children often struggle to make time for concentrated periods of prayer. They need to use their creativity to find suitable times. I once asked a young friend who had two little children how his wife was finding time to pray. He told me that when the children fell asleep in the afternoon, she would immediately pounce on the opportunity to have her time alone with God.

A lady was impressed that her neighbor, who was the mother of many children, seemed to have a demeanor that suggested that she was in intimate contact with God. She asked the mother how she was able to achieve this. The lady pointed to a large apron she always wore. She said that when she sat on a certain chair and put the apron over her head, the children knew that this meant she was praying. There was a rule in the house that the children must be quiet during these times.

Children must know that their parents devote time to prayer because God is important to them. Unconsciously they imbibe the idea that personal prayer is an important aspect of life. This becomes an incentive for them also to become people of prayer. Once “Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples’” (Luke 11:1). That question prompted Jesus to give them the Lord’s Prayer (vv. 2–4). Seeing Jesus pray gave the disciples a desire to become people of prayer.

The first fourteen chapters of Acts give us a glimpse of the life of the early church. There are twenty-two references to prayer in this section, and most of those are instances of corporate prayer. If corporate prayer is so important to church life, it must surely be important in the most basic unit of the church—the family. The habit of couples praying together regularly and parents praying with their children is an important aspect of the identity and stability of the family. We should also pray together at important

family events and when the family faces challenges. The family should recognize that prayer is not just a ritual that is performed at birthdays; rather, it is an important aspect of the celebration. Praying before the start of a long journey or before a family member leaves for an important event helps mediate God's blessings for the journey or the event. It also establishes that God is the One from whom we get our help at important times.

My son played cricket at school when he was in his early teens. We had a habit of praying with him before he left for a game. One day, I was driving him to a game, but I had forgotten to pray with him. While I was driving, he asked me, "Can you pray for me?" He had come to accept that committing a game to the Lord was an important part of his life.

When children grow up, they will not forget that their identity and security as children were wrapped up in praying to God. Sometimes, when they go through a rebellious stage and are tempted to give up the faith, the pleasant memories of these moments with God as a family may make it difficult for them to abandon the faith of their childhood. Even if they do abandon it for a time, these memories could trigger a return to God. I am sure you know of children who have turned their backs on God but who nevertheless ask their parents to pray when they have a special need.

It goes without saying that family prayer should not be legalistic, burdensome, or boring. Parents must do all they can to use their creativity to make it interesting and pleasant: one of those happy things parents and children do as a family. We should try to develop ways for the children to be meaningfully involved during the prayer time. When our children were young, we would first discuss things about which we should pray. Then I would ask, "Who's praying for what?" That became a source of laughter in the home, but also a practice that helped involve the children in the prayer time. Of course, the children's needs have an important place in this prayer time. The fact that they know they can bring

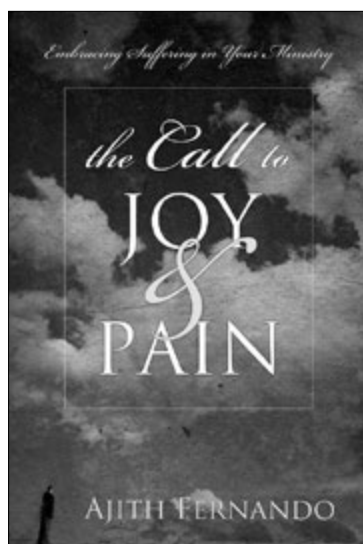
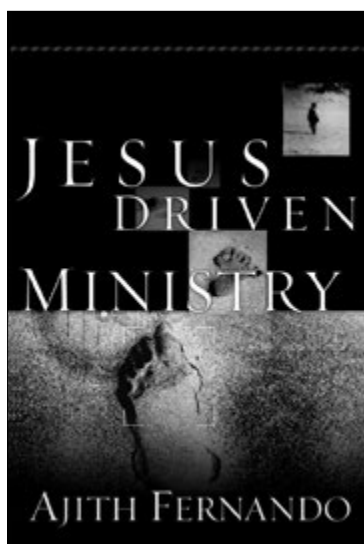
those needs to the family and pray about them becomes a major source of security for them.

Again, let me say that, no matter how interesting we make the family prayer time, it is not natural for families to meet regularly for prayer. It is best that one person takes upon himself or herself the responsibility to ensure that the meeting takes place. When the children are young the father or the mother could take on this role. As the children get older, one of them could be given this responsibility. This principle is also important for couples with no children or whose children have left home. It is sad that many Christian couples today do not have a regular time of prayer together. This must change! Either the husband or the wife should ensure that they have such a time.

## **Conclusion**

The main point of this chapter has been that God's involvement is the most important factor in our marriages and families. He is the committed senior partner in the marriage covenant, who helps us fulfill the covenant conditions and works in every situation for our good. On our part, we must be committed to God and to his principles. Failure to be so committed will take us along destructive paths. At a time when families are under attack, when the media and many segments of the culture seem to be at war against the biblical understanding of marriage and family, Christians must remain enthusiastic about these God-created institutions.

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