

SESSION 8:

YOUR FAMILY VALUES

Welcome, Prayer & Review of LIFE Starter Journaling: 5 minutes
Review #8 Teaching: 10 minutes

I hope you gained more understanding of what a sabbath rest is SO important for your relationship and how being intentional about getting “un-busy” is SO IMPORTANT! With everything you have learned in this Covenant study about the seriousness of YOUR marriage promise, we are now going to evaluate your “family Values!” Taking the time to figure out your family values is a transformative experience. As a couple and as parents, one of our biggest jobs is to help our family develop their own God-given internal compass – a framework to help them make decisions when we aren’t around. But with all of the outside influences we experience today, how can we make sure that we really understand what qualities and traits are important to our family? One way is to create a family mission statement. The family mission statement is a concept described in Stephen Covey’s 1989 book **“7 Habits of Highly Effective Families.”** Many successful corporations craft mission statements so that all employees can work together toward a common goal. Covey contends that families, like businesses, need common goals and values to function well:

“A family mission statement is a combined, unified expression from all family members of what your family is all about – what it is you really want to do and be – and the principles you choose to govern your family life.” – Stephen Covey

A family mission statement is a starting point in the unfolding map of your family’s journey. Not only does it create the basis for family interaction and a goal to which every family member can contribute, most importantly, it establishes the framework for family direction and decisions.

Small Group Discussion: 25 minutes

- What do you want your kids to remember about your family life?
- When people look at your family what would you want them to see?
- What values do you place on your possessions & status, and does it line up with God’s Word?
- How will your family understand God’s character as seen through your example?
- How does your family communicate—both in times of conflict and peace?
- What families inspire you? What about them do you want to emulate?
- What do you want your family to look like in 20 years?
- Discuss the value of this exercise to YOUR family. Will you do it?

Small Group Wrap-Up: 15 minutes

What were the biggest take-aways and action items? Group Discussion: 15 minutes

Homework: 5 minutes

WHY: Create a Family Mission Statement?

The best time to begin creating a family culture is as early as possible (like right now!). A family mission statement lays out a vision for your family of where you want to go and how you want to get there. It provides a path and guideposts pointing the way ahead and illuminating the curves and bumps along the way. Having a shared vision – a shared sense of values and purpose – bonds families together. It guides your parenting decisions and offers your children clear ideals to strive for and guidance in what choices to make. A mission statement also articulates the standards by which each member of the family can evaluate each other's behavior, and children and parents will ideally check and encourage one another as they make their way down this agreed upon path. Another benefit is that a family mission statement serves to distinguish your family from others – providing its members a sense of meaning and identity and giving your children the feeling of being part of something important and special.

HOW: Where to begin

The purpose of this activity will help you to learn what's most important to each person in your family; your values. When you talk about what you value, it can help you to get along better in the future. Values are deeply held views of what we find worthwhile. Talking about our values together as a family can help us to understand our motivation behind our actions and be used as a decision making tool.

Tips:

- Spend time really thinking about your personal values and what they mean to you. Don't just pick words quickly. This is not just an intellectual exercise. It should also have a connection with your feelings.
- When you start the family exercise, listen and ask questions. The intention is to explore and learn about one another's values, not to impose your values on others.
- At the end, take time to reflect on what was most meaningful about your conversation.

Step 1. Together with your spouse answer the following questions:

- Why did we get married?
- Why did we start a family?
- What do we want our family to look like in 20 years?
- What do we want our children to learn from us?
- Do any scriptures come to mind that we want our family to live by?
- What makes our family unique?
- What are the noticeable gifts and strengths of each member of the family?
- What are the noticeable weaknesses for each member of the family?
- When is our family at its best?
- When is our family at its worst?
- What is our family's favorite way to spend time together?
- What are practical ways we can serve one another?
- What three words best describe our family?
- What do other people say about our family?
- What do we want others to say about our family?
- How do people feel when they walk into our home?
- How do we want people to feel when they walk into our home?
- What is the main purpose of our home?
- What is the secondary purpose of our home?
- How can we support one another in our collective goals?
- What families inspire us?
- What about them do we want to emulate?

Step 2. Together with your spouse, from the list below, pick the ten words or phrases that are most important to you and line up with your Personal Values. Feel free to add your own words!

Parents' Words

Kids' Words

- | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> accountability | doing what you say you will do | achievement reaching your goals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> balance (home/work) | balancing school, work and play time | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> commitment | working hard on what we believe in | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> compassion | being kind and understanding | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> competence | being good at what you do | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> continuous learning | always learning | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cooperation | working well with other people | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> courage | being brave | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> creativity | using your imagination | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> enthusiasm | being excited and confident | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> efficiency | making good use of time | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ethics | doing the right thing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellence | doing excellent work or sport | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fairness | being fair | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> family | family | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> financial stability | having enough money | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> friendship | having friends | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> future generations | caring about children of the future | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> health | keeping healthy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> honesty | telling the truth | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> humor/fun | laughing and having fun | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> independence | able to do things on your own | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> integrity | being honest, trustworthy and live a balanced life | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> initiative | making decisions for yourself | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> making a difference | making life better for others | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> open communication | talking openly and freely with others | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> openness | telling others about thoughts and feelings | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> personal fulfillment | having a full and happy life | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> personal growth | improving myself | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> respect | showing respect | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> responsibility | being responsible | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> risk-taking | being brave to try something new | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> self discipline | controlling my behavior | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> success | being successful | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> trust | trusting others | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> wisdom | being wise | |

Step 3. Be sure to include fun values as well as more serious values. Your list will likely be very long initially. You might need to get together more than once to whittle it down. The end goal of creating your family mission statement, which will be a memorable sentence or short paragraph. When you are ready, pick your top three words from the above list and go on to **Step 4.**

Step 4. Now that you have identified your three family values, complete the worksheet below:

Write down your 3 most important values:	Why are these values important to you?	How do you show people these values? What are your behaviors?
1.		
2.		
3.		

Step 5. Now that you have identified your three family values, apply Scripture to each value. (Tip: Go to <https://www.openbible.info/topics/> and type in your values to match Scripture verses.)

Step 6. Discuss what you've learned from this exercise with each other and write a narrative of values and how you plan to live those values from your list above. This narrative becomes your family mission statement. It's important that you take the time to really talk about it and own it. The real learning occurs when you slow down, connect, and listen with your hearts and then activate what you've learned. Taking the time to figure out what your family is meant to be a transformative experience.

Sample Family Mission Statements:

#1: The Jones Family Mission Statement:

The mission of our family is to create a nurturing place of ministry. We will first minister to the needs within our family, first between husband and wife and then to our children. We will cultivate a loving atmosphere where we can grow closer to each other and to God. As a family and individually, we will then minister to others as a reflection of our faith in Christ.

#2: The Criswell Family Mission Statement:

More than anything else, it is our desire that this family be built around God's plan, purpose, and desire for the family. We will reflect Him in everything we do.

- We will be a family of worship. Both formally and informally, at church and at home, worship will be a priority in our life.
- We will be a family of prayer. Together and individually, we will pray for and with each other, about everything.
- We will be a family of service. We will serve each other within our family, and we will serve each other in the world around us.

What to Do with Your Family Mission Statement:

Now that you have developed a family mission statement, post it anywhere your family can refer to it often.

Refer to your family mission statement daily and try to memorize the words, write them on your hearts, in order that you may live them out loud.

Your family mission statement can now be the foundation by which all of your decisions, plans and routines are established.

Other ideas for displaying your mission statement:

- Frame it as a wall decoration
- Post it on your bathroom mirror
- Put it in your Bible
- Put it with your calendar
- Use it as a background on your phone or computer

In the end, your mission statement will be your go-to resource when making ALL decisions!

SESSION #8

WK. 7 DEVO 1

Read 2 Corinthians 10

How do we consistently “sow” thoughts that make us into the people God intends us to be?

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 Romans 12

How does the renewing of our minds and focus on Biblical values impact in our daily lives?

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

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SESSION #8

WK. 8 DEVO 3

Read Hebrews 10

Our transformational process is not instantaneous, as it's a process wherein the Holy Spirit writes God's laws on our hearts (Heb. 10:16). We are not passive participants in this process—we have an essential, active part to play. Journal about the part YOU need to play!

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

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SESSION #8

WK. 8 DEVO 4

Read Joshua 1

We read in Joshua: "Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." Constant renewal is necessary for flourishing with our values! As we are committed to the transformative process, we must be actively seeking out the wisdom of God's principles found in His Word. The Bible underscores the importance of studying God's word on a daily basis to allow our Biblical values to stay alive.

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](#).

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