

... can make the best
... of it. I hope you make the
... t. And I hope you see things that
... ou. I hope you feel things you have
... elt before. I hope you meet
... with a different point of view. I
... ou live a life you're proud of.
... nd you are not, I hope you have
... urage to start all over again.

Scott Fitzgerald

LIFE STUDIES

Life Giving Moms



CONTENT

Journaling Method

LIFE Starter Journaling Method.....3

Session #1: Be a Great Model

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. 1 Corinthians 11:1: "And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ"4

Session #2: Keep Growing

A parent can only be an effective if they continue to grow spiritually.....9

Session #3: Respect Your Husband

The number-one need for men is honor and respect. Men cannot meet that need themselves.....15

Session #4: Repent When You Are Wrong

When we sin against our children, we must repent to the Lord and repent to our children.....21

Session #5: Focus on the Power of the Holy Spirit

We need the power of God's Spirit. We need His help to stay encouraged, to love, to exercise self-control.....26

Session #6: Discipline Patiently

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.....33

Session #7: Teach Consistently

The wise parent will see all of life as an opportunity to teach children about the Gospel, walking with Jesus, and practical wisdom.....39

Session #8: Next Step Resources

Know your children and their "sacred pathway" and know yourself and your needs.....45

Session #9: Study Wrap-Up

Discuss your takeaways and next steps as well as improvement areas for this study.....55

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 Being a Great Role Model?: 5 minutes

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 are the greatest influence on their children.**

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 Christians 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? I know I gave you more questions than teaching to kick this study off, but 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.

wants you to experience. God desires for you to find freedom from your busyness: "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefor, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5:1). Surrender your priorities to God, and allow Him to show you what is most valuable in your life.

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?
- What is ONE thing that you will do different this week in order to make needed changes that came up in today's study?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION 2: KEEP GROWING IN CHRIST

- **Welcome & Review Last Week's Homework/LIFE Starters: 15 minutes**
- **Session #2 Teaching: Growing in Christ: 10 minutes**

Being a great Mom starts with being a great follower of Jesus Christ. We can't give or teach what we don't have, so your ability to be a great Mom starts with growing in your relationship with Jesus Christ! When you accepted Jesus, did you sit at His feet for a while and revel in the awesomeness of this new, indescribable, unending, all healing, all powerful love you found in your Savior? I hope you did because that's exactly what you should have done. That's exactly where you belonged. That's exactly where He wanted you. I trust you enjoyed the knowledge of being His princess while you were being fed the spiritual milk of His love that you so desperately craved. Today, I hope you thrive in that knowledge while still being lavished with His love. In 1 Peter 2:2 you are told to "crave pure spiritual milk." First Corinthians 3:1-2 says you are given "milk, not solid food for you were not ready for it." Then in Hebrews 6:1-2 you are told to "leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity." Ephesians 4:14-15 says to "no longer be infants...Instead,...in all things grow up into Him." Plain and simple, we're being called to grow up, and being a mom makes that even MORE APPARENT!

Christian moms are being called to step up to the plate and put that living, breathing Word of God we hold in our hands, into action, into our families. As a Christian women, we say we believe what is written in Gods book and we want to do His will, but when it comes right down to the nitty-gritty, we're often too proud to submit to God, our husbands or be a servant leader for our families. We'd rather shout our God's name from the rooftops, or start that new ministry, but, many times we can't even minister to the hearts of those in our very homes. As Christian moms, our first ministry is to our husband. Our children are a close second. If we can't humbly serve and minister to them first, then we have no business venturing on to other things. If you take the time to grow in Christ, you will have all the tools you need to be a **Proverbs 31** wife.

Here are some practical tips for mom's to grow spiritually

1. **Find your "Sweet Spot" time:** A major key to spiritual growth as a Christian woman is studying when you're at your best. Not a morning person? Try squeezing a few minutes of study into afternoon nap time, or right before bed. Make it happen when you are feeling your best (and least stressed). You'll be able to focus better and retain more of what you're studying.
2. **Listen to the Word:** Listening to the Bible as you go about your day is a great an efficient way to received God's Word. An especially good time to do this is in the car – you get into that trance/ meditative state while driving, but listening to the Bible is a perfect way to focus! Even if you don't have time to sit down and read, everybody has time to listen while they do everyday tasks. It's amazing how doing this transforms your mindset, and sometimes you'll notice things while listening that you would have skimmed over reading.
3. **Listen to songs of praise:** Songs of praise are so encouraging and uplifting, and adds a layer of learning that you don't get with typical music or radio. Every once in a while I get emotional while listening to these beautiful songs – many times the truths in them speak to my heart and convict me of something I need to change.
4. **Study the Bible with your husband:** It's easy for us as wives to fall into the same line of thinking if we don't have a lot of friends to discuss spiritual things with. Instead of feeling isolated, see if your husband is interested in studying the bible with you on a regular basis. What better support or accountability system could there be?

5. Post Scriptures around the house: Posting bible verses around your house is a great way to bolster your faith as a Christian woman. Every time you see your Scripture, take a moment to think about it and ways you can exhibit that trait in your life. You can handwrite verses and post them in high-traffic areas (your fridge, bathroom mirror, car) where you will see them often. Change out the verses each week for extra encouragement.

Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes

- *Talk about how you are growing spiritually.*
- *Review the practical tips and discuss:*
 1. *What are you already doing?*
 2. *What can you do more of?*
 3. *What is something you do that is not on the list?*
- *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 mom from the inside out!*

Small Group Wrap-Up: 10 minutes

- *What were the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?*
- *What is ONE thing that you will do different this week in order to make needed changes that came up in today's study?*

Discuss This Week's Homework: 5 minutes

- Focus on the LIFE Journaling Method and it will give you more insight to be a great mom!*
- *Pray about how to better grow spiritually!*

SESSION #2

WK. 2 DEVO 1

Read Deuteronomy 6

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION #2

WK. 2 DEVO 3

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

Spiritual growth brings about God's fruit to all who seek it.

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

•Relook at Session #2 and be ready to talk to your group about the areas of growth you are committing to!

SESSION 3: RESPECT AND HONOR

- **Welcome & Review Last Week's Homework/LIFE Starters: 15 minutes**
- **Session #3 Teaching: Honor & Respect Your Husband: 10 minutes**

Men and women are completely equal in a marriage, but God created us with different sets of needs. He designed marriage to allow a husband and wife to meet each others' needs. **The number-one need for men is honor and respect. Men cannot meet that need themselves.**

In Ephesians 5:33, Paul writes, "let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband." In addition to his command toward men, Paul says a wife should respect her husband.

Notice what he doesn't say. He doesn't say, "Respect your husband the way you see it on television." He doesn't say, "Respect your husband the same way your friends respect their husbands." He doesn't even say, "Respect your husband like your mother respected your father."

He doesn't qualify it at all. Respect your husband, period. That's the standard the Bible gives to women. One thing I know is that men gravitate to the place where they receive honor and respect. If he can only get it from work, he'll pour himself into his job. If he doesn't get respect from his wife but does receive it from another woman, where do you think the man will turn his attention?

Here are four practical ways women can honor their husbands:

1. **Allow him to fail.** Here's a truth that may shock some people, but men are imperfect. They make mistakes. A lot of women damage their marriage relationship by trying to prevent their husband from making those mistakes. So they correct their husband or tell him what to do. That's not the wife's role. A better approach is to allow him to learn through failure. Let him make a wrong turn. Let him mess up from time to time. Don't allow him to wallow in self-destructive behavior, but let him be imperfect.
2. **Let God be the enforcer.** Wives, it's okay to speak up when your husband does or says something you disagree with. After all, you're equals. But once you say what you want to say, remember it's not your job to change him. That's God's job. Pray for your husband and rely on God to change his heart and mind.
3. **Honor the man you want him to be.** Men go crazy for honor and will become their fullest, healthiest selves in an atmosphere of respect. What do you see in your husband? What first attracted you to him? Honor him at that level, and watch him rise to it.
4. **Cover his faults and focus on his strengths.** The devil wants us to be overly attentive to our spouse's worst qualities. But God wants us to think about the best qualities in our spouse. I believe, on any given day, the good elements of our lives and relationships outweigh the bad ones.

Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes

- *A man's most important need is for honor and respect. Wives, are you honoring him? According to Ephesians 5:33, it's one of the things God asks you to do for your marriage.*
- *What of the four practical ways to honor your husband will be the easiest? What will be the most challenging and why? Discuss as a group.*
- *Are you more likely to complain about your husband's failings or praise him for one of his strengths? Discuss as a group.*
- *Marriage thrives in an atmosphere of praise. It's a critical discipline to create within your home. Can you start praising more? Discuss as a group.*

Small Group Wrap-Up: 10 minutes

- *What were the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?*
- *What is ONE thing that you will do different this week in order to make needed changes that came up in today's study?*

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION 4: RESPECT AND HONOR

- **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, 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 mom 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

Journal about repentance and a "time of refreshing" because of your willingness to repent.

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION #4

WK. 4 DEVO 2

Read Mark 1:1-15

What does repentance mean to you? What sin do you need to turn from? Without naming it, you can't have victory over it!

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION #4

WK. 4 DEVO 3

Read Acts 2:14-40

Review verse 38 and journal about what it means to you.

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION #4

WK. 4 DEVO 4

Read Luke 13:1-5

Reflect on confession, repentance and obedience and spend time in Listening Prayer and reviewing your LIFE Starter time for the week. Make notes to share with your group!

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION 5:

FOCUS ON THE POWER OF THE HOLY

- **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: 20 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?
- What is ONE thing that you will do different this week in order to make needed changes that came up in today's study?

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 parent 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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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 Mommy still love me? As mentioned in Session #4, 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?
- What is ONE thing that you will do different this week in order to make needed changes that came up in today's study?

Discuss This Week's Homework: 5 minutes

- Review the tips below 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.

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 a 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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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 "Life Giving Mom!"

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION #6

WK. 6 DEVO 4

Read Ephesians 4

You have been called and gifted to be a GREAT mom 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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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 parent 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 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. Many parents they don't have enough Bible knowledge to teach their children and they leave that training to Sunday School teachers. 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 “Life Giving Mom” 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 were the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?
- What is ONE thing that you will do different this week in order to make needed changes that came up in today’s study?

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.
- Review all the information and resources in Session #8.

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION #7

WK. 7 DEVO 4

Read Colossians 3

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

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION 8: NEXT STEP RESOURCES

- **Welcome & Review Last Week's Homework/LIFE Starters: 15 minutes**
- **Session #8 Teaching: FIRST, understand your children's path: 15 minutes**

We've talked a lot about why it's so important to be a great mom, but today, we are going to cover some practical tips (and several resources) to best understand your children and then continue your growth path in Christ! Kids are all so different, just like we are. God made us all with special gifts and it's never too early to uncover those gifts in your children. We've focused on connecting your children to God at an early age through this study, but we all know that some kids find it easier to connect with God. Some connect through their intellect, while others may prefer using their surroundings, routines or service. Pastor and author Gary Thomas refers to these temperaments as "sacred pathways." Although your child may have a combination of these pathways that make it easier to be drawn closer to God, one or two of them may stand out a bit more than others. Thomas notes that Christians all have different and acceptable ways of demonstrating their love for God. "Our temperaments will cause us to be more comfortable in some of these expressions than others – and that is perfectly acceptable to God," Thomas writes in his book *Sacred Pathways*. "In fact, by worshiping God according to the way He made us, we are affirming His work as Creator."

Most Christian parents assume that their way of connecting with God is the way their children will or should connect with Him. But there is no one size fits all approach to faith. "God wants to know the real you, not a caricature of what somebody else wants you to be," Pastor Thomas notes. "He created you with a certain personality and a certain spiritual temperament. God wants your worship, according to the way He made you."

An intellectual parent will tend toward deep Bible study with her children, while a caregiver will focus on finding family service projects and a naturalist will spend a lot of time out in nature with his children. If I am an extremely extroverted enthusiast, it might look odd to me if my introverted child would rather sit in quietness and contemplate God's love or ponder a section of Scripture. I may feel that my child lacks faith, but the truth may be that my child connects with God in a different way than I do. God, who delights in our differences, desires to draw each of us to Him. I can, and should, look for teachable moments, but these may look different for each child. As parents we should also consider helping our children find mentors who connect with God in the same way that they do, particularly if their spiritual temperament is the complete opposite of ours.

So what is our role as parents in our children's personal connection to God? Our role is to open our eyes to the unique way God is communicating with our children. Then we can respond by finding ways to partner with Him to encourage their relationship with Jesus.

Some people find it easier to connect with God through their surroundings or routines, while others may prefer service or using their intellect. A child's dominant spiritual pathway provides more potential points of connection with God. Although your child may have a combination of these seven temperaments, you'll find that one or two of them may stand out a bit more than the others.

•The Traditionalist

Most children begin life with a need for routine. Traditionalists not only thrive in this environment, but as they grow, they continue needing structure in their faith. Consistent worship times, structured prayers and reliable and meaningful celebrations benefit these young children.

As traditionalists grow older, they may lean more toward another temperament, while still relying on the basic faith structure they've grown up with. Others will become more defined in their traditionalist temperament. They may create their own daily rituals or homework routines; these children thrive on consistency.

To incorporate faith-routines into their lives, create special celebrations for Advent, Lent and Pentecost – celebrations that may feel restrictive to non-traditionalists, but will bring life to someone of this temperament. These children also thrive when they pray at certain times of day or when their prayer times are based on external cues, such as a school bell.

Bible characters to check out:

- Abraham (built a lot of altars)
- Esther (built up her courage to break a rule to save the Jews)
- Bible passages to read together: Colossians 3:16, 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

•The Naturalist

Some children may be wired to connect with God through nature. Just like some adults feel closest to God when on the top of a mountain or while fishing, many children feel closest to God while enjoying His creation. They may understand spiritual metaphors better when they are related to the natural world. God uses nature – weeds, gardens, pets, clouds and people – to draw these children closer to Him. In the case of the naturalist child, a parent will need to help him approach creation mindfully and with an ear bent toward the Creator. If your children are young, you can and should take the lead in pointing out how God's creation draws us toward Him, similar to the conversation I had with my son. Eventually it will be a natural way for your child to connect with God. Otherwise, they may have a tendency to give nature credit for itself. Talking about nature as a creation of God is key to drawing the naturalist's eyes to the Creator.

Bible character to check out:

- Elijah (a prophet who moved around a lot)
- Deborah (judged Israel under a date palm tree rather than from a tent)
- Bible passage to read together: Psalm 19:1-6

•The Caregiver

The temptation of a caregiver is the same struggle felt by Martha: She was so busy serving Jesus that she forgot to use that service as a way to get to know her Savior. It is fairly simple to expose a child to Christian service. It is another thing altogether to show him how to let his service draw him closer to Christ. When you talk about the child's acts of service, have him consider which were done with a pure motive to bless others in Jesus' name and which were done out of pride or feelings of righteousness. Finding the right motivation is key for this child.

Bible characters to check out:

- Lydia (a seller of purple cloth who showed hospitality to Paul)
- Stephen (supervised the care of widows and orphans in the early church)
- Bible passage to read together: Matthew 25:31-46

•The Activist

Have you ever met a child who became incredibly upset over injustice? We've probably all seen news stories of children who latch onto a particular cause, dedicating their young lives to it. We may be tempted to shield our children from the evil in the world, to keep them in their safe bubble of family and school, but if we choose to ignore the world beyond us, an activist child will become completely overwhelmed by it when she discovers what is happening.

As a parent, your job is to allow your child to witness the ills of the world, in manageable and age-appropriate chunks, to help her develop God's passion for the downtrodden. Most activists won't need to be told to stand up for a cause. You will more likely need to hold her back to help her find balance, once she's recognized God's heartbeat. However, the temptation of any activist is to become proud in her stand against evil, forgetting her relationship with God. The role of the parent will be to help her seek God's will, wisdom and humility in her work, using her activism to draw closer to God's love and truth.

Bible characters to check out:

- John the Baptist (prepared the way for Jesus)
- Shiphrah (one of the midwives who saved Israelite babies from Egyptians)
- Bible passage to read together: Isaiah 58

•The Intellectual

As a parent, your job is to feed your child's intellectual fire with challenging material. It may be books that make him think deeper about faith, Bible studies that you do together or even buying him a concordance for his birthday. Many intellectuals also make excellent teachers because they love to share what they have learned. The temptation here is to become arrogant in knowledge and prideful in the treatment of others, exchanging the Tree of Life for the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil as Adam and Eve did. Parents can help children balance their growing body of knowledge by encouraging them to live out what they've learned in their relationship with God and toward others. If the intellectual pathway rings true for your child, consider partnering with him to teach a Sunday school class for younger children or allow him to teach younger siblings.

Bible characters to check out:

- Ethiopian eunuch (accepted Jesus after Philip ran alongside his chariot)
- Priscilla (who opened her home to Paul and learned about Jesus from him)
- Bible passage to read together: Acts 8:27-38

•The Enthusiast

As a child in the tabernacle, Samuel clearly heard the voice of God. He spent his life following direct orders from God and prophesying to the Israelites. His life was filled with the mystery of nighttime voices, direct revelation from God and even calling down thunderstorms in the name of God. To many, this sounds terrifying and impossible, but to our children with the enthusiast temperament, this type of relationship with God sounds incredible.

You may have a child who is enthusiastic about discerning God's voice and seeking His will. Parents with an enthusiast child will need to learn how to welcome their child's connection with God and help develop her discernment skills through biblical knowledge and understanding. Reinforce the truth that God will never contradict His Word. If your child believes she's sensing the prompting of the Holy Spirit, help her to search through the Bible to find a scriptural foundation that affirms God's perspective.

Bible characters to check out:

- Samuel (the prophet)
- Anna (a prophetess)
- Bible passage: Ephesians 5:15-20

WHAT MOM NEEDS...

Mothers have a special calling to love and care for their children and raise them to know God. With this calling come many questions, challenges, and joys. From guidance on raising godly kids, to refreshment for your soul, these Bible studies will equip and encourage moms in their daily walk with God.

1. Parenting Bible Study Bundle

Discover how you can raise balanced, Godly children in a chaotic world.

13 Session Bible Study

Parents have the special privilege and calling to guide their children and help them grow into balanced, God-honoring adults. This calling requires constant sacrifice and increasing wisdom. In this bundle, you'll find biblical support for your journey to raise Christ-centered children. You'll also receive encouragement as you learn to manage expectations and grow in your own walk with God.

2. Becoming a Balanced Woman

Practical, biblical perspectives on self-worth, stress, confidence, and contentment.

6 Session Bible Study

The demands of life pull us in different directions every day. In the midst of trying to keep up, it's easy to start believing lies about our identity and become unhealthy physically, emotionally, and spiritually. This six-session study guides you to grow in your relationship with God and get practical, biblical perspectives on self-worth, stress, confidence, and contentment.

3. Children and Materialism

Learn to make deliberate choices to grow children of faith and stewardship.

4 Session Bible Study

Materialism permeates our everyday life. Commercials, magazines, and the Internet blare societal values that are distinctly worldly, not godly. As a result, many of us have far more possessions than we actually need or use, and this tendency to accumulate things sends the wrong message to our kids. Ever heard the expression "values are caught, not taught"? We need to walk the truth before our children, not simply share it with them. This four-session study brings us back to basic truths and helps you grapple with how to teach children biblical values such as sacrifice, generosity, and stewardship in an age of abundance.

4. Women Leaders Bible Study Bundle

Serve God and lead others out of your calling.

13 Session Bible Study

Leadership is fulfilling and demanding. Sometimes, you may feel pulled in 20 different directions, and you can't remember the last time you could truly rest. In this bundle, you have the opportunity to focus on caring for your soul, learn how best to use your spiritual gifts, and connect with God so you can help others do the same.

5. 9-Month Parenting Track

Nine months of Bible studies for parents.

38 Session Bible Study

What task is more difficult than parenting? And what could be more important? Why not take 9 months to explore what the Bible has to say about this all-consuming task?

We've assembled a useful mix of studies that looks at raising Christ-centered children, examines how to discipline them, and addresses materialism and sex. We also give you tools to decide what is best for your child's education and to think through divorce, adoption, special needs, and how to deal with parental guilt.

6. Drawing the Line

This six-session study helps parents discuss ground rules, expectations, responsibility, and more.
6 Session Bible Study

Parenting raises a lot of questions. We want to raise responsible, respectful, and successful children, but we're not sure how to do that. How can we avoid raising children who feel they can never quite measure up? How does rescuing our children from the consequences of their choices and behaviors undermine discipline? What roles, if any, do negotiation and compromise play in discipline? Should we require our kids to do chores, and how do we do that? How do we prepare them (and ourselves!) for their adolescence? This six-session study will explore these practical, crucial questions.

7. Women's Bible Study Bundle

Embrace your identity in Christ and live out your calling.
19 Session Bible Study

When life gets busy and we feel overwhelmed, our connection to God is often the first thing we forget to tend. We may try to muscle through our weak times, but we quickly discover it's impossible to succeed this way. The best thing we can do is find our rest and our identity in God. He will provide us with strength, balance, support, and peace. This collection of Bible studies explores each of these gifts from God.

8. The Myth of the Perfect Parent

Why faithfulness—not perfection—must be the goal in raising our children.
Single Session Bible Study

The Internet and social media have made it easy for us to peek into hundreds of other people's lives every day. Award-worthy after school snacks and Pinterest-perfect birthday parties can feel like normal expectations for parents and lead us to believe the perfect parent exists. In this Bible study, you'll unpack the myth of the perfect parent and learn what how to have healthy expectations for parenting.

9. Thriving in the Empty Nest

These studies will help the transition from a full house to an empty nest.
3 Session Bible Study

Graduation day and the start of college may be quickly approaching for the youngest child in your household. When the kids leave home, it is a time of transition. It can be sad, but it doesn't have to be devastating. In fact, it can be a time to grow as a person and find new meaning. You could see it as a time to thrive as never before. This three-session study will help you prepare for this season of your life.

10. Raising Christ-Centered Children

Gain a Christian perspective on a tough job.
6 Session Bible Study

Parenting is not an easy job. Helping children grow and develop the skills they need to be a balanced adult is a demanding task. Even more daunting is teaching kids to live with a Christian perspective and make God the center of their choices. The good news is, you don't have to try to make this happen on your own. From learning to discipline with love, to facing the teenager years, to staying united with your spouse in the midst of parenting, this Bible study will provide support and insight that will equip you as you help your children walk with God.

Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes

- Discuss “sacred pathways” and if you were able to identify your children.
- After reviewing all this info discuss with your group and commit to YOUR next step plan.
- Discuss your concerns and obstacles around your next steps. What will help make this a reality?

Small Group Wrap-Up: 10 minutes

- What were the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?
- What is ONE thing that you will do different this week in order to make needed changes that came up in today’s study?

Discuss This Week’s Homework: 5 minutes

- Make a commitment to each other to do a season of these personal Bible studies. Discuss HOW to make these a reality for your home!
- Consider starting NEXT 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.

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION #8

WK. 8 DEVO 2

Read Joshua 1

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

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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.

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

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!

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.

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](#).

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?

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?

SESSION 9: NEXT STEP RESOURCES

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

- Will you commit to your next Bible study? Discuss.

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

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?

Small Group Discussion: 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 LIFE Study?

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!