

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION

Welcome and Program Overview: 5 minutes

PBC LIFE Studies are meant to be highly interactive, so that the information presented is learned and lived. The last thing we need is more head knowledge, so there will be a lot of small group interaction as you learn and live out the materials we cover each week. There will be weeks where there is little teaching and more interaction and there will be weeks where there is more teaching. We will start this week with a self assessment that you and your spouse talk about during the class and during the week for homework. Each class will come with some homework for each couple that is imperative to complete. If you do the work together, you will grow together and get the most out of this program. In the next few weeks, we will cover a lot of Biblical Truth to build a strong foundation and then move into more practical application, culminating in you creating a **"Family Covenant"** to take your family to new heights of relationship with Jesus. **This will allow you to fortify your family to stand strong against the changing culture that wants to eliminate God's Truth, and will create an authentic faith in Jesus Christ!**

Session #1 Teaching: Why are we doing this study? 10 minutes

A Christian home, in uncomplicated terms, is one in which God is alive and present in the lives of family members. There needs to be passion present. It is Christian not just in name, but in covenant—Christ is present through His Spirit in the lives of His followers who live there. A physical house built without a foundation is destined to fall. Only a firm foundation creates a real and lasting home. In the same way, Christ, in His fullness, is the foundation of a Christian home. If we try to create a Christian home only by JUST immersing in a Christian Church culture, we will "labor in vain." We even run the risk of building on a sandy foundation that could leave our house, our family, in danger in a storm of life that our current and future culture is bringing. When we let the life of God flow through us and into our family through our intentional, purposeful, life-giving relationship with Jesus, that is how "the Lord builds the house."

Your passion for each other was culminated with your marriage covenant. We want to use your marriage to help you understand what God means by covenant. This should help you grow your intimacy with God and each other. John 17:3 explains that, "And this is eternal life: [it means] to know (to perceive, recognize, become acquainted with, and understand) You, the only true and real God, and [likewise] to know Him, Jesus [as the] Christ (the Anointed One, the Messiah), Whom You have sent."

The word **"KNOW"** is a verb that means "to come to KNOW, learn, and realize, through personal experience." In Luke 1:34, Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not **know** a man?" This "knowing" describes intimacy. Few people realize that the Old Covenant was essentially a marriage covenant—by which God "was a husband" to Israel (**Jeremiah 31:32**). In this covenant, Israel, the wife, had agreed to submit to God and obey His laws. But she did not. Israel's adultery with foreign gods was so heinous that God divorced His people except for a few who still tried to serve Him (**Jeremiah 3:8-14; Isaiah 50:1**). The people never had the right heart and mind to obey (**Deuteronomy 5:29; Romans 8:7**). This fault of the people, the book of Hebrews explains, was the problem with the Old Covenant—and the reason a New Covenant was necessary (**Hebrews 8:7-8**). The book of Hebrews actually quotes this important passage from Jeremiah twice (**Hebrews 8:8-13; Hebrews 10:16-17**).

Just like we will learn in future sessions, YOUR identity in Christ and His New Covenant can build a Christian home that starts with your heart; with your passion, and with PURPOSE, ON PURPOSE. In this first session, we are going to spend the next 30-minutes doing a self-assessment. We will come back and wrap up with a 2-minute take-away from each couple and talk about the homework and next class. Mute yourself and break out into couple groups to answer the following questions.

Self Assessment (Spouses): 30 minutes

Let's start with where you are right NOW. We already know that the best guidebook for running your life is the Bible. Are YOU actually using it to run your home? Here are some topics to pray about and consider brining (or expanding upon) at your house. Rate yourself as a couple from 1-10 (10 being the best) and total you (honest) current score to share with the group at the next class:

1. Look forward and stop going back to comfortable. We can so quickly act like the Israelites as Moses led them out of Egypt and hijack our trip to the "Promised Land!" The challenge is to press forward and allow God to grow you and not go back to the things of life (even if they're not that bad) that keep you stuck in mediocrity. Your family needs more than that. Your family needs a Promised Land and you can make sure that you don't spend your existence wandering in the desert. Remember, that the temptation to 'go back to Egypt' is a lie -- there is no peace, no happiness, no freedom, in returning to old ways. Press on in faith and don't return to Egypt. What is your "Egypt" that holds you back?

Rate/Discuss as a couple: _____

2. Become stronger leaders. Pray for the ability to think and act more like Jesus so you can grow into a stronger leader. Confess your mistakes and repent when you fall short; create clear vision and values for you and your family; hold yourself and your family lovingly accountable to your family values.

Rate/Discuss as a couple: _____

3. Build solid character. Never tell "white lies." Tell the truth even when it's not easy, or convenient. Follow through on your commitments even if they become more costly, inconvenient, or time-consuming than you'd estimated. Always put forth the extra effort necessary to do an excellent job. Don't give others false impressions, such as by omitting facts that reveal reality or offering excuses to disguise reality. Let go of grudges against people who hurt or offend you; forgive and reconcile right away.

Rate/Discuss as a couple: _____

4. Develop stronger people skills. Genuinely care about people. Value using your heart and not always your head. Learn how to confront and not stuff. Learn how to be efficient with things but effective with people. Listen more than you speak. Ask the right questions to engage others in good conversations. Don't keep score with people; serve them to express your love for God rather than because you're expecting something in return. Don't judge people or try to debate them into Christianity. Instead, love them and humbly tell them how your own relationship with Jesus has changed your life for the better. Control your attitudes and emotions to make them positive rather than negative. Look for ways to meet others' needs. Speak respectfully to people and well of them. .

Rate/Discuss as a couple: _____

5. Maximize your time. Get rid of busyness. Identify your priorities and base your schedule on them. Don't let trivial tasks consume too much of your attention; focus on what's most important. Whenever you need to add something to your "to-do" list, take something off the list to make room for the new task. Trust God in every part of your life and tell Him that you want to use your time to fulfill His purposes for you. He will guide you to use your time well. Don't waste your time comparing yourself to others who have different talents. Instead, develop and use the unique talents that God has given you.

Rate/Discuss as a couple: _____

6. Overcome pride. Pride is a particularly dangerous sin because it not only separates you from God, it causes you to attack God by attempting to dethrone Him in your life and enthroning yourself as your own god. Ask God to help you cultivate humility, which will bring you both peace and success. Recognize that you're a sinner just all other people and are not superior to anyone else. Don't always insist on having your own way. Seek out and be open to Biblical instruction, reproof, rebuke, and constructive criticism. Submit to authority. Learn from others and accept help from them whenever you need it.

Rate/Discuss as a couple: _____

7. Model honor for your family. The word honor means to highly value something – to appreciate, cherish and recognize it as a priceless treasure. Matthew 6:21 says, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." This verse suggests that honor is primarily a matter of the heart. So in marriage and family, it involves recognizing the beauty and worth of your relationship with your spouse and children and then doing something to put that recognition and appreciation into action. It's about dedication, heart and soul, to building strong foundational qualities into your family dynamic.

Rate/Discuss as a couple: _____

8. Create work-life balance. Build mental balance into your life by learning new information and developing new skills. Build emotional balance by constantly investing in your relationships. Build physical balance by getting enough sleep and exercise regularly and eating a healthy diet. Build spiritual balance by celebrating disciplines like prayer, Bible study, scripture meditation, and participating in church worship services. Build structure for all quadrants of life and make sure you are addressing them all with the same amount of passion (for Jesus).

Rate/Discuss as a couple: _____

9. Manage your money well. Remember that all the money you and your company have comes from God. Give generously as God leads you. Avoid unnecessary debt and pay existing debt off as soon as possible. Don't concern yourself with the prosperity of dishonest people; keep doing what's right yourself and trust God to judge everyone fairly. Communicate more clearly about money, so there is no relational unrest.

Rate/Discuss as a couple: _____

10. Start with WHY! Why Jesus? What's blocking you from finding your passion - and integrating it into a balanced work/life dynamic? What's your reason for not living in your passion? And what are you going to do to change? Create a practical plan to address the questions and topics above. If you don't integrate your passion into a balanced life, you will never achieve fulfillment. God gave you passion and He wants you to point that same passion back to Him. He points His at you, so what will it take to have the same passion back?

Rate/Discuss as a couple: _____

Total Score: _____

Small Group Discussion: 15 minutes

- After reviewing the video discuss what do you hope to get from this class as a group?
- Are there any questions about the structure and goals of this class?
- Discuss your assessment and improvement goals.

Homework:

- Discuss the class and the assessment and reevaluate what you'd like to get out of this class.

SESSION #1

WK. 1 DEVO 1

Read John 17

Journal about growing in your intimacy with God and each other during this study.

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 Jeremiah 31:30-40

Review and journal about how the Old Covenant was essentially a marriage covenant—by which God “was a husband” to Israel.

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?

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SESSION #1

WK. 1 DEVO 3

Read Romans 8:1-17

Journal about New Life Through 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 #1

WK. 1 DEVO 4

Read Hebrews 8:8-13

Journal about why the New Covenant was necessary.

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?

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