

## Questions related to “The Dignity of Family Life”

1. What does Dr. King mean by the “family,” and how important does Dr. King believe the family is to society?
2. According to the Moynihan Report, what percentage of black births were illegitimate, and what percentage of black children would be recipients of public aid at some point in their lives? How big of an effort on the part of society does Dr. King call for in order to solve the overall problem, and what does he view here as a danger?
3. Describe how a matriarchy came about and how it was strengthened later on.
4. By 1990, roughly 70% of all black births were to single mothers, and the figure has hovered near 70% ever since. Although the illegitimacy rate among blacks has stayed about the same since 1990, it has continued to increase among whites, now being near 30%. Illegitimacy matters, to say the least, because “*living apart from either biological parent at any point during childhood*” tends to have a negative impact on children, given that as a group they “achieve less and suffer more” than those from intact families. (Kathryn Edin and Maria Kefalas, *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*, University of California Press, 2011, p. 215.)

Although Dr. King acknowledged the bleak prospects for the black family, he concluded his Abbott House address in a hopeful and encouraging manner. Discuss Dr. King’s faith in black Americans and also in America itself as regards the black family.