

Get ^{it} Together

Discussion Guide: Week 5

Message Topic: Family Life Part I: Principles for Parenting

Welcome Everyone

Celebrate WINS

We hope you've enjoyed our relationship series so far! Life happens in the context of relationships. As a matter of fact, we are wired to be in relationships and connected to one another. We spent two weeks talking about relationships in general and shared principles that apply to any and every relationship we have. We learned about marriage the past two weeks – how marriage was God's idea and how to protect your marriage. This week we're taking a look at family life and parenting.

Whether you are married or single, have children or not, the principles in God's Word are truth and life for each of us. Since we are His kids, we can see from His Word how He wants to relate to us and how we are to relate to others.

Proverbs 22:6 tells us, *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* (KJV) That verse sure makes child training sound simple! But if you've spent any time around children, you know it's anything but simple!

Getting More Together:

1. Look at the verse above again and consider the phrase "train up a child."
 - a. What does "train up a child" mean? Discuss ways that athletes train, the time it takes, the dedication to excellence – how does that compare to how we train our children?
 - b. Training a child takes time, effort, and commitment – look up Deuteronomy 6:6-7. How does this passage apply to child training?
 - c. Which commandment holds a promise regarding honoring your father and mother?
 - d. What practices have you observed or experienced in parenting that are beneficial for training up children in the way they should go?

2. In Genesis 22:1-13, we read the story of Abraham and Isaac. In this passage we see a great example of obedience which sets the standard for our obedience to the Lord. As you read this passage, see if you can find the four characteristics of proper obedience from Abraham’s response to the Lord.
- a. How did Abraham respond to what seems to be an unbelievable command – to take his son and sacrifice him? (see verse 3)
 - b. Did Abraham question or challenge the Lord?
 - c. How did God reward Abraham’s obedience?

This story is so great because it gives us a standard that we can use to train our children: Children can be trained to obey immediately, without arguing or complaining, without challenging or questioning, and children can be trained to obey completely, not just with half-hearted efforts.

*One of the greatest joys of parenting is teaching your child to obey your voice so that as they grow older, they learn to hear and obey the voice of the Lord!

3. Proverbs 29:17 tells us: *Correct your son and he will give you comfort, he will also delight your soul.* (NASB)
Psalm 127:3 says, *Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from Him.* (NLT)
- a. How can children be a reward?
 - b. If you want to enjoy your children, what are some changes you could make to “correct” them?
 - c. Do children need affirmation more than correction or both? Which is more effective?

4. Proverbs 23:13 - *Do not withhold discipline from a child.* (ESV)
Proverbs 22:6 - *Train up a child in the way he should go.* (ESV)
- a. What is the difference between discipline and training?
 - b. Which one is proactive and which one is reactive?
 - c. Is it possible to be purposeful in training your child? How difficult would it be to develop a plan for training your child?
 - d. As God’s children, what disciplines or habits can we establish in our lives to obey and honor Him?

Message Insights: Share any insights from the message that spoke to you and how it applies to your relationships.

Next Steps: What are some steps you can take that will help you develop strategies for parenting your own children or for strengthening your relationship with God as His child?

Prayer: Divide into smaller groups or prayer partners (male with male, female with female) and take time to share and pray over one key prayer request for the week.