



SUMMER SERIES

the gospel and the next generation
Small Group Guide

Small Group Guide - Week 1 - July 1, 2018

Planted In The Gospel

Pastor Dr. Eric Mason - 2 Peter 1:1-9

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Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—*a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.*

Review—*a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time. Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to revisit the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.*

Prayer—*a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.*

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

Sermon Outline

Planted In The Gospel

2 Peter 1:1-9

Changed People

- God does not change context without changed people.
- To be used by God you have to be changed by God

Authentic Faith

- God's call for his people to be unleashed *"from being brainwashed by culture, with the backbone to lead the church, with boldness to serve the world, for the Gospel."*
- Nothing we do will transform others until we are transformed by the gospel.
- Authentic faith will have the presence of several characteristics, including:
 - Virtue or Moral Excellence
 - Biblical Knowledge
 - Self-control
 - Perseverance
 - Godliness
 - Brotherly Affection
 - Love
- The gospel of Jesus Christ changes the life of the believer from the inside out.

Message Summary

No matter how much you desire for the people in your church or community to be changed for mission and justice, until the gospel transforms you, nothing you do will transform others. In this inspiring session, Eric Mason explores 2 Peter 1:1–9 to describe how God desires to shape us into effective and fruitful disciples.

In looking at this passage, Eric explains that Peter first gives a theological framework before addressing the practical nature of the gospel being lived out in our lives. Peter begins these verses by acknowledging his status as God’s servant—an important point for all who wish to be used by God.

The gospel of Jesus Christ changes the life of the believer from the inside out. Eric discusses how as we grow in our relationship with God, He helps us grow in true knowledge and He changes the way we think, what we value, and our passions. God calls us to Himself to reflect His glory. Eric notes, “When the gospel transforms you, you show His imprint on your soul.”

As the significance of Christ’s sacrifice permeates our lives, it should impact our reality in several practical ways. Eric carefully explains that we do not add anything to our faith, but that our faith should be authenticated by the presence of several things growing in us, which include: session overview

- **Virtue or Moral Excellence.** Having been transformed by the gospel, we now have the ability to commit to God’s standard.
- **Biblical Knowledge.** Now that we have the mind of Christ, we have the ability to process the information that informs God’s standard, which is found in God’s Word.
- **Self-control.** With Christ, we now have the ability to control our passions so that we will use them to serve God and not ourselves.
- **Perseverance.** The power of the gospel alive in our lives gives us the ability to be consistent in the midst of adversity.

- **Godliness.** This is God’s goal, to make us like His Son, Jesus Christ. God uses everything in our lives to mature us into becoming more like Jesus.
- **Brotherly Affection.** Our faith must impact how we treat other believers.
- **Love.** Once we grasp God’s love for us and are impacted by it, then we can truly love others.

This session challenges us to remain planted in the powerful message of the gospel. For as God transforms and shapes us through the practice of these virtues, we then become effective and fruitful. The challenge is to remain planted in the powerful message of the gospel.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- We saw a clip at the beginning of the session that illustrated God’s call for his people to be unleashed “from being brainwashed by culture, with the backbone to lead the church, with boldness to serve the world, for the Gospel.” What is compelling about this illustration? How can we better equip and unleash those we lead to overcome their fears and failures to be God’s representatives on earth?
- Are we creating programs in our church to carry out the mission of our church? Is there anything that just touches on justice or service, but does not bring the message of the gospel or transformation? How can we create a balance?
- Eric Mason cautioned that nothing we do will transform others until we are transformed by the gospel. Are we working in our own strength? What is evident in our actions or how we lead, that shows we have been transformed?

- What are some areas where we are still trying to lead and equip others in our flesh, rather than through the transformation of our own lives? Is there anything we need to address as a ministry team?
- Using 2 Peter 1:1–9, Eric taught that an authentic faith would have the presence of several characteristics, including virtue and biblical knowledge—we now know and have the ability to commit to God’s standard. Are we conveying God’s expectations and standards? How are we equipping people to personally study the Bible? Are we modeling that in our own lives as leaders?
- Eric also challenged us to have self-control—the ability to use our passions to serve God and not ourselves. Are we creating programs in our church to make people consumers or are we equipping people to live out their purpose when they leave the building? How are we leading people to be other-centered rather than self-centered?
- Walt’s story showed a man who was an alcoholic, drug-addicted father and was completely transformed when he met Christ. What do you think of his journey? How do we lead and equip people to make sure that the gospel message is included in their social service? Do you know anyone like Walt who would be good to develop as a leader?
- Eric concluded with the characteristics of brotherly affection—how we treat other believers—and love—how we treat others once we grasp and are impacted by God’s love for us. How are we loving those we lead? How are the people we lead loving other believers? How are the people we lead loving the lost world? How can we do better?
- How does Eric’s message line up with our mission, vision and values as a church? Did Eric say anything that goes against our current strategies? Did he say anything that would cause us to refocus or rethink some of our mission?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- How should the truths of this message affect the way you invest in the next generation?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

Weekly Prayer Focus . . .

• ***Lives and Church:*** *As we move out of the summer in back into the swing of the school year, pray that The Lord will use CityView Church to effectively reach the next generation.*

Small Group Guide - Week 2 - July 8, 2018

The Gospel and the Next Generation

Pastor Dr. David Platt - Psalm 78

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word through His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool, not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

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Prayer—*a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.*

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

Sermon Outline

THE GOSPEL AND THE NEXT GENERATION

Psalm 78

The Situation...

- Percentage of people who profess to be born again Christians who have trusted in Christ alone for salvation:
 - Over 65 years old: 65 %
 - From 46-64 years old: 35 %
 - From 34-45 years old: 15 %
 - From 16-33 years old: 4 %
- Percentage of high school students who attend church and then leave the church within 4 years of graduation: 70 %

The Solution...

- What is NOT the answer...
 - New methods .
 - More programs .
 - Cooler personalities .
- What is the answer...
 - The Word must be foundational.
 - The family must be strong.
 - The church must be accountable.
 - The family includes non-Christians...
 - But the church includes only Christians.
 - The family is a temporary institution...
 - But the church is an eternal institution.
 - The family has a role in the Great Commission...

- The family has a unique responsibility for children in the home...
 - But the church has a shared responsibility for children in the body.
- The church must strengthen parents ...
 - To make disciples in their homes.
 - To make disciples through their homes.
- The church must streamline a process ...
 - That involves every member of the church.
 - That intentionally trains children and students for the world.
 - We don't want the next generation to survive in the world with the gospel.
 - We want the next generation to thrive in the world with the gospel.

What We Do...

- We teach the Scriptures.
 - We teach them who God is.
 - We teach them what God has done .
 - We teach them what God has said .
- We tell the stories.
- We warn against sinfulness.
- We exalt the Savior.
 - God responds to our failures with His forgiveness !
 - God responds to our faithlessness with His faithfulness !

What Will Happen...

- They will know God in their minds.
- They will trust God in their hearts.
- They will obey God in their lives.

Message Summary

The church as a whole, every member, must be engaged in taking the gospel—the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes—to the next generation.

Pastors David Platt and Scott Kindig began by presenting some distressing statistics that indicate the U.S. church is currently ineffective

in reaching younger generations, especially those 33 years old and under. The solution to this problem does not lie in methods, programs, or personalities. Instead, the Word must be foundational, the family must be strong, and the church must be accountable. Both the family and the church have their roles and responsibilities for the next generation, and neither can be elevated to the exclusion of the other.

When we teach the Scriptures, tell the stories, warn against sin, and exalt the Savior, the next generations will know, trust, and obey God. We must be intentional about making disciples among our own children, among the children of Birmingham, and among the children in all nations. Let's live for the glory of God now and for the sake of generations to come.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- Briefly review the statistics presented. What is your reaction to these percentages? Why do you think the American church is seemingly ineffective in reaching and discipling the younger generations?
- How might solutions such as new methods, more programs, and cooler personalities sometimes be true attempts at meeting the real and legitimate needs of younger generations? Why do these faulty solutions have mixed results at best? What is lacking? Why do we seek these “magic bullets” to speak to our young people?
- What is the foundation of the only real solution for reaching the next generation? How does the gospel address the real needs of all generations?
- Does God's power lie in methods, programs, and personalities? Where is His promised power found?
- When discipling the next generation, why should neither the family nor the church be elevated to the exclusion of the other?

- Read Matthew 10:35–39. Who is worthy of our ultimate allegiance? Read Matthew 22:30. Does marriage/family last into eternity? What does last? Read Matthew 28:18–20. To whom was the Great Commission given? Was it given to them in their roles as husbands and fathers or as apostles? How do these facts lead us to understand that every member of the church has a shared responsibility for the discipling of the next generation?
- We do have unique responsibilities for our relatives and immediate families. Read 1 Timothy 5:8. What responsibilities do you think could be included here (both in the passage and beyond)?
- How can the church and family work together to make disciples of all generations in all nations? How can fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, and singles all have a role through the church discipling the next generation?
- How can you help strengthen parents within and outside the church to make disciples in and through their homes?

Respond . . .

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- How should the truths of this message affect the way you invest in the next generation?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

Weekly Prayer Focus . . .

• ***Lives and Church:*** *Spend some time this week confessing the ways that you have sinned and fallen short in your family relationships, accepting the forgiveness that your Father offers you in Christ, and asking for the power of the Spirit to order you life according to His Word.*

Small Group Guide - Week 3 - July 15, 2018

BIBLICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD (PT. 1)

Pastor Dr. David Platt - Gen. 1-3

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word through His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool, not a rigid group task list.

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Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

Sermon Outline

BIBLICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD (PT. 1)

Genesis 1-3

The Effects Of Manhood And Womanhood...

- Our understanding of God.
- Our understanding of the gospel.
- How we express our sexuality.
- How we love our spouses.
- How we thrive as singles.
- How we train our children.

Three Truths About Manhood And Womanhood...

- God created men and women with equal dignity. (Genesis 1:26-31)
 - We all resemble God.
 - We all represent God.
 - We all have the capacity to relate to God.
 - We all have personal responsibility before God.
- God created men and women with different roles. (Genesis 2:4-24)
 - Man and woman complement one another.
 - Man was created to be the head . (1 Cor. 11:3, 8; Eph. 5:23)
 - Woman was created to be the helper .
 - Man was created to exercise loving authority over woman.
 - Woman was created to extend glad submission to man.

Three Truths About Manhood And Womanhood...

- God created men and women with equal dignity. (Genesis 1:26-31)

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Eph. 5:23)

- Woman was created to be the helper .

- Man was created to exercise loving authority over

woman.

- Woman was created to extend glad submission to

man.

- o Are you sure about that?

- The order of creation. (1 Tim. 2:12-13, 1 Cor. 11:8)

- The design of creation.

- The naming of woman .

- The naming of the human race .

- The representation of man. (Rom. 5)

- The responsibility of man. (Gen. 3:1-9)

- The effect of sin . (Gen 3:16-19)

- Not the introduction of new roles.

- Instead, the distortion of previous roles.

- The redemption of sinners . (1 Pet. 3; Eph. 5)

- God created men and women as a reflection of the

Trinity .

- o The persons of the Trinity are equally divine .

- o The persons of the Trinity are positionally different .

- The Father has authority over the Son.

- The Son is subject to the Father. (Rom. 8:34; Heb

1:3, 13; 1 Pet. 3:22)

- o This is loving authority and glad submission in the context of beautiful

- relationship .

Three Conclusions Concerning Manhood And Womanhood...

- All of this is good for us.
 - Unity in Diversity: We are attracted to one another by our differences.
 - Equality amidst Intimacy: We honor one another as we enjoy one another.
- All of this is glorifying to God.
 - We reflect His character.
 - We trust His Word.
- All of this is the essence of the gospel. (Eph. 5)
 - Christ is our sacrificial groom.
- He died to save us.
 - We are His submissive bride.
- We live to serve Him.
 - God has designed the headship of men and the help of women to display the glory of Christ in the salvation of the church.

Message Summary

Our culture has been bombarded with various understandings of what true manhood and womanhood is in theory and how it lives out in practice. God addresses this topic clearly through His Word, however, and our understanding of it affects how we view Him, the gospel, and relate to those around us. God created man and woman as equals in value and dignity. Both genders were created in the image of God and bear that image to the world. Men and women are both valued equally by God and are both worthy of the respect and dignity of others. Although both are inherently equal in their beings, the roles of men and women differ according to the picture given by God in creation. The man is the head and is given the responsibility to lead in the Spirit of God, in the pursuit of God's glory; the woman is given the role of follower, supporter, and co-laborer by the Spirit of God in the pursuit of God's glory. The introduction of sin into the world did not introduce or change the intent of these roles, but, rather, distorted the men and women who fill those roles. The biblical understanding and application of manhood and womanhood allows believers to actively portray the gospel before a sinful world and glorifies Christ through the display of God's image to a lost world.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- How is God’s creation of gender evidence of the importance of both genders in individual identities? In families? In the world?
- How does our society de-value genders by efforts to homogenize them and critique differences?
- How do we belittle the opposite gender by our words, even if seemingly in jest? How is this harmful to instilling value for the beauty of gender differences in our children?
- What images come to mind when you hear the words “authority” and “submit”? How do our possibly negative cultural influences affect the way that we want to interpret biblical teaching about manhood and womanhood?
- If you are a man, do you feel arrogance when you hear that you are the “authority” over your wife? What does this indicate about your misunderstanding of biblical manhood? What should you feel in light of this responsibility?
- If you are a woman, do you feel defensive when you hear that you are to be “submissive” to your husband? What does this indicate about your misunderstanding of biblical womanhood? What should you feel in light of this valuable role?
- How does our existence as sinful men and women affect the way that we view the roles of men and women as laid out in Genesis and the rest of Scripture?
- What models in our lives do we have that live out a biblical example of the beauty of manhood and womanhood?

- Why is it difficult to imagine the loving and beautiful relationship between the authority of a husband and the submission of a wife if we have not seen it modeled before? How does the example of our own parents affect how we view God's design in this case?
- What steps can we take to make sure that we are reading God's intended meaning of Scripture instead of reading our cultural influence into Scripture?
- How can the nature of the difference in roles between men and women NOT affect their equal intrinsic value?
- Why is the biblical relationship of godly men and women important in the spread of the gospel?
- How are these relationships not only a living picture of the gospel, but also a living representation of God?
- How does your view of God affect your understanding of gender roles and functions?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

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- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- How should the truths of this message affect the way you invest in the next generation?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

Weekly Prayer Focus . . .

- ***Lives and Church:*** *Let us all pray that God fills this faith family with men who reflect the character of the perfect Man, Jesus Christ.*

Small Group Guide - Week 4 - July 22, 2018

BIBLICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD (PT. 2)

Pastor Dr. David Platt - Gen. 1-3

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Prayer—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

Reflect . . .

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Sermon Outline

BIBLICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD (PT. 2)

Genesis 1-3

Summary of Manhood and Womanhood in Genesis 1-2...

- God created men and women with equal dignity.
- God created men and women with different roles.
 - Man was created to be the head.
 - Woman was created to be the helper.
- God created men and women as a reflection of the Trinity.
 - This is loving authority and glad submission in the context of beautiful relationship.

Sin's Distortion of Manhood and Womanhood in Genesis 3...

- Manhood...
 - Passive: Spineless abdication of his responsibility.
 - Aggressive: Selfish abuse of his authority.
 - He will experience pain in his role of breadwinning .
- Womanhood...
 - Passive: Spineless dismissal of any responsibility.
 - Aggressive: Selfish defiance against authority.
 - She will experience pain in her role of childbearing .

God's Design for Manhood and Womanhood in Genesis 1-3...

- Manhood...
 - Man's primary responsibility is to lead ...
 - For the good of woman .
 - For the glory of Christ .

Man is accountable to God for...

- Protection of his wife.
- Provision in the home.

• Womanhood...

o Woman's primary responsibility is to support ...

• Through a humble disposition that yields to man's leadership.

leadership.

- With ultimate devotion to following Christ's

o Woman is accountable to God for...

- Affirmation of her husband.
- Nurture in the home.

Application To Our Lives...

• Men...

o Initiate humble, hard-working leadership...

- In spiritual devotion .
- In marital duties (or potential marital duties).
- In parental discipline .
- In essential decisions .
- Amidst inevitable disagreements .

o By the grace of Christ, lay down your life to...

- Honor women.
- Train boys to be men.

• Women...

o Incline yourselves toward wise, willing submission...

- To God in constant prayer .
- To men in certain positions .

o For the glory of Christ, live in a way that...

- Demonstrates godly respect for men.
- Shows girls how to be women.

Anticipation For The Future...

• One day, our lives will be redeemed .

• One day, our relationships will be made right .

o Jesus died to make us the men and women God created us to be.

Message Summary

Dr. Platt began with a summary of biblical manhood and womanhood based on Genesis 1–2. Man and woman were created with equal dignity and with different roles—in this they reflect the Trinity.

In Genesis 3, we read how sin distorted the roles of manhood and womanhood. Men are tempted to either abdicate responsibility or abuse their authority. Women are tempted to dismiss all responsibility or selfishly defy authority. Sin resulted in gender-specific punishments in this life (pain in breadwinning and childbearing).

God’s intention for men is that they would lead in protection and provision for the good of woman and the glory of Christ. God’s intention for women is that they would support through nurture and affirmation, with a humble disposition. Every woman is still ultimately responsible to Christ.

Men are to be humble, hard-working leaders and initiators in marriage, parenting, and the church. Women should be inclined to wise, willing submission to God and to men in certain positions.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- Read Genesis 3. From the text, what are two ways in which men may sin and fail to fulfill their biblical roles? What are two ways in which women may sin and fail to fulfill their biblical roles? What are the consequences of sin for the man? For the woman
- Why do you think it is so tempting for both men and women to shirk responsibility? How is selfishness at the core of both abuse of authority and defiance of authority? How do these sins show our lack of trust in God? How would an understanding and

affirmation of both mankind's responsibility and God's sovereignty help combat these sins?

- How do these passive and aggressive sins play out in twenty-first-century Birmingham among both families and singles? Provide some examples. How does our contemporary culture tend to shape us into its conceptions of manhood and womanhood?

- Realizing that our natural inclinations are to react in one or both sinful extremes (I'm not responsible at all; or, I am fully in control —not God) how can we better prayerfully navigate decisions and roles in the home? How can we better serve each other in our roles as husband and wife?

- Man's primary responsibility is to lead. How and for whose sake? Woman's primary responsibility is to support. How and for whose sake?

- How can a man fulfill his duties to protect and provide for his wife and family? How can all men do these two things in the context of the church body?

- How can a woman fulfill her duties to affirm and nurture her husband and family? How can all women do these two things in the context of the church body?

- Men are to exhibit leadership in many areas. How can men lead in spiritual devotion? In marriage? In parenting? In mission? In the church? In decisions and disagreements?

- How does Genesis 3:20 show Adam's trust in God and affirmation of his wife?

- Women are to be inclined to wise, willing submission. How can they maintain a submissive spirit? To men in what positions should they submit? Does submission equal being a doormat or committing intellectual suicide or putting up with abuse?

- How can men show boys how to be men? How can women show girls how to be women?

- When making decisions in the family, how can men initiate and lead while still affirming the gifting and dignity of their wives? How can women submit but still ensure they are ultimately taking responsibility for their actions before Christ?
- What does biblical manhood mean for making disciples in all nations, even difficult places? What does biblical womanhood mean for making disciples in all nations?
- What are common distractions for men that keep them from leading? How can these be dealt with? What are common ways in which women can be deceived about their biblical roles? How can these be dealt with?
- Knowing that all of us struggle with sin, what hope does the gospel offer us in regard to biblical manhood and womanhood? How can God's forgiveness in Christ lead us to forgive others? How does the gospel give us hope for tomorrow?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?

- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- How should the truths of this message affect the way you invest in the next generation?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

Weekly Prayer Focus . . .

- ***Lives and Church:*** *Pray that our families and our faith family would honor the biblical teaching of what it means to be a woman, even if that means being radically countercultural.*

Small Group Guide - Week 5 - July 29, 2018

THE GOSPEL IN MARRIAGE

Pastor Dr. Bart Box - Ephesians 5:22-33

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word through His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool, not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

Review—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time. Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to revisit the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

Prayer—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

Sermon Outline

The Gospel in Marriage

Ephesians 5:22-33

The Mystery of the Gospel in Marriage

- The mystery of the gospel in marriage is ultimate.
 - The wife portrays the church to the world.
 - The husband portrays Christ to the world.
- The mystery of the gospel in marriage is profound.
 - Our Savior is exalted in gospel-centered marriage.
 - Our witness is enhanced in gospel-centered marriage.

The Marks of the Gospel in Marriage

- The mark of the gospel among wives is glad submission.
 - Submission that is willing.
 - Submission that is reverent.
 - Submission that is comprehensive.
- The mark of the gospel among husbands is sacrificial love.
 - Love that is costly.
 - Love that is unconditional.
 - Love that is effective.
 - Love that is tender.

The Motivation of the Gospel in Marriage

- In the gospel, we receive the mercy of our God.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ- by grace you have been saved. (Ephesians 2:4-5)

- In the gospel, we have the help of the Spirit.

Be filled with the Spirit... (Ephesians 5:18)

Message Summary

Using Paul's letter to the Church at Ephesus, Dr. Bart Box preached a message directed toward husbands and wives intended to challenge the way they relate to each other because their relationship is intended to show the gospel to the world. While God does use other things, such as books or marriage retreats, to strengthen marriage, the gospel is the most central element to a biblical, God-honoring marriage. The mystery of the gospel in marriage is ultimate, meaning marriage itself is not ultimate, but Christ and His Church are ultimate. The wife portrays the Church to the world as the husband portrays Christ to the world (Eph. 5:22- 27). This mystery is profound as our Savior is exalted and our witness is enhanced through marriages that are gospel-centered.

Next, Dr. Box looked at the marks of a gospel-centered marriage, or what marriages that show the gospel look like. Among wives, glad submission is key: submission that is willing, reverent, and comprehensive. As the Church desires to submit to Christ, wives should desire to submit to their husbands, as unto the Lord. This requires the grace of the gospel. It is not the worth of a husband that calls for his wife's submission, but the worth of the Lord. Among husbands, sacrificial love is key to marking a gospel-centered marriage: love that is costly, unconditional, effective, and tender. Essentially, a husband's love requires him to die to himself and put his wife's needs and well-being above his own. Even if she never shows him the submission described in the preceding verses, he should show her unconditional love, just as Christ has done for us. As Christ's goal is to present His bride to His Father, husbands should create and promote their wives' holiness and create an atmosphere in their homes where the gospel can flourish.

What motivates the gospel in marriage is receiving the mercy of our God (Eph. 2:4-5) and having the help of the Holy Spirit (Eph.

5:18). First and foremost, husbands and wives must be driven to the gospel to find the strength to believe and apply truth and receive His mercy. Living this example of marriage is impossible in human strength and must be lived out by the Spirit. Husbands and wives must be diligent to pray for each other and for themselves as they seek to live out the gospel.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- How has God designed marriage to show the gospel to the world? How is this design of marriage different than what the world tells us the right design for marriage?
- How does viewing marriage as a tool to show the mystery of the gospel change the way you value marriage?
- How should this view of marriage change the way you value and treat your spouse?
- Describe what “glad submission” looks like in a wife. Describe what it does not look like.
- Describe what “sacrificial love” looks like in a husband. Describe what it does not look like.
- Consider Ephesians 5:15-18 and 6:10-12. If marriages are under attack from within because of our sin and attack from without because of spiritual forces, how can ordering your marriage by the verses in this passage proclaim the truth of Christ’s reign over all?
- If the mark of the gospel in marriage is glad submission from a wife, how has our culture corrupted this truth? How can you guard yourself and your family from being deceived?

- If the mark of the gospel in marriage is sacrificial love from a husband, how has our culture corrupted this truth? How can you guard yourself and your family from being deceived?
- Wives: What is the biggest hindrance to your submission to your husband? What lie is at the root of that hindrance? How can you combat that lie with a specific Scripture? What does it mean to submit “as to the Lord?”
- Husbands: What is the biggest hindrance to you showing your wife sacrificial love? What lie is at the root of that hindrance? How can you combat that lie with a specific Scripture? What does it mean to “give oneself up” for your wife?
- Think about your parents’ relationship and the ways it did or did not show the gospel to you as you grew up. Why is it significant that Paul used the relationship between Christ and His Church as the ultimate example of marriage instead of any human marriage?
- Have you experienced a gospel-centered marriage drawing someone (or yourself) to Christ? Share that experience.
- Is a gospel-centered marriage possible between two people who are not walking in the Spirit? Why is walking in the Spirit vital to husbands and wives fulfilling their roles to their spouses and showing the gospel to the world?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
-

- According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- How should the truths of this message affect the way you invest in the next generation?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

Weekly Prayer Focus . . .

- Lives and Church: Pray this week for the marriages within our faith family, whether they be your own or another's. Ask God to grant His grace for the gospel to be lived out in our marriages.

Small Group Guide - Week 6 - August 5, 2018

THE CHILD, THE HOME, AND THE CHURCH

Scott Kindig - Eph. 6:1-4, Deut. 6:1-9

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word through His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool, not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—*a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.*

Review—*a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time. Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to revisit the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.*

Prayer—*a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.*

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

Sermon Outline

THE CHILD, THE HOME, AND THE CHURCH

Ephesians 6:1-4, Deuteronomy 6:1-9

The Gospel in your Family in a Messed up World

- Simple Reminders for context.
 - o Everyone is Created in the Image of God! (Genesis 1:27-28)
 - o Everyone is spiritually Wrecked by the Fall! (Genesis 3)
 - These realities have affected FAMILIES for all of human history!
 - o God longs to get Glory through His Story of Redemption in & through your home!
 - o God sends His Church to Champion His Mission to . . .
 - succeeding generations
 - all the nations/people groups
 - o The Family and the Church CAN BE powerful partners in this Mission!

The Marks of the Gospel in Key Relationships – Ephesians 6:1-4

- The mark of the gospel amongst children is honoring obedience.
 - o The Reason for Honoring Obedience? This is right!
 - o The Result of Honoring Obedience? Long life
 - o The Reality of Honoring Obedience? Ephesians 5:18
- The mark of the gospel among fathers (parents) is disciplined leadership.
 - o Be a father (parents) that your children want to follow.
 - o Balance the need for nurture and discipline.
 - o Become a student of your children's heart.

Shared Purpose: The Community of Faith and the Home – Deuteronomy 6:1-9

- Deuteronomy 6 is a reminder to remember God for the next generation! Exodus 20
 - o Remember the TRUTH about God that makes us a community
 - Hear O, Israel
 - Hear the Word, do the Word, multiply greatly, love Him completely
 - Hear O, Family
 - Teach them diligently to your children when you . . . ,
 - o Sit down, walk around, lie down, rise up
 - Let others see them in you
 - o Frontlets, hands, doorposts, gates
- How do we do this TODAY?
 - o Recognize we are different!
 - o Recognize that we are the same!
 - o Access the God who loves you!
 - o Access the help around you!
 - o Be marked by the Gospel!
 - o Be the mark of the Gospel!

Message Summary

Every person was created by God, in His image and for His glory. However, sin messed up everybody's inclination toward God, causing every person to be prone to sin and affecting all relationships including those within our homes. God created the home, though as part of his plan to reach all generations and nations with the gospel. Therefore, families must seek God's Word as instruction on how to live through the power of the Holy Spirit to make disciples in and through our homes. God's command for children is to obey their parents in a way that honors their parents. Parents are to provide discipline and instruction in the home in a way that nurtures and disciplines the child while

guiding their hearts to follow God. In every aspect of life, parents are to model and teach the truth of God and His Word. All of us who are members of a local body of Christ have a responsibility to partner with parents to advance the gospel to the next generation and to help nurture children's faith in Christ. These roles cannot be lived as God intended without the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit

Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- How is the family an integral part of God's mission to make disciples of all nations?
- How has our culture's redefinition of family affected our understanding of its purpose?
- Looking at our families' activities, recreation, time, and money, what changes in our families might need to take place so that we reflect this purpose better?
- How should the family's role in God's mission affect the way we parent? The way we grandparent? The way we interact with siblings, parents, and our extended family?
- Why must we realize our sinfulness and inadequacy to obey God's Word within our families?
- What is the difference in parenting in a way that leads to obedience by domination versus in a way that teaches obedience through honorably following?
- How does creating a placating environment in our home with very little discipline ultimately exasperate children? How does an environment of domination exasperate children? How could

- out-sourcing the spiritual instruction of our children to others also exasperate our children?
- How can parents discipline in a way that does not exasperate their children?
- How can adult children honor their parents and maintain appropriate boundaries? What can parents of adult children do to help to make honoring them easier?
- Why must parents take time to learn the heart of each child? How can a child's heart direct the parent in appropriate disciplining and instruction? What things can parents do to begin to learn their children's hearts?
- How can we, as a community, come alongside and support family members who are sole believers in their families— children, teenagers, young adults, wives, husbands, senior adults, single moms or dads?
- Scott mentioned that both Psalms 78 and Deuteronomy 6 imply a community of faith responsibility for teaching the next generation about God from His Word. What might that look like for senior adults to own that responsibility? For single adults? For empty nesters? For parents who have children at home?
- How have our families, churches, and culture been affected by the gap in Titus 2 inter-generational discipleship? What are some practical ways you could implement a Titus 2 picture in your small group?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?

- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- How should the truths of this message affect the way you invest in the next generation?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

Weekly Prayer Focus . . .

• ***Lives and Church:*** *Please be in prayer for our existing and incoming elders.*

Specifically, pray that these men would model the character of Christ by faithfully walking in holiness and purity.

Small Group Guide - Week 7 - August 12, 2018

SINGLENES AND THE NEXT GENERATION

Dr. David Platt - 1 Corinthians 7

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word through His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool, not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—*a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.*

Review—*a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time. Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to revisit the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.*

Prayer—*a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.*

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

Sermon Outline

SINGLENES AND THE NEXT GENERATION

1 Corinthians 7

Four Foundations for Biblical Singleness...

- Both singleness and marriage are good .
 - Biblically, marriage is expected .
 - Biblically, singleness is exceptional .
- Both singleness and marriage portray the gospel .
 - Marriage portrays...
 - Christ's sacrificial love for the church.
 - The church's submissive obedience to Christ.
 - Singleness portrays...
 - The Christian's ultimate identity in Christ.
 - The Christian's eternal identification with the church.
- In the past (old covenant), singleness was avoided by most.
- In the present (new covenant), singleness is advantageous for many.
- In the future (new creation), singleness will be applied to all.
- Both singleness and marriage are God's gifts .
 - Contentment is deep trust in the sovereignty of God.
 - Contentment is deep enjoyment of the grace of God.
- Both singleness and marriage are for God's glory.
 - Singleness has a purpose we must be careful not to waste .

Four Reasons to Delight in Singleness...

- Because of the times we're in.

- o We are looking forward to an eternal hope.
- Because of the mission we're on.
 - o We are living for an eternal heritage .
- Because we want to be undistracted in our affections.
 - o We guard against unholy sexual desires.
 - o We guard against unholy selfish desires.
- Because we want to be undivided in our devotion.
 - o We give ourselves wholly to a single desire...
 - To use God's good gift for God's great glory in the next generation and among all nations.

Message Summary

This message explores both the foundations and delights of biblical singleness. Using 1 Corinthians 7 as a starting point, Dr. Platt led the congregation through the views of singleness and marriage in Genesis, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Matthew, and 1 Corinthians. The thought that both singleness and marriage are good was not a common view in Corinth or in the Old Testament; rather, it was thought that marriage and the children created within marriage signified blessing. The Apostle Paul, however, taught that marriage is expected, and singleness is exceptional. Both marriage and singleness portray the gospel. Marriage displays Christ's sacrificial love for the Church and her subsequent submissiveness. Singleness reveals that a Christian's identity is in Christ, not another human, and it portrays that a Christian's eternal identification is with the Church. While in the Old Covenant singleness was avoided, in the New Covenant, singleness has advantages for the spread of the gospel. In Christ, the Kingdom multiplies not through physical birth but through new, spiritual birth. Ultimately, in the New Kingdom, singleness will be applied to all. Singleness and marriage are both gifts from God intended to bring Him glory.

Next, Dr. Platt suggested four reasons to delight in singleness. First, we must consider the times. The Corinthians were facing severe persecution and lived in a culture full of sexual perversion (1 Cor. 7:26), as are we, so we must remember that whether married or single, we look forward to the eternal hope we have in

Christ. Second, advancing the Kingdom is the mission we are on, and we are living for an eternal heritage that comes through making disciples—not merely a physical heritage that comes from having children. Third, as singles we are less distracted in our affections, though we must guard against unholy sexual and selfish desires. Finally, we delight in singleness because we want a devotion to Christ that is completely undivided—to use the good gift of singleness to bring glory to God everywhere.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- Did today's message change your views of singleness? If so, how?
- How would you describe singleness through the eyes of our culture?
- How does viewing singleness as a display of the gospel—our ultimate identity in Christ and identification with the Church—change the way you value singleness?
- What does it mean to delight in singleness?
- How can singleness be advantageous over marriage in many contexts?
- Consider Isaiah 54:1 and 56:4-5, and Matthew 19:10-12. Using these verses, describe God's design for singleness.
- What does it mean to squander the gift of singleness?
- If you are single, how is your singleness helping you in your mission to spread the gospel?
- What practical steps can you take to guard your affection for Christ against unholy sexual desires and unholy selfish desires? How does a right view of Christ change what you value and desire?
- How does the truth that we are living for an eternal heritage or everlasting name (Isa. 56:5) encourage you to pour yourself into the next generation?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- How should the truths of this message affect the way you invest in the next generation?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

Weekly Prayer Focus . . .

• **Lives and Church:** *Pray that singles throughout our church would sincerely delight in their singleness and understand it as a good gift from God that is to be used for His glory.*

Small Group Guide - Week 8 - August 19, 2018

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

Dr. David Platt - Matthew 6:9

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word through His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool, not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—*a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.*

Review—*a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time. Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to revisit the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.*

Prayer—*a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.*

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

Sermon Outline

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

Matthew 6:9

God is our Father .

- The contrast with earthly fathers...
 - o We are evil; He is good .
 - o We have limited wisdom; He has infinite wisdom.
 - o We have imperfect love; He has perfect love.
- The care of our heavenly Father...
 - o He loves us.
 - o He understands us.
 - o He forgives us.
 - o He provides for us.
 - o He disciplines us.
 - o He leads us.

We are His children .

- What we have...
 - o A new name .
 - o A new spirit .
 - o New brothers and sisters .
 - o Access to the Father's presence .
 - We are not afraid of God.
 - We are now friends of God.
 - o An inheritance in the Father's kingdom .
- What we do...
 - o We worship Him.
 - o We glorify Him.
 - o We imitate Him.
 - o We obey Him.
 - o We reflect Him.

- We care for orphans not because we are rescuers .
- We care for orphans because we are the rescued .
 - We pass the gospel on to the next generation because we want them to be counted among the sons and daughters of God.
- What we anticipate...
 - A day when there will be no more pain .
 - An eternity where we will enjoy His presence .

Message Summary

Dr. Platt taught two main points: God is our Father; we are His children. God is completely good, infinitely wise, and perfectly loving—far exceeding even the best of human fathers. He takes good care of us in every way: He loves us, understands us, forgives us, provides for us, disciplines us, and leads us.

Those who have been born again by His Spirit are God's children. We have been given a new name, new spirit, and new family (brothers and sisters). We have been given access to our Father's presence and an eternal inheritance in His Kingdom. In loving response, we worship, glorify, imitate, obey, and reflect our Father's character. We care for orphans because we have been rescued, and we pass the gospel on to the next generation because we want them to be counted as sons and daughters of God. One day, we will enjoy our Father's presence forever, free of every type of pain.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- Read Matthew 7:9–11. If the true mark of a Christian is to know God as your Father, what kind of Father do we know Him to be?
- What do you think is the difference between knowing God as Master and knowing Him as Father?

- How should knowing God as our Father affect our desire to spend time with Him?
 - Read 1 John 3:1. What kind of love has God given us? How should this affect how we see life?
 - Read Matthew 6:7–8; Psalm 103:13–14; and Psalm 139:1–6. How does knowing God understands us provide comfort to us?
 - How should this truth affect your view of sin (especially hidden or secret sin) and shame?
 - Read Matthew 6:11–15. How does God’s forgiveness free us from fear and shame?
 - What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?
 - How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
 - According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to value?
 - How do your values need to change to align with His values?
 - What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?
 - What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
 - How should the truths of this message affect the way you invest in the next generation?
 - Read Matthew 6:25–33. What tends to make you anxious or worried? Why is worry a sure sign that you’ve forgotten you’re a child of God? What’s wrong with worry? What sin is at the heart of worry? How can we overcome worry and anxiety?
 - Read Hebrews 12:5–11. Why does God discipline us as his sons? Why must He discipline us if we are His children? How does God discipline us? How is discipline a loving act? What is the end result of discipline?
 - Read Romans 8:14; Matthew 6:33; and Luke 11:13. How does our Father lead us? What (Hint:Who) is His ultimate gift to us? How can we walk in the Spirit, following God’s leading?
 - In Christ, we are given a new identity, a new life, and a new family. Read John 1:12–13. How does a person become part of God’s family? Does God want His family to grow? How will He grow His family? (Read Mark 10:29–30.)
 - As His followers, what does Jn. 15:14–15 say about our access to God’s will and presence? How is our relationship to God radically different from those who lived under the Old Covenant?

- Read Romans 8:15–17. What is our inheritance as God’s children? How should this truth affect our view of earthly things, including our jobs, possessions, and relationships? Where should our mind and heart rest?
- Read Matthew 5:16; Ephesians 5:1; and 1 John 3:10. How do these verses suggest we should respond to God’s Fatherhood? How does this affect our view of our careers, our daily life at home, our marriages, our family, our relationships in the church and with the lost?
- How does care for orphans reflect God’s Fatherhood in our lives?
- Read Revelation 21:1–8. How can knowing our eternal destiny give us peace now? What is the most wonderful part of eternity? How can we develop satisfaction in God alone now, here on earth?
- Men, how can you demonstrate the qualities of our heavenly Father in your marriage, in your families, and/or in the church?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?

- How should the truths of this message affect the way you invest in the next generation?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

Weekly Prayer Focus . . .

- ***Lives and Church:*** *Pray that fathers all across our church family would wholeheartedly strive to be for their children an image of the Father in heaven.*

Small Group Guide - Week 9 - August 26, 2018

HOMES BUILT BY THE LORD

Pastor Scott Kinding - Psalm 127 | Luke 2:41-52

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word through His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool, not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—*a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.*

Review—*a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time. Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to revisit the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.*

Prayer—*a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.*

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

Sermon Outline

Homes Built by the Lord

Psalm 127 | Luke 2:41-52

Jesus is a gift!

- God promised Mary & Joseph a very special gift.
 - o God's promise to Mary. (Luke 1:26-33)
 - o God's promise to Joseph. (Matthew 1:20-23)
- God provided Mary & Joseph a very special gift. (Luke 2:1-7)
 - o God's provision of Jesus as a son to Mary and Joseph.
 - o God's provision of His Son as Savior of the world.
- Joseph and Mary consistently cared for God's great gift. (Luke 2:41-42)
 - o They carried out their responsibility of spiritual leadership.
 - o They connected Jesus to the larger faith family.
- Joseph and Mary lost that gift. (Luke 2:43-45)
- Joseph and Mary found that gift. (Luke 2:46-48)
 - The gift, Jesus, who was GOD IN FLESH, took Mary and Joseph to school. (Luke 2:49)
 - Mary and Joseph did not understand their adolescent Son. (Luke 2:50)

Children are gifts!

- God builds durable homes/families on a solid foundation.
- God guards His community.
- God gives His beloved rest.
- God blesses homes with the Next Generation.

- He multiplies His blessing with children/Next Generation.
 - With birth children.
 - With adopted children.
 - With foster children.
 - With your children's friends.

- God fills your home with abundance.
- Children become your ammunition.
- Children become your protection.
- Children extend your mission, influence and values.

Re-gifting God's good gifts!

- Fill the quiver.
- Load the bow.
- Aim the arrow.
- Release the Next Generation toward God's bull's-eye.

Message Summary

By studying Solomon's Song of Ascents in Psalm 127 and Luke's record of Jesus as a boy at the Temple in Luke 2:41-52, Pastor, Scott Kindig, led the church to look at homes built by the Lord. From Psalm 127, he noted four aspects of these homes: The parents are to build well, to protect their family, to fill their home with blessing, and to prepare themselves for battle. Jesus was a very special gift given specifically to Mary and Joseph to raise. The church looked at God's promise and provision to Mary and Joseph as parents and Mary and Joseph's consistent care for Jesus when He was a boy. Luke 2:41-52 tells of the instance when Mary and Joseph thought they had lost their twelve-year-old Son. Through this event we learn from Jesus that it was natural for Him to seek after God when He was away from His parents—evidence of a well-built house.

In Psalm 127, we see the gift that children are to their parents. The most durable homes are those in which the solid foundation of God's Word and intimate prayer times are primary. As we seek God through prayer and His Word, we show our children that we

are totally dependent on God. God guards His community and gives rest to His people as we strive to work, rest, and play all while showing our children a proper balance of the three. God blesses homes through birth children, adopted children, foster children, and with our children's friends. In doing so, He fills homes with abundance as these children become parents' ammunition and protection. One day children will extend our message to touch a generation we will never even meet.

We have the privilege of "re-gifting" God's good gifts of children by filling the quiver, loading the bow, aiming the arrow, and releasing the next generation toward God's bull's-eye. We are not to hold onto our children but to send them to the world.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- When you think about Jesus as God's promise and provision to Mary and Joseph, how does that affect your perception of them as a family?
- How does Mary and Joseph's care for Jesus through spiritual leadership and connecting Him to the larger covenant community serve as an example for how we should raise our children?
- What caused Mary and Joseph's astonishment when they found Jesus at the Temple? (Luke 2:47-50)
- If prayer and God's Word are essential tools God uses to build durable homes on a solid foundation, how can you more greatly incorporate those tools into your family life?
- What hindrances do you face in showing your children your complete dependence on God?

- When have you experienced God guarding your family and home? How did you share God’s work of protection with your children?
- God gives rest, work, and play—each in their proper place. How are you demonstrating each of these actions to your children? Which is easiest for you to show? Why is a balance among the three so important?
- If your children will extend your mission, how are you intentionally shaping them to share with you in God’s mission for the world?
- Consider the process of filling the quiver, loading the bow, aiming the arrow, and releasing the next generation toward God’s bull’s-eye. In your particular life circumstances, what does this process practically look like?
- What are some practical ways you can “load the bow” with your children? Why does “loading the bow” require such great intentionality?
- If you are a parent, what specific gifts do you see in your children? How can you encourage them to pursue those gifts in a God-honoring, mission-oriented way?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to value?

- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- How should the truths of this message affect the way you invest in the next generation?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

Weekly Prayer Focus . . .

• ***Lives and Church:*** *As we move out of the summer in back into the swing of the school year, pray that The Lord will use CityView Church to effectively reach the next generation.*