

SESSION 1: START WITH WHY!

IT'S OK TO ASK MORE QUESTIONS!

Welcome and Program Overview: 10 minutes
Session #1 Teaching: 10 minutes

Read Proverbs 22:6 Out Loud:

6 Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

Why do WE need to be GREAT parents?

If you share your faith in a loving way with your kids, they will advance God's kingdom and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. They are a gift from God.

Psalm 127:3 Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him.

2. They will bring you joy.

John 16:20-22, Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. Proverbs 23:24-25 The father of a righteous child has great joy; a man who fathers a wise son rejoices in him. May your father and mother rejoice; may she who gave you birth be joyful! Ecclesiastes 3:4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.

3. Kids add meaning.

Psalm 127:4-5 Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court.

4. God says, "Be fruitful and multiply."

Genesis 1:28 Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground."

5. They will help you grow in responsibility and help decrease your selfishness because you are putting your child before yourself.

Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

6. We learn more about love.

Ephesians 5:1-2 I Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Jesus Christ loves us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God

7. God is always working in your life to make you into the image of Christ.

Children will help you grow as a Christian. James 1:2-4 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. Philippians 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

8. Kids make you healthier.

Proverbs 17:22 A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

9. You get to share the faith and become a better evangelist. By teaching, you will also learn more.

Philemon 1:6 and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ.

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Proverbs 22:6: Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

As children grow, they are often taught to conform to rules and boundaries, and not to question for fear of displeasing others or being mocked. Without even realizing it, parents often curb their curiosity and critical thinking, in place teaching them conformity and acceptance of what they believe is right. Curious children often gradually lose their inquisitiveness, and courage to question what they do not understand.

Small Group Discussion: 25 minutes**Discuss These Family Engagement Tips:****1. Establishing a Family Q&A Culture**

Without family questions, many parents don't really have any idea whether or not their teaching is ever absorbed. In order to create this vital shift in your family dynamic, it may be necessary to establish a new direction for your home—one that will ultimately benefit both parents and kids. If it's silent when you start this new strategy, don't feel as though you need to be the one to fill it. Instead, get comfortable with silence, and wait for your kids to speak. By giving them time to formulate their thoughts, you put them in a better position to ask future, vital questions. Give them time to brainstorm and work independently too. Do not put them under pressure to speak all the time. First, give them a chance to ponder and reflect silently so they can focus, and come up with creative, original ideas. In short, do not make them speak or question just for the sake of it. All you have to do is create a spark and give them the encouragement they need!

• **Discuss some practical ways to create a new Q&A family culture.**

2. Make it about them—not you!

Never be afraid of not knowing the answer to a question – a parent is not supposed to be all-knowing, not even about the Bible! In fact, if they do ask questions which are out of the box and even new to you, that means you have succeeded in giving them the courage to ask. Good parenting consists of 10% asking kids questions and 90% inspiring kids to ask questions that you can't even answer! Listen to student answers—really listen. They may ask questions of their own, or they may go off on a tangent. That's okay! Listen to everything they have to say before you answer. Give them your full attention when they speak. Even your body language will say a lot about your interest, like how you face them and how kind and genuinely interested your facial expressions are.

• **Discuss some practical ways to inspire your kids to ask better questions.**

3. Praise them MORE!

Appreciation is the best confidence booster you can give a child. Just saying, "That's a great question!" or "Wow, what an interesting question!" will mean the world to your kids and will make them open up more often. Similarly, when they answer a question you asked, appreciate them for what they say even if the answer is not correct. If they are younger kids, then you can even give them stickers or candies.

A **high-five** would be great too! Also, never mock or belittle a child for asking a question. Instead, provide clear, solid answers that will genuinely help them, even if they're difficult. If you snuff out a child's question saying it is trivial or that they should have paid attention earlier or that it is a repeated question, essentially, you are snuffing out their courage to ever ask a question again.

• *Discuss how encouraging you are, or how you can improve in this area.*

4. Give kids time, space and respect.

Be prepared to give more time and effort. In our busy world, we often miss what's MOST important and that is our kids. We get and stay so busy, we teach them that, instead, busyness is MORE important! Everyone needs more time to learn and if given this time, they will ask more questions and come to Biblical conclusions for themselves! Also, make sure your kids feel respected and respect you and one another. Make it a rule that no one can laugh or make fun when family members are speaking. Infuse empathy within them. Make them think about how they would feel if they were in the same situation.

• *Discuss how busy you are and priorities that may need changing to be the best parent.*

Small Group Wrap-Up: 10 minutes

What did you cover in your small group time?

What were the biggest take-aways and action items?

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

This Week's Homework:

1. Commit to doing the LIFE Starter's Journalling method individually and discuss daily.

2. Re-read the Scriptures on pages 6-7 and discuss as a couple. Do you really know why God has blessed you with your kids?

3. Re-read page 8 and discuss improvements you need to make as a couple to infuse a Q&A culture in your home.

4. As a couple, read Ephesians 6

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.

5. Talk about Ephesians 6:4

How are YOU bringing your kids up in the training and instruction of the Lord?

Are you allowing your children to ask "WHY?" Do YOU even ask "WHY?" As painful as that word can be, we need to encourage it, so they don't conform, while NOT understanding the Gospels. ***Discuss.***

ARE YOU A GOOD ROLE-MODEL?

Read 1 Corinthians 11:1

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.***

Talk about what needs to change in your life to be a GREAT role-model for your kids.

Talk about what YOU want to get out of this program and make some goals and commitments for yourself to your group!

SESSION 1: Weekly Devotional: Day 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, 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...

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

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

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

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SESSION 1: Weekly Devotional: Day 2

Read Psalm 127

Are YOU letting the Lord "Build YOUR House?"

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...

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SESSION 1: Weekly Devotional: Day 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, 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...

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SESSION 1: Weekly Devotional: Day 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, 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...

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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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