

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.

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

- Share your name, how long you've been married (if applicable), and your favorite story of your children/grandchildren.
- 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

- **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?
- **Read Genesis 2:15-25**
 - What does 2:15-17 tell us about God's design for man, and ultimately man and woman together, to live in His Creation?
 - 2:18 says something that we have not yet read in Genesis. What is it and why is it significant?
 - 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?
 - Look at 2:24. Ask the group how they understand this verse?
- **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?
 - 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?
 - How do you read Genesis 3:20-24?

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.
- 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

- **Read Exodus 20:1-17.**
 - Why did God give what we know as the 10 Commandments? Look at 20:1-2.
 - 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)?
- **Read Deuteronomy 6.**
 - Who is talking in this passage, what is the occasion, and who are they talking to?
 - Look back at 6:4-7. What do you hear in these verses?
 - 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?
- **Read Ephesians 5:21-24, 25-32; 6:1-4**
 - 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?
 - Now look at 5:25-32. How do these verses speak to the role of the man, as husband and father?
 - But how do our imperfect households still live out this truth of Ephesians 5 and 6?

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

- 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?

Book & Look: 35 minutes

- **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?
 - 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?
- **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?
 - Was the promise of paradise from Jesus conditional on anything the thief did?
 - 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?
 - 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?
- **Read 1 Peter 4:7-11.**
 - What do you hear in this passage? Does this speak to any relationship struggles you are currently facing?
 - As you hear verse 8, how do you think this applies to our family relationships and the power of forgiveness in these relationships?
 - According to verse 11, why is the power of forgiveness so vital to our family relationships?

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?
- What do you think your grandchildren will share about you?
- Think of somebody who has greatly impacted your life. What about them, or your relationship, made them so impactful?

Book & Look: 35 minutes

- **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?
 - What is significant about the full extent of God's covenant promise with Abram?
- **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"...?
 - 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?
 - 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?
 - 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.
- Joining Jesus: Show Me How*. Greg Finke. Tenth Power: Tyler. 2017.
- Joining Jesus On His Mission: How to be an everyday missionary*. Greg Finke. Tenth Power: Tyler. 2014.
- Parenting Beyond Your Capacity: Connect your family to a wider community*. Reggie Joiner and Carey Nieuwhof, David C. Cook: 2010.
- Parenting with Love and Logic*. Foster Cline, MD. And Jim Fay. NavPress: Colorado Springs, 2006.
- Shepherding A Child's Heart*, 2nd ed. Tedd Tripp. Shepherd Press: Wapwallopen, 1995.
- Spiritual Parenting: An Awakening for Today's Families*. Michelle Anthony, David C. Cook: 2010.
- Trophy Child: Saving Parents from Performance*. Ted Cunningham. David C. Cook: Colorado Springs, 2012.