



Family Matters



A CHRIST-CENTERED RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES AND TEACHERS

Upon This Rock: The Everlasting Rock

“SOME THINGS JUST DON’T LAST LIKE THEY USED TO.”

Have you ever said that, or thought that, or had that conversation with your family? Perhaps it was when an appliance gave out at the very worst time. Maybe it was when the family car broke down or when a favorite piece of clothing wore out sooner than you expected.

In this consumer-oriented day and age, new and better things come on the scene very quickly. As parents, we need to decide if it is appropriate for our family. In some instances, it has become more than just practical to get the “latest and greatest” — it has become fashionable. At the same time, there also seems to be a growing interest in preserving things from our past, honoring our family heritage and trusting that “old school” ways may work just as well as something new and flashy. There are also those times when new methods intersect with honoring our past, such as the rising interest in ancestry research using the Internet and other electronic resources.

Being mindful of how we use, preserve and even reuse things is good stewardship of the resources that God has given to us. He has richly blessed us as His people and filled the earth with good things. He has given us the ability to learn about our world, to work and live within it in helpful and productive ways.

But even with all we know, we don’t always make the best choices when caring for the homes that God has given us or even the people in our families. We work hard at it — sometimes to the point of exhaustion. Due to our sinful nature, even with our best efforts to keep things in balance, we come up short.



**“God is the solid rock that
we can rely on. In Him
alone can we trust.”**

The second part of Is. 26:4 says, “For the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock.” This is good news for us who live in a world where things fall apart, family plans go awry, relationships get strained and people hurt each other. God is the solid rock that we can rely on. In Him alone can we trust.

In JER. 31:3, we are told that God loves His people with an everlasting love. In a world where we tire and wear down, where we come up short, this everlasting love of God has given us everlasting life. For in the fullness of time, God sent His Son to be our Savior!

Jesus went to the cross on our behalf to restore an everlasting relationship between us and the Father, to reconnect the created with the Creator, to assure that those who believe and are baptized in His name will have everlasting life.

In a world where family plans start and stop, where things get out of balance, where relationships change and end, we have an everlasting God who will be our Rock of Ages now and for all eternity.

FAMILY LINKS: Activities for families to reinforce Bible story truths in the home.

Gather the family together in a comfortable place in the home for a time of family interaction and Bible study using the outline below.

OPENING PRAYER: Have the person in the family who is the oldest offer an opening prayer.

FAMILY SHARING TIME:

Work through the questions below to have a family discussion around the topic of time.

- How old is everyone in the family in years?
(Have everyone share.)
 - How many days has everyone in the family lived thus far in their life? (Use a calculator to figure this out.)
 - How many hours has everyone in the family lived up to this date in time? (Very challenging to calculate this, but it can be done.)
 - Pick an older family member who is not present and figure out the number of years, days and hours they have lived.
- 1) Were you surprised by the numbers your family came up with in the questions above? (Responses will vary.)
 - 2) What does it mean to be able to calculate these numbers? (That we are blessed to live the lives we have lived, that God has given us so much in the years, days and hours of our lives.)
 - 3) Seeing these numbers, how does it make you think about how you want to live your days ahead? (Responses will vary, but will hopefully focus on living a life of faith and service.)



FAMILY BIBLE TIME:

Have a family member look up Eccl. 3:11–14 and read it aloud. After reading, ask these follow-up questions:

- **Verse 11** says God has made everything beautiful in its time. What are some beautiful things in your life? (Answers will vary.)
- **Verse 12** says that there is nothing better for men (humans) than to be happy and do good while they live. What makes you happy? (Answers will vary.) What are some good things that you like to do? (Answers will vary, and will hopefully focus on service to God, the church and others.)
- **Verse 14** mentions that everything God does will endure forever. What are some things that will endure forever? (God's love. God's mercy and grace. Eternal life that He gives us in Jesus.)

FAMILY ACTIVITY TIME:

Pick a nice day to take a walk where you live and look for examples of things that connect with the words from Ecclesiastes that were read during Family Bible Time. Point them out and talk about them as you walk as a family.

- Beautiful things.
- Things that make you happy.
- Good things that you like to do.
- Examples of how God endures forever.

CLOSING ECHO PRAYER: Have an adult or older sibling read the prayer below, section by section, with the rest of the family echoing each phrase.

Gracious God, You are the Creator of all. You are the Giver of all good gifts. Thank You for giving us Jesus as our Savior. Thank You for being the Rock we can count on. Continue to bless all of our days, until we live with You eternally. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Family Matters

Vol. 21 • No. 9 • May 2017

Family Matters is an LCMS School Ministry newsletter Published by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295
314-965-9000 • lcms.org
Writer: Dr. Steven Christopher Designer: Lisa Moeller

TO REPRINT: Permission is granted to reprint articles from this newsletter with the credit line "Reprinted with permission of LCMS School Ministry."

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

