

# SESSION 1: PRIORITIES

**Welcome and Program Overview: 10 minutes**

**Session #1 Teaching: Priorities: 10 minutes**

**What is your mission in parenting your children?** Many times people begin their parenting journey with a picture of what their life and family should look like; big enough house, a pet, children who learn eat their veggies, be respectful and empty the trash without being asked...and then along the way we realize that children have their own personalities, emotional and physical needs and challenges that shape the way they see the world. In the Bible, parents are instructed to impress upon the hearts of their children the commands of the Lord, NOT to make their children turn our picture perfect by the world's standard, or even church culture standards. If our ultimate goal in parenting is anything other than to point our children to God and encourage a relationship with Him, we will likely create an environment of control, frustration and bitterness. If you've never created either a parenting mission statement or list of priorities, that may be something you want to consider.

We often have to remind our children that they can't control the people around them, but they can control themselves and their responses. The same goes for parents. Our prayer may be that our children grow up following God and obeying us and Him, but we can't control whether that happens; that is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit and our child's choice. What we CAN control is ourselves, what we teach our children and whether they grow up in an environment that points them to God, His grace and His love for us.

None of us plan for our children to have hard experiences like loss, abuse, neglect or developmental challenges, but sometimes children do. Those things all have a powerful and lasting impact on our children that may not look pretty. How can we help them heal and adapt to the challenges that come with these things? Here are some suggestions for parenting goals that keep your focus on what \*you\* can do.

- Communicate daily that they are loved unconditionally by God and their parents.
- Teach and model grace and patience.
- Make home a physically and emotionally safe place where they know they are always welcome.

## **Small Group Discussion: 25 minutes**

- What are your priorities in parenting?
- Do your actions communicate your priorities?
- Are there priorities you need to change or refocus on?

## **Small Group Wrap-Up: 10 minutes**

What did you cover in your small group time? What were the biggest take-aways and action items?

## **Discuss This Week's Homework on next page: 5 minutes**

- Commit to the LIFE Starters Journaling process to allow this study to have the biggest impact.
- Confirm that you two, as a couple, are on the same page with your priorities, how you communicate them and how you may need to refocus them.

# SESSION #1

## WK. 1 DEVO 1

### **Re-Read Proverbs 22**

*Journal about how YOU want to do a better job starting your children off on the right path.*

**L=Listen** in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

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**I = Investigate** the context around today's Scripture reading. To whom was this written? Why? How does this passage fit with what comes before and after it? What is the Holy Spirit communicating through this text? Feel free to use Bible study tools for commentary: [Bible Study Tools](#), or [Easy English Bible](#).

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**F=Focus** to the text to make it applicable for your own life. What is God saying to you personally through this passage? How can you apply what you've read?

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**E = Engage** God. This can either be a short prayer or an action that you can take that day after reading the text. Is there a command to follow in the text? How are you different because of what you've learned?

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# SESSION #1

## WK. 1 DEVO 2

### **Read Psalm 127**

*Are YOU letting the Lord "Build YOUR House?"*

**L=Listen** in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

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# SESSION #1

## WK. 1 DEVO 3

### **Read Titus 2:1-15**

*How are YOU teaching your kids? Are you teaching sound doctrine? Do YOU know sound doctrine?*

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# SESSION #1

## WK. 1 DEVO 4

### **Read Proverbs 3:1-12**

Start with trusting in the Lord with ALL YOUR heart, so you can teach your children to do the same. Journal about your level of trust and how you teach that to your children.

**L=Listen** in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

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