

What Have They Seen in Your House?



SABBATH—JUNE 15

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: 2 Chronicles 32:25, 31; Ruth 1:14–18; 1 Corinthians 7:12–15; 1 Corinthians 4:16.

MEMORY VERSE: “But God chose you to be his people. You are royal priests [religious leaders]. You are a holy nation. You are God’s special treasure. You are all these things so that you can give him praise. God brought you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9, NIV).

WHEN SOMEONE COMES TO VISIT YOUR HOUSE, what do they see? Some people came from Babylon to visit King Hezekiah. Later, God’s special messenger, Isaiah, asked the King, “What did they see in your house?” (Isaiah 39:4, ERV). How will visitors to your house answer that question?

What do people see in your house? What do the angels from heaven see? What spirit fills our homes? Is it a spirit of love? Is your home a house of prayer? Or is there anger, hate, and disagreement there? Will someone who comes to visit your home see Jesus in your family members?

These are important questions that we all need to ask ourselves. This week, we will look at some of the things that can make your home life wonderful. We know that no family is perfect. We all have our troubles. What can we do to make the home a wonderful place?



What do people see in your house? What do the angels from heaven see?

KING HEZEKIAH'S MISTAKE (2 Chronicles 32:25, 31)

Read the story about the visitors from Babylon who came to see King Hezekiah after he was healed. You can read the story in 2 Chronicles 32:25, 31; Isaiah 38; and Isaiah 39. Why did the men from Babylon visit the king? What happened when they came to see him?



Sin makes us sick. But Jesus came to heal us.

The Bible tells us that King Hezekiah was very sick. Then God healed him. Later, some Babylonian leaders visited King Hezekiah. They wanted to learn how the king got better. King Hezekiah does not tell the men from Babylon about how God healed him. That is odd. Why? Because in Isaiah 38, King Hezekiah is very grateful to God for healing him. But in Isaiah 39, King Hezekiah does not say anything about what God did for him at all!

“God left Hezekiah alone to test him and to know everything that was in Hezekiah’s heart” (2 Chronicles 32:31, ERV). The visit of the men from Babylon was very important. Did King Hezekiah ask God to help him be a good witness? No. The king did not ask for advice from God’s special messengers or from Israel’s holy leaders.

We should always show our faith in God, even in our home when we think no one is watching. Hezekiah’s story teaches us this important lesson. What other lessons about being loyal to God does the king’s story teach us?

People who come to a Christian home will have the chance to meet Jesus’ followers. That is why every visit that people make to your home is important. Very few people who visit your home will start talking with you about spiritual things. So, Christians must find ways to share the Good News in a warm and loving way.

God does not want you to show off your house to your guests. Or brag about all the nice things you own. Sure, these things are beautiful gifts from God. Maybe these things will even cause your guests to praise God for being so good to you. Yes, God wants your guests to “give him praise” (1 Peter 2:9, NIV). But more than that, God wants your guests to see from you how much they need Jesus. King Hezekiah saw how much he needed Jesus when he got sick. God healed Hezekiah. This miracle shows us what Jesus will do for us (Ephesians 2:4–6). Sin makes us sick. But Jesus came to heal us and “[give] us a seat with him in the heavens” (Ephesians 2:6, ICB).

FAMILY FIRST (Ruth 1:14–18)

Who are the first people we want to share the Good News with? Our families. As Christians, one of the most important places where we can serve Jesus is in our homes.

What does John 1:40–42 teach us about sharing our faith at home? Also, read Deuteronomy 6:6, 7 and Ruth 1:14–18 to help you answer the question.

What did Andrew do? He did not just talk about Jesus. He helped Simon, his brother, to meet Jesus. From then on, Peter and Jesus had their own friendship. We can do what Andrew did too. We can tell our family members about Jesus. Then we can help them get to know who Jesus is.

Do not forget the children in your family. They also need to know Jesus. Many times, people forget about sharing the Good News with kids. Some parents think that children will just go along with religion because the parents are religious. But that does not always happen. Yes, children and young people learn about Jesus from watching how adult Christians behave. But young people also need personal care and attention. They need the chance to get to know Jesus too. Deuteronomy 6 is clear: we must help our children learn about Jesus. We should make family worship a habit in the home. Put time into helping your children get to know God. Work hard to help them understand that Jesus loves them and died for their sins.

What did Naomi do to help her sons' wives learn about Jesus? What can we learn from Naomi to help us witness to our families? Read Ruth 1:8–22 for the answers.

Ruth saw Naomi at the worst time in her life. Naomi lost her husband and two sons. Then she tried to push Ruth away. Later, Naomi told God that she was angry and hurt because of everything she lost (Ruth 1:15, 20, 21). What did Ruth do? She showed Naomi how much she loved her. Ruth also showed Naomi her deep love for God. Naomi was far from perfect. But Naomi helped Ruth to know who God was. Ruth shows us that young people can give their lives fully to a perfect God. Even if the mom or dad who tells them about God is not perfect!



We should make family worship a habit in the home.

PEACE THAT WINS (1 Corinthians 7:12–15)

What advice does the New Testament give Christians who are married to people who do not believe in God? Read 1 Corinthians 7:12–15 and 1 Peter 3:1, 2 for the answer.



The Christian partner brings Jesus into the home.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul answers questions that Christians have about marriage. Believers are worried that God might be upset with them if they stay married to unbelievers. But Paul says God will not be angry with them for staying married to their husbands and wives who do not believe in Him. Marriage is very holy. It continues to be holy for a husband and wife even after only one of them becomes a Christian. The Christian partner brings Jesus into the home. He or she becomes a blessing to the other partner and their children too.

At times, the husband or wife who does not believe in Jesus may decide to end the marriage. God always respects our choices. We are free to choose. He made us that way. That is why Paul says: “But if the husband or wife who is not a believer decides to leave, let them leave. When this happens, the brother or sister in Christ [Jesus] is free” (1 Corinthians 7:15, ERV).

What are the best ways to win your husband or wife to Jesus? Be loving and kind. Show him or her that you are loyal to your marriage and to God. Serve your partner in love. But make sure you always put Jesus first (read Ephesians 5:21). As Christians, our first loyalty always must be to God. God wants us to honor our marriages and stay with our partners, even if they do not accept Jesus. But God does not want you to stay with a husband or wife who hits you or beats you because of your beliefs.

Do you know someone in your church who is married to someone who does not believe in Jesus? Is this church member having a hard time in his or her marriage? What can you do to help?

FAMILY LIFE AND SHARING (1 Corinthians 4:16)

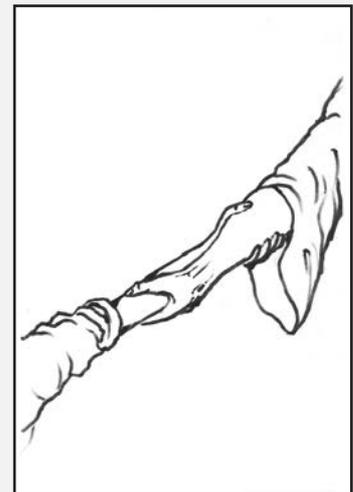
Look at what the New Testament writers tell us to do: “Follow the way I live” (1 Corinthians 4:16, NLV; 1 Thessalonians 1:6). “Follow his [God’s] example” (Ephesians 5:1, NlrV). “Be like those who have faith” (Hebrews 6:12, ICB). “Copy their faith” (Hebrews 13:7, NlrV). “Follow what is good” (3 John 1:11, ERV). These verses show us that there is a strong connection between copying and witnessing. When we copy what we see other Christians do, how does that help us to become better witnesses?

Children copy their parents and their brothers and sisters. Married people often copy each other too. We become the same as the people and the things we watch. The same thing can happen when people come to visit us in our homes. They get a chance to share our family life in some way. Many people have never seen a good example of marriage or family. So, they do not have a good example to follow. They may see how the spirit of Jesus makes a big difference in our homes. “We can change people’s lives by the way we live our lives around them. This power to change other people’s lives is very wonderful. We can use this power to help the people around us.”—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry [work done for God] of Healing*, page 354, adapted. Married couples should invite other couples to their homes for a meal or to study the Bible together. Then their guests will see an example of Christians as they solve problems, communicate, and serve each other. In this way, visitors will get to see an example of Jesus.

What do Jeremiah 17:9; John 2:25; and Romans 3:23 tell us? What do we need to be careful about when we try to be examples to other people?

All humans are sinners. All humans make mistakes. So, we will never be perfect examples. We need to remember that. The New Testament tells us to follow believers who follow Jesus. God’s plan is for people to take hold of Him in faith as they see faith in the lives of Christians. We Christians are just as human and able to make mistakes as the people we witness to.

How can you make your home a better example of God’s love?



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FRIENDSHIP (Genesis 18:1–8)

The Bible tells us we should be kind to people, help them, and welcome them into our homes. Read the stories below. How do these stories show us the important rules talked about in Isaiah 58:6, 7, 10–12; Romans 12:13; and 1 Peter 4:9?

Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 18:1–8) _____

Rebekah and her family (Genesis 24:15–20; Genesis 31–33)

Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1–9) _____



When we give a drink to a thirsty person, we are really giving it to Jesus.

Everyone needs rest, food, and friendship. When we give these things to people, we show them Jesus' love. Jesus taught that feeding the hungry was important. Our giving a drink to someone who is thirsty is important too. When we give these things to people, we also give them to Jesus (Matthew 25:34–40). We can use our homes to serve Jesus too. Why not invite neighbors to share a meal with your family? Or let someone stay with you who needs to heal from a broken marriage? Maybe you can invite someone to your home to pray or study the Bible. When God's love touches our hearts, we will want to share His love with people.

Some families feel that they cannot invite people into their homes. They make excuses. They worry about problems that may happen if they invite neighbors in their homes. Or they feel they do not have enough time or energy for guests. Some people are shy. They do not know how to invite people to their homes. They say their houses are not very big or nice enough for guests. But we must not think that our showing Christian love to people in our homes means we are showing off. We do not need to have a fancy party for our guests. We can show them Jesus by giving them a simple meal.

How does your home show your love for Jesus?

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: Ellen G. White, “A Powerful Christian Witness,” pages 35–39; “Attitude [thoughts and feelings] Toward [that you show] an Unbelieving [does not believe] Companion [husband or wife],” pages 348–352, in *The Adventist Home*; “Ministry of the Home,” pp. 349–355, in *The Ministry [work done for God] of Healing*; “The Ambassadors [leaders] From Babylon,” pages 340–348, in *Prophets [special messengers] and Kings*.

“A home that is true to Jesus can change human hearts and lives and make them better. This power is stronger than any sermon that a person can preach. . . .

“We may not think that we can change very many lives and make them better. We may think that we do not have many skills. We may believe that we do not have many chances either. But we can use our homes to touch lives. And if we do, God can make many wonderful things happen in the lives of the people we welcome into our families.”—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, pages 352, 355, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1 Are there people in your class who are Christians today because a Christian family invited them home and showed them Jesus’ love? What did your class member like about this Christian home? What was it about the home that led them to accept Jesus? What can your class learn from this experience?
- 2 What can you do to help a family with a father or mother who does not believe in Jesus?
- 3 As a class, talk about the things that make it hard for you to have faith. Make a list of these problems. Next to each problem, write an answer that solves it.
- 4 In our homes, we witness to our kids, to our husbands or wives who do not believe in Jesus, other family members, and visitors. It is not always easy to witness in our homes. We are not perfect people. But we do our best to show the love of a perfect Savior. One way we can do that is to invite people into our homes to meet Jesus. What do people see when they come visit your home? What can you do to make your home a better place for visitors? How can you help them to see Jesus more?



God can make many wonderful things happen in the lives of the people we welcome into our families.