

youthESource Bible Study

God's Design for Family

By Rev. Brian Weaver

Overview: The current reality of most of our families, within our church communities, and within the surrounding communities, is that we do not fit what we read in the Bible as God's design of family! There are struggles between a husband and wife that pull them apart. There are job requirements that hinder the role of dad, or mom, in raising their own children. Some families are blended families, single parent families, two parent families that are highly dysfunctional, parents desiring children but unable to have them, and countless other ways that our households don't fit what is too often referred to as the "Biblical design for family".

This Bible study will start with looking at the Scriptures to see:

- 1) God's design for families in the Garden of Eden, and how the fall into sin impacted that reality.
- 2) The roles of the members of each household and what we say and do in a society that doesn't always encourage these Biblical roles.
- 3) How the good news of forgiveness in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection transforms our own families and households.
- 4) How this Gospel transformation impacts our families for generations to come.

Use of Study: This study has been written for adults, whether single, engaged, married, with children or without children, or older generations looking to support and build up the next generation of families in their worshipping community.

Every part of this study is written for the purpose of conversation, accountability, and the opportunity to bring Christ's good news of forgiveness and hope into a household and family that may be struggling with their own reality. While looking at the Biblical foundation of family, especially in Genesis as God created Adam and Eve, it is important to remember that because of the fall into sin, no household is perfect, nor can we ever be perfect. Every household, every family, in some way, has fallen short of God's design (Romans 6:23-24), and needs His mercy and grace. Use this as a connection point between each other, not a point of separation.

There are places marked "**Leader Note**". These are for the purpose of encouraging the leader throughout the study, as well as drawing attention to some issues or struggles that may arise from whatever may follow.

Notes throughout the study that are *italicized* are for the purpose of the leader in fostering conversation. These notes are not in the participant's guide.

Resource List: There will be a bibliography of resources at the end of this study that will help further discussion and learning concerning God's design for family, and how we live that out in our current reality and in His mercy and grace.

Week 1: What is Family?

Overview: This week will dive into Genesis 1-3 to look at God's original design for families in His perfect Creation, as well as how the fall into sin by Adam and Eve impacted God's design and continues to do so through our present society and culture.

Hook: 10 minutes (opportunity to connect the group and focus attention on this week's study)

- Share your name, how long you've been married (if applicable), and your favorite story of your children/grandchildren. *Best if the leader(s) of the study go first.*
- Introduce this Bible study. If necessary, use overview included above.
- Set "Ground Rules" for the group, such as: we will give each person opportunity to share; we will not discount another person's questions, ideas or stories; what is shared in this group will remain confidential unless otherwise said.

Book & Look: 35 minutes

- **Leader note:** *Most of our society does not fully agree to the Biblical standard of family laid out in Genesis 1 and 2, nor may they understand it or have ever heard it. Unfortunately, this is true for people in our communities of faith as well. Be gracious as you dive into this text realizing that for some in your group, this may be a new, or challenging concept.*
- **Read Genesis 1:26-31**
 - Point out to the group verses 1:10, 1:12, 1:22. What do these verses say about God's Creation?
 - As you read through the assigned passage above, ask that the group be listening for the following: How was man created differently from the rest of creation? What commands did God give to man as he was created that weren't given to the rest of creation?
 - Why is 1:31 important to understanding God's Creation before the fall into sin?
 - *Note: "good" in the Scriptures is more like our words of "perfect" or "fulfilled" or "without fault or blemish". The fact that God called EVERYTHING good highlights that there was nothing wrong, or defunct, or even lacking in all His Creation.*
 - *"Good" is also a moral quality, over and against evil. The truth that God created everything "good" also points to the reality that it was without evil, without sin.*
 - *Therefore, Creation, from a Biblical perspective was perfect, without blemish and evil, until the fall into sin.*
- **Read Genesis 2:15-25**
 - **Leader Note:** *This passage has been used in often inappropriate ways to argue against homosexuality in our culture today. Yes, God's design is for man and woman to be wed and live in great intimacy, including sexually. However, this is not an opportunity to speak against homosexuality, as much as an opportunity to speak to the blessings of God when we live in His design for marriage.*
 - What does 2:15-17 tell us about God's design for man, and ultimately man and woman together, to live in His Creation?

- *Adam was given freedom within limits, meaning, even in the perfect creation, Adam was still called to obedience to God's commands SO THAT he could live the life God has created him to live, in the fullness of His love.*
 - 2:18 says something that we have not yet read in Genesis. What is it and why is it significant?
 - *This is the first time God has said that something is not "good" with His Creation. This speaks to the truth that God's design was always for man to have a companion, somebody who would dwell with him, live with him, and carry out God's calling in Creation with him.*
 - How does 2:20 correct the issue that arises in 2:18? What was this *suitable helper* to do with Adam in God's Creation?
 - *Go back to Genesis 2:15-17. Here, Adam is told how he is to care for and steward God's Creation. As he is carrying out this role it is when God realizes this part of His Creation is not yet fulfilled so He creates Eve as the suitable helper and companion in this task.*
 - Look at 2:24. Ask the group how they understand this verse?
 - *Too many in our culture do not practice the "leave and cleave" principle. This shows itself in spousal arguments about husband still being attached to his mother, or wife still looks to her dad as the protector and provider of her family. God's design for husband and wife, and for their household, was that as they came together in marriage they would start their own, distinct family, living out His purpose for them. This is a very important verse in understanding marriage and some of the negative impacts on a marriage relationship we see in our culture today.*
 - *It's also important to note the intimacy and full knowledge that is made available for Adam and Eve in their original created state. Their relationship, even at the most intimate level of sexual intimacy, was to be unique to them, and for the sake of drawing them closer to each other, as compared to their relationship with anybody else, or any other part of God's creation.*
- **Read Genesis 3:11-24.**
 - What do you read/hear at the very beginning of this passage as the reality of sin in God's Creation comes into existence?
 - *Adam immediately places blame on 1) Eve, but even more 2) on God! Already, from the very beginning of a sinful reality, separation, blame, and dysfunction already enters God's created and designed family. Why would we think ours would be any different after all these years?*
 - Look at 3:15. This is the first promise of a salvation, of a messiah that will come and bring restoration to God's Creation from the fall and effects of sin.
 - According to 3:16-19, how have Adam and Eve's life of obedience to God now changed because of their sinfulness?
 - *Interesting to note, there doesn't appear to be a gap of time between when the sin occurred, and the full weight of its impact. God's punishment upon their sin is immediate, and they immediately begin feeling the effects of their disobedience. We have convinced ourselves in our culture today that there aren't immediate*

consequences to our actions, or especially to our sinfulness, but Genesis 3 seems to say otherwise.

- How do you read Genesis 3:20-24?
 - *There are 2 primary ways you can read this: 1) absolute banishment and punishment, or 2) loving discipline with the promise of salvation to come.*
 - *As Lutherans we read this passage according to #2 above for multiple reasons.*
 - *Eve was given her name from Adam AFTER the fall into sin, because God still promised offspring would come from her and the promise of the Messiah was to come through her offspring. Her name literally translates, "life".*
 - *God clothed them to remove their shame and guilt from nakedness, and He did so through the sacrifice of an animal. This points to the Old Testament sacrifices made for the atonement of sin, but ultimately to the sacrifice of our Savior Jesus Christ on the cross to pay the price for each of our own sins.*
 - *Look closely at 3:22. God banished them from the Garden of Eden, because otherwise they could have eaten from the tree of life and mankind would dwell FOREVER separated from God and His love. To banish them was to provide opportunity for Him to carry out His plan of salvation, ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ.*

Took: 10 minutes

- What did you learn from today's lesson?
- This week, here are 3 simple ways you can reinforce this Biblical truth of God's design, love and grace in your own household:
 - 1)** As a husband and wife, mom/dad identify and seek forgiveness for any ways you have not lived out your role in your family as God has called you to do? *Good opportunity to have everyone practicing saying, "Please forgive me for _____ (be specific). I forgive you for _____"*
 - 2)** Read Genesis 1 and 2 with your child(ren). Ask them 1) how did God create everything around us (*by speaking it into being and it was good/perfect*)? 2) What role/job did God give to Adam in His creation? 3) Why did God create Eve for Adam?
 - 3)** To get ready for Week 2, begin identifying the roles that each member of your household carries out, such as mowing the lawn, providing income, washing the dishes, cleaning up toys, preparing meals, paying the bills, leading family devotions, etc.

Week 2: Who's In Charge?

Overview: This week's study will focus on the roles God designed for households in His love and grace, so that families can live in the fullness of His joy. This study will not say that each member of the household is to carry out specific duties or chores in a household, but focus more on how God designed husband and wife, parent and child, to live together always proclaiming and living out His good news.

Hook: 10 minutes

- Share your name, and one thing you learned from last week's study, if you were here. (*If there are new people in your group, this will give them a chance to easily gain some insights from Week 1 without having to do a big review.*)
- In your household, how are the chores divided?
- What chores do you give to your child(ren) and why?
- What is your understanding of the Biblical roles of a husband, wife and child(ren)?

Book & Look: 35 minutes

- **Leader Note:** *It is important to highlight that the Biblical understanding of family roles is not an opportunity to promote oppression of either gender, or directly tied to the types of chores needing to be done in a household. Instead, a Biblical understanding of family roles focuses more on how Christ leads His Church, and how our marriages and households reflect this leadership. It is about how God designed man and woman to serve together in His Creation and raise up the next generation of His faithful people.*
- **Read Exodus 20:1-17.**
 - Why did God give what we know as the 10 Commandments? Look at 20:1-2.
 - *The Commandments were given so that God's people could live in His design of their life of freedom. This should lead us back to Genesis 2:15-17 where God gives Adam (and ultimately his household) freedom within the Garden but still calls him to obedience.*
 - *The Commandments were also put in place for the protection of God's people, whom He had just freed from slavery and oppression in Egypt. He did not bring them out so they could harm and kill one other, or even oppress one another, but so that He could carry out His promise to His people given to Abram in Genesis 12.*
 - As you read through verse 11, how does this apply to our households? Whose responsibility is it to teach these to the next generation of God's people, i.e. your child(ren)?
 - *Ultimately it is the parent's responsibility (as will be discussed in the next Bible passage). Ideally, this is the responsibility of the father as the head of the household (Ephesians 5:21-32), but in today's culture, all too often, it falls to the mother. Living in our current, sin-filled reality, it is the responsibility of the one who believes in God to teach this to the next generation.*
 - *Highlight for the group what we as Lutherans call the 4th Commandment. Paul says this is the only commandment with a promise – ask the group how they understand this commandment and how it may impact their view of their current household reality.*

- **Read Deuteronomy 6.**

- Who is talking in this passage, what is the occasion, and who are they talking to?
 - *Moses is talking to the whole assembly of Israel, as they are preparing to enter the Promised Land after wandering the wilderness for the past ~40 years. He is not just speaking to the religious leaders, or political leaders, or just the parents, or just the children. He is speaking to the entire group, all of whom except Moses, Caleb and Joshua, are the next generation from those who came out of Egypt in the Exodus.*
- Look back at 6:4-7. What do you hear in these verses?
 - *Moses gives the assembly of Israel two very important imperatives in this text: 1) Love the Lord their God with everything they have (Exodus 20:3-11), and 2) DILIGENTLY teach these commands and statutes to the next generation, including throughout their daily lives.*
 - *We don't do many things diligently in today's culture. In an effort to do everything, we often barely do anything. This is great opportunity to speak into the group the importance and priority of faith formation in their home above everything else on their plate.*
 - *The responsibility of faith formation in their home is second only to their own life of faith and discipleship in Jesus Christ—which when done as He calls us to in His truth and grace, actually fosters and encourages faith formation in their home!*
- Look at 6:20-24. What role does the father of a household play in faith formation of his home? Why do you think Moses said the father would do this, even in a culture and society where women had the most time with the children as they were growing up?
 - *Research is overwhelmingly in agreement that "dad" is by far the most influential member of a household when it comes to faith. His positive, or negative, attitude and response to faith (of any kind) dramatically influences the positive and negative attitude of his household to faith.*
 - *Yes, God can and does use mom to raise up the next generation in faith in His truth and promises. He uses whom He needs to, by His Spirit, to teach and pass on faith.*
 - *But, the role of husband and dad, as we will see next in Ephesians, dramatically influences the faith of his household because dad is the tangible, present example of Jesus Christ to his wife and household.*

- **Read Ephesians 5:21-24, 25-32; 6:1-4**

- **Leader Note:** *It is important that you start with vs. 21. Unfortunately, throughout the centuries in the Church, vs. 22-24 have been used for abuse and oppression by husbands of their wives and children. However, this was never Paul's intention when outlining the roles of husband, wife and children in this letter to the Ephesians. Acknowledge this with the group, and if you feel it appropriate, begin this part of the conversation with a prayer for clarity and wisdom in Christ's Spirit.*
- Look at 5:21-24. How do these verses speak to our roles as individuals living in Christ's Church, as well as the role of the wife in a household?

- *Christ's command is that we submit to each other out of love for Him, since He is the head of the Church, and the one we fear, love and trust above all things (again, going back to Exodus 20:3-11).*
 - *Wives are the tangible example, in every household, of how the Church responds to her King and Savior Jesus Christ. Her submission to her husband is not for his control of her, but so that her husband, their children, and everyone else will see an example of how the Church is to follow after Jesus Christ—in His truth, mercy and grace.*
 - *Submission, respect and honor, to her husband has very little to do with his great character, or lack thereof, but everything to do with the wife's love and honor of her Savior Jesus Christ.*
- Now look at 5:25-32. How do these verses speak to the role of the man, as husband and father?
 - *Christ's model of leadership for His disciples was not oppressive or rule by power and strength. Instead, He led His disciples, and now leads His Church, by the truth of His Word and in His grace and forgiveness through His death and resurrection.*
 - *Husbands are to seek to love their wives, and their household, in the same way our Savior loves and leads each of us—in His Word of truth, grace and forgiveness. The husband is to serve his wife and family, even to the point of self-sacrifice, because that is how Christ loves His Church.*
 - But how do our imperfect households still live out this truth of Ephesians 5 and 6?
 - *In Christ, each of us has experienced mercy, grace and forgiveness because of His death and resurrection.*
 - *In our marriages, in our households, it is exactly in these times of sinfulness that we have the greatest opportunity to be living examples of Christ and His relationship to His Church, by lovingly forgiving one another and encouraging each other with His Word of truth!*
 - *In the good and in the bad, our relationships, our marriages, our households, are to be living and tangible examples of Christ's relationship to His Church as we speak His truth into each other's lives, as we forgive and love one another, and as we give of ourselves in service to one another.*

Took: 10 minutes

- What did you learn from today's lesson?
- This week, here are 3 simple ways you can reinforce this Biblical truth of God's design, love and grace in your own household:
 - 1)** Husband/Dad, if applicable, lead your family in short prayer every day – it can be in the morning or the evening, whatever works. During this prayer, say something specifically for each member of your household. *(If applicable, ask Wife/Mom to do this)*
 - 2)** Ask the child(ren), if applicable, to identify the roles of each member of the household based on the Scripture readings from this week's Bible study.
 - 3)** As a couple/family, based on today's study, identify 3 ways your household can better live out God's design for family.

Week 3: The Power of Forgiveness

Overview: Forgiveness in our Savior's death and resurrection is a gift beyond words that Christ has won for each of us. Forgiveness is more than just a legal determination; it builds relationships, it restores brokenness, it brings about reconciliation. However, a lack of, or neglect of, forgiveness breaks down relationships, furthers brokenness, and leads the opportunity for reconciliation ever further away. As people redeemed in Christ's death and resurrection, our lives, and every relationship, should reflect that forgiveness we have in Him. The power of forgiveness leads a family together to make an impact in the lives of those God has placed around them.

Hook: 10 minutes

- **Leader Note:** you will need a 10lb, or more, weight for somebody to use during the introduction. This can be any object, or combination of objects. The harder the object(s) is to hold, the better the illustration.
- What is one thing you learned from last week or throughout the week?
- Do you feel you are the type of person that holds on to grudges? Why or why not? *Realize that not everyone may be willing to answer this question, but it helps people begin to think about how they handle conflict in relationships.*
- *Ask for a volunteer to hold the 10+lb object(s) you have brought with you. Do not give them a timeline, just ask them to hold on to it and not let go until you say so. Then move into the "Book & Look" section.*

Book & Look: 35 minutes

- **Leader note:** *It is important to understand that not everyone understands a Biblical definition of forgiveness. There is forgiveness in our culture, which is often defined as forgetting or moving past an incident. There is forgiveness according to religion, which says forgiveness is something that is earned by righting a wrong, or being sincerely repentant, or something along those lines. Then there is Biblical forgiveness, which is discussed in this study.*
- **Read Genesis 3:11-24**
 - What do you remember from this passage when we discussed it in Week 1 and how it relates to family relationships?
 - *Adam immediately places blame on 1) Eve, but even more 2) on God! Already, from the very beginning of a sinful reality, separation, blame, and dysfunction already enters God's created and designed family. Why would we think ours would be any different after all these years?*
 - If this is true of the marriage relationship between Adam and Eve, how do you think this also affects every other relationship?
 - Ultimately, who is at fault for what in this passage?
 - *God's command to not eat of that specific tree was to Adam, and it was Adam's responsibility to also ensure his household knew, and followed, the commands of God in obedience. This would have been part of his role as care-taker of God's Creation.*
 - *Eve made the choice to eat the fruit, whether or not Adam carried out his calling of telling her the command of God regarding the tree, so she has ownership in ushering in the fall into sin.*

- *Neither wants the ownership or blame for the fall into sin. This is often how we handle conflict in our own lives, placing blame on others. What does God's response to Adam, Eve and the Serpent say to us regarding His view of sin?*

- **Read Luke 23:39-43**

- Why does this Scripture reading seem out of place as we talk about the power of forgiveness in our families?
 - *This is a text normally focused on for the season of Lent, or right around Easter. However, what happens in the interaction between Jesus and the thief on the cross sheds a great deal of light on how we are to interact with one other.*
- Was the promise of paradise from Jesus conditional on anything the thief did?
 - *No! In fact, there was nothing the thief could do at that point other than his request for mercy from the One whom He realized was there to save him.*
 - *However, this is not a passage to support "death-bed" conversions as the only necessary confession from an individual. The thief cried out to Jesus in a recognition and faith of who He is, and Jesus forgave him. The same is true for us through God's Word of truth and promise every day.*
- In that moment, what does Jesus's interaction with the thief on the cross teach us of how we can interact with one another? Is there a sin too great between us that can't be forgiven in His death and resurrection?
 - *There are any number of reasons that thief could have been on the cross, none of which would be considered minor crimes. Even Jesus was on the cross for a drastic crime, albeit falsely accused.*
 - *God's forgiveness in Jesus Christ is not only for sins that seem "minor", or only for the "major" sin of our lives. God's forgiveness in Jesus Christ is for each and every sin we've ever committed, and will commit, so that He can say to us as well, "Today you will be with me in paradise."*
- What impact do you think this interaction between Jesus and the thief may have had on the people who witnessed it?
- Have you ever experienced or witnessed forgiveness given to somebody, or yourself, when it was absolutely clear that you did not deserve it? How did that change your/their relationship with that individual?
- *Look back at the person holding the weight from the introduction. Ask them to put down the weight.*
- Ask that volunteer—how does it feel to have that burden now removed from you? How was it affecting your ability to engage or interact? Now that it's gone, how do you think this will impact your ability to engage?
 - *This is a tangible example of forgiveness. Christ, in His death, removes the burden of sin, guilt and shame, from each of us so that it no longer stands in the way of our relationship to Him.*
 - *In His love and desire for each of us, He did what only He could do so that He could reconcile us back to Himself.*

- *Forgiveness in our relationships is not about being right or wrong, or being the person taking the higher road. Forgiveness in our marriages, as parents and children, in our families and communities, is about being able to continue forward in God's love, together, in the relationships in which He has placed us.*
 - *Forgiveness is removing whatever burden or obstacle is standing in the way of my relationship with somebody else. I can only do this because Christ has removed every obstacle in my own relationship to Him.*
- **Read 1 Peter 4:7-11.**
 - What do you hear in this passage? Does this speak to any relationship struggles you are currently facing?
 - *Give the group a chance to answer. Reality is that in some way, we've all lost self-control, or haven't been "sober-minded," meaning calm and cool headed. Unfortunately, this often leads to conflict, some of it quite severe, in relationships.*
 - As you hear verse 8, how do you think this applies to our family relationships and the power of forgiveness in these relationships?
 - *Peter is not saying to overlook or forget wrongs or sins that may be in your relationships. But that love covers a multitude of sins. As we have been forgiven in Jesus Christ, so we are able to forgive.*
 - *The other reality to this is that our understanding of Christ's forgiveness in our lives impacts our ability to forgive—so if I have a shallow understanding of my forgiveness in Jesus Christ, I may have a shallow understanding of forgiving others. But, as I grow in faith and the Spirit works in my heart, I grow in understanding the depth of my own sin and our Savior's forgiveness, and thereby grow in my ability to forgive others as I have been forgiven.*
 - *This is a good opportunity to bring in the Lord's Prayer and the specific petition of "...forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us..." Our forgiveness in Christ is not necessarily dependent on our forgiveness of others. However, because of Christ's forgiveness of even our most shameful sins, we can in great peace and love forgive others too!*
 - *It may be in the closest relationships of a family that forgiveness seems the most difficult. But, our forgiveness, and the ability to forgive, comes from the forgiveness we receive in Jesus Christ.*
 - According to verse 11, why is the power of forgiveness so vital to our family relationships?
 - *"...in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen!"*
 - *Forgiving one another as we have been forgiven in Christ is the pivotal way we give glory to our Savior and proclaim the good news of salvation in Him! We forgive one another because He forgives us, and in doing so, we proclaim the Gospel through our words, and how we love those God has placed in our lives.*

Took: 10 minutes

- What is/are the relationship(s) you have hesitated to live out the power of forgiveness?
- As you reflect on your family, would you say you have taught your child(ren) conditional or unconditional grace? Based on our study today, in what ways can you show them a Biblical understanding of forgiveness and grace in Jesus Christ?

Week 4: For Generations to Come

Overview: Throughout the Old Testament and into the New Testament, the legacy of God's chosen people extends through generations to come. In this week's study, the focus will be on what we do now, in the present, and its impact on the Church throughout the generations. It is far too easy to get caught up in the present without realizing the legacy your actions leave. As parents seeking to raise up our household in the grace, mercy and truth of Jesus Christ, it becomes vitally important that we consider what legacy we are leaving for the generations that follow.

Hook: 10 minutes

- What do you remember about your grandparents or great-grandparents? Does your family ever talk about them? If so, what do they say?
 - **Leader Note:** *Again, it is important to have the awareness that not everyone may want to share. This could be for any number of reasons, but do not force everyone to share.*
- What do you think your grandchildren will share about you?
 - *It is important that even people without grandchildren ponder and have a chance to answer this question. They may not be thinking that far ahead in life but looking forward helps determine what we do today.*
- Think of somebody who has greatly impacted your life. What about them, or your relationship, made them so impactful?
 - **Leader Note:** *Encourage participants to consider both positive and negative influences in their life. Both leave a legacy with them, as will be discussed.*

Book & Look: 35 minutes

- **Leader Note:** *The purpose of this study is not to give people a reason to boast, but to bring the study back to what Moses tells the people of Israel in Deuteronomy 6. In that speech, he recognized that what they were doing then was going to influence their children, and their children's children throughout the generations. In the same way, we are called, as parents, to leave a legacy of discipleship and faithful obedience to our Savior Jesus Christ within our households, that by His Spirit, will carry through the generations.*
- **Read Genesis 12:1-3, and Genesis 15:1-6**
 - As you read these two passages together, what do you understand of the covenant promise that God is making to Abram?
 - *Abram received a covenant promise from God that was far beyond his ability to even fathom completing. He and Sarai were both believed to be beyond child-bearing years. There was nothing about Abram, according to the account of Genesis, that would give God any reason to choose him over anybody else.*
 - What is significant about the full extent of God's covenant promise with Abram?
 - *But, God's promise to Abram was not just for a household, but for a nation, for a people that would number like the stars in the heavens!*
 - *This was a covenant promise beyond what Abram could imagine.*
- **Read 1 Peter 2:9-12.**
 - Do you hear any similarities between what God says to Abram is the purpose of His covenant promise to him, and what Peter says about us as Christ's "chosen race...people for His own possession"…?

- *If you go to the end of verse 9 it becomes quite apparent that Christ redeemed us and calls us His people, so that we can proclaim and share the good news of salvation in Him.*
 - *This is the fulfillment of what God calls His people to live out in the Old Testament as they are "blessed to be a blessing" in Genesis 12. Their blessing of other nations was in their sharing of God's commands and grace, that others would follow after Him as well, faithfully waiting for the promised Messiah to come.*
 - Peter uses 4 ways to describe us as the redeemed people of God in Christ. This would apply to your children as well, and anybody baptized in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ. In what ways does this realization impact our parenting of our children?
 - *It is important that we do not lose our children's true identity as we parent them. They are first and foremost redeemed, children of God in Jesus Christ!*
 - *It is when we try to put other identities on them, like disobedient, mean, under-achiever, hopeless, etc. that we actually lead them away from understanding who they are in Jesus Christ.*
 - How do you think it would impact your household if you reminded each other of your identity in Christ Jesus every day?
- **Read Revelation 7:9-17.**
 - What do you think this passage has to say about the legacy we leave in our families?
 - *At some point, each of us dies, and we will continue doing so until Christ returns on the Last Day. This means we have a set amount of time, known by God, to pass on and teach faith in Jesus Christ to our families, children, grandchildren, or other people.*
 - *Each of these standing around the throne as John sees them heard the good news of Jesus Christ from somebody else and believed in Christ's death and resurrection. They, too, were those that were one of God's chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation that Peter mentioned in his first letter.*
 - Your calling as a parent, or grandparent, friend, co-worker, neighbor, etc. is to share the good news of Jesus Christ so that those you know will also be a part of the "great multitude" as John saw them in Revelation. This week pray for God's wisdom and discernment, as opportunities are presented for you to carry out this calling.

Took: 10 minutes

- What are simple things you can start doing today, this week, based on our study together, that will leave a legacy of faith in Jesus Christ for your household and the generations to come?
- What are parts of the legacy from those who have gone before you, that you want to pass on to the generations that follow?
- What, from this study, has influenced you the most in understanding family according to God's Word?

Resource List

- 1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for Children 2-12*, 4th ed. Thomas W. Phelan, Ph.D. Parent Magic, Inc.: Glen Ellyn, 2010.
- Cost of Discipleship, The*. Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Touchstone: New York, 1959.
- Faith Begins At Home: The Family Makeover with Christ at the Center*. Mark Holmen, Regal Books: 2005.
- Family Vocation: God's Calling in Marriage, Parenting, and Childhood*. Gene Edward Veith, Jr. and Mary J. Moerbe, Crossway: 2012.
- Generational IQ: Christianity isn't dying. Millennials aren't the problem. And the future is bright*. Haydn Shaw. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.: Carol Stream. 2015.
- Instructing a Child's Heart*. Tedd and Margy Tripp. Shepherd Press: Wapwallopen, 2008.
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