

STUDY GUIDE

ANCIENT WAYS FOR THE MODERN FAMILY 7.30.2017

[set up]

Brainstorm a list of challenges that families face today (if in a LifeGroup, use a large Post-It note). Now circle the two that you feel most concerned about for your family.

[digging deeper]

God put Moses in charge of a huge “family,” the people of Israel (estimated at over 2 million people). And he had to lead them in a time of difficulty as they wandered through the wilderness. In the book of Deuteronomy, this expansive group of people are on the border of entering Canaan, the land that God has given them to possess. Most of the Israelites at this point are under the age of 40 and comprised of young families. Moses is recapping their history, giving them instructions, and reminding them of God’s law.

**Review the following verses for a brief understanding of what is happening:
Deuteronomy 1:1-2; 5-8; 19-21; 26-33.**

If you could summarize those verses in a brief sentence, what would it be?

If you are not familiar with Deuteronomy or want a brief refresher, this is a creative and brief video to watch: <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/deuteronomy/>

The Israelites demonstrated disbelief and fear (1:21; 1:26; 1:29; 1:32; 3:22). What did that keep them from experiencing? What does disbelief in God and His promises keep us from experiencing in our families?

Moses was calling his people back to a place of remembering God’s faithfulness to them (1:30-31; 2:7) and to pursue their faithfulness to God (Deut. 4:1-9). How is God’s faithfulness to us (despite our feelings and circumstances) such a source of good news for our souls?

Go back to your list of challenges. For the ones that you are most concerned about, what advice does the world tend to give on those issues (good and bad)?

What good news does God’s Word provide for us regarding those issues? If you are having a hard time finding verses on topics, this website is a great search tool:
<http://www.openbible.info/topics/>

The Israelites were going to the promised land, a place of peace, rest, and abundant life. The good news of the promised land kept them going. One day, believers in Christ, will reach the ultimate promised land—Heaven. But in so many ways, Jesus is our promised land now and for eternity.

According to Matt. 11:28-30, Jesus is our _____.

According to John 16:33, Jesus is our _____.

According to John 10:10, Jesus is our _____ and that life is _____ according to John 5:24.

The Gospel is God's good news every day. Read this excerpt from an article by the late Jerry Bridges, a Christian author and ministry leader:

Evangelicals commonly think today that the gospel is only for unbelievers. Once we're inside the kingdom's door, we need the gospel only in order to share it with those who are still outside... So I learned that Christians need to hear the gospel all of their lives because it is the gospel that continues to remind us that our day-to-day acceptance with the Father is not based on what we do for God but upon what Christ did for us in his sinless life and sin-bearing death... Therefore, I don't have to perform to be accepted by God. Now I am free to obey him and serve him because I am already accepted in Christ (see Rom. 8:1). My driving motivation now is not guilt but gratitude... Yet even when we understand that our acceptance with God is based on Christ's work, we still naturally tend to drift back into a performance mindset. Consequently, we must continually return to the gospel. To use an expression of the late Jack Miller, we must "preach the gospel to ourselves every day." For me that means I keep going back to Scriptures such as Isaiah 53:6, Galatians 2:20, and Romans 8:1. It means I frequently repeat the words from an old hymn, "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

Do you agree with his thoughts? Why or why not? How does the concept of the Gospel (good news) play out in your family dynamics? What's one way the good news could be more prevalent in your family?

There's a lot of advice out there for us...some good, some not so good. But how does the ancient understanding of God's faithfulness and God's good news through Jesus Christ help our families today? List three benefits of good news over good advice:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Is there someone you need to connect with or circle back around with in order to share how the good news of Christ and His faithfulness is superior to just good advice?

[living it out]

Go back to your list of challenges one more time. Look at one of the ones your circled. How have you seen God's faithfulness in that area? How does the Gospel, the good news of Christ, speak to that concern? What are three action steps of how you can remind yourself and/or live out the good news of Jesus in that area of concern?

Close in prayer. As you pray, start with a time of thankful prayers. Thank God for His faithfulness and good news. Ask Him to help His presence, faithfulness, and Word come to your mind and comfort your heart on family issues. Pray for the people you know and love who need the good news of Christ more than good advice.

*For this study, visit our blog this week (<https://cuyahogavalleychurchblog.wordpress.com/>) to also see a list of suggested resources that you can use for personal, family, or LifeGroup study.