

A bonfire of logs is burning brightly at the bottom of the frame. A thick plume of golden sparks and embers rises from the fire, filling the dark night sky. The entire scene is framed by a thin, dark red border.

**BETHANY INTERNATIONAL CHURCH
MELBOURNE**

MAY EDITION

**KINGDOM OF GOD AND
HOLY SPIRIT**



for my house
will be called
a house of
prayer for all
nations



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Keluarga yang Kokoh

Kehidupan keluarga saat ini menghadapi tantangan yang jauh lebih berat dibandingkan dengan dua atau tiga dekade yang lalu, di mana spirit keduniawian semakin kuat, kesuksesan hanya diukur dengan materi, gaya hidup hedonisme, fenomena LGBT dan lain-lain. Kemajuan teknologi informasi bila tidak disikapi dengan benar justru membuat keluarga semakin jauh, bahkan ada godaan untuk berkomunikasi dengan pihak-pihak tertentu secara tersembunyi, yang dapat membawa keretakan bahkan kehancuran dalam keluarga.

Setiap pasangan yang memasuki pernikahan pasti memiliki kerinduan untuk mengalami pernikahan kuat dan bahagia. Namun kenyataannya banyak keluarga yang lemah, bahkan sampai ada yang hancur.

Keluarga yang kuat bukanlah absen dari masalah, tetapi atas anugerah Tuhan dapat berhasil mengatasi setiap masalah, bahkan keluar sebagai pemenang.

SYARAT UNTUK MEMILIKI KELUARGA YANG KUAT

1. Suami isteri Sama-Sama Mengasihi Tuhan Yesus

Cinta akan Tuhan merupakan fondasi utama untuk mengalami keluarga yang kuat. Jika cinta kepada Tuhan pasti senang melakukan firman Tuhan.

Tuhan Yesus memberikan gambaran tentang dua macam dasar rumah yang dibangun dengan ilustrasi, yaitu mereka yang membangun rumah di atas batu atau di atas pasir. Perumpamaan yang Tuhan Yesus berikan mengenai mereka yang mendengar Firman Tuhan dan melakukan, dianalogikan seperti orang yang membangun rumah di atas batu. Saat badai datang, rumahnya tetap kokoh. Berbeda dengan orang yang membangun rumah di atas pasir, yaitu mereka yang mendengar Firman tetapi tidak melakukannya, saat badai datang maka hancurlah rumahnya dan hebatlah rusaknya, karena mendirikan rumahnya di atas pasir. (Matius 7:24-27)

Keluarga yang kuat harus membangun rumahnya di atas batu karang yang teguh, suami isteri sama-sama cinta Tuhan Yesus dan terus membangun keluarganya di dalam kebenaran Firman Tuhan. Setiap usaha tanpa Tuhan, maka hasil dan tujuannya pasti salah.

“Jikalau bukan Tuhan yang membangun rumah, sia-sialah usaha orang yang membangunnya; jikalau bukan Tuhan yang mengawal kota, sia-sialah pengawal berjaga-jaga. Sia-sialah kamu bangun pagi-pagi dan duduk-duduk sampai jauh malam, dan makan roti yang diperoleh dengan susah payah – sebab Ia memberikannya kepada yang dicintainya pada waktu tidur.” (Mazmur 127:1-2)

Membangun keluarga dalam kebenaran Firman secara korporat dapat dilakukan dengan mendirikan mezbah keluarga. Suami isteri bersama dengan anak secara bersama dalam waktu yang telah ditentukan, sebaiknya pagi, bila tidak memungkinkan malam. Memuji Tuhan bersama, membaca Alkitab dan berdoa yang dipimpin oleh suami sebagai imam. Tetapi dapat juga secara bergantian. Keluarga yang berdoa, memuji Tuhan dan membaca Firman bersama, akan dapat tinggal rukun bersama sama.

2 . Memiliki Visi Yang Sama

Visi yang sama menentukan tujuan hidup yang sama. Tujuan yang sama membuat keluarga memiliki arah yang sama. Bila suami isteri bersama dengan anak-anak yang Tuhan anugerahkan memiliki visi yang sama, maka mereka dapat bekerja sama untuk mencapai visi mereka. Tiap anggota keluarga memiliki potensi dan talenta yang berbeda. Namun saat perbedaan dalam anggota keluarga tersebut dijalankan bersama-sama, maka akan menghasilkan perkara-perkara besar. Visi yang sama, seharusnya terlebih dahulu dimiliki oleh suami isteri sebagai inti keluarga. Bila orang tua telah memiliki visi yang sama, maka dengan mudah mengimpasikannya kepada anak.

Bila setiap anggota keluarga memiliki visi yang berbeda, maka keluarga ini sulit menjadi keluarga yang kuat. Suami memiliki visi yang tidak dimengerti oleh isteri, demikian sebaliknya. Anak juga tidak pernah memahami apa visi dari orang tua mereka. Mereka akan berjalan masing-masing sesuai dengan visi pribadi.

Tetapi saat keluarga memiliki visi yang sama, maka mereka akan menjadi kuat dan tangguh, terlebih lagi bila mereka menerima dan meyakini visi mereka itulah visi yang Tuhan beri, sehingga mereka dalam melakukannya pun dapat pengurapan dari Tuhan.

3. Memiliki Quality Time Bersama

Semasa pra nikah pada umumnya selalu ada waktu yang berkualitas secara bersama. Dapat membicarakan berbagai hal, mulai dari hal yang kecil sampai kepada perkara besar. Satu sama lain dengan senang hati dan penuh perhatian untuk mendengarkannya. Tetapi seiring dengan berjalannya waktu, setelah menikah sering tidak ada quality time secara bersama. Kesibukan dalam pekerjaan menyita waktu, sehingga ikatan emosi satu dengan yang lain dalam keluarga bisa rapuh.

Karena itu waktu keluarga harus direncanakan, makan malam bersama dapat merupakan waktu yang baik. Sebagai contoh: ada keluarga yang membuat satu kali dalam 1 minggu mengadakan sambung rasa. Dalam acara ini setiap anggota keluarga dapat menyampaikan kerinduannya dan masalah yang dihadapi. Acara tersebut dapat juga diselingi dengan game yang disesuaikan dengan usia anggota keluarga. Dalam acara ini tidak diperkenankan memegang HP, semuanya fokus kepada acara kebersamaan. Waktu keluarga yang dilakukan secara baik akan menghasilkan ikatan emosi yang kuat dan mendalam bagi setiap anggota keluarga.

DAMPAK KELUARGA YANG KOKOH

1. Sehati

Tiap anggota keluarga memiliki karakter yang berbeda, yang cenderung mementingkan dirinya sendiri. Tetapi keluarga yang kuat walaupun berbeda mereka dapat menjadi sehati (Matius 18:19). Mereka berhasil menyinergikan perbedaan menjadi satu kekuatan

2. Dapat Saling Mengampuni

Dalam perjalanan keluarga, kecewa, sakit hati, terluka bisa saja terjadi. Bahkan pribadi yang paling kita cintai, adalah pribadi yang paling berpotensi mengecewakan dan melukai hati kita. Karena itu suami adalah pribadi yang paling berpotensi melukai isterinya, demikian sebaliknya. Anak terhadap orang tua dan sebaliknya.

Tetapi keluarga yang kuat, atas anugerah Tuhan dapat memberikan pengampunan satu kepada yang lain, walaupun bisa terjadi beberapa kali, mereka tetap saling menerima dan memaafkan. Karena mereka tetap berpegang pada Firman Tuhan yang mengatakan, pengampunan tidak cukup sampai tujuh kali, tetapi sampai tujuh puluh kali tujuh kali. (Matius 18:21).

3. Dapat Mensyukuri Setiap Keadaan

Hidup bersyukur adalah sesuatu yang menyenangkan hati Tuhan, karena itulah perintah-Nya untuk selalu bersyukur (Filipi 4:4; 1 Tesalonika 5:16). Apapun yang terjadi keluarga yang kuat selalu melihat dengan kacamata rohani, sehingga mereka bisa bersyukur.

4. Dapat Menggenapi Destiny Ilahi

Hidup bahagia, bila hidup ini menggenapi tujuan Allah. Ia memiliki tujuan yang mulia untuk setiap keluarga. Secara umum ialah membangun kerajaan Allah dengan membawa dan memberitakan nilai-nilai kebenaran bagi dunia ini. Keluarga adalah partner kerja Allah (Kejadian 1:28; 2:15).

Love Won't Stop

12 MAY

After I turned nineteen, and years before I owned a pager or a cell phone, I moved more than seven hundred miles away from my mom. One morning, I left early to run errands, forgetting our scheduled call. Later that night, two policemen came to my door. Mom had been worried because I'd never missed one of our chats. After calling repeatedly and getting a busy signal, she reached out to the authorities and insisted they check on me. One of the police officers turned to me and said, "It's a blessing to know love won't stop looking for you."

When I picked up the phone to call my mom, I realized I had accidentally left the receiver off its base. After I apologized, she said she needed to spread the good news to the family and friends she had informed that I'd been missing. I hung up thinking she'd overreacted a bit, though it felt good to be loved that much.

Scripture paints a beautiful picture of God, who is Love, relentlessly beckoning His wandering children. Like a good shepherd, He cares about and seeks out every lost sheep, affirming the priceless value of every beloved child of God (Luke 15:1–7).

Love never stops looking for us. He will pursue us until we've returned to Him. We can pray for others who need to know that Love—God—never stops looking for them either.

How does it encourage you to know that God continually pursues you in love? How is He using you to reveal His love to others?

Read

Luke 15:1-7

Bible in a Year

2 Kings 15–16;

John 3:1–18

Rejoice with

me; I have

found my lost

sheep.

Luke 15:6

By Xochitl Dixon

13 MAY

Read

Deuteronomy
34:1-5

Bible in a Year

2 Kings 17–18;
John 3:19–36

*I have let you
see it with your
eyes, but you
will not cross
over into it.*

Deuteronomy
34:4

By Tim Gustafson

A Longing in Stone

“Ah, every pier is a longing in stone!” says a line in Fernando Pessoa’s Portuguese poem “Ode Marítima.” Pessoa’s pier represents the emotions we feel as a ship moves slowly away from us. The vessel departs but the pier remains, an enduring monument to hopes and dreams, partings and yearnings. We ache for what’s lost, and for what we can’t quite reach.

The Portuguese word translated “longing” (*saudade*) refers to a nostalgic yearning we feel—a deep ache that defies definition. The poet is describing the indescribable.

We might say that Mount Nebo was Moses’s “longing in stone.” From Nebo he gazed into the promised land—a land he would never reach. God’s words to Moses—“I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it” (Deuteronomy 34:4)—might seem harsh. But if that’s all we see, we miss the heart of what’s happening. God is speaking immense comfort to Moses: “This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, ‘I will give it to your descendants’” (v. 4). Very soon, Moses would leave Nebo for a land far better than Canaan (v. 5).

Life often finds us standing on the pier. Loved ones depart; hopes fade; dreams die. Amid it all we sense echoes of Eden and hints of heaven. Our longings point us to God. He is the fulfillment we yearn for.

What are your unfulfilled longings? What places in life are you trying to satisfy with wrong things? How can you find true fulfillment in God alone?

A Kind Critique

14

MAY

During a landscape painting class, the teacher, a highly experienced professional artist, assessed my first assignment. He stood silently in front of my painting, one hand cupping his chin. Here we go, I thought. He's going to say it's terrible. But he didn't.

He said he liked the color scheme and the feeling of openness. Then he mentioned that the trees in the distance could be lightened. A cluster of weeds needed softer edges. He had the authority to criticize my work based on the rules of perspective and color, yet his critique was truthful and kind.

Jesus, who was perfectly qualified to condemn people for their sin, didn't use the Ten Commandments to crush a Samaritan woman He met at an ancient watering hole. He gently critiqued her life with just a handful of statements. The result was that she saw how her search for satisfaction had led her into sin. Building on this awareness, Jesus revealed Himself as the only source of eternal satisfaction (John 4:10–13).

The combination of grace and truth that Jesus used in this situation is what we experience in our relationship with Him (1:17). His grace prevents us from being overwhelmed by our sin, and His truth prevents us from thinking it isn't a serious matter. Will we invite Jesus to show us areas of our lives where we need to grow so we can become more like Him?

How is Jesus using grace and truth to point out issues in your life? Where might He want you to make changes to honor Him more fully?

Read

John 4:7-15

Bible in a Year

2 Kings 19–21;

John 4:1–30

The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 1:17

By Jennifer Benson Schultz

15 MAY

Read

Psalm 22:1-5

Bible in a Year

2 Kings 22–23;

John 4:31–54

*My God, my
God, why
have you
forsaken me?*

Psalm 22:1

By Leslie Koh

When All Seems Lost

In just six months, Gerald's life fell apart. An economic crisis destroyed his business and wealth, while a tragic accident took his son's life. Overcome by shock, his mother had a heart attack and died, his wife went into depression, and his two young daughters remained inconsolable. All he could do was echo the words of the psalmist, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Psalm 22:1).

The only thing that kept Gerald going was the hope that God, who raised Jesus to life, would one day deliver him and his family from their pain to an eternal life of joy. It was a hope that God would answer his desperate cries for help. In his despair, like the psalmist David, he determined to trust God in the midst of his suffering. He held on to the hope that God would deliver and save him (vv. 4–5).

That hope sustained Gerald. Over the years, whenever he was asked how he was, he could only say, "Well, I'm trusting God."

God honored that trust, giving Gerald the comfort, strength, and courage to keep going through the years. His family slowly recovered from the crisis, and soon Gerald welcomed the birth of his first grandchild. His cry is now a testimony of God's faithfulness. "I'm no longer asking, 'Why have you forsaken me?' God has blessed me."

When it seems there's nothing left, there's still hope.

What will help you to remember and cling to God's sure and certain hope of deliverance? How has trusting in God sustained you in a difficult challenge?

Bear Hug

16
MAY

“Bear” was a gift for my grandchild—a heaping helping of love contained in a giant stuffed animal frame. Baby D’s response? First, wonder. Next, an amazed awe. Then, a curiosity that nudged a daring exploration. He poked his pudgy finger at Bear’s nose, and when the Bear tumbled forward into his arms he responded with joy joy JOY! Baby D laid his toddler head down on Bear’s fluffy chest and hugged him tightly. A dimpled smile spread across his cheeks as he burrowed deeply into Bear’s cushiony softness. The child had no idea of Bear’s inability to truly love him. Innocently and naturally, he felt love from Bear and returned it with all his heart.

In his first of three letters to early Christians, the apostle John boldly states that God Himself is love. “We know and rely on the love God has for us,” he writes. “God is love” (1 John 4:16).

God loves. Not in the pillow of a pretend animal but rather with the outstretched arms of a real human body encasing a beating but breaking heart (John 3:16). Through Jesus, God communicated His extravagant and sacrificial love for us.

John goes on, “We love because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). When we believe we’re loved, we love back. God’s real love makes it possible for us to love God and others—with all our hearts.

*What do you find is most amazing about God’s love for you?
How will you reveal His love to others today?*

Read

1 John 4:13-19

Bible in a Year

2 Kings 24–25;
John 5:1–24

God is love.

1 John 4:16

By Elisa Morgan

17

MAY

Read

Psalm 31:1-8

Bible in a Year

1 Chronicles 1-3;
John 5:25-47

*Into your hands I
commit my spirit;
deliver me, Lord,
my faithful God.*

Psalm 31:5

By Mike Wittmer

God's Amazing Hands

Twenty minutes into a flight from New York to San Antonio, the flight plan changed as calm gave way to chaos. When one of the plane's engines failed, debris from the engine smashed through a window causing the cabin to decompress. Sadly, several passengers were injured and one person was killed. Had not a calm, capable pilot been in the cockpit—one trained as a Navy fighter pilot—things could have been tragically worse. The headline in our local paper read, "In Amazing Hands."

In Psalm 31, David revealed that he knew something about the Lord's amazing, caring hands. That's why he could confidently say, "Into your hands I commit my spirit" (v. 5). David believed that the Lord could be trusted even when life got bumpy. Because he was targeted by unfriendly forces, life was very uncomfortable for David. Though vulnerable, he was not without hope. In the midst of harassment David could breathe sighs of relief and rejoice because his faithful, loving God was his source of confidence (vv. 5-7).

Perhaps you find yourself in a season of life when things are coming at you from every direction, and it's difficult to see what's ahead. In the midst of uncertainty, confusion, and chaos one thing remains absolutely certain: those who are secure in the Lord are in amazing hands.

Have you committed your life—your earthly and eternal existence and well-being—to God? How are you showing that you are trusting Him in good times and bad?

We Need Each Other

18
MAY

While on a hike with my kids, we discovered a light, springy green plant growing in small clumps on the trail. According to a signpost, the plant is commonly called deer moss, but it's not actually a moss at all. It's a lichen. A lichen is a fungus and an alga growing together in a mutualistic relationship in which both organisms benefit from each other. Neither the fungus nor the alga can survive on its own, but together they form a hardy plant that can live in some alpine areas for up to 4,500 years. Because the plant can withstand drought and low temperatures, it's one of the only food sources for caribou (reindeer) in deep winter.

The relationship between the fungus and the alga reminds me of our human relationships. We rely on each other. To grow and flourish, we need to be in relationship with each other.

Paul, writing to believers in Colossae, describes how our relationships should look. We are to clothe ourselves with "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (Colossians 3:12). We ought to forgive each other and live in peace "as members of one body" (v. 15).

It's not always easy to live in peace with our families or friends. But when the Spirit empowers us to exhibit humility and forgiveness in our relationships, our love for each other points to Christ (John 13:35) and brings glory to God.

In what ways do your relationships point to Jesus? How can you pursue peace?

Read

Colossians
3:12-17

Bible in a Year

1 Chronicles 4–6;
John 6:1–21

*Let the peace
of Christ
rule in your
hearts, since
as members of
one body you
were called to
peace.*

Colossians
3:15

By Amy Peterson

Pray for Nation

AUSTRALIA



Capital: *Canberra*

Population: *24.6 million people*

Religion: *Christian*



1. Pray that God would rule over this election that righteous leaders would be elected to govern this nation in truth and justice because, “When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice.” Proverbs 29:2

2. Pray God’s blessing upon all our current parliamentarians and leaders, including their families and all the candidates of all the parties standing for this federal election. 1 Timothy 2:1-3

3. Pray for a multiplication of prayer and unity across the Body of Christ in Australia that people will wake up to the dangers facing our nation and respond in prayer. Ephesians 5:14

4. Pray for a Spiritual Awakening for Australia, Revival and Transformation for our nation and the proclamation of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. John 3:16

“And now I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken... The Lord is long suffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving the iniquity and transgression (of the nation) ... Pardon the iniquity of this people I pray, according to the greatness of your mercy... Then God said, ‘I have pardoned according to your word’.” Numbers 14:17-20



COOL

Community of Love

MAIN

<i>Berea-Bethesda</i>	Ika, Mareta	<i>Ephratah</i>	Steven, Henry
<i>Bethlehem</i>	Felix, Fransisca	<i>Galilee</i>	Kevin, Reinetta
<i>Bethany</i>	Paulus, Erina	<i>Gilgal</i>	Jessica, Mike
<i>Bethel</i>	Christy, Erika	<i>Hebron-Philippi</i>	Yoseph, Rian
<i>Cana</i>	Bobby, Vissy	<i>Horeb</i>	Ferry, Nyssa
<i>Canaan</i>	Kezia, Freddie	<i>Jordan</i>	Sony, Wilfred
<i>Carmel</i>	Rio, Cinthya	<i>Moriah</i>	Andy, Novi
<i>Eden</i>	Jennifer, Jessen	<i>Philadelphia</i>	Dwi, Alicia
<i>Ekklesia</i>	Tabita, Edo	<i>Pniel</i>	Ribka, Vero
<i>Emmaus</i>	Fabian, Priska	<i>Zion</i>	Monica, Raymond

FAMILY

<i>Antioch (West)</i>	Andy, Iwan
<i>Tiberias (West)</i>	Andre, Albert
<i>Doncaster (East)</i>	Michael, Rudy
<i>Jerusalem (East)</i>	Edwin, Gerda
<i>Mt Hermon (East)</i>	Lily, Unggul
<i>Phillipi (East)</i>	Hariyanto, Ivan
<i>Shekinah (East)</i>	Cynthia
<i>Tabernacle (East)</i>	Sandi
<i>Westal (East)</i>	Michael Moeidjiantho

180

<i>Ephesians</i>	Ivan, Anjani
<i>Israel</i>	Timothy, Adela
<i>Judah</i>	Friska, Hendy
<i>Judea</i>	Valen, Charles
<i>Macedonia</i>	Priscilla Kezia
<i>Nain</i>	Sylvia, Alicia

MAIN SERVICE

8.30 am & 11 am
(Indonesian with English
translation)

SUNDAY SCHOOL

9 am (English)

180 (TEENS)

8.45 am (English)

NEXT GENERATION (YOUTH)

11 am (English)

PRAYER TOWER

Point Cook | Monday | 7:15 PM
BIC Melbourne | Tuesday | 6:30 PM
Mount Waverly | Wednesday | 7:15 PM
BIC Melbourne | Friday | 12:00 PM
BIC Melbourne (Fasting Prayer) | Saturday | 10:00 AM

COOL

Friday, 7:00 PM

LADIES FELLOWSHIP

Women of Impact Community
Tuesday 10:30 AM, at BIC



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Bethany International Church Melbourne