

**Sample prayer of dedication:** “Heavenly Father, you created this child (say his name) and you love this child. You sent Jesus into the world to die for this child and you want him to live for you in the world and to live with you forever. We ask you to bless these parents, make them wise and help them to raise this child to honour them and to love you. Together, we present this child to you to bless in Jesus’ Name.”

### 3. Plan with your co-workers the next worship service.

- € Read, recount or act out the story of Abraham who sought a wife for his son, Isaac (Genesis 24).
- € Lead the believers in a discussion of the benefits of good marriages between believing mates.
- € Have the children present the drama that they have prepared.
- € Hold a dedication ceremony in which the parents offer their children to the Lord and promise to give them in marriage only to believers.
- € Pray for each child, that the Lord will break any curses on them and provide believing mates for them.
- € To introduce the Lord's Supper, read 1 Corinthians 10:13-22.
- € Form small groups of two, three or four to pray for each other's children and their marriages.

## Believers' Children Marry Believers

Teach believers to give their children in marriage to believers.

### 1. Prepare your mind and spirit to preserve godly families and marriages.

**Prayer:** “Holy Father, please use this study to help me lead the believers to give their children into holy marriages.”

Our enemy, Satan, has many tricks to destroy our families. He wants our children to marry unbelievers.

Find in **Genesis 6:1-7**, how, before the Great Flood, how bad marriages led to great evil.

- Who chose mates for men's children? (Find the answer in verse 2)
- What was in men's hearts? (verse 5)
- How did God feel about men's choices? (verse 6)
- What did God decide to do? (verse 7)

Find in **Genesis 34:9-10** how pagans tried to deceive Jacob's family.

- What did the pagans want Jacob to do? (verse 9)
- What did the pagans offer to Jacob? (verse 10)

Find in **Ezra 9:10-14**, how bad marriages in Israel displeased God.

- What had God forbidden them to do? (verse 12)
- What did God do to the people because of bad marriages? (verse 13)
- What would God do if the people continued making bad marriages? (verse 14)

Find in **1 Corinthians 11:1-3** God's pattern for Christian marriages.

- Who must be the "head" of every husband?
- Who must be the "head" of every Christian wife?

Understand the **evils of bad marriages** with unbelievers.

- Bad marriages displease God and parents will lose an eternal reward.
- Believing children married to unbelievers will commit sins and serve demons.
- Bad marriages lead to unhappy husbands and wives and to unhappy parents.
- Bad marriages keep the country unbelieving and keep believers a minority.
- Bad marriages give Satan power over people.

Understand **the benefits of good marriages** with believers.

- Good marriages please God and earn an eternal reward.
- Children married to believers will serve the Lord.
- Good marriages make husbands as wives happy and parents happy.
- Good marriages make the country more believing and make believers more numerous.
- Good marriages help to defeat Satan.

Write here reasons why you will give your children in marriage only to believers:

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Discuss with your co-workers some reasons that believing parents give their children to marry unbelievers. Tick the reasons that apply and write down other reasons.

- € They want to get a dowry or bride price.
- € They hope to get money, land or political power.
- € Tradition says they must do so.
- € They are afraid of evil magic or spirits.
- € They want to please an unbelieving relative or friend.
- € Other reasons:

## 2. Project what you and your co-workers will do during the week.

- € Visit families who have little children and pray for them and their future marriages.
- € Explain to parents the consequences of bad marriages with unbelievers.
- € Explain to parents the consequences of good marriages with believers.
- € Pray to break generational curses, bondages and obligations.
- € Pray for parents to have courage and give their children to believers.
- € Invite parents to dedicate their babies to Jesus during a worship meeting.
- € If parents have made an unholy alliance with unbelievers, then plan with them how to break that alliance.