



[study guide]

RELATIONSHIPS:

11.11.12: Ephesians 5:19-21

[warm up]

Identify a Godly family that you admire. What is it about this family that inspires and encourages you?

When you think about your own family, what were some of pluses and minuses for you as you grew up?

[digging deeper]

Read Ephesians 5:18, a verse that reflects one of our passions at CVC, **God dependence**. How does being filled with the Spirit demonstrate God dependence? Why is this foundational for being able to live out Ephesians 6:1-4?

Read Romans 8:1-6; Romans 8:12-13, and Galatians 5:16-25. Based on these verses, how can individual family members stay filled with the Spirit?

Re-read Ephesians 6:1. In the context of this verse, what does the phrase “in the Lord” mean? How does this apply if a child has Christian parents? How does this apply if a child has non-Christian parents?

Reread Ephesians 6:2-3. What does it mean for children at home to honor their fathers and mothers? What does it mean for adult children to honor their fathers and mothers?

How do the commands in Ephesians 6:1-3 to children counteract today’s culture? How do the commands in Ephesians 6:4 to fathers counteract today’s culture?

Reread Ephesians 6:4a. As a group, make a list of the top 10 ways a father can exasperate and provoke his children to anger. Which of these ways was the greatest temptation for your dad? For the dads in the group, which of these ways is the greatest temptation for you?

John Piper writes, “When Paul says in Ephesians 6:4, ‘Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger,’ don’t just stop doing things that provoke anger; start doing things that remove anger—overcome anger. Start doing things that awaken in the heart of a child other wonderful emotions.” What are some ways that a father can do this?



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Reread Ephesians 6:4b. What can happen when parents – particularly dads – fail to train and disciple their children?

A primary OT passage that instructs parents about discipling their children is Deuteronomy 6:4-9. In obedience to this passage, what are some practical ways Christian parents can train their children?

[living it out]

Look at the list of family life resources provided below. Ask if anyone in the LifeGroup is familiar with these resources. Ask if anyone in the group would recommend other resources for the family. What is one resource that you will commit to explore in order to pursue more Spirit-filled family life?

Make sure everyone has a 3 x 5 card. In the weekend message, we learned a prayer we can pray to be filled with the Spirit: “Father, search me; Jesus, cleanse me; Spirit, fill me.” Write that prayer or compose another prayer on your 3 x 5 card that will remind you to pray often to be filled with the Spirit as you relate to members of your family. (If you compose your own prayer, share that prayer with the members of your LifeGroup.)

One of the ways parents can disciple/train children is by being on mission. What are some ways that your family can be on mission together over the holiday season? (Idea: Host an international student from International Friends in your home at some point over the holidays. For more information, check out <http://international-friends.org/>, call Tom Wright at (216) 496-5244, or email Tom at tom@international-friends.org.)

Spend time praying for the families in your LifeGroup. Pray that your families will be more and more God dependent as each family member is increasingly filled with the Spirit. Pray that the upward cycle of OBEY -> HONOR -> ENCOURAGE -> TRAIN -> will grow and grow in your families' lives.



[study guide]

[suggested family resources]

These resources have been suggested as excellent tools by CVC leadership, particularly the children's and youth staff: Rick Eimers, Denise Petek, and Joe Valenti along with suggestions from Chad Allen and Rick Duncan.

Books

Sacred Parenting by Gary Thomas

Parenting Beyond Your Capacity by Reggie Joiner and Carrie Nieuwhof

Shepherding a Child's Heart by Tedd Tripp

Making your Children Mind Without Losing Yours by Kevin Leman

Leading Little Ones to God: A Child's Book of Bible Teachings by Marian M. Schoolland

Praying the Bible for Your Children by David and Heather Kopp

Parenting Today's Adolescent by Dennis and Barbara Rainey

Family to Family by Dr. Jerry Pipes and Victor Lee

Building Faith at Home by Mark A. Holmen

Parenting Beyond Your Capacity by Reggie Joiner and Carey Nieuwhof

The Jesus Storybook Bible by Sally Lloyd Jones

Websites:

The Source for Parents Jonathan McKee regularly posts articles dealing with youth culture and how parents are to deal with it. He is the parent of a teenager and is very transparent.

The Youth Culture Report This is a great website to check weekly on what is new in youth trends. Follow them on twitter for quick access. It's regularly updated.

Focus on the Family- This website has a wide range of articles that are very practical and deal with a wide variety of issues including how to effectively discipline your teenager.

The Center for Parent/Youth Understanding (CPYU) This is great resource on understanding youth culture. It helps parents relate to teens and understand how they are designed.

Orange Parents This website is designed to give practical tips to parents. Find resources, articles, and podcasts that help parents become better spiritual leaders.