

Week 1: Children are a Heritage

Objective: Motivate you to value the gift you have been (or someday will be) given.

When it comes to our relationship with God, there are no “do overs” or second chances, but there are new beginnings. – *Ken Davis*

Background Statistics – the importance of fathers (gathered in 2012)

- Fatherless children are eight times as likely to have children as teenagers, 2.5 times as likely to have a birth outside of marriage, 1.5 times as likely to marry as teenagers (but overall less likely to marry), four times more likely to need professional help for emotional or behavioral problems; and at least twice as likely: to suffer physical, emotional, or educational neglect; to experience health problems; to drop out of school; to use drugs; to get divorced; to be poor; and to spend time in jail.
- Children not living with their biological father are **100 times more likely** to suffer fatal abuse.
- Children from fatherless homes make up:
 - 34% of US children (without biological father – 28% are w/o any male) (US Census, 2012)
 - 90% of adolescent repeat arsonists (Psychology Today, January, 1985, p. 28)
 - 90% of all homeless and runaway children
 - 85% of all youths in prison (Fulton Co. GA, TX Dept. of Correction)
 - 85% of all children who show behavior disorders (CDC)
 - 80% of rapists with anger problems (Justice & Behavior, Vol 14, p403-26)
 - 75% of all adolescent patients in chemical abuse centers
 - 71% of pregnant teenagers (U.S. DOHHS press release, Friday, March 26, 1999)
 - 71% of all high school dropouts (Nat’l Principals Assoc. Report)
 - 70% of youths in state-operated institutions (U.S. DOJ, Sept. 1988)
 - 63% of youth suicides (US DOHHS/Census)

Sources: <http://thefatherlessgeneration.wordpress.com/statistics/>
Experiments in Living: The Fatherless Family (Rebecca O’Neill, CIVITAS)
Family Life - Weekend To Remember seminar notes
<https://www.fatherhood.org/father-absence-statistic>
<https://lifeisbeautiful.org/statistics-on-fatherless-homes/>

FATHERHOOD

Week 1: Children are a Heritage

Objective: Motivate you to value the gift you have been (or someday will be) given.

- Read Psalm 127:3-5
- Is this what you hear from your favorite news source? How does the enemy undermine the truths of Psalm 127?

- What can you do to testify to these truths – to yourself, to your wife, children, parents, others?

- Listen to the short biographical sketch, taking note of their fathers' **actions** during their childhoods and the **results** in the individuals' adulthoods

- Read Lamentations 3:24
- Who is responsible for the results of our child's upbringing?

- Where should we put our hope?

Next week's topic: Love and understand your wife

Next week's verses: Ephesians 5:25, 1 Peter 3:7

Week 2: Love and Understand Your Wife

Objective: Encourage you to love your wife “more” than your children.

- Read Ephesians 5:25
- Look at a few of these: Mark 8:31-33 and Luke 2:48; 4:28-30; 42-44; 8:19-21; 11:53-54; 13:31.
- What distractions did Christ have from giving himself up for the church?

- What distractions or attitudes may hold you back from giving yourself up for your wife?

- Name specific ways you are now, or can start, giving yourself up for your wife.

- Read 1 Peter 3:7
- When was the last time you prayed with your wife?

- What are you doing right now to better understand your wife?

- What are your wife’s professional aspirations?

Resources:

Weekend to Remember seminar workbook (FamilyLife)
For Men Only (Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn)

Next week’s topic: Set the True Standard

Next week’s verses: Deuteronomy 5:16, Genesis 2:24, Romans 12:9

Week 3: Set the True Standard

Objective: Encourage you to strike a biblical path for parenting.

- Read Deuteronomy 5:16
- What positive influences from your parents should you bring into fatherhood?

- If there are few or none, how else can you honor your parents?

- Is there scriptural evidence for and against generational curses? Did “good” kings have “good” sons, and “bad” kings have “bad” sons?
(Search 1&2 Kings and 1&2 Chronicles for “did what was right” in ESV or NIV)

- Read Genesis 2:24 and Romans 12:9
- What negative influences from your parents should you exclude from your practices as a father?

- In what ways are you and your wife deliberately leaving and cleaving?

- What is keeping you from cleaving to your wife? How can you both “hold fast to what is good?”

Resource: The Blessing (Gary Smalley and John Trent)

Next week’s topic: God’s Representative (discipline and forgiveness)

Next week’s verses: Ephesians 6:4, Luke 11:13

Week 4: God's Representative (discipline and forgiveness)

Objective: Encourage you to embrace your role as a father.

- Read Ephesians 6:4
- What weaknesses of yours are shaping and/or have shaped your children's image of God? How can you change these patterns?

- Read Ephesians 4:26
- How can you apply this verse to your relationship with your children?

- Read Proverbs 3:12, 13:24, 22:15, 23:13, 29:15, 29:17
- Do these verses affect your view of corporal punishment?

- What structure do you provide for corporal punishment?

- Read Ephesians 4:32
- What structure do you provide for forgiveness?

- Read Luke 11:13 and James 1:17
- How can you be both generous and consistent with your children?

Resources:

Shepherding Your Child's Heart (Tedd Tripp)

Next week's topic: Sowing the Word

Next week's verses: Psalm 119:9-11; Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Zephaniah 3:17

Week 5: Sowing the Word

Objective: Encourage you to bathe your children in the Word.

Read Psalm 119:9-11

➤ How can you help to keep your children pure?

➤ What are some benefits you have experienced with Scripture Memory?

Read Deuteronomy 6:6-7

➤ How are you communicating God's truths to your children?

➤ How often are you communicating God's truths to your children?

➤ List resources that help you to teach God's truths "diligently to your children:"

Read Zephaniah 3:17 and Ephesians 5:18-20

➤ Does God sing over you? Have you considered singing to or with your children?

➤ Describe your family worship practices:

Next week's topic: Making Decisions

Next week's verses: Psalm 1:1-3; Luke 9:23; Proverbs 25:11-12

Week 6: Making Decisions – Modeling Obedience to God

Objective: Encourage you to offer choices and consequences to your children.

- Read Psalm 1:1-3 and Luke 9:23
- How are you displaying Christian wisdom to your children?

- How can you teach your children to make wise choices?

- In what ways are you giving your children room to make choices?

- Consider the nugget “little children can make many mistakes at affordable prices.”
- How can you take advantage of this truism?

- Read Proverbs 25:11-12
- How can you achieve the result of your children having “a listening ear?”

Resources:

Parenting with Love and Logic (Foster Cline & Jim Fay)

Next week’s topic: The Praying Father & Spiritual Gifts

Next week’s verses: Romans 12:6-8; Proverbs 22:6

Week 7: The Praying Father & Spiritual Gifts
Objective: Encourage you to pray for your children.

- Read Romans 12:6-8 and consider this chart, reproduced from the resource below.

A brief overview of the motivational gifts, the needs they meet, and what the gifts do in general:

Gift	%	Definition	Needs met	Value to the Body
PERCEIVER	12	declares the will of God in the situation	spiritual	keeps us fixed on spiritual principles
SERVER	17	renders practical service	practical	keeps ministry work going
TEACHER	6	researches and teaches the Bible	mental	keeps us studying and learning
EXHORTER	16	encourages personal progress	psychological	keeps us applying spiritual truths
GIVER	6	shares material assistance	material	keeps specific needs provided for
ADMINISTRATOR	13	gives leadership & direction	functional	keeps us organized, increases vision
COMPASSION	30	personal & emotional support	emotional	keeps attitudes & relationships right

Note: % column: the rough percentage of the population with this as a primary gift
 All gifts are: given by grace, valuable, useful, necessary, and - when developed - blessings.

- What are your gifting area(s)? your wife's? your children's?

- What potential or realized conflicts result from the gift-mix of your family?

- Read Proverbs 22:6

- Why is it important to understand the gifts that your child has been given?

Resources:

Discover Your Children's Gifts (Don & Katie Fortune)

Next week's topic: Wrap Up: The Long View

Next week's verses: 2 Timothy 2:2, Psalm 78:4-6, Exodus 23:29-30

Week 10: Wrap up: The Long View

Objective: Encourage you to have hope and to put these lessons into practice now.

Read 2 Timothy 2:2 and Psalm 78:4-6

➤ How many generations are mentioned in these passages?

➤ How are you showing your children that life is a relay race?

Read Exodus 23:29-30

➤ How long did God expect the Israelites to take to conquer Canaan?

➤ How long do you have to parent your children?

Read Lamentations 3:24

➤ Where is our hope?

Read Hebrews 3:13

➤ Name specific individuals that you can encourage and/or receive encouragement from in the fatherhood journey:

Resources:

What a Daughter Needs From Her Dad (Michael Farris)
