Dear Central Members and Friends,

As many of you are aware, I have been teaching on a new series called “Family Matters.” We know our immediate family and broader Christian family matters but with the best of intentions we often take them for granted or allow our busy schedules to prohibit us from connecting with one another as often as we should. As I prepare to teach on lesson four of this series on Sunday, we all got a reminder on last Sunday of just how fragile life can be. As we experienced the tragic news surrounding the helicopter crash that resulted in nine people being killed, including legendary basketball player Kobe Bryant, our thoughts and prayers go out to all of these nine individuals and the sadness their family, friends and fans are experiencing.

This is a powerful reminder for us all about the importance of family and how unpredictable life is!!

**One of the greatest gifts we can give God as well as our family and friends is by living a life where we are giving God our best effort as well as our family and friends. Now reflect for a moment and ask yourself, are you giving God your best effort as well as your family?**

**If we would all be honest with ourselves, we would say that on many occasions we often fall short in demonstrating our best effort for our families and for our Heavenly Father.** A great lesson we can learn from Kobe Bryant’s life is that he wanted to be the best basketball player on the court every time he played the game. He always gave his best effort when he stepped on the court and put in the work to ensure he would be remembered among the greatest players to ever play the game. Obviously, he was blessed with great basketball ability. However, he had a tremendous work ethic to go along with that ability.

**One of the principles we can all take away from Kobe’s life is giving God and our family our best effort every day that we wake up!!**

**Please implement this principle starting today and we will all be amazed at how much we will grow both personally and spiritually. Our families will be pleased as well since they will benefit the most from our transformation!!**

**Grace & Shalom!!**

**Pastor Perry Stuckey**