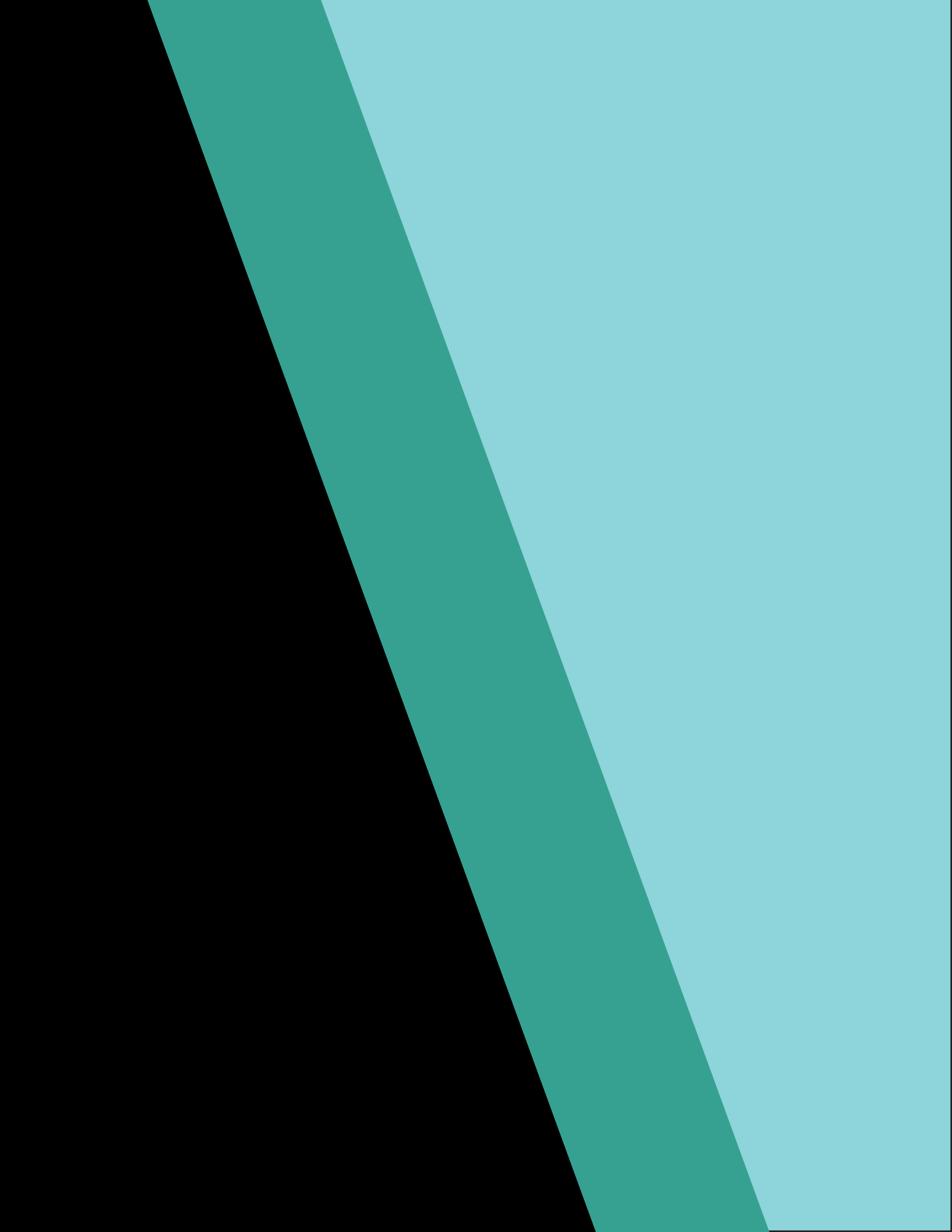


A photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, smiling broadly, carrying a young child on his shoulders. The child is laughing and looking to the side. The background is a clear, light blue sky. The text 'LIFE STUDIES' is overlaid on the image, with 'LIFE' in white and 'STUDIES' in teal. Below this, a white banner contains the text 'Fathers for Life' and a small circular logo with a cross.

# LIFE STUDIES

Fathers for Life

A SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM MADE BY PBC



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# **L.I.F.E STARTER JOURNALING**

*The Bible journaling method called LIFE Starter was developed to create an easy, yet effective way for people to study the Bible, remember what they read and allow their hearts to get ignited for Jesus Christ.*

**L.I.F.E. stands for Listen, Investigate, Focus and Engage**

## **L=Listen**

In your journal, write the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, listen to the Holy Spirit and focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal. Writing helps you remember the verses

## **I = Investigate**

*Next, you investigate the context around the 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](#).*

## **F = Focus**

The next step is focusing on the text to make it applicable for your own life. What does the text mean today? What is God saying to you personally through this passage? How can you apply what you've read? Write out a couple sentences detailing what God is saying to you through the text.

## **E = Engage**

The final step in the journaling process is engaging 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?

*The beautiful thing about this journaling method is that it is short and only takes a few minutes, and it can be done every time you read or study a passage.*

# SESSION 1: Modeling

## Prayer, Welcome and Ice Breaker Question: 20 minutes

Introduce yourself and talk about why you are doing this study and what you hope to get out of it

## Session #1 Teaching: Are YOU Ready to Be a Great Dad?: 5 minutes

**Proverbs 22:6** says, "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." And, The words of Paul in **Ephesians 6** remind Christian fathers that our parenting has a great end towards which we must aim. God gave us the task of teaching, correcting, disciplining, loving, and training our children so that they come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and walk in a way which pleases Him.

So, let me ask you, how are YOU bringing your kids up in the training and instruction of the Lord? We started this VERY important study by talking together about what YOU want to get out of this program and today, we are going to hit the ground running by making some goals and commitments to your group!

We need to answer another tough question as we get started...**ARE YOU A GOOD ROLE-MODEL?**

**1 Corinthians 11:1** says modeling means to give shape and form to something or someone. To be a beautiful pattern, you have to pattern your life after Jesus Christ. In patterning for your children, Love is a must in a Christian home. It is non-negotiable. It neutralizes the work of the devil. It cannot be compromised.

We need to ask ourselves this question; Do I want my children to be like me? According to statisticbrain.com, 26% of kids between ages 8-11, say they don't want to be like their parents. 74% are saying they **want to be like parents**. 73% of teenagers says their relationship with their parents makes them the most happy. **The BOTTOM line is that parents, especially Dad's, are the greatest influence on their children.**

So, I know I gave you more questions than teaching to kick this study off, but as Dads, we have a HUGE role to play in the spiritual formation of our family and I want you to make a strong commitment to be what God is calling you to be! Our kids future in eternity depend on it!

So, take today and talk about what needs to change in your life to be a GREAT role-model for your kids and then invite the Holy Spirit into this study by finishing your session today by praying as a group.

## Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes

### Talk about **Ephesians 6:4**

- How are YOU bringing your kids up in the training and instruction of the Lord?
- Do I want my children to be like me?
- Talk about what needs to change in your life to be a GREAT role-model for your kids.
- Talk about and make some goals and commitments for yourself to your group!
- Pray as a group and ask the Holy Spirit to make your goals a reality.

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

•What were the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?

***Discuss This Week's Homework: 5 minutes***

Focus on the ***LIFE Journaling Method*** and it will give you more insight to be a great dad!

•***Pray about your commitment to this study and rethink what you want to get out of it.***

# 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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# SESSION #1

## WK. 1 DEVO 2

### **Re-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

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

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

**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 4

### **Re-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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# SESSION 2: Keep Growing in Christ

*Welcome & Review Last Week's Homework/LIFE Starters: 15 minutes*

*Session #2 Teaching: Growing in Christ: 10 minutes*

When I think of different “spiritual categories” most men fall into, I think of the following 4. The first being a **Secular man**. A man with little or no spiritual interest. They come when they have to—for holidays, weddings and funerals—or because they are keeping the peace with their wife. The second is **Cultural Christians**. These are men with one foot inside and one foot outside the church. Perhaps they grew up in the church and so now just go through the motions. Or church is a social gathering or gives them a place to ensure their kids get some moral instruction. They are present, but not engaged or interested in spiritual growth. Third is **Biblical Christians**. These men are disciples or want to be disciples. They are interested in spiritual growth and want to lead their families well. These men are the ones who join small groups and classes, and often serve throughout the church. These are the easiest men to reach because they want to grow in their faith. The fourth and target for us is truly being **servant leaders**. These men are actively engaged in helping others grow in their faith. They are a subset of your Biblical Christians, more advanced in their faith and looking for opportunities to serve, teach, mentor and lead. Today, I’m going to ask you to discuss where you fit and where you want to grow and why.

We have SO many opportunities to grow spiritually and being a dad drives those opportunities into overdrive! **Spiritual growth** should be a top priority. When we make it a point to grow in the Spirit, we also make it a point to grow in every aspect. That’s because our spiritual status affects every other area of our life - whether it be physiological, mental, emotional, economical or relational. The Bible makes it clear how truly important it is that we make it a point to grow in the spirit. **Colossians 1:9-10** tells us, “And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

Spiritual growth brings about God’s fruit to all who seek it. As men who are called to pursue the good work we were created in Christ to do (**Ephesians 2:10**), here are five things we must start doing some more. First, **embrace God-given roles**. The Bible is filled with descriptive instructions of how God wants us men to act, think and live. They aren’t stereotypes but rather guidelines that help us pursue God’s will more and more by first growing in character, faith and knowledge. Second, **take the lead**. There seems to be a strong correlation between leadership and growth. Every time God called someone in the Bible to step up in leadership, they experienced immense spiritual advancements as well. Take David, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Abraham, Peter, Paul and all the other Godly men who grew more as God called them into leadership roles. The same principle applies for us men today. Third, **seek to step out in faith**. Faith is the greatest evidence of spiritual strength. When we live lives of faith, we live lives that honor and please God (**Hebrews 11:6**) primarily because when we grow in faith, we grow in Spirit. As we approach God more, He dispels all doubts and gives us faith. So as we walk with God, we start walking in faith more and grow more in our spiritual journey.

Fourth, **consume the Bible**. The most effective way to grow spiritually is to consume the word of God. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work." Lastly (BUT NOT LEAST) disciple other men. The world wants you to believe that to gain, we must get. But the Bible reminds us that gain comes by giving. When we live to give other men wisdom, by discipling them, we start growing faster too. Proverbs 11:25 says it this way: "Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered."

### **Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes**

**Review these four categories to think about which category YOU fit into and discuss:**

1. Secular men
2. Cultural Christian
3. Biblical Christian
4. Servant leaders

**Review these four challenges below and talk about where you need the biggest improvement:**

1. Embrace God-given role
2. Take the lead
3. Seek to step out in faith
4. Consume the Bible
5. Disciple other men

**Relook at last week's LIFE Starter Journaling as a group and talk about your commitment to spend 30-minutes each day in the Bible. This commitment will be the first step toward spiritual growth that will make you a better dad from the inside out!**

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

**What were the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?**

### **Discuss This Week's Homework: 5 minutes**

**Focus on the LIFE Journaling Method and it will give you more insight to embracing spiritual growth!**

•Pray about how to become the servant leader in your family and grow spiritually!

# SESSION #2

## WK. 2 DEVO 1

### Read Deuteronomy 6

Dads spend time with their children, and it's not empty time! Journal about your spiritual growth and how that can help your children grow also.

**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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# SESSION #2

## WK. 2 DEVO 2

### **Read Colossians 1:1-14**

*The Bible makes it clear how truly important it is that we make it a point to grow in the spirit.*

**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 #2

## WK. 2 DEVO 3

### **Read Ephesians 2:1-10**

*Spiritual growth brings about God's fruit to all who seek it. As men, we are called to pursue the good work we were created in Christ to do!*

**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 #2

## WK. 2 DEVO 4

### **Read 2 Timothy 3**

*The most effective way to grow spiritually is to consume the word of God.*

**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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Relook at page 12 (Session #2) and be ready to talk to your group about the areas of growth you are committing to!



# SESSION 3: Love Your Wife

**Welcome & Review Last Week's Homework/LIFE Starters: 15 minutes**

**Session #3 Teaching: Love Your Spouse, Second to God: 10 minutes**

I hope modeling your spiritual growth becomes a way of life in the culture of YOUR family! Today, we will talk about how to model a loving marriage to make your kids even MORE secure. We can so center our lives on the wrong priorities, that we neglect our marriages, and a neglected marriage will become an unhappy marriage.

**Ephesians 5:21-33** tells us, 21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body. 31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”[b] 32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

This Scripture is intimidating and possibly overwhelming, but it is what we are called to do in our marriage covenant. As a husband, **it is intimidating to think of being to your wife what Christ is to the church.** Husbands are commanded to love their wives.

Today, I want you to reflect on this Scripture and talk about what it looks like for husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the church. What does it look (and not look) like for wives to submit to their husbands as the church does to Christ? Also, how can husbands make it easier to submit to them? Discuss together as a group how YOU can show your wife more love moving forward!

If you have embraced the gospel, then the Holy Spirit lives in you. You are not alone! The Holy Spirit will help you do what God has commanded you to do.

**Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes**

- What does it look like for husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the church?
- What does it look (and not look) like for YOUR wife to submit? Also, how can YOU make it easier to submit?
- Discuss together as a group how YOU can show your wife more love moving forward!

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

**What were the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?**

**Discuss This Week's Homework: 5 minutes**

**Please take this Love Languages test this week with your spouse:**

**<http://www.5lovelanguages.com/assessments/love/>**

- Review the “love languages” profile and discuss some practical ways to show each other love.
- Plan a date night and talk about having them on a regular basis and then schedule accordingly.

# SESSION #3

## WK. 3 DEVO 1

### **Read Genesis 2**

Focus on Genesis 2:24 and journal about what God says about becoming ONE flesh.

**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 #3

## WK. 3 DEVO 2

### **Read Ecclesiastes 4**

Focus on Ecclesiastes 4:12 and journal about what God says about the unity of marriage.

**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 #3

## WK. 3 DEVO 3

### **Re-Read Ephesians 5:25-33**

*Think about how you can do YOUR part to treat your spouse like God expects. Journal about that.*

**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 #3

WK. 3 DEVO 4

## **Read 1 Corinthians 13**

*Pray about the fruits of the Spirit and areas that YOU need to improve to show God's love to your spouse.*

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# SESSION 4: Repentance

**Welcome & Review Last Week's Homework/LIFE Starters: 15 minutes**

**Session #4 Teaching: Time to Repent 10 minutes**

We have covered a lot of information in this study so far concerning making a conscious decision to walk away from things that may hold you back (Egypt), not allowing negative thoughts to control you and learning to forgive. All of those topics will help you to find freedom in Christ as you accept your position as a member of the royal family. Today, we will cover the Biblical term for practically turning from ALL of these behaviors... **REPENTANCE!**

**From Wikipedia:** Repentance is the activity of reviewing one's actions and feeling contrition or regret for past wrongs, which is accompanied by commitment to and actual actions that show and prove a change for the better. In Christianity it is often defined as an action, **turning away** from self-serving activities and **turning to God**, to walk in His ways.

You may be surprised to learn the word repent in the Greek New Testament simply means to **turn around**. It was a military term that described a soldier marching in one direction and then doing an about-face. And when it's used in a spiritual sense, it means to change your mind.

So really, repent is a perfect description of what happens when you come to Christ, believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of the God; You do a spiritual about-face, which in turn changes everything. Not only should you change your mind about Christ, but you should change your mind about sin as well as you discover what it really means to honor God. **You realize that it's no longer about performance.** It's about a **heart attitude** that seeks to honor Christ in every aspect of life, so don't be afraid of the word repent, instead, embrace the idea of doing a spiritual about-face, turning to Christ and away from sin in your life!

**Acts 3:19-21** challenges us to "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, **that times of refreshing may come from the Lord**, and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets."

In today's group, you will review what it means to Repent...So many people today are scared of the word REPENT and avoid using it altogether! In reality, very few actually understand what the word means.

**Small Group Discussion: 25 minutes**

**Re-read out loud: Acts 3:19-21 Think about what you've learned so far in this class.**

Express what a **"time of refreshing"** might look like for you as you make the spiritual about-face. God wants you to picture a healthy future with Him and sometimes, we need to define what that looks like to have the motivation to stick with the repentance process and keep moving in God's direction.

- What areas in your life do you need to make **spiritual about-face**?
- Talk about how you view “**repentance**” after this conversation verses before.
- Make some **commitments** to the group on what you need to repent of and how you will do it.

### **Group Prayer Time: 15 minutes**

Wrap up by praying for the courage to step out in faith and repent to be the best dad you can be. That decision requires a change of mind, or repentance, about your way of life. As you think about repentance and what you learned in this week’s session, THIS COMING WEEK, use the LIFE Starter Method to make a personal decision on what YOU need to repent of!



# SESSION #4

## WK. 4 DEVO 1

### **Read Acts 3:19-21 again**

Focus on Genesis 2:24 and journal about what God says about becoming ONE flesh.

**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 #4

## WK. 4 DEVO 2

### **Read Mark 1:1-15**

Focus on Ecclesiastes 4:12 and journal about what God says about the unity of marriage.

**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 #4

## WK. 4 DEVO 3

### **Read Acts 2:14-40**

Think about how you can do YOUR part to treat your spouse like God expects. Journal about that.

**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 #4

## WK. 4 DEVO 4

### **Read Luke 13:1-5**

*Pray about the fruits of the Spirit and areas that YOU need to improve to show God's love to your spouse.*

**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 5: Focus on the Power of the Holy Spirit**

**Welcome & Review Last Week's Homework/LIFE Starters: 15 minutes**

**Session #5 Teaching: We Need the Power of God's Spirit: 10 minutes**

We need His help to stay encouraged, to love, to exercise self-control, and to make our parenting efforts effective, because we cannot change the hearts of our children. As Paul said, we labor in the strength that God provides, and pray that he would use our effort in our homes to change our children's lives and bring glory to himself. A better parenting paradigm is "**faithfulness-driven**" rather than results-led. Our role as parents is not to "produce" children who exhibit certain behavior criteria, but to be mere instruments in the Holy Spirit's ongoing work in the heart of our children. We highly value and adhere to the wisdom of Proverbs, Deuteronomy, Hebrews, and other child-training passages in the Scriptures and realize only God transforms the hearts of our children. Our first priority then becomes salvation, so the regenerating work of the Spirit can begin, both making the parenting job easier and also pointing toward lasting change. We look for signs of inner heart change rather than focusing primarily on external conformity.

It's time to recognize the Holy Spirit's pre-eminent role in changing hearts reshapes our parenting priorities. Removing the unnecessary weight of producing results helps us see our kids, not as a reflection of who we are, but as a unique creation in the image of the Creator. Instead of pushing our kids to abide by our standards as a way of conforming and producing their own righteousness, we might offer the disciplined life as gracious obedience to the Spirit, who empowers them to live the life of Christ. Consider these 4-ways you can invite the Holy Spirit into your parenting. **First, spend more time in God's Word.** Being in God's Word sets our hearts on Him and His truth so that we know and recognize Him in even the ordinary moments. Second, pray for your children. Pray that their hearts will be softened toward God and you as their parent. Third, pray that you will be aware and listen to the Holy Spirit all day, in all moments. Pray that you will be aware of those little thoughts or pricks in your heart that say this is the moment, this is the person, this is the question or decision. Lastly, teach your children that they are loved more than they can imagine. (By you, but also by God.) As they trust in the love and goodness of God first, they will learn to trust your Spirit-lead parenting decisions, even when they don't agree with them.

Today, I want you to discuss your parenting style and your willingness to insert the Holy Spirit into your parenting.

**Small Group Discussion: 29 minutes**

- Discuss your parenting style. Are you faith-driven or performance driven?
- Have you talked to your children about accepting Christ and being filled with the Holy Spirit?
- Reread the 4-ways to invite the Holy Spirit into your parenting and then discuss how YOU are modeling a reliance on the Holy Spirit in your home and how you might improve that example.

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

***What were the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?***

***Discuss This Week's Homework: 5 minutes***

Focus on the ***LIFE Journaling Method*** and it will give you more insight to embracing spiritual growth!

•Pray about how to infuse the Holy Spirit into your parenting style!

# SESSION #5

## WK. 5 DEVO 1

### **Read John 14:15-31**

*Jesus promises the Holy Spirit, so you don't need to father alone.*

**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 #5

## WK. 5 DEVO 2

### **Read Acts 1:1-11**

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Are YOU allowing the Holy Spirit to work in and through you, so that your kids see that modeled?*

**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 #5

## WK. 5 DEVO 3

### **Read 1 John 2:18-27**

*You have an anointing from the Holy One, and it's time to share that anointing with your family.*

**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 #5

WK. 5 DEVO 4

## Read Ephesians 1:3-14

*We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise and guarantee of our inheritance.*

**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 6:

## **Discipline Patiently & Consistently**

*Welcome & Review Last Week's Homework/LIFE Starters: 15 minutes*

*Session #6 Teaching: Discipline Patiently & Consistently: 10 minutes*

**Proverbs 29:17** says, "Discipline your son and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart."

Consistently teaching, correcting, and disciplining our children can be exhausting work. We can easily give in to the temptation to let things go we should address or to "parent" by simply barking orders, and neither of these is an acceptable option. Instead, we must patiently and consistency discipline our children. This takes time and is definitely not the easy way out, but it will train the hearts of our children and be better for them in the long run. As mentioned last week when we discussed repentance, If you slipped up and lost your temper in a way that was hurtful to your child, be quick to apologize and seek forgiveness. Your children don't need a perfect parent, but they do need a parent who will teach them how to restore relationships. Forgive yourself and show yourself grace. And be sure you have forgiven your children if needed – you don't want to become bitter toward them.

Always provide closure after an unpleasant interaction by reassuring your son or daughter of your love. Don't ever leave your child wondering, **Does Dad still love me?** As mentioned last week when we discussed repentance, If you slipped up and lost your temper in a way that was hurtful to your child, be quick to apologize and seek forgiveness. Your children don't need a perfect parent, but they do need a parent who will teach them how to restore relationships. Forgive yourself and show yourself grace. And be sure you have forgiven your children if needed – you don't want to become bitter toward them.

Another reason that we "practically" lose our patience is from what we covered in earlier sessions, and that is BUSYNESS! Poor time management can create a lot of stress and frustration in a family. If you're often running behind schedule, **work hard on planning better.** Learn to call ahead and apologize when you expect to arrive late, so you won't feel quite so stressed about getting the kids in the car. Keep your children informed about each day's activities. Unclear communication or unfulfilled expectations that leave a child disappointed or confused can trigger bad behavior. If you feel pushed for time, reviewing your priorities with your wife might be a good idea.

*Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes*

- Discuss how patient you are with your spouse and children. Remember, the modeling necessary starts with how you treat your spouse!
- Discuss what you are doing NOW to teach your kids consistently. What can you do to improve?
- Discuss some practical ways YOU can take the primary responsibility to teach your children the Bible.

*Small Group Wrap-Up: 10 minutes*

**What were the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?**

## **Discuss This Week's Homework: 5 minutes**

- Review the tips on the next page and discuss what new strategies can be implemented.
- Focus on the LIFE Journaling Method and it will give you more insights on how to be more patient.

**Review these practical tips on how to maintain more patience with your family.**

## **Disciplining Patiently & consistently**

**1. Speak slowly and softly.** When you feel your anger rising, slow your speech way down and talk quietly. This will help you resist the urge to shout. Don't lecture – it will make you more upset. Simply say to your child, I'm feeling really upset/angry/frustrated right now. I need a few moments to calm down before I deal with this situation. This lets your child know that there's going to be a "pause" in the proceedings. Naming your emotions in front of your child is important too. In effect, you're sending your child the message, Watch and learn – this is how to deal with anger.

**2. Take 10 deep breaths.** Rehearse a verse of Scripture like James 1:5 or Romans 12:2. Then pray, asking the Holy Spirit to help you put self-oriented thoughts aside and respond in a way that lovingly meets your child's needs and nurtures their emotional and spiritual growth.

**3. Remove yourself from the situation if needed** (provided your children will be safe in your absence). Keep a stash of calming Scripture memory verses in the bathroom (or another calm-down retreat, or in your purse or wallet) and pray through them until you feel more under control.

**4. Don't expect too much from your children!** Remind yourself that you are the parent, and responsible before God to show your child a better way.

**5. Dig for the truth. Anger is a secondary emotion.** When you feel yourself getting upset, listen carefully to your thoughts to reveal the primary emotion underlying your reaction. Is it fear? Resentment? Hurt? Grief? Disappointment? Stress? For example, you might be thinking, If my kids don't leave me alone, I'll never meet my deadline. Your children didn't set your work deadline, so be honest about who really owns that problem.

**6. Lighten up and channel your inner comic.** Learn to laugh with your kids first, before you talk about how they might do better next time.

**7. Call an Ignite Purpose friend for two minutes.** A brief chat with another parent in this program will help you put the situation in perspective.

**8. Count your blessings.** Rehearse in your mind all the things you love about your child/children. This moment of frustration will soon pass.

**9. Ask your kids to help!** Once you've told your kids, I'm feeling very frustrated right now, ask them, What do you think I should do? Their cute answers may just melt your heart. At the very least, you've got them actively engaged in thinking about good ways to manage their own anger.

# SESSION #6

## WK. 6 DEVO 1

### **Read Galatians 6:1-10**

*Journal about not getting weary doing good, especially for your family!*

**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 #6

## WK. 6 DEVO 2

### Read James 5:7-20

*Learn to be patient in suffering.*

**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 #6

WK. 6 DEVO 3

## **Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-13**

*Love is patient and kind and is the most attractive trait of a "Fired Up Father!"*

**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 #6

## WK. 6 DEVO 4

### **Read Ephesians 4**

You have been called and gifted to be a GREAT father to your children. Are YOU ready to take full responsibility for the UNITY in 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 7: Teach Consistently**

**Welcome & Review Last Week's Homework/LIFE Starters: 15 minutes**

**Session #7 Teaching: Teach Your Kids Consistently: 10 minutes**

The wise father will see all of life as an opportunity to teach his children about walking with Jesus, and practical wisdom. When your children are younger, you can read through The Big Picture Story Bible or The Jesus Storybook Bible with them. As they grow older, use this guide and the resources at the Ignite Purpose website to help you stay consistent. Accepting the responsibility of teaching the Bible in your home will equip your kids to live by it when they are grown. So many dads think they don't have enough Bible knowledge to teach their children. Nothing could be further from the truth. If you can read, you can teach your children God's Word. All you have to do is stay a step ahead of them. Don't be afraid. God has given you everything you need to do this. You don't have to be a seminary-trained theologian to read the Bible and talk about what it means. Besides, God would not have given you the responsibility unless He knew you could handle it.

Contrary to popular belief, the home—not the church—has been entrusted with the primary responsibility of teaching children the Bible. In our age of professionalism we tend to hire out virtually every parental responsibility. We want our kids to succeed at sports, so we hire a professional for private lessons. We want them to get into a good college, so we hire a special tutor to boost her SAT score. And we want our children to be upstanding citizens and Christians, so we hire a children's pastor or youth minister. There is nothing wrong with wanting our children to succeed (as long as we have a biblical view of success). Nor is there anything inherently wrong with seeking help when we need it. However, we have gone beyond seeking help to abdicating our responsibility.

Our worldview shapes the way we think. If giving our children a biblical worldview is the why of family-driven faith, giving them biblical instruction is the what. Our worldview shapes the way we think, but learning the Scriptures determine what we think. For example, a child with a biblical worldview may understand the inherent dignity of his parents as human beings created in the image of God, but a child with biblical instruction also knows that the God who created his parents says, "Honor your mother and father." It is not an either/or proposition but a both/and mandate. We must give our children a biblical worldview, and we must instruct them in the Word of God. In fact, without the Word of God there is no biblical worldview.

**Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes**

- Discuss what you are doing NOW to teach your kids consistently. What can you do to improve?
- Discuss some practical ways YOU, as a "Fired-Up Father" can take the primary responsibility to teach your children the Bible.
- Are YOU modeling a Biblical worldview? Discuss how your worldview and the biblical worldview line up in your home.

### **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: 5 minutes**

- Review the tips on the next page and discuss what new strategies can be implemented.
- Focus on the **LIFE Journaling Method** and it will give you more insights on how to be more patient.

Review these practical tips on how to maintain more patience with your family.

# SESSION #7

## WK. 7 DEVO 1

### **Read Deuteronomy 6**

*Journal about your love for the Lord and why teaching that love to your kids is SO important.*

**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 #7

## WK. 7 DEVO 2

### **Read Joshua 1**

*Like Joshua, YOU have been installed and called as the leader of your house to teach your family well.*

**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 #7

## WK. 7 DEVO 3

### **Read Proverbs 4:1-4**

*As you humble yourself to learn from God, loving expect the same from 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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# SESSION #7

## WK. 7 DEVO 4

### **Read Colossians 3**

*Remember to teach in love and NOT dictate, so your children will NOT get embittered!*

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# **SESSION 8: SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP**

## **- BIBLE STUDY PLANNING**

**Welcome & Review Last Week's Homework/LIFE Starters: 15 minutes**

**Session #8 Teaching: Spiritual Leadership: 15 minutes**

**Dads, it's time to be THE spiritual leader of YOUR home!** Your time of family Bible study is a mixture of humility, vulnerability and self-deprecating humor, with a dash of storytelling. Don't think of yourself as Moses coming down the mountain with stone tablets to give some religion to his unruly children. You are not a lecturer or a judge wielding a Study Bible as your gavel. Think of yourself as a trusted spiritual guide on a journey with your family. The Bible is your GPS, showing you the route to take and the hazards to avoid along the way. **Remember, you don't have to have all the answers!**

### **WHY DO WE NEED IT?**

- Create a **fun and non-preachy way** to teach children the Bible.
- Create a weekly vehicle to **pass on most important beliefs**, values and hard-earned lessons, often in humorous and vulnerable ways.
- Create an **intimate window** into the highs and lows of your children's lives.
- Create a **shared experience of trust** that will serve as the **foundation for developing a uniquely close friendship** with your kids as they become adults.
- Create a systematic way to **pray for your family** and track the results, **building God's influence in your home and the faith of your family.**

### **Small Group Discussion: 15 minutes**

- Review the info on the next page and commit to the plan.
- Discuss what you think about starting your OWN weekly family Bible study. Will YOU do it?
- Discuss your concerns and obstacles around doing this. What will help make this a reality?

### **Small Group Discussion: 15 minutes**

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

### **Small Group Discussion: 15 minutes**

- Make a commitment to each other to do a season (at least 8 weeks) of these personal family Bible studies. Discuss HOW to make these a reality for your home!
- Consider starting this week!
- Focus on the **LIFE Journaling Method** and it will give you more insights on how YOU are equipped to use the Bible as the guide for your family.

# YOUR WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Here is a 90-minute formula and format for a winning, weekly Bible study with YOUR family that will influence generations to come:

## **(DAD) PREPARE (30 minutes)**

Pray and think about an area of interest from something that came up this week. Make the topic relevant to you and your children. Did YOU have a learning moment? Was there an event that the family experienced this week that is worth talking and teaching around? Review Scripture verses by using **Free Bible Study Guide website** and jot down 3-5 questions that will engage your children and **order some PIZZA!**

## **EAT & CHAT (20 minutes)**

Order pizza, or do something different to make this time the most special time of the week! Talk about sports, school, movies, whatever and considered this period an “ice breaker.”

## **SHARE (10 minutes)**

Share about what you came up with during your preparation time. How do YOU personally relate to the topic? This is the time for YOU to be vulnerable to set the stage for both the Scripture review and the questions you will engage your family with.

## **LEARN (10 minutes)**

Now, it is time to take your topic and allow everyone to **discover biblical principles on those practical themes**. You don't need to OVER-TEACH at this time, just make it light and fun for everyone.

## **DISCUSS (10 minutes)**

Now, it's time to discuss what you learned from the Bible and ask the questions of your family that you came up with during your prep time. You may get a lot of, “I don't know” answers, but you need to keep asking slightly different (open ended) questions that will make everyone think for themselves. This is not easy, as most men don't know how to go past the first phase of questioning, but it's a great time to grow and learn how to engage people in ALL relationships, as you make them think about the subject matter in a personal way.

## **SHARE (10 minutes)**

End the study time with a more personal time of questions to end on a positive note:

- What was the “high” of your week?
- What was the “low” of your week?
- How can I pray for you?



# SESSION #8

## WK. 8 DEVO 1

### **Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17**

*Are YOU equipped with God's Word to teach your children God's Truth?*

**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 #8

## WK. 8 DEVO 2

### **Read Joshua 1**

*Like Joshua, be strong and courageous as you step up your leadership at home.*

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# SESSION #8

WK. 8 DEVO 3

## **Read Psalm 119:1-8**

*Be blessed as you take on this new adventure for Christ and your family.*

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# SESSION #8

WK. 8 DEVO 4

## **Read Proverbs 3**

*Don't trust in your own understanding, make sure to trust God in your new parenting adventure!*

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# **SESSION 9: SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP**

## **- BIBLE STUDY PLANNING**

### **Welcome and Review Last Week's Homework: 15 minutes**

Did you start a family Bible study time? Discuss.

### **Session #9 Reflection/Feedback: 15 minutes**

**Read and remember this verse as you move forward.**

"37 All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one. "

Matthew 5:37 (NIV)

**Reflect back on this program and talk about how your perspective is different:**

- What is MORE important to now?
- How have your beliefs shifted?
- Is your family MORE focused on Jesus? Why or why not?
- How will you interact with your family differently?
- How will you interact with God differently?
- What are the radical changes you need and how will you execute these changes?

### **Session #9 Reflection/Feedback: 15 minutes**

**With what you've learned, HOW will you do the following as you move forward?**

- Set yourself up for success, not failure.
- Define and measure success regularly.
- Commit to accountability.
- Adjust as needed and redefine your goals and expectations often.

### **Small Group Wrap-Up: How can this study be improved?: 15 minutes**

- What are the top THREE takeaways from this study?
- What about this study could be improved to have MORE IMPACT?
- Was the LIFE Method of Journalling helpful and did you actually do it? Why or why not?
- Would you refer others for this class? Why or why not?
- Are you ready to participate in the NEXT Ignite Purpose program?

### **Be part of this movement and give us your feedback please!**

- Write out a testimony about how this class changed your parenting.
- Shoot a short 2-minute testimony video if you feel led.
- Fill out the assessment forms (emailed tomorrow).
- Consider your involvement in the next semester classes (also emailed).

**Please take the time to give us feedback, as we want to improve these classes and have the biggest impact for God's Kingdom and generations to come.**



