

My Family Full circle in 60 Seconds:  
**Bites for Family togetherness Week of Prayer**  
September 3-9, 2023

## #1 Parenting – September 3

Hello, fellow parents!

In God's design of the family, the first and most influential persons in an individual's life are parents – yes, **you** – working hard at securing, nurturing and training, for at least the first 15 years of your child's existence. The awesome task is yours parents, to prayerfully guide each child into becoming an independent adult of a good character, serving humanity and glorifying God.

Teaching your children from the Word of God, showering them with love, while coaching them to observe rules and guidelines, is the formula to help these young ones lay a solid foundation for life. In doing so, we help them develop healthy minds that interpret the world correctly and formulate a positive self-image. This will equip your child to establish good relationships that serve as a springboard for a happy, successful future.

I pray God's blessings on you and your offspring.

## #2 Mental Health and the Family – September 4

What's on **your** mind?

The mental health of each family member should always be taken seriously, especially during these stressful times in which we are now living.

Some of us are more susceptible to mental illness because of our genetic make-up, the intensity of our daily stresses, and a lack of proper coping mechanisms. Within a loving family, members must be continuously mindful of the mental condition of each other. Where a family member is challenged in maintaining mental health, the necessary support should be provided to professionally diagnose and treat the condition.

Mental illness is no respecter of persons; so let us help each other to stay healthy mentally - for without mental health, there is no real health at all.

I PRAY ABOVE ALL THINGS THAT YOU PROSPER AND BE IN GOOD HEALTH.

### #3 Dealing with Separation and Loss – September 5

Are you feeling that pain again?

Dealing with divorce, separation by death or physical abandonment can be a very excruciating experience for any human being. The loss of your intimate lover will necessitate significant alterations to stem the emotional pain, financial drain, and other complicated issues which for some, drag on for the rest of their lives.

The journey back to happiness looks like this:

- Face your situation in the most practical and positive manner possible.
- Be deliberate about letting go of your sadness, pain and loss, as you focus on carving out a bright future.
- Explore new interests in life as you rediscover yourself in your new context.
- and don't travel this difficult road alone. Instead, surround yourself with supportive, loving people, and become submerged in the healing grace of a loving, compassionate God.

I PRAY FOR YOUR HEALING TODAY.

### #4 Parenting Children with Special Needs – September 6

An estimated 15% of the population in Jamaica are persons with disabilities. More and more persons are becoming parents of children with special needs. A huge challenge, indeed, but one with many possibilities.

Here are some **possibility tips** for parents:

Your task is a special and unique one - One which requires education, dedication, and cooperation. Utilize Government agencies and NGOs that are established to provide you with help and support.

Integrating all family members into the caring and training of the child with special needs will lower the stress levels for all, and can be a means of keeping the family united and strong.

While we encourage our churches and society to become more sensitive to persons with special needs, we salute the parents, and encourage you to lead the charge in helping your children to maximize their potential, and lead happy, fulfilled lives.

WITH GOD, IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE.

### **#5 The Family & Forgiveness – September 7**

Your family is your closest neighbour. Therefore, your work of forgiving and receiving forgiveness is first and best practiced at home. Is there some hurt you have been carrying? Is there a family member whom you need to forgive? Or must you ask to be forgiven?

Remember that forgiveness heals. We have all been wronged and have done wrong. Yet, God is willing to forgive us; and He requires that we also be willing to forgive others.

How about you, child of God? How about you, family member? Would you allow the Holy Spirit to fill you with the healing oil of love and humility? As you forgive and are forgiven, you will notice a load being lifted from your own soul.

Destroy your unforgiving spirit, not your family. They are too precious to beat up! Let us pray for the courage of compassion right here at home, where it matters most.

PLEASE JOIN ME IN PRAYING ... “Father, forgive us, as we forgive those who offend us. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.”

### **#6 Conflict Resolution – September 8**

Here comes another fight! ... or ... how about a handshake ... or an embrace, instead?

Conflict resolution allows the parties involved to find a peaceful solution to their disagreement.

Before trying to settle a conflict, invite the presence of the Holy Spirit. Be caring in confrontation. Be fair. Present the facts. Listen patiently and well. Be positive and provide opportunities for restoration. Remember Proverbs 10:17 – *Anyone willing to be corrected is on the pathway to life. Anyone refusing has lost his chance.*

If a member of the family refuses to make peace, you might consider giving him or her another chance. Go back to God in prayer. Seek counsel from your pastor, therapist, or some other competent person.

The Prince of peace is willing and able.

TODAY, I PRAY FOR GOD'S PEACE IN **YOUR** HEART, IN **YOUR** LIFE, IN **YOUR** FAMILY.

## #7 **Single with a Song – September 9**

Can you be single and happy? Oh yes! Being single does not mean that you are alone or lonely. It's a great opportunity to meet people, accomplish goals, and practice some good selfcare!

The most important relationship you will ever have is the one you enjoy with your Creator, God. Make priority the time you spend with Him – in His word and in prayer. Know your worth: You are a child of God!

The absence of a spouse does not mean that your life is incomplete. Go ahead and celebrate what you do have. One of the things you certainly have is nature. Time outdoors is excellent for mental health. Take frequent walks. Soak up some sun. Book a trip. Plant a garden. Get out there!

Finally, *single* does not mean *self-centered*. Help someone. Contribute time and resources to a cause that grabs your heart. And yes, keep in touch with family members, friends, neighbors, and folks from church.

If you are feeling down and unable to cope, it might be time to talk to someone – a professional therapist who can guide you through the highs and lows of life. There is always a way. Be single with a song ... a happy song.

HAPPY SABBATH!