



Godly Home: A Divine plan

A home where God delights



FAMILY MONTH - JANUARY
NEGF Christian Home Cell



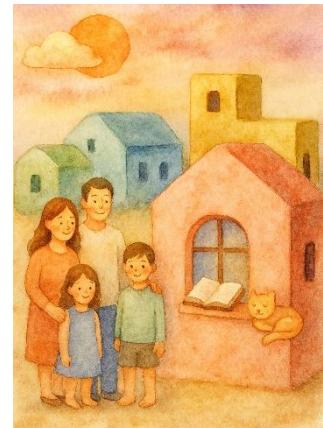
Foreword

HAPPY
NEW
YEAR

Loving greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Savior Jesus Christ. I Believe that you all had a joyful Christmas Season and celebrations of new year 2026, together with your family, friends and Relatives.

We, NEGF Christian Home Cell, cordially inform all EGFs of UESI nationwide to observe January 2026 as FAMILY MONTH. This signifies the importance of family love relationships among family members and glorifying God through family and establishing an exemplary family in the community.

It is God's plan that the institution of marriage and being fruitful in the world. It is God's design for people to live as a family which constitutes members as Father, Mother, and Children. Children are miraculous gifts of God in a family. And it's beautiful in God's sight when parents and children love each other and care for one another. Home is the place where God's presence prevails and where His name is honored and worshipped.

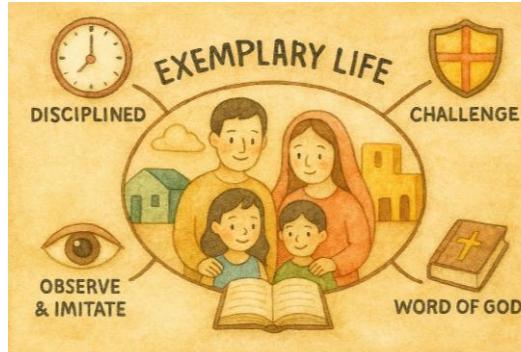


God wants to be the Head of the house as every one of the family submits to His authority. Godly parents are those who wish their children also love and serve the Lord. According to Deuteronomy 6:1-2 & 7-9, it is the responsibility of parents to teach their children about God when they sit, stand, walk and in bed. Our children need to be directed towards God. Teaching them how to depend on God and how to obey God and His commandments is the primary requirement of Godly family and praying together and studying the



word of God as well. When they grow up, they will not fall away from what they have learned.

As per parents, setting up an exemplary life before children is also a challenge. The little eyes always observe and imitate what they see. So parents also need to be disciplined and aligned with the word of God.



The articles and group bible studies have been prepared on different themes to address the present needs of Christian Home and families. The resource contributors have labored diligently, investing their time and experience to provide valuable insights into preparing for Christ centered families. I extend my hearty salutations to all the writers. I also extend thanks to my team CH cell and NEGF dept for their help in design, reviews and suggestions. My thanks also go to different state units and their team who helped us in translating in their vernacular languages.

As a NEGF Christian Home cell, we endeavor for every graduate family to practice Godly disciplines to disciple their children as well. This will build Christian homes, Churches and communities and Country. We, all the members of NEGF- CH Cell wish you a happy and prosperous new year and present this wonderful family month of January 2026 edition with Articles, Group Bible Studies and Daily quotes to encourage families and establish Godly homes.

With Best Wishes

P. David Suresh Babu.

Chairperson, NEGF Christian Home Cell



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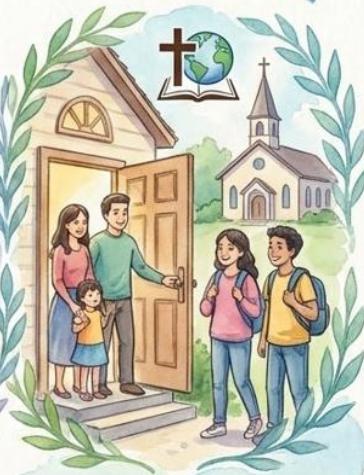
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Celebrate Family Month - January

Objectives of UESI Family Month:
Enrich...Enhance...Encourage



1. To Enrich

the family lives of UESI families by helping them look into the Biblical Principles and practice of Christian marriage, family and parenting.

2. To Enhance

the intimacy between husband and wife (Communication and companionship).

3. To Encourage

young couples understand the practice UESI Open Home and to involve as family in Church and UESI student ministry.

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The Proposed Activities for Local EGFs

As An EGF: (EGFs to celebrate God's Design for Family: The Mini-Heaven on Earth)

1. Pray for all EGF families by name to overcome the schemes of the Enemy.
2. Plan Four EGF Bible Studies based on the materials given in the E-booklet (invite new Christian families - Contacts).
3. Organize Local EGF Seminar/Workshop, Family Excursion for Married Couples (invite new Christian families - Contacts).
4. Visit the families who are irregular to fellowship and inactive in the ministry.
5. Link the Senior Families with young families for Mentoring.
6. Organize/ recommend a pre-marital workshop for young graduates who are getting ready for marriage.

The Proposed Activities for Families

As A Family: (Graduate Couples to celebrate intimacy with the Lord & One another)

1. Recite the Marriage Vows to each other (Husband & Wife) & recommit.
2. List the positives & appreciate one another & sharpen communication skills.
3. Share fears and ambitions with each other.
4. Identify the talents & gifts of the spouse.
5. Enrich the family prayer time.
6. Plan a family time (be creative).

Share the Resources of UESI Family Month

Use this E-Booklet (guidelines and resource materials) circulated by NEGF Christian Home Cell. This E-Booklet contains articles, group bible studies and UESI's stand on Gender.



May God enable every Graduate family to build their own family & other families to become Christ-Centred for God's Kingdom!!!

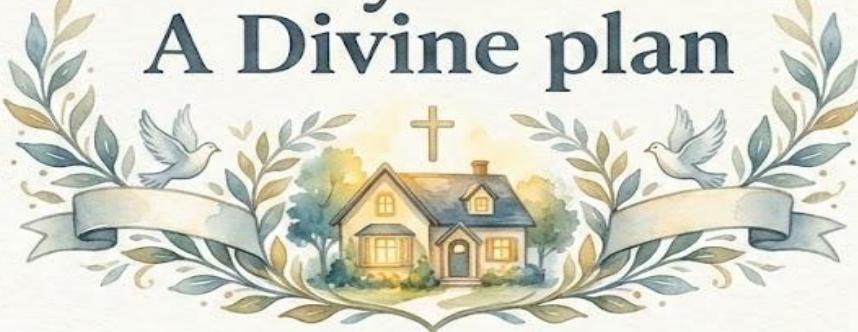
Rajeswari (Rebecca),

Secretary, NEGF Christian Home Cell.



Three Articles

Godly Home: A Divine plan



1. When the Family serves together



2. Raising Critical Thinkers
Who See God Everywhere



3. Empowering the Local Church
Through UESI Graduates

Chacko Jacob, Kharagpur

For many, marriage and the rearing of kids ends up being an end in itself. However, God has put us in families both for our personal enrichment and also that we might be a blessing to others. How can this be, given that taking care of the family takes up so much time and effort? How can we give additional time to serve others as a family? What would it look like for us to be a serving family, outward focused and driven by a missional purpose?

The Scriptures make it clear from the outset that the family is God's plan. It was not good for man to be alone (Gen. 2:18). God blessed Adam with a companion and then He blessed them with children. The blessing of God's creation was meant to flow through this family into all other families that would follow. What was meant to be a harmonious and complementary group of people (viz. the family) ended up, as a result of sin, demonstrating all that was evil within itself. Thus, humans became selfish and self-centred. Nevertheless, God's redemptive purposes continue to involve the family as He saves us and (often though not always) our families and then



chooses to use us to demonstrate His love and care to others around us, thereby inviting them into the perfect family of God!



A walk through the Scriptures helps us see how God has used families (often imperfect ones) to fulfil His purposes. Some families worked together to serve the Lord. Others were divided or broken and yet were part of God's plan. Let us look at a few examples and see what they have to teach us.

Amram, Jochebed and their family

One of the early examples in the Old Testament of members of a family ministering together to bless others is the family of Amram and Jochebed, Moses' parents. We do not know much about them other than that they were of the tribe of Levi (Exodus 2:1). But what sets them apart is their faith – a faith that could defy Pharaoh, then the most powerful ruler around. In an act of defiance, they saved their baby boy, Moses. He was the youngest of the family. But he was chosen by God to lead His people out of Egypt. We see that Moses' parents not only exercised faith, but they also taught their children to exercise this faith. See Miriam at the river's edge. Probably a little girl, fearful and timid. But she had a role to play in ensuring the survival of the nation of Israel. Later, she is part of the group that leads the people in worship through song when the Israelites escaped from Egypt (Exodus 15:20,21). Where did she acquire this faith from? Almost certainly from her parents. I don't know what that family's life looked like. But it sure would have included passing on the faith from one generation to another. See Aaron in the distance, the big brother. When Moses struggled to respond to God's call on his life (Exodus 4), it is Aaron that God uses to help Moses finally say "Yes" to His call. While Moses was the famous one in the story, it is clear that the whole family had

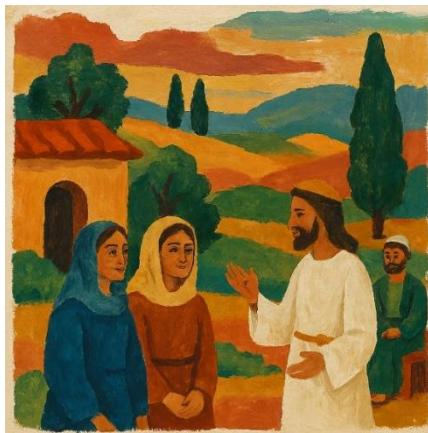


a role to play in the rescue of Israel from bondage in Egypt. This provides us with an apt example of how God uses each member of the family in diverse ways, each according to their ability, to fulfil His promise of redemption. We must not forget to bring up our children in a way that they understand their role in the redemptive work of God as we minister to those around us.



Mary, Martha and Lazarus

As we move into the New Testament, one of the lovely examples of a family ministering together is that of Mary, Martha and Lazarus (see Luke 10:38-42; John 11 and John 12). Again, not much is known of their background other than the fact they were living together just outside of Jerusalem in a place called Bethany. A strategic choice to stay – a place of rest away from the bustle of the city. How often do we consider that when we choose where to stay? Do we see if our choice of a place is helpful for ministry? I know that some do. But more often our considerations are based on time to commute to work, children's schools, etc. None of these issues are trivial and often become prominent at certain stages of life. But what if our homes were in "Bethany" – a quiet place of rest? Again, nothing is known of their family background. Since the two sisters and brother are staying together, it appears that they may have lost their parents. Yet, they care for each other and do so without forgetting to let others in. Jesus enjoyed being with them. Perhaps he looked forward whenever He visited Jerusalem to spending time in their home. It was a place where He could be away from the hustle and bustle of ministry. A place where perhaps food that he liked was prepared for Him with

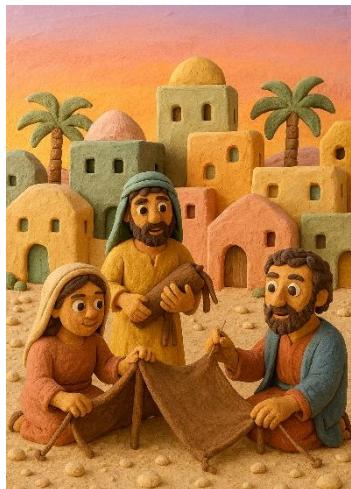


care. A place where deep and loving conversation flowed. A place like home! Are our homes like that? Do people who come to our homes feel cared for? Do they long to come back again?

In the midst of this, we also are made aware of the tensions in the home – between Martha and Mary (wonder what Lazarus was doing?) (Luke 10:38-42). Martha was the perfect hostess – eager to please Jesus with well cooked food, a well laid table, etc. There was nothing wrong with any of these. But it seemed like she had lost the point of Jesus visiting their home – sort of like the older son who stayed at home in the parable of the Prodigal Son and lost the point! Jesus gently chides Martha and draws her to imitate the attitude of Mary – she chose the best over simply what was good! Mary was eager to feed on Him who was the Bread of Life while Martha chose to serve an impressive meal. Maybe this was not the usual case. Maybe this was a special occasion. Whatever be the reason, we can see how gently Jesus points Martha towards what is more important. When someone comes home, what is our priority? To spend time with them? To listen to them? Or is it to focus on something else, good as that may be?

Priscilla and Aquila

In Priscilla and Aquila, we have a classic example of ministering together as a family (Acts 18:1-2). Again it is interesting to note that nowhere do we find mention of children in this family. One suspects that this couple had no children. This is never portrayed as a source of grief and a disabling factor in their lives. While they may have grieved this inability to have children of their own, this family (complete without children) is used by God as a powerful



tool to establish churches, mentor younger disciples and support Paul. They each use their gifts in coordination to be a blessing to the early Church. They are a classic case of a “tentmaking” couple (Acts 18:3)– using their profession to support themselves and gain a hearing for the Gospel. They are flexible – willing and able to move in response to situations, eager to see others develop (Acts 18:26), taking risks for the Gospel (Romans 16:3-4), often taking a back seat and yet always there for the Church. Their home was available for the church (1 Corinthians 16:19 and Romans 16:5). Are our homes like that? Are we so wedded to our careers and professions and pursuits that the Kingdom of God is secondary in our lives? Are we willing to move for the sake of the Gospel? Establish professional careers that will open doors for the Gospel?

Ministering through hospitality in the home

Part of ministering as a family is extending hospitality to others. Hospitality is not about serving a fancy meal in a super clean house well decorated and set up to impress. For many of us, we have missed the essence of hospitality. It is more about opening our hearts and our homes to those in need around us – those in material need, those with emotional needs, etc. Hospitality is rooted in God’s character in that He cares for the widow and fatherless. He enters into our world to reconcile us to the Father and has now gone to prepare a place for us in His Father’s mansion. We are invited to the great Marriage Supper of the Lamb! Hospitality in the Old Testament was also a way for the Israelites to remember their own time of bondage in Egypt and therefore to treat the needy with extra care. (See Lev. 19:33-34 and Deut. 10:18-19). Hebrews 13:2 points out that through the very act of hospitality to strangers, Abraham entertained angels (Genesis 18:1-15)! In the New Testament, the idea of opening up our homes in an act of hospitality to the needy is taught again and again. Mary, Martha and Lazarus, whom we saw

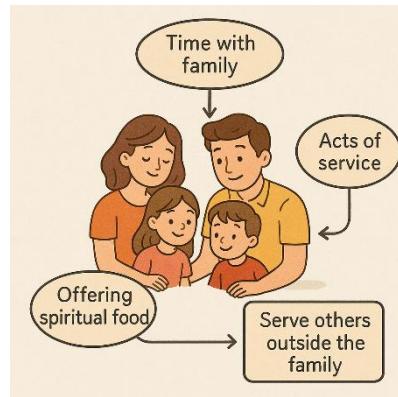


earlier, are classic examples of the blessedness of hospitality exercised in the service of our Lord and His disciples. Jesus teaches the importance of extending our worldly goods to serve those who cannot return the favour (Luke 14:13-14). This is so contrary to the idea of the world of entertaining others either to show off our wealth or homes or to network with the right people, etc. Kingdom values turn the world's values upside down. The early church was full of examples of people sharing deeply with each other, often at great cost to themselves (Acts 2:44-45). Paul lists hospitality as a mark of a genuine Christian (Romans 12:13). A mark of a good leader in the church was hospitality (Titus 1:8). Peter reminds the church that it is not simply a matter of following a command but that we need to do so without grumbling! Sharing with the needy is our privilege and not a mere duty!



Ministering to one's own family!

In the midst of all this outward focus, it is easy to lose sight of our own family. God's call for each of us is to minister to our families, too. We cannot sacrifice them on the altar of ministering to others. Sure, sacrifices will be made since the call to serve others outside will come at a cost. But we simply cannot ignore our own families in the name of ministry to others. How can we serve our families? Sometimes it is through time given to be with and listen to our families. At other times, it may be in acts of service within the family. Yet at other times, it will be in offering spiritual food to others in the family, thus nurturing them to come alongside and serve others outside the family.



In closing, it is very clear that God intends for our families to be the base for our ministry. Incidentally, some of you who are single may wonder what that means for you. But your homes and lives are also starting points for

ministry as much as that of families. God is not looking for the perfect family, the perfect home, or the perfect situation to bless you and use you. He seeks to use you as you are and where you are for His purposes. Will you, with your family, be a place where the church has a home?

Questions for Reflection:

1. Looking at your own family situation, ask yourself what are the things that may be holding you back from being available to serve the Lord. Write those down.
2. In the light of this article, how can those hindrances you listed be overcome and your home become a lighthouse for Jesus?
3. If you are single, how can you partner with a family to help serve people around you? List practical ways.

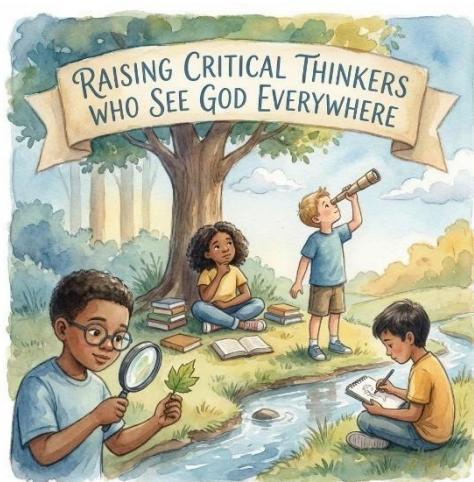
Raising Critical Thinkers Who See God Everywhere

Philemon Daniel, Hamirpur

1. The Foundation: When Questions Meet Faith

The question arrives unexpectedly, as meaningful questions often do, cutting through the comfortable rhythm of daily life: "If God is with daddy and daddy went to another city, how can God be here and there?" In this precious moment, every Christian parent faces a choice that will shape their child's spiritual journey.

Should we offer quick, simplistic answers to move the conversation along, or should we lean into the beautiful complexity of these questions? Rather than treating children as needing protection from difficult thoughts, we can recognize them as young thinkers capable of wrestling with life's mysteries. This recognition forms the heart of raising critical thinkers who see God everywhere—cultivating not

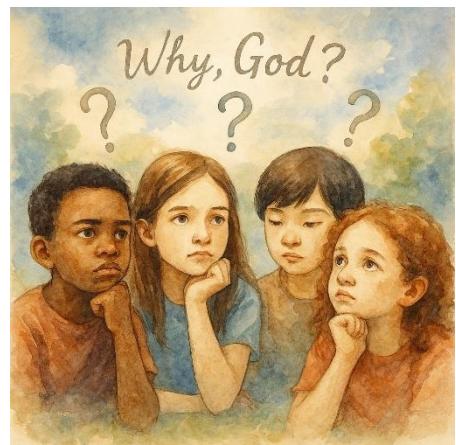


children who have memorized all the answers, but those who know how to ask the right questions and trust that truth, wherever it leads, ultimately points back to God.

2. Beyond the "Ye Toh Bacha Hai" Mindset

2.1 Transforming Cultural Assumptions

In Indian culture, we often dismiss children's deeper questions with "*ye toh bacha hai*"—they're just children. However, this well-meaning attitude may actually rob children of developing the intellectual muscles they'll desperately need to navigate an increasingly complex world. By failing to equip them with tools for thoughtful engagement, we inadvertently make them more vulnerable rather than protected.



2.2 The Power of Treating Children as Thinkers

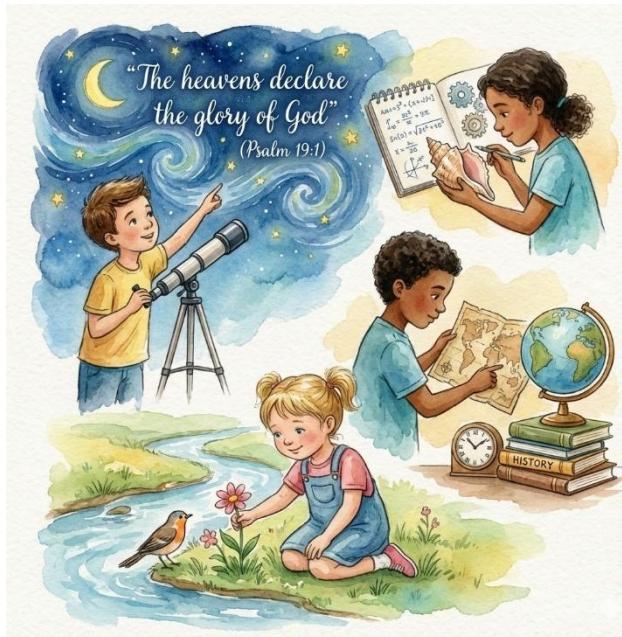
When we shift our perspective and treat children as independent thinkers rather than passive recipients of information, something beautiful begins to unfold. They naturally start seeing connections everywhere, asking questions that reveal God's character in the most unexpected places. Most importantly, they develop confidence not because they possess all the answers, but because they've learned how to seek truth with both courage and humility.



3. Core Principles for Parents

3.1 See the World as God's Classroom

The fear of God truly is the beginning of wisdom, as Scripture teaches us. With this foundation, every subject, every experience, and every question becomes a precious opportunity to trace God's character. As Psalm 19:1 declares, "The heavens declare the glory of God" — and remarkably, so does mathematics, history, science, and the rhythms of everyday life.



3.2 Build Homes Where Faith and Reason Walk Hand-in-Hand

Creating such homes starts with intentional daily family rhythms and purposeful teaching moments. During homeschool time, as children work through their timetables and study independently, they're encouraged to bring their questions rather than accept confusion. This environment of intellectual curiosity flourishes when families engage in activities together, welcoming ideas and consistently showing how Scripture applies to everyday situations. Simple practices like maintaining a family question book or incorporating colour-and-draw Bible studies can transform abstract concepts into tangible understanding.

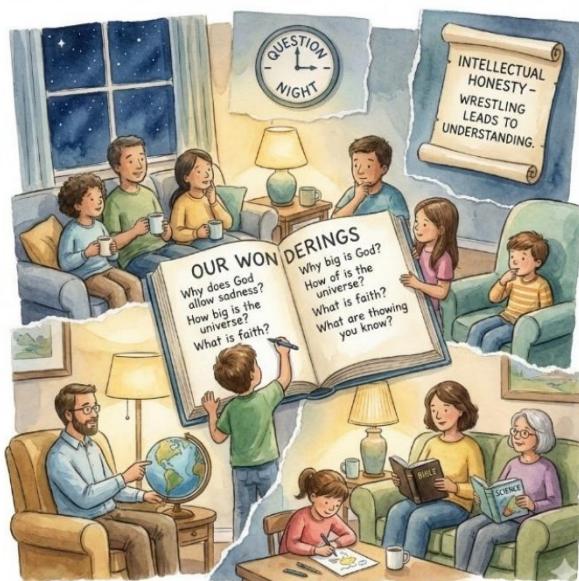
4. Creating Question-Safe Spaces

4.1 The Unique Challenge for Indian Christian Families

As Indian Christian parents, we navigate unique challenges in raising thinking believers. Our children desperately need home environments where they can safely process confusing messages, wrestle with genuine doubts, and voice questions that might be unwelcome or misunderstood elsewhere.

4.2 Practical Implementation

Consider instituting regular "question nights"—dedicated times when any family member can ask anything about God, faith, or life without fear of judgment or dismissal. Keeping a question book where children record their wonderings throughout the week provides continuity and shows that their thoughts matter. Remember, the key isn't having perfect answers but rather modelling intellectual honesty, demonstrating that wrestling with difficult questions often leads to deeper understanding rather than lost faith.



5. The Wonder + Wisdom Approach in Daily Life

5.1 Complementary Tools, Not Competing Forces

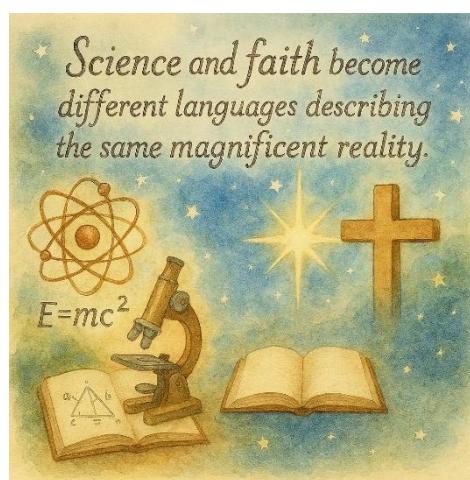
Critical thinking and awareness of God aren't opposites competing for children's allegiance. Instead, they function as complementary tools that help develop eyes capable of engaging deeply with both God's creation and His character. Indeed, the most profound spiritual moments often emerge from careful observation combined with thoughtful questioning.



5.2 Example: Night Sky Observations

When observing the night sky through a telescope, families can move beyond simple "See how beautiful God made this" observations to engage in deeper inquiry. Together, examine the mathematical precision of planetary orbits, marvel at the vast distances between stars, and ponder the intricate dance of moons around planets. These observations naturally lead to discussions about how such complexity and order could emerge from what some call mere chance, inviting wonder about the intelligence required to set such systems in motion.

These conversations seamlessly flow into Scripture, remembering how God told Job to consider creation, and how the psalmist declared heaven's testimony. Through this approach, science and faith become different languages describing the same magnificent reality.



6. Integrating Faith and Reason in Academic Life

When children study independently during homeschool, every subject transforms into an opportunity to think God's thoughts after Him. For instance, during DNA studies, families can examine together how genetic code functions like a sophisticated language—complete with syntax, grammar, and meaningful information. This naturally leads to discussions about how languages always require intelligent authors and how coded information invariably points to an intelligent source. These scientific observations connect beautifully to John's description of Jesus as the Word through whom all things were made, transforming study time from mundane academic exercise into an exciting discovery adventure.

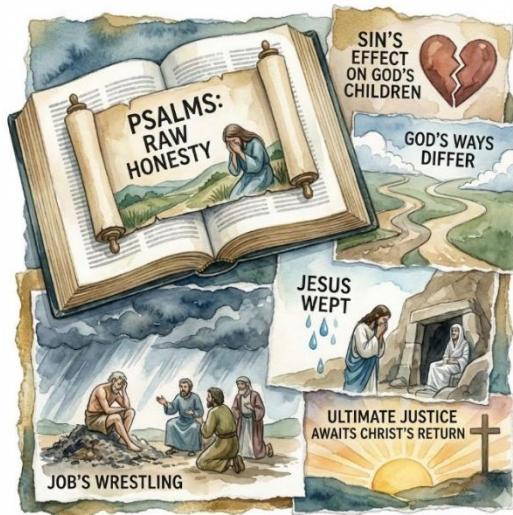
7. Processing Life's Difficulties Through Faith and Reason

7.1 Honest Engagement with Complexity

Not everything in life provides easy answers or immediate spiritual insights. When children face disappointments, witness suffering, or encounter seeming unfairness, parents must resist the temptation to offer quick explanations that might ultimately sound hollow.

7.2 Biblical Models for Wrestling

Instead of providing simplistic answers, families can model intellectual honesty about life's complexities while maintaining unwavering faith in God's ultimate



goodness. Together, explore how the Bible itself acknowledges these tensions — the raw honesty of the psalms, Job's profound wrestling, and Jesus's real tears at Lazarus's tomb. These discussions help children understand how sin affects even God's children, how God's ways often differ dramatically from ours, and how ultimate justice awaits Christ's return.

8. Practical Strategies for Daily Implementation

8.1 Media Literacy Through Christ's Lens

In today's digital age, teaching media literacy becomes essential. Help children learn to filter entertainment through Christ's character by asking together: "Would Jesus like this? Would it honour God?" Crucially, parents must live by these same standards, as children quickly sense and reject hypocrisy.



8.2 Creative Engagement Activities

- **Ethical Dilemma Role-Plays:** Present age-appropriate scenarios and work through them together, always returning to biblical principles and God's character as the foundation
- **God Chronicles:** Maintain an ongoing family record of God's work, regularly asking during family times: "Where did you see God at work today?"
- **Picture of God Exercise:** Help children develop a comprehensive understanding of God's character through various biblical accounts and personal experiences

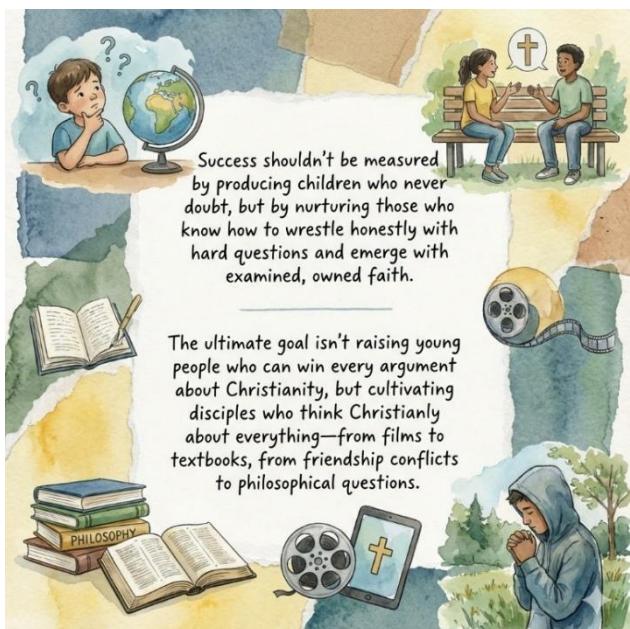
8.3 Tracking Patterns of Faith

Over time, these practices help patterns emerge. Children begin recognizing God's consistent character across different situations, developing confidence in His involvement even when purposes aren't immediately clear. They learn to look for His hand in ordinary moments rather than only in dramatic interventions.

9. The Long Game of Faithful Formation

Raising critical thinkers who see God everywhere isn't a project with neat timelines and measurable outcomes. Rather, it's a journey of patient cultivation, consisting of thousands of small moments where faith and reason reinforce each other, creating an environment where wondering and worshiping become natural partners.

Success shouldn't be measured by producing children who never doubt, but by nurturing those who know how to wrestle honestly with hard questions and emerge with examined, owned faith. The ultimate goal isn't raising young people who can win every argument about Christianity, but cultivating disciples who think Christianly about everything—from films to textbooks, from friendship conflicts to philosophical questions.



Christianly about everything—from films to textbooks, from friendship conflicts to philosophical questions.

This formation happens through ordinary moments made extraordinary by intentional engagement: car ride conversations about current events examined through biblical lenses, bedtime discussions processing the day's experiences, nature walks becoming laboratories for wondering about God's character, and meal times transforming into integrated learning classrooms.



Conclusion: The Continuing Adventure

As children grow within this framework, they naturally begin connecting dots never explicitly taught, demonstrating the power of faithful formation. This approach raises children who become adults capable of thinking God's thoughts in every sphere, seeing His fingerprints during the day, and finding His wisdom applicable to every genuine challenge.

Every question becomes an adventure in discovering truth, every challenge transforms into an opportunity for growth, and every ordinary moment opens a window into extraordinary reality. In homes committed to this vision, that adventure continues each day, one question at a time, building a generation equipped to engage the world with both deep faith and sharp minds.

Empowering the Local Church Through Graduates

UESI's Vision for a Missional Partnership

Emmanuel S K, Hyderabad

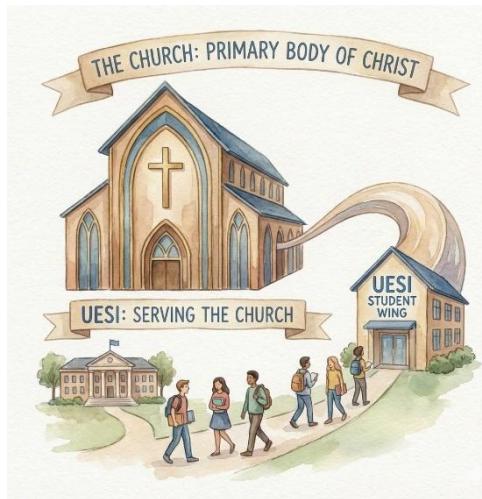
In today's rapidly changing cultural and spiritual landscape, the Church stands as a vital instrument in fulfilling God's purposes on earth. One of the key responsibilities of the Church is to engage actively with young people, especially students, equipping them to live out their faith in every sphere of life. Recognizing this, the Union of Evangelical Students of India (UESI) has consistently sought to build strong bridges between the student movement and the local Church.

The objective of Church involvement is not merely about organizational collaboration but about cultivating a deeper, gospel-centered partnership. UESI envisions graduates playing a crucial role in this mission — to educate, equip, and encourage local churches to embrace their role in disciple-making and mission, particularly among students.



Clarifying the UESI Policy on Church

One of the essential steps in strengthening this partnership is ensuring that the local Church is well-informed about UESI's policy on Church relations. The UESI affirms the Church as the primary body of Christ through which God carries out His mission. UESI does not exist apart from the Church but functions as a student wing, called to serve the Church in raising up disciples from among college and university campuses.



Unfortunately, due to a lack of awareness, some churches may misunderstand the role of UESI, viewing it as a para-church organization working independently. This is where graduates can make a significant impact—by educating their local churches about UESI's foundational policy, helping them understand that UESI complements the ministry of the Church and does not compete with it.

By bridging this gap, UESI graduates help foster mutual respect, alignment, and trust between churches and UESI fellowships, leading to more fruitful collaboration in the Gospel mission.



Calling Graduates to Invest Their Gifts and Talents

Graduates who have been discipled through UESI fellowships carry a unique calling and responsibility. They are not only witnesses of what God can do in student life but also stewards of the vision to

reach the next generation. As mature believers, they are encouraged to invest their God-given gifts and talents in their local churches, helping them become vibrant, missional communities.

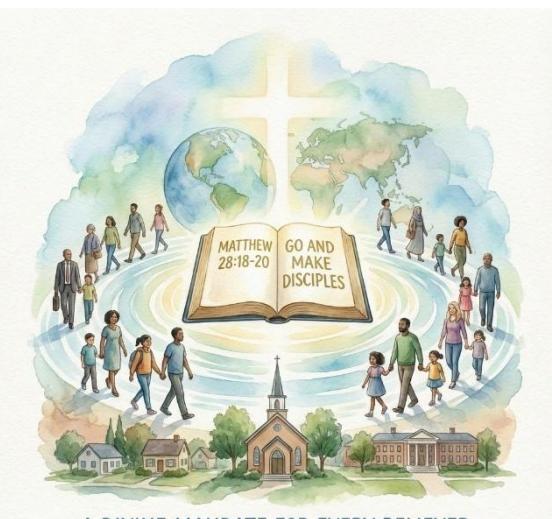
This investment includes teaching about missional discipleship, starting student outreach initiatives, mentoring young people, and encouraging churches to adopt a Kingdom mindset that goes beyond the four walls of the church building. When graduates serve the Church in such ways, they model servant leadership and mission-mindedness — inspiring others to do the same.



Making the Church Missional in Obeying the Great Commission

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) is not an optional assignment for a few select individuals or organizations. It is a divine mandate for every believer and every local church. The Church is called to "go and make disciples of all nations" — beginning in their own neighbourhoods, cities, and student campuses.

Graduates, having experienced discipleship within UESI, are strategically placed to stir the Church into action — helping them realize that mission is not a department or a program but the very identity of the Church. Through Bible studies, vision-casting meetings, and personal testimonies, graduates can help churches



A DIVINE MANDATE FOR EVERY BELIEVER

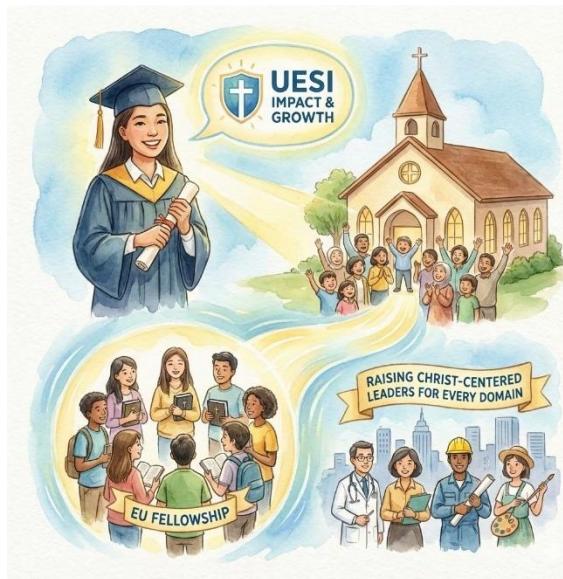
see students not just as future leaders but as current agents of transformation in their campuses and communities.

A missional church, when awakened to this reality, begins to intentionally pray, plan, and partner in evangelism, discipleship, and leadership development — thereby fulfilling its God-given purpose.

Accepting EU as the Church's Student Wing

For this vision to become sustainable, it is crucial that churches recognize and accept Evangelical Unions (EUs) as their student wing — an extension of the Church's mission field. This recognition brings with it a sense of ownership, accountability, and mutual support. When churches support the EU fellowships in their area — through prayer, mentoring, financial aid, and active participation — they help strengthen the roots of the student ministry.

UESI Graduates are key catalysts in this transformation. By testifying of the impact UESI had on their spiritual growth and worldview, they can encourage churches to stand behind EU fellowships with confidence and joy. In doing so, the Church becomes an active participant in raising a generation of Christ-centered leaders who will serve God in every domain of society.



Conclusion

The involvement of the Church in UESI's mission is not a side project — it is central to the vision of seeing lives transformed by the Gospel through student ministry. Graduates serve as vital links between the student movement and the Church, educating, encouraging, and equipping both to walk together in obedience to Christ.



As the Church embraces this calling, and graduates step up to invest their gifts, a powerful synergy is created — one that advances the Kingdom of God and shapes the future of the nation through faithful discipleship and mission among students.

Let us pray, serve, and build — together.



Group Bible Studies

Godly Home: A Divine plan

Group Bible Studies (GBS)

1. Bearing with One
Another in Love

2. Forgiveness
in the Family

3. Generosity and
Sacrificial Giving

GBS Patience: 1 Bearing with One Another in Love

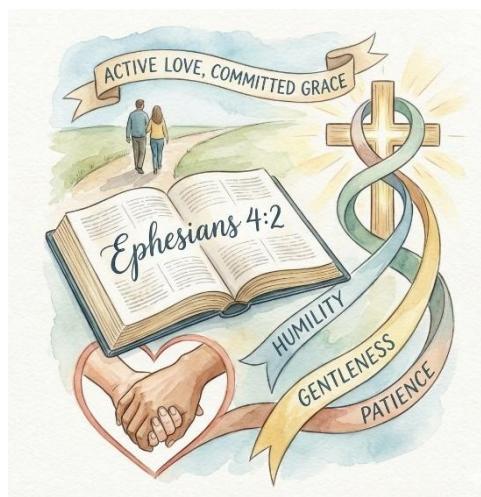
Benalin CR, Lucknow

Aim: To understand the Biblical virtue of patience as taught in Ephesians 4:2 and apply it meaningfully to Christian marriage, especially in the context of differences between spouses.

Ephesians 4:2 – “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.”

Introduction

Ephesians 4:2 is part of Paul’s exhortation to live a life worthy of our calling. The verse calls believers to humility, gentleness, and patience. These virtues sustain unity and reflect Christ’s character. In marriage, patience is not passive endurance but active love. It is the grace to bear with one another, not because change is instant, but because love is committed. This study explores how patience, rooted in love, becomes a spiritual anchor in marriage.



Patience

- The Greek word makrothymia translated as “patience” in Ephesians 4:2 is more fully rendered as “longsuffering” or “long-tempered”. The term is formed from makros (long) and thumos (passion, temper), and denotes a self-restraint that does not hastily retaliate against wrong. It can also be understood as the ability to endure discomfort or irritation for an extended period without reacting in anger or revenge.
- It reflects God’s nature. The same term describes God’s patient forbearance toward humanity, especially in withholding judgment so that people might repent (Romans 2:4; 2 Peter 3:15).
- The same word is used to denote patience in the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

Bearing with One Another in Love

- The phrase “bearing with one another in love” talks about the practical outworking of patience.
- This forbearance is not mere tolerance or resignation, but an active, loving choice to endure the failures, and diverse personalities of others because Christ has done the same for us.
- This patience is rooted in Christ-like, sacrificial love (not mere sentiment or duty).
- The command to Bear with One Another in Love acknowledges that:
 - Differences will irritate and frustrate.
 - Patience is possible only through love that:
 - Empathizes with weakness
 - Speaks truth with gentleness
 - Walks alongside in growth
 - Commits to enduring together

Some instances when Patience Is Tested in Marriage

- **Expectations not met** – When change is slow or absent.

Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 15–21) – They waited decades for God's promise of a son. The delay tested their faith and patience.

- **Repeated offenses** – When actions of one disappoint or frustrate the other.

Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25–33) – Jacob's repeated deceit deeply hurt Esau. Years later, Esau chose to forgive and embrace his brother, showing that reconciliation is possible even after repeated offenses

- **Perceived negligence** – When one feels the other isn't serious about growth.

Moses and the Israelites (Numbers 11–14) – Despite God's miracles, the people repeatedly complained and resisted change. Moses often felt they weren't serious about trusting God, yet he interceded for them and continued to lead patiently.

- **Emotional fatigue** – Feeling helpless yet obligated to act.

Jesus Gives Breakfast to His Disciples (John 21:1–14) – After a long, discouraging night of catching nothing, the disciples were physically tired and emotionally drained. Jesus met them at dawn, provided a miraculous catch of fish, and served them breakfast by the sea.



- **Personality Differences** – When contrasting temperaments create tension

Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38–42) – Martha was practical and task-focused; Mary was contemplative and relational. Their different personalities led to tension.

- **Values and Standards** – When priorities and convictions diverge

Abraham and Lot (Genesis 13:5–12) – They were family leaders whose differing priorities (Lot choosing fertile land near Sodom, Abraham valuing peace and God's promise) led to separation.

- **Communication Styles** – When ways of expressing differ

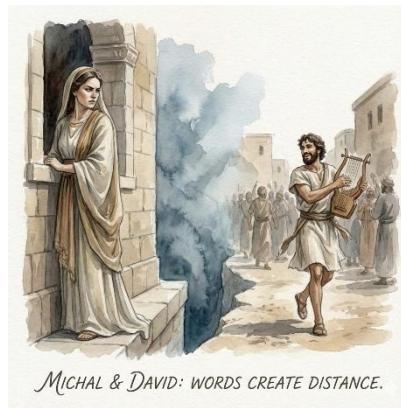
Michal and David (2 Samuel 6:20–23) – Michal's sarcastic and critical words toward David after he danced before the Lord created emotional distance and lasting estrangement in their marriage.

- **Efficiency in Tasks** – When pace and productivity don't match

One spouse may prefer to act quickly and get things done, while the other takes more time, works methodically, or struggles to complete tasks. These differences in pace, organisation, and follow-through can create frustration, especially when responsibilities overlap or deadlines loom.

- **Habits and Mannerisms** – When personal quirks become irritants

Small, repeated behaviours—whether in routines, preferences, or social habits—can become sources of annoyance if not met with understanding and forbearance.



MICHAL & DAVID: WORDS CREATE DISTANCE.

Practical Applications that foster patience in Couples

- **Recognize triggers** – Identify what behaviours test your patience.

Be aware of the specific words, actions, or patterns that tend to frustrate you. Naming them helps you prepare a godly response.
- **Choose instead of react** – Develop a plan for responding calmly.

Pause before speaking or acting, and decide on a Christ-like response. This intentional choice prevents escalation and keeps love at the centre.
- **Build emotional capacity** – Grow through prayer, Scripture, and fellowship.

Regular time with God and supportive believers strengthens your ability to handle stress. Spiritual depth equips you to respond with grace under pressure.
- **Practice self-care** – Rest and renew to avoid burnout.

Tend to your physical, emotional, and spiritual health so you can give your best to your marriage. Rest is not selfish—it's preparation for loving well.
- **Walk together in growth** – Encourage gently, celebrate small victories.

Support your spouse's progress with patience and affirmation. Even small steps forward deserve recognition and shared joy.
- **Forgiveness Rituals** – Set a regular check-in time (weekly or monthly) to clear minor offenses, offer apologies, and reinforce the bond of love.

Making forgiveness a habit keeps resentment from building up. These intentional moments restore peace and deepen trust in the relationship.

Discussion questions:

1. How has God shown patience to you personally? (Psalm 103:8; Nehemiah 9:30; Exodus 34:6-7; 2 Peter 3:9; Isaiah 30:18; 1 Timothy 1:16)
2. Considering patience as the fruit of the Spirit, what does patience look like in the daily interactions within the family? (Galatians 5:22-23; Colossians 3:12)
3. When is it hardest to “bear with” your spouse? (Ephesians 4:2; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7)
4. What are the triggers that affect “bearing with one another”? What communication strategies can we adopt that exhibit patience and “bearing one another in love”? (Proverbs 15:1; James 1:19)
5. What are some recurring differences between you and your spouse that tend to test your patience? Consider areas like personality, pace, grasping ability, or values. How do these differences challenge your commitment to bear with one another?
6. In what ways do your spouse’s habits, mannerisms, or standards differ from yours—and how do these differences affect your emotional responses? Explore how these differences can lead to irritation or frustration, and how love can reframe your reaction.
7. Why is it important to recognize that our spouse’s weaknesses may stem from genuine limitations or emotional burdens—and not just unwillingness to change? How does empathy help us bear with one another in love? (Psalm 103:13-14; Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13)

8. How can couples speak truth in love when correction is needed—without losing gentleness or patience? Share examples of how tactful communication can preserve unity while encouraging growth. (Ephesians 4:15; Proverbs 15:1)
9. What does it mean to patiently walk alongside your spouse in their growth journey, rather than waiting passively for change? How does this shift in posture reflect Christ-like love? (Hebrews 10:24; Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)
10. Unity is not uniformity. How can couples celebrate their differences while growing in deeper communion? Explore how diversity in personality, gifting, and perspective can enrich the marriage when embraced with love.
11. Have you ever felt emotionally exhausted from trying to be patient? What helped you persevere? Discuss how spiritual resources (prayer, Scripture, fellowship) can renew your capacity to bear with love.

 **Note:** This Study could be done over 2 weeks.

2 Forgiveness in the Family

Moatoshi Imsong, Dimapur

Text: Col. 3:13 & Eph. 4:32

Introduction:

Family is the nucleus unit of the society at large, and as such, it is the key component that either builds up the society for better or breaks it for worse. What the nation is, depends on what the individual family is. Since such is the importance, the family is in human society, it is also the prime target of Satan to destroy it. He hits the core, and everything crumbles down. An unhappy person in the family often vents his or her frustration at the workplace or in various ways. A frustrated family man may crush the airplane or lead a nation to war or bully others or can commit serious crimes. Not much of the battles are fought in the battle fields as much as it is fought in the family - battles between the spouses, among siblings, between parents and children, conflicts with the in-laws and extended families, etc. Since, we are knit together in the family, we become too familiar with one another, and as the saying goes, "over familiarity breeds contempt." We see each other's flaws, we see the likes and dislikes in the other person, we go through various situations together and get exposed to each other. Unmet expectations, selfish tendencies and lack of understanding exasperate the situation. These factors often lead to conflict within

the family and forgiveness stands out as a key virtue to hold the family together... the virtue of keep on forgiving without a count!

What it means to “Forgive”

To forgive is simply to pardon, to waive any negative feeling or the desire to punish the offender. It is to stop feeling angry towards someone for an offence committed or a mistake done. Forgiveness is not emotional in the first place, but intentional. It's an intentional decision to let go off resentment and anger against someone whose act had hurt or offended you. It is synonymous to pardon, excuse, condone, overlook, absolve, and release. It involves a conscious choice to let go off grudges, bitterness and the need for revenge or blame.

Story behind Da Vinci's depiction of the Last Supper - Leonardo Da Vinci was one of the outstanding intellects of all history, for he was great as a craftsman, an engineer, and a thinker. Just before he commenced work on his “Last Supper” he had a violent quarrel with a fellow painter. So enraged and bitter was Leonardo that he determined to paint the face of his enemy, the other artist, into the face of Judas, and thus take his revenge and vent his spleen by handling the man down in infamy and scorn to succeeding generations. The face of Judas was therefore one of the first that he finished, and everyone could easily recognize it as the face of the painter with whom he had quarreled. But when he came to paint the face of Christ, he could make no progress. Something seemed to be baffling him, holding him back, and frustrating his best efforts. At length he came to the conclusion that



the thing which was checking and frustrating him was the fact that he had painted his enemy into the face of Judas. He therefore forgave him, painted out the face of Judas and commenced anew on the face of Jesus, and this time with the success which the ages have acclaimed.

You cannot at one and the same time be painting the features of Christ into your own life, and painting another face with the colors of enmity and hatred. In the same way you cannot be building a happy family with unforgiving heart within you.

Once in a meeting, when the preacher asked what forgiveness is, a little girl gave her definition as – “Forgiveness is like the odor that flowers breathe when they are trampled upon.” Another little boy followed – “Forgiveness is like a mango tree; when hit, it gives back tasty fruit.”

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul exhorted, *“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you”* (Colossians 3:13).

The Greek word for forgiveness – ‘*Charizomenoi*’ – literally means ‘to be gracious’. To be gracious over “whatever grievances you may have against one another.” It is inclusive of the full list of all those offences, hurts, pain, shame, humiliation, suffering, troubles, etc., caused by your spouse, family members, and others. Paul even instructed how to forgive - “Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” How does the Lord forgive us? By being gracious! Showing



undeserved favor to sinners like us. The exhortation here is to be gracious even to the person who doesn't deserve your forgiveness. So there is no "BUT" in forgiving someone. No matter how undeserving the person is, the command is to show grace to him or her, just as the Lord also showed grace to us when we don't deserve it at all. Paul also exhorts in Ephesians 4:32 - "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

What Extent to Forgive

- **Exercise:** List out in your mind all the sins that you have committed as much as you can remember [pause for a moment].
- **Exercise:** Count in your mind all those bad habits, negative attitude, sinful thoughts, behaviors, etc. that you harbor [pause for a moment].
- **Exercise:** If God has to repay you evil for evil, just imagine where you will be today [pause for a moment].

Remember how much God has forgiven you, and how forgiving He is to you every day. In the same way, "forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another." Literally, it's "WHATEVER." There are many families where a husband can forgive all the hurts he receives from his wife, but not that one particular offence she keeps committing. A wife is willing to forgive every hurt she received from her husband, but not that one particular wrongdoing. Children also harbor certain bitterness against parents. But the command is to forgive literally "whatever," to whatever extent it takes, even to the extent of adultery, betrayal, alcoholism, drug abuse, etc.!

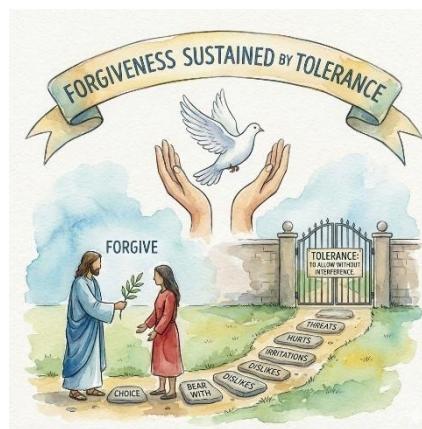
How many times to Forgive:

One day the impulsive disciple Peter asked Jesus how many times to forgive, and he offered to forgive seven times. We must salute Peter here, as forgiving someone seven times is not a joke. Indeed, Jesus did not reject that offer, but added on that, “seventy times seven.” So, do we have to forgive someone $70 \times 7 = 490$ times? Isn’t it too much? Who can truly forgive 490 times to a single person for repeated offences? What more, by this Jesus actually meant even far more than that; do not bother to count but to keep on forgiving unlimited, without measure. Ironically, not before long, the same Peter who entered into this forgiveness dialogue with the Lord could not even forgive once, and in the garden of Gethsemane, he cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. His unforgiving action prompted Jesus to do His last miracle on earth, a literal demo of forgiveness by fixing Malchus’ ear to its original place.



Forgiveness is sustained by Tolerance:

Paul linked forgiveness to bearing with each other or tolerance. He used the Greek word ‘Anexomai’ for tolerance which means to endure, to hold out in spite of persecution, threats, injury, indifference, or complaints and not to retaliate. Tolerance is to allow something that one dislikes or disagrees with to exist or occur without interference. It’s nothing to do with your likes or dislikes, but it’s a choice, a conscious decision to bear with in spite of the dislikes, irritations, hurts, threats, etc.



In a worship team, one member noticed that another member keeps imitating his moves and styles. Over time he became quite irritated by that. One day, it so happened during a worship leading that the two collided with each other and both fell down. They said to each other, “We’ll meet outside after the worship!” It’s actually not easy to keep tolerating and forgiving. It is all the more difficult to bear with regular irritations or hurts within your inner circle such as your family. Siblings fight very often over petty issues, because they are together under the same roof getting over-familiar and irritating to each other.

Once an EU boy made a commitment for mission saying, “I am willing to go across the mountains, across the oceans, anywhere as the Lord lead, but I can’t tolerate my roommate anymore!” Tolerance or bearing with one another is a painful thing to do, but it is the most needed ingredient in the family especially between spouses.

Once a husband warned his wife, “Watch out, whenever I am terribly irritated and angry with you, I will bind a red scarf around my forehead!” His wife also warned him, “When I am extremely irritated and angry with you, I will be wearing a red handkerchief around my wrist as a warning to you!” The arrangement worked for some time avoiding head on clashes between them, until one day the husband came home from work with a big red scarf bound around his forehead, just to find his wife wearing a red handkerchief on her wrist. What happened that day, only God knows!

Tolerance is tough and it will reach its limit, but remember that the Lord keeps on forgiving you “seventy times seven” so that we will also do the same to others. Without tolerance forgiveness becomes questionable. There are many families that quarrel over the quantity of salt intake or spices as to how much to put in the curry. Families



fight over the use of toothpaste, because some squeeze it from the other end while some squeeze it from the middle. Conflicts are inevitable in the family due to over-familiarity, exposure and constant irritations. Only tolerance can tolerate one another in the family.

Implications and Questions for Reflection/Discussion:

1. In the context of forgiveness spoken of in Ephesians 4:32, how does *unforgiveness* look like according Ephesians 4:30, 31?
2. Husband, do you choose to forgive and be gracious and caring to your wife no matter how far she may have crossed the limit in not respecting or understanding you?
3. Wife, do you choose to forgive and be gracious to your husband, no matter how unloving or insensitive he is to you?
4. Parents, do you choose to be gracious to your children no matter how disobedient or dishonouring they are to you?
5. Do you choose to be gracious to your in-laws or relatives no matter how unlikeable and troublesome they are?
6. Children (who are now adults and saved), do you choose to forgive and honour your parents no matter how unloving or inconsiderate they were to you as parents?
7. What makes obedience to the Word hard in the above scenarios? Does forgiveness *always* mean you lose your right to speak about your hurt or disappointment with the one who you think is the reason for it? Discuss this in the light of Ephesians 4:15, 29, 30 and Matthew 18:15.

3 Generosity and Sacrificial Giving

Sony Abraham, Mumbai

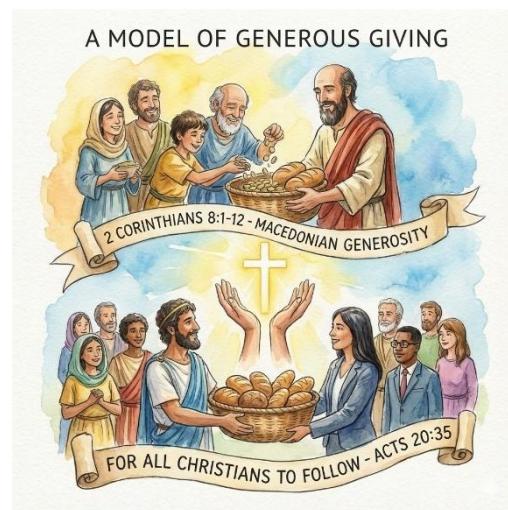
Aim:

- To encourage believers to be Christlike in their giving, being generous, cheerful and sacrificial.
- To model the early church in giving.

Bible Text: 2 Corinthians 8: 1-12, Acts 20:35

Paul introduces the exceptionally generous giving of the Macedonian churches as a model not only for the church in Corinth but also for all Christians to follow.

Being generous or generosity is considered a good virtue in our society circles. But it is more than a good virtue. God looks at His children and wants them to be generous and sacrificial, for His kingdom purposes. Hence it is important to have a right and in-depth understanding on this topic. Let us study a few verses that the Bible teaches us about generosity.

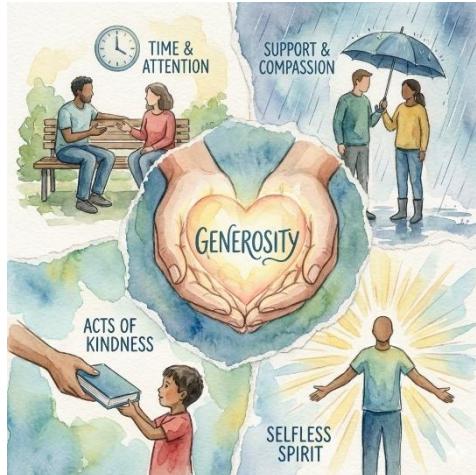


Generosity is a willingness to give, share, or contribute freely without expecting anything in return.

Generosity involves acts of kindness, compassion, and selflessness directed towards others. Generosity goes beyond material possessions and can include giving one's time, attention, support, or even emotional understanding.

Being generous is not solely about the quantity or value of what is given but rather about the spirit and intention behind the giving.

God designed generosity to bring joy, fulfilment and a sense of purpose to both the giver and the recipient. The best model of generosity is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who embodied the essence of generosity during His earthly ministry.



Questions for Discussions:

1. What are the key aspects of giving we can learn from the Macedonian churches?
2. What does it mean to give beyond our ability as the Macedonians did?
3. In what ways are we encouraged to excel in the grace of giving?
4. What is the ultimate motivation for Christians that Paul highlights in connection with Jesus' sacrifice?

5. How does Jesus' act of becoming poor so that we might become rich, inspire our understanding of giving?
6. How does giving serve as a test of our sincerity of our love for God and others?
7. How can the practice of giving influence our spiritual growth?
8. How does generosity bring in blessedness into our lives? (from Acts 20:35)
9. What principles can be drawn about sacrificial giving from this study?
10. It possible, in an EGF home, one of the spouses is more generous than the other and this could lead to occasional tension. How do you think this family can have a more joyful giving experience? Besides other things, discuss this also in the light of what you understand from the concept of One Flesh union described in Gen 2:24.



Additional Resources

Additional Resources

1. UESI's stand on Gender



2. Resources from NEGF Christian Home Cell



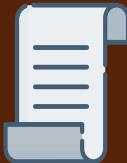
3. NEGF Initiatives & Feedback



Please contact NEGF Christian Home Cell members

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UESI's Stand on Gender

Executive Summary:

The need for articulating UESI's stand on Gender* is borne out of the need to provide clarity on a subject whose essence lies not on objective truths, but on subjective feelings of individuals and the societal expectations that surround them. Even the term “gender” was not in use till the mid-twentieth century! But we at UESI believe, as our 3rd Aim goes, the truths of the historic Christian faith have in them the answers for the whole of life and problems of mankind. It is important, therefore, to know what the truth is concerning man and woman, as how God sees them, and be equipped to discern the inaccuracies in modern gender constructs and the challenges they pose to the understanding of God’s blueprint for marriage, and also their potential to undercut the very essence of humanity. This document, as an answer to this need, elucidates the timeless biblical truths concerning what the world calls today as “gender”.

While affirming there is no distinction between the gender identity and biological identity of a person *in the original design of God*, the document acknowledges the effect of human fall on the society’s less-than-ideal influence in the shaping of a person’s gender... sometimes even deviant and destructive at that. The document affirms that gender is not a product of individual choice, but is rather a consequence of divine design. It also establishes the differences between the genders as God-ordained, biologically determined and

meant to be socially reinforced. While upholding the equality between the genders, the document shows how biblical roles of a husband and wife in a Christian household is different from the social roles society assigns to men and women.

The document is divided into 4 sections:

- 1) Introduction
- 2) What we believe in
- 3) What we mean by what we believe, and how they affect our conduct
- 4) what do these beliefs mean to us as an organization



The reader is persuaded to not only read the document in its entirety but is also encouraged to take time to read/recall the biblical references therein, in their respective contexts, and reflect on them. The annexure at the end outlines the context that led to the creation of this paper on UESI's stand on Gender.

The applicability of this document is limited to UESI members' (signed or otherwise) conduct and advocacy in their homes, in EU-EGF fellowships, and the marketplace they minister in. Regarding the scope of the document's content, the paper addresses gender related concern only, and the aspect of sexuality is outside its scope.

**Gender: the social and cultural differences a society assigns to people based on their biological sex.*

Section I - Introduction

This document on UESI's stand on gender is meant to serve as a prescriptive guideline for all in the organization to navigate through the dynamic, and often baffling, sociocultural landscape that defines concepts of gender, gender identity, transgenderism and gender roles, and to discern how they intersect with, or impinge on, the revelations and teachings of the Bible. The document will also serve as a basis to empathetically and sensitively engage with those having varied experiences and perspectives different from our beliefs on the subject matter. The document articulates a set of beliefs that we as UESI affirm, and goes on to provide a fair amount of explanation on what we mean by what we believe.

Before getting into the details of UESI's position on the subject, here are two scenarios that would help the reader gain a sense of what the subject matter is about:

An EU student in his/her sociology class, when introduced to the statement, “gender is a superstructure socially constructed on the biological base”, is very likely to experience some disturbance from a sense of confusion, or distress, trying to reconcile the thought with the biblical account of creation of the man and the woman. The confusion will only deepen when some friends of theirs insist that they be addressed by their preferred pronouns [a biological male wants to be referred to as “she” or a biological female wants to be referred to as “he”, or “hir” for either gender]. The (EU) student might believe that this is not how things were when God created Adam and Eve; but how will they reconcile what is playing out before their eyes as “lived experiences of people” and what they hear as “science” from their teachers or peers, with what they

always believed? Will their beliefs be shaken? Even if their beliefs are not shaken, how will they relate with their friends without coming across as snobbish, irrational, or fanatical?

Likewise, when gender-based roles are discussed in the class, there might be challenges faced by believing students who might not have a sound scriptural understanding. They could come to an erroneous conclusion that the roles that the Bible calls a husband and wife into are no different from what society expects of them to do or not do. Worse still is the thought that the Bible encourages patriarchy or interpreting a culture-transcending text in the Scriptures as culture-influenced. This would certainly create tension in the understanding of what the first Core Value of UESI, “Centrality of the Scriptures” means, and could potentially trigger a departure from our evangelical position in any aspect of faith or conduct.

“There can be no more reliable authority on the earth than God’s Word, the Bible. This timeless, trustworthy source of truth holds the key that unlocks life’s mysteries. It alone provides us with the shelter we need in times of storm.” – Charles Swindoll [quote cited in “Core Values – Back to Basics” by Prema Fenn, UESI Publication Trust].

Section II - What we believe in?

1. We affirm that God created human beings in His image; male and female, He created them. [Gen 1:27]
2. We see no distinction between biological sex and gender in the creation account, and therefore we believe that gender is not a by-product of individual choice but is rather a consequence of divine design.
3. We believe gender, as the term means in Sociology, is supposed to be in alignment with the biological sex of the person.
4. We believe sex is determined at conception and the behavioural differences between the genders are also part of God's design, some biologically determined and some meant to be socially reinforced.

We also believe deviations from God's design is a result of human fall, affecting a person's sense of gender identity, gender expression or gender role, mediated through social, psychological or biological factors.

[Gen 1:27; Gen 2:15-24; Gen 3:16-19; Titus 2:5]

One example of a gender-based behavioural difference is the bonding behaviours mothers exhibit with their babies correlated to the levels of the hormone, Oxytocin, present during the first trimester of their pregnancy.

Another example could be the role of the *right world* view about motherhood in confirming a mother's calling to be a mother and the natural fashioning of behaviors that goes with it.

5. We acknowledge gender as a social construct distinct from biological sex for the merit it offers in understanding the non-binary gender spectrum (of the fallen world) and its manifestations in transgenderism.
6. We affirm that both man and woman, as created in His image, are equal in the sight of God, having equal worth and dignity [Gen 1:27]. This truth is also affirmed in the redemption of both man and woman equally [Gal 3:28], the inheritance they both share as co-heirs in Christ [1 Pet 3:7], and in the co-stewardship He is calling them to [Gen 1:28].
7. We believe God chose, in His wisdom, the institution of marriage to shed light into the mystery of the relationship between Christ and His Church, even as He wants the husband and wife to model their relationship after the relationship between Christ and His Church. [Eph 5:22-33]
8. We believe God created man and woman distinctly different and calls them differently to fulfil His design intent for families. [Gen 2:15-24; Eph 5:23; Gen 2:18; Tit 2:5]
9. We affirm that the husband, as head, is called to provide God-honouring leadership to the family, modelled after the headship of Christ over the Church and His love for it. We also affirm that the wife, as suitable helper, is called to partner and complement him in God's mandate for the family. [Eph 5:22-25, Gen 2:15-24, Gen 1:28]
10. We affirm to the instruction given to the wife to submit to her husband's God-honouring leadership, as to the Lord. [Eph 5:22-25]

Section III - What we mean by what we believe, and how they affect our conduct?

Our beliefs mean that...

1. Gender differences and role distinctions do not compromise the equality between the genders.
2. *Biblical roles* which God calls the husband and wife to embrace in a Christian household are different from the *social roles* that society assigns to genders.
3. We do not recognize gender-based power structures in the society manifesting as male dominance and female subordination as God's idea for humanity.
4. The husband and wife sharing household chores is an act of love for each other and is for making way for God's purposes to be fulfilled in them as individuals and as a family. A loving couple will be ready to practice this in any proportion as situations demand, yet not showing reluctance to embrace the primary calling for the husband and wife, as revealed in the Scriptures, and as people who see the wisdom of God in His design. [Gen 2:15-18, Eph 5:28-31]
5. Caregiving functions (like tending to the needs of the family or making the home a welcoming haven) are not reserved only for the wife, although we believe she may be better equipped for it both biologically and psychologically. This does not limit her from working outside her home or the husband from working within the home. A godly wife will not cringe at the idea of caregiving, but will embrace it with gladness as a unique part of God's design for her, as the suitable helper. Likewise, a godly husband will not hesitate to provide caregiving or neglect

domestic responsibilities, as someone who is called to love his wife as his own body. [Gen 2:18, Tit 2:5, 1 Pet 3: 7, Eph 5:28-31]

6. The husband, although having the primary responsibility to provide for and protect his family, cannot see it as an exclusive privilege. [Gen 2:15]
7. The husband is accountable to God for the godly direction he is called to provide to the family as the spiritual head of the home. [Gen 2:17, Eph 5:23, Gen 3:9]
8. The husband, as head of his wife, must not feel entitled but rather exhibit qualities of servant leadership and show Christ-like love towards her. [Phil 2:5-8, Mark 10:35-43, Eph 5:25]
9. In a godly household, the husband and wife will, together, seek God's wisdom in decision-making, in all areas of their lives and in their children's lives. The husband provides God-honouring leadership in attitude and practice in facilitating decision-making, and along with his wife makes quality decisions for the family. The husband is accountable to God in the choices they make as a family and for the shared identity they are called to bear, reflecting the glory of God. [Gen 2:16-18, 2:24, 3:9, Eph 5:23, 22]
10. The husband and wife submitting to one another (Eph 5:21 when applied to husband-wife relationship) is distinctly different from the wife submitting to the God-honouring leadership of the husband (Eph 5:22). The former is a universal virtue and a generic instruction whereas the latter is a specific instruction given to the wife in the context of the godly priorities the husband is called to set for the family. This is not to suggest that the wife does not have a responsibility for setting godly priorities for the home.

11. Men and women should have equal opportunities to grow into what God had purposed them to become, and so, in UESI, they will have the freedom to serve in any capacity as the Lord wills. [Gen 1:28, Eph 2:10]
12. The demand for dowry as a cultural practice is disrespectful to the dignity of the woman and a shameful testament to the dignity of the man.
13. There should be no gender-based discrimination in children's share to their ancestral wealth/property.
14. We reject the gender-diverse and gender-fluid world that some envisage as normative, invalidating God's design and purpose. We cannot endorse the solutions offered by secular practitioners to those who have genuine feelings of gender non-conformance (including those with gender dysphoria). We believe that in a majority of gender non-conforming cases, their genders can be aligned to their biological sex with the right kind of truth-based therapy. In some cases, though, it may not produce the desired results. Regardless of therapy outcomes or the lifestyle choices they make, we, as bearers of the truth, must respectfully engage with them, speak to them the truth in love, and walk with them with a hope of helping them find rest in the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ. As created in the image of God, every person deserves dignity and respect, and this includes gender non-conforming people as well. We commit ourselves to treat them with love and compassion and make them feel welcome in ministry platforms/channels that are appropriate to the stage they are in in their faith journey.
15. Intersex is a biological anomaly just as any other congenital aberration. Even as we recognize what they go through and the challenges they face with respect to their sexuality, we believe

they can find rest, purpose and fulfilment when they experience the redeeming love of Christ Jesus. We must treat them with all respectability regardless of the fact they belong to the household of faith or not. Taking a cue from how God looks at a covenant-keeping eunuch [Isa 56:3-5], we believe, God has a special place in his heart for the intersex, when they are justified by His grace. We consider the hijras of our land in this category.

Section IV - What do these beliefs mean to us as an organization

1. We understand that we, as UESI community, are bound by the aforesaid beliefs and interpretations.
2. If there are any of us who have struggles in wholeheartedly subscribing to these beliefs and interpretations, we commit ourselves to learn in humility and to grow into full maturity concerning these truths... and until then, we as individuals commit to *not* accept, or as an organization (when in doubt), *not* assign any leadership role at any level in the organization, nor accept/assign any teaching/preaching assignments in the areas of gender, sexuality, marriage, or family, nor represent UESI in any forum that addresses these topics.
3. To this end, the organization will put in place adequate mechanisms to build lasting awareness of, and seamless adherence to UESI's stand on Gender, in all of its constituencies. The organization may ask individuals to sign a declaration to this effect, if convinced of the need and when faced with a situation/decision described in Section IV (2).

Note: This document is to be read ideally with the teaching material titled, “*A Biblical Response to Gender Concerns*” for a more elaborate understanding of the scriptural reasoning behind it and for a deeper understanding of the subject.

Annexure: Context that led to the writing of this paper

Is it necessary for UESI, as an interdenominational organization, to take a definitive position on this subject? Well, it is important to note that, historically, denominations did not differ on the subject of gender, gender identity and gender roles on doctrinal grounds. In fact, the subject is a fit example of socio-culturally triggered ‘winds of change’ that weaken denominations’ convictions in Bible-centered beliefs. Some denominations may not even have an articulated position on the matter. So, as an interdenominational organization, we should exercise extreme caution when faced with the challenge of having to evolve the way ‘member denominations’ tend to evolve. Who we are as an interdenominational organization *should continue to be defined by parameters of commonality*, explicit or otherwise, which we had agreed upon when we came together as a movement... not by new beliefs!

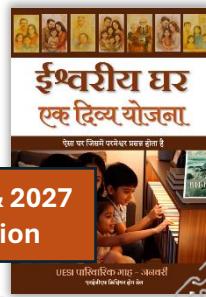
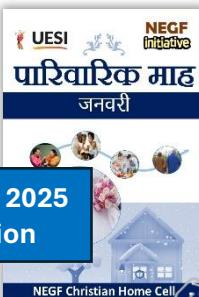
In UESI, although this wind of change (in the area of *biblical roles* of the husband and wife) has been noticeable for a long time, (arguably) no one recognized the belief for what it is in its entirety. The root of this belief and its ramifications were begun to be understood when the reference material (study notes) used in the Bible Study Centre module of *Gender and Family in the 21st Century*, was found to be based more on sociology than on theology. This led the UESI board to suspend the teaching of this module until the said material was re-written, reviewed and approved for use. The re-written paper too failed to stand up to the rigour of biblical scrutiny in that it did not provide a biblical argument for “gender” beyond how

sociology views it. While upholding the scriptural truths of equality between the genders, and co-stewardship of the husband and wife in the creation-mandate of God to humankind, it failed to establish the God-ordained roles that the Bible speaks of for a husband and wife. Further, the paper did not seek to defend the truth that gender is God's idea, notwithstanding the fact that it does come under the influence of one's social or cultural setting also [It must be noted that it is the absence of this element in *sociology* that contributes to the laying of foundation for a gender-diverse society and the invalidation of biologically determined gender differentiation!]

Therefore, it became necessary to conceive of an *alternative reference material* for the said module at the *Bible Study Centre* – one that would begin with theology and address what we know from sociology on the subject of gender. We do have this alternative paper now, titled, “*A Biblical Response to Gender Concerns*”. But to be attested for use as a training material, we need an *organizational position paper* to serve as a measuring rod. The paper on “*UESI’s stand on Gender*” is that measuring rod, not only to attest the said, newly created, reference/teaching material but also to guide the organization in its programs, activities or decisions, and help its ‘members’ navigate the challenging space of gender.

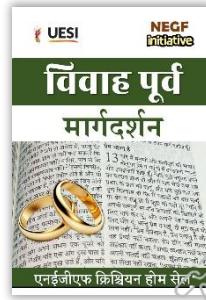
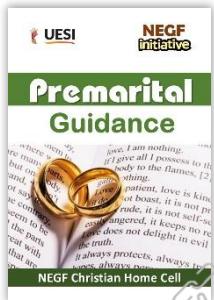


Resources from NEGF Christian Home Cell



Family Seminar (Hindi & English)

 **Pre-marital Guidance**
Online Seminar
(Hindi & English)



Click on the picture to download these resources.

Read, study and share these resources with other members and EGFs.



Ten NEGF Initiatives

UESI NEGFI Initiatives

NEGFI is a field support team of **UESI**. **NEGFI** Department or the "National Graduates Department" should be seen on similar lines as the "National Students' Cell". **NEGFI** means members of the **NEGFI** committee, committees of all the cells under **NEGFI**.

Five NEGF Cells

1. NEGFI EU to EGF Transition Cell
2. NEGFI Member Care Cell
3. NEGFI Evangelical Graduate Cell
4. NEGFI Christian Home Cell
5. NEGFI Evangelical Graduate Editorial Cell

Ten NEGF Initiatives

- 1 EU-to-EGF Transition**
- 2 Mentoring**
- 3 Member Care**
- 4 Evangelical Graduate**
- 5 Christian Home**
- 6 Sixty-Six TM Focus Cities**
- 7 Engaging with SEGFs**
- 8 Saved to Serve**
- 9 Orientations @ States**
- 10 EGF Councils**

Field Support Team
Field Development Team
INC. NEGFI
CND. TD. 500
FDR & ACT

Ten NEGF Initiatives

- 5 Christian Home**
- 6 Sixty-Six TM Focus Cities**
- 7 Engaging with SEGFs**
- 8 Saved to Serve**
- 9 Orientations @ States**
- 10 EGF Councils**

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