

PARENT / TEACHER LESSON PLANS



FAMILY



Summary

This lesson requires students to consider God’s design and plan for the family unit. Students compare this biblical version of the family with that represented by Canadian census data from the years 1961-2011. After learning about the response to several “family” bills in Ontario, students record their own radio ad in response to a “family” bill in their own province. Students are educated, encouraged and equipped to respond with a Christian perspective in the public sphere in the future.

<p>Essential Question</p>	<hr/> <p><i>How does the meaning of the word “family” guide us as we engage with our culture?</i></p> <hr/> <p>This essential question requires students to work with the reality that the family unit is contested territory in Canada. The concept of a traditional family unit as designed by God for our spiritual and physical well-being is the oldest institution known to humankind and we undermine it at our peril. Students are prompted to contemplate the changing nature of the family unit in our society and how the meaning of the term “family” can guide them as they engage with Canada in the public square.</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>This lesson requires students to consider God’s design and plan for the family unit. Students compare this biblical version of the family with that represented by Canadian census data from the years 1961-2011. After learning about the response to several “family” bills in Ontario, students record their own radio ad in response to a “family” bill in their own province. Students are educated, encouraged and equipped to respond with a Christian perspective in the public sphere in the future.</p>
<p>Engage students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage students by explaining that, as a class, you hope create a deep understanding of the concept of “family”. They will do this through a creative exercise by imagining this concept in terms of their five senses. Distribute copies of <i>Handout 1 – A five senses portrait of family</i> In small groups or individually, come up with a variety of words for each of the five senses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>sight</i>...what shapes, colours, or objects do you think of? <i>touch</i>...what textures or surfaces do you think of? <i>hear</i>...what sounds come to your mind? <i>smell</i>...what smells are associated? <i>taste</i>...what tastes are associated? Brainstorm several for each of the five senses and then decide on the preferred one that best captures what the student or small group thinks. Take this preferred term and determine a rationale for it. Some examples could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My family sounds like <u>an orchestra</u> because <u>everybody is like a different instrument but together we sound great.</u> My family tastes like <u>freshly baked bread</u> because <u>my mother always had fresh bread on Sunday morning.</u> After determining a rationale for each of the preferred terms for each of the five senses, each small group or individual should share their statements with the rest of the class.

Exploring what the Bible has to say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute <i>Handout 2 – Paul’s instructions for families</i> and read Ephesians 5:21 through Ephesians 6:4. <i>Handout 2</i> is intended to help the students organize the following main questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What instructions does this chapter give for husbands? Is there a primary task invoked? ○ What instructions are there for wives? Is there a primary task invoked? ○ What are the expectations given by God for children? ○ What are the expectations given by God for parents? • It should become clear after reading and studying this Scripture passage that God has a clearly designed pattern, already established with Adam and Eve, for husbands and wives, for parents, for children and for families. This pattern is beneficial for children, for the whole family and most importantly honours God because it reflects the love he shows His Church. • The pattern of the church’s submission to Christ is presented to wives. The pattern of Christ’s love to His Church is presented to husbands.
Comparing Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Handout 3 – Fifty years of families in Canada</i>. the following article, have students compare the last 55 years of Canadian families and summarize what has happened. • Read and make several observations about how the structure of the traditional family unit has changed in Canada in the last 55 years.
Encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly summarize that there are ways to bring a biblical perspective to our civil authorities when legislation is brought forward to • Highlight ARPA’s work on Bill 89 in Ontario • Easy mail – radio ads. • Link to effective radio ads • Summarize
Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Ontario Bill 89 • Read the backgrounders. There is one from RealWomen, an interview transcript (play the interview here at time code: • There are also Easy Mail letters. • Have students create their own radio ad that tackles • Start strong, tell a story, be clear in your call to action • This radio ad needs to provide an answer to listeners about how the meaning of the word family is contested territory and how it

Extension

- Depending on the legislation being put forward in your own province, please consider using this lesson as a test-drive to engaging with some actual legislation that is before Canada's Parliament or your own provincial Legislative Assembly or Provincial Parliament.
- Consider working with a local ARPA to raise funds to have one of these ads actually run on a local radio station.

Teacher Overview- Family

In the summer of 2005, Canada's Parliament passed the Civil Marriage Act which redefined marriage to include homosexual couples.

Canada became the fourth country in the world to officially redefine marriage in this way. Parliament's decision followed numerous court decisions which found that the traditional definition of marriage was "unconstitutional."

But this wasn't the only effort to redefine the traditional family. Here are a few more recent examples from the Ontario context:

2007: An Ontario court ruled that a child can legally have three parents. The biological mother and father of the child wanted the mom's lesbian partner to legally be the boy's parent as well. The court agreed, resulting in the boy having three "parents." In addition to these changes to the traditional family, there is a growing push to allow for polygamy in Canada.

2012: Bill 33, or "Toby's Act", marked the first time a major jurisdiction in North America passed the terms "gender identity" and "gender expression" into its human rights code.

2012: The "Accepting Schools Act" (Bill 13), required public and Catholic schools to allow gay-straight alliances and to root out "homophobia", "biphobia", and "transphobia".

2015: Bill 77, the "Affirming Gender Identity Act", banned "reparative therapy" for minors that are struggling with gender identity disorder.

2016: The “All Families are Equal Act”, or Bill 28, removed the terms “mother” and “father” from Ontario law and allowed up to four different adults to become a child’s parents through a so-called “pre-conception parentage agreement”.

2017: Bill 89, the “Supporting Children, Youth and Families Act” cements gender identity and gender expression into child services law.

The redefinition of family has resulted in part from the breakdown of the family that accelerated with the introduction of "no-fault" divorce back in 1968. When maintaining marriage became a matter of preference, it did not take long for other groups to take advantage of this and redefine other parts of family according to preference.

What is going on behind each of these scenarios? The traditional family unit is being redefined according to individual preferences. Instead of biology and adoption defining family, family becomes whatever people want it to be. With these changes, there is no longer any objective standard of what should constitute a family. Instead, courts determine the new parameters based on what they think is "loving" and "tolerant". The state is assuming a more direct role in children’s lives. Parents are gradually being separated from their role as primary decision make in their children’s lives.

This redefinition of family is a rebellion against the long-standing definition of family (a married father and mother and biological or adopted children). This traditional definition was not simply some arbitrary definition that worked in the past but should be replaced to suit our postmodern times. It was designed by God to reflect the spiritual relationship between Him and us. Ephesians 5 explains how the relationship between husband and wife is to reflect the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. Likewise, the relationship between fathers and children is also to reflect the way that we are obedient to our heavenly Father. Throughout the Bible it is very clear that God puts a divine imprint on His creation. The family is to reflect who God is to this world. It is not to be defined according to our changing preferences but according to God's eternal standard.

God also knows what is best for us. The traditional family unit is not only a spiritual reality; it is made for our good. When it is destroyed through divorce, redefining marriage, or any other way, there are inevitable consequences. A wealth of social research testifies to the importance of stable traditional families for the well-being of children and society in general.