



SHARING SCRIPTURE

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Finding Rest in Family Ties

For use: August 1 - 7

Texts: Genesis 34; Hebrews 11:17-22; Deuteronomy 4:29; 1 John 3:1, 2; Genesis 39; Ephesians 6:1-13

Rags-to-riches tales and similar stories are the motif of pursuing the American dream, and it's no different for U.S. Olympian Simone Biles, whose childhood was far from perfect.

As children, Biles and her three siblings were often neglected by their parents, who were eventually reported to the proper authorities by a concerned neighbor. In a piece she wrote for CNN, Biles recalls, "My road to success began the day my grandfather and his wife officially adopted my sister and me. ... Although I was young when my foster care ordeal began, I remember how it felt to be passed off and over-looked. Like nobody knew me or wanted to know me. ... Finding a family made me feel like I mattered." [1]

Like Biles, many of us struggle with family life that leaves much to be desired. Although God originally designed the family unit to be one of love, care, nurture, and respect, symbolic of our relationship with God, sin has impacted how earthly families function.

Fortunately, the Scriptures provide us detailed instruction on how to live as best we can with our family members. As we study [Ephesians 6:1-13](#), we see that having faith in the Lord, honoring and respecting each other, and living for God can greatly influence the character of the family. We won't be perfect, but we can be better.

What's more, God still offers a perfect example of the family when we accept God as our loving parent and follow the covenant. Through God's care we are known, wanted, and loved, and we can find our true self-worth as children of God ([1 John 3:1-3](#)), transforming from dry trees to children eternally living

within God's home ([Isaiah 56:3-8](#)). Now that's something to celebrate!

~ Stefani Leeper

[1] <https://sports.yahoo.com/simone-biles-competing-in-tokyo-spotlights-another-important-subject-adoption-and-foster-care-143212502.html>

For Reflection

Connecting: God instructs us to honor our parents, but can there be an exception to the rule when the parents are abusive and/or neglectful?

Sharing: God's love for us is boundless, but is being a child of God conditional?

1. Our spiritual adoption hinges on faith ([Hebrews 11:17-22](#))
2. Yes, we must have faith, keep the Sabbath, live in love, and avoid evil ([Isaiah 56:1-8](#); [1 John 3:9-12](#))
3. No, we were automatically made children when Christ died on the cross
4. No, our future was predestined and is beyond our control
5. Unknown
6. Other

Applying: We can fall into the problem of loving ourselves uncritically or not valuing ourselves enough, instead of looking to God for our worth. This week, prayerfully reflect on God's view of you as presented in this lesson's texts. If you know someone struggling with their self-worth, you may wish to share these verses with them.

Valuing: What patterns in your family would you like to have been different? Can that pattern be broken from passing down through the generations? How can surrendering to God's plan for family dynamics help your future family? Pray for God's guidance in this matter.

Other Helpful Resources

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Executive Director

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