

EMMAUS EQUIPPING

COLLEGE BIBLE CLASSES

Assignment 7

Assignment 7-1.....	1
Overview.....	2
Cultural Background.....	2
Belief System.....	2
Upbringing.....	2
Professional Life.....	3
Personal Life.....	3
External Influences.....	3
Values.....	3
Sacrifice.....	3
Fun.....	3
Persistence.....	3

Assignment 7-1

In three or four pages, describe your family background in regard to cultural influences.

Discuss as well as you can both your mother (and her family) and your father (and his family). Include any other families that may have influenced you as well.

For each, discuss attitudes and views towards religion, family, work, education, and wealth. Describe the socioeconomic location of your family and its religious context.

Also, how do members of your family tend to relate to each other? Does your family tend to be warm and “huggy” or cold and distant?

Finally, try to relate your family background to your own set of values and outlooks. What have you retained? What have you rejected?

Overview

	Father	Mother
Heritage	Lebanese	Austrian
Culture	Arabic, mediterranean lifestyle	European
Belief	Muslim	Catholic, converted to Church of God
Occupation	Factory work Retailer shop owner	Factory production line work Supermarket checkout

Cultural Background

A blend of Arabic and European, both parents out of their homeland, struggling with the language and the furthest place from home that they could be. Neither could assimilate into each others' culture and neither could be traditional Australian, even though they worked hard at raising me as Australian.

Belief System

Mum was called into the Worldwide Church of God when I was 3 years old. Being a Sabbath keeping church (with multiple Jewish overtones) caused significant additional friction in the home environment, due to my father's background. However difficult it was, mum, being strong minded, persisted in my upbringing in the church of God.

My father was culturally raised Muslim, but wasn't practicing. His brother was prominent in the local mosque and aspired to be respected in that community. Given my father was married to a Christian was disgraceful. Given that this form of Christianity was perceived as Jewish, was intolerable. Having his children (me and my brother) raised non-Muslim (let alone the perceived Jewish influence), was a disgrace. Hence he could not fit in with his brother's world of prominence in the Mosque.

The spiritual conflict had a significant impact on daily life. Towards the end of my fathers' life, he mellowed a lot and admitted that the Christian upbringing made a positive impact in my life.

Upbringing

Mum was brought up in a small village in Austria. As a result of the war, they lived a simple existence with very little. Through family dynamics, they were left with very little and had a very meager, poor existence. Mum moved to Australia when she was early 20s, following her older brother and sister.

My father came to Australia when he was 17 and mum said he never grew up. Being the youngest of 9, his older brothers who were here in Australia passed away whilst I was still young. Except for the one who was prominent in the mosque and was largely disconnected from us.

Hence, family get together occasions only happened a few times in my life and always felt odd and uncomfortable.

Professional Life

Having both parents in a new country, having to learn a new language and both being relatively uneducated, things were difficult. Needless to say, my father had a job, then owned a retail shop. The shop failed unfortunately for a few reasons and my father often pursued irresponsible lifestyle choices which made us struggle financially.

Mum, being uneducated, worked extremely hard in labouring factory jobs to get enough money for us to exist. It was very difficult with 2am starts, but the persistence and hard work enabled us to get through the financially difficult times.

Personal Life

My parents conflicted in almost every area of life. It's hard to reflect on my childhood and consider that it was a harmonious environment. Given the conflict, there are of course many good times and laughs and regular family time, the memories of which I cherish. As opposed to having those times as special occasions, I endeavour to the best of my ability to make the best of those times the lowest base line for my family life now.

External Influences

Outside of the immediate family, there were few external influences. School friends and their families were often at a distance and had minimal social interaction outside of school. This is mainly due to the Sabbath preventing weekend activities. Church ran activities made up all social interactions. Given the scale and dynamics of the church at the time, there was ample opportunity to connect with various families and friends. This occupied most weekends and social activity.

Values

As much as I try to avoid it, the older I get, the more I recognise myself turning into pieces of my parents. Unfortunately, those are the pieces which I don't like. There are, however, also virtues which I see are traits of my parents which I recognise in myself.

These virtues include:

Sacrifice

Both my parents generously would give everything they had to me to improve my life. Naturally, there was a lot of selfishness, but that paled in comparison. I always perceived them as sacrificing for my brother and I.

Fun

My fathers humour, even during the most traumatic health challenges, was an inspiration to not take life more seriously than one has to.

Persistence

Both parents were relentless in their endeavours, whether that being going to work at 2am or going out to socialise at 2am. Their persistence, both good and bad, was an admirable trait.