

## **Group Experience**

Start

Welcome to session 5 of Kingdom Disciples.

What was a helpful point of review or a new insight gained from your personal study last week?

Does anybody have any stories or updates related to our discussion and application from the previous group session?

This week we'll examine the personal life of a kingdom disciple.

Share a family tradition you had growing up. Next share traditions you've started with your own family.

The call to be a kingdom disciple affects our lives in all four realms of God's kingdom. Today we'll consider the first two, our individual and family lives.

Before we learn what Dr. Evans has to teach us about individual and family discipleship, would somebody pray for our time together, asking the Lord to open our hearts and minds to His Word?

Share your experience #KingdomDisciples **Watch**

Refer to this viewer guide as you watch video session 5.

#### Four Realms of God's Kingdom

1. The individual life

2. The family

3. The church

4. The broader society

If you're going to become a kingdom disciple, you have to become dependent.

The moment human thinking overrules heaven's point of view, you have rendered inoperative God's work, authority, and rule in your life.

After you're saved, you must come to Him but not with human wisdom.

#### The Yoking Process

1. Companionship

2. Surrender

3. Shared responsibility

The purpose of yoking is learning so that you are becoming His disciple.

The deterioration of the family is the greatest social catastrophe we are facing in our country and in our culture.

When God created the family, He wanted there to be an earthly reflection of His nature: one God composed of three coequal persons.

God wanted us to have children so He could colonize the earth with His image.

The first area of discipleship is not the church house; it's your house.

Kingdom discipleship must be in the home. The church can't replace the home.

## **Discuss**

**Discuss the video with your group, using the questions below.**

In the previous session Dr. Evans talked about the need for Christians to mature in their relationship with Jesus. In this session Dr. Evans said we need to be dependent on God as a baby depends on the mother. How do these two ideas—maturity and childlike dependence—fit together?

Read Matthew 11:28-30. What verbs did Jesus use in this passage?

Dr. Evans said, “Coming to Jesus demonstrates that you want Him.” Why do so many Christians sit around and wait for Him to show up instead of coming to Him?

Where do you find the three steps of the yoking process Dr. Evans described in your relationship with Jesus?

Read 2 Corinthians 10:5. How does learning to follow Jesus allow you to take “every thought captive”?

Dr. Evans said, “The rest Jesus gives is custom-made.” How have you found rest for your soul by following Jesus?

How do family relationships mirror the structure that exists within the Trinity?

In what ways have we pushed the responsibility to disciple our families onto the church? What would change if every Christian family took the time to teach their children what it means to follow Jesus?

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9. How is the glory of God designed to be taught in our homes?

## **What does discipleship look like in your home?**

Read week 5 and complete the activities before the next group session.

### **Personal Experience**

#### **Kingdom People**

I wasn't raised with money. I was raised in a row house in an urban community in Baltimore, where my parents just barely made it. Many of you know that narrative because you've lived it too. Sometimes my mom would have to find a way to cook the fish my dad caught for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and dessert. But despite this reality, I never went to bed worried. The load of life didn't weigh me down. The reason I never struggled with life's burdens as a young child was because they weren't my problem. They were my parents' problem. I let them worry.

Therefore, whether we would eat tomorrow was never my concern. When my dad was laid off for weeks without work as a longshoreman, I didn't stress. I relied on those who were responsible to care for us. I was able to rest because I trusted my parents and lived in conscious dependence on them.

Now as an adult, however, I understand that life's burdens can weigh people down. I've had that experience myself, especially as a young man with four young children, a wife, and the challenge of balancing full-time academia with providing for my family. Yet despite all the stress we carry as we become adults, Jesus says if we'll simply grow in discipleship as individuals and families, we can rest. We can experience one of the greatest benefits of belonging to Him: peace.

The solution to life's burdens isn't found in your knowledge, success, or understanding. As a true kingdom disciple, you access the covering of the Father and the wisdom He imparts as you live under His lordship and in an abiding relationship with Him. His covering and wisdom will radically transform your life and will give you all you need to live abundantly and victoriously with kingdom authority.

## **Day 1**

### **Come to Me**

If you've ever watched a baby with her mother, you know that everything this little one needs is provided by the mom. If she needs to eat, it's the mom who feeds her. If she wants to change positions, the mom picks her up and moves her. When she's sleepy, the mom rocks her or sings to her.

Babies are entirely dependent on their parents for their needs. We all started out that way. But as we grew into adulthood, independence started to dominate our thinking and way of life. Although that's good on many accounts, it can also be a hindrance on many others. One way our independence can hinder us is in our relationship with God.

God wants us to become responsible adults who rule the realm in which He has placed us. Yet at the same time, He desires that we retain our dependence on Him for covering, provision, and wisdom. Jesus Christ became God in the flesh when He lived on earth thousands of years ago. Despite having access to all wisdom and power within Himself, He still humbled Himself in dependence on the Father. When desires conflicted, He always chose to do God's will. When He needed rest, He sought out the Father.

God doesn't reveal Himself to the proud and the self-sufficient but only to the humble (see Jas. 4:6). People who think they're smart enough to fix their own lives aren't ready to admit their need and draw close to God. The Lord wants us to humble ourselves in dependence on Him, like an infant with her mother, in order to tap into all He has in store for us as His disciples.

Read Matthew 11:25. Why does God reveal wisdom to those with a childlike posture?

What are some ways we can demonstrate dependence on God through concrete actions?

Read Proverbs 3:5-6. Despite having access to the God who knows all and is Lord over all, why do you think we tend to lean on our own understanding?

What do these verses say we should do instead of making decisions based on our own ideas?

If you've been wrestling with a decision lately, how can you more fully seek God's wisdom and direction?

Wisdom from above comes with a number of excellent benefits, the chief being peace and rest. Would you like some rest? Would you like some peace? As you grow in your maturity as a kingdom disciple (a man or a woman who is progressively living all of life under the lordship of Jesus Christ), you'll discover that Jesus offers you what no one else ever could. He gives you the power of personal peace. He gives you a way to light your load. He gives you not only eternal rest in heaven but also ongoing rest while on earth.

This gift of peace and rest comes when you do three things as the Lord's disciple: come, take, and learn.

Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

Rewrite these verses in your own words.

Read Psalm 127:2. How dependent is God on you to accomplish what He wants or to give you what He wants?

How dependent are we on God to accomplish or achieve anything?

Although God is able to do anything and everything for us, He also calls us to actively participate in His will and His plan by taking steps toward His goals for us. For example, God told Joshua that every place he placed his foot would be given to him (see Josh. 1:3). But Joshua had to take the step.

Describe how it's possible to be dependent on God yet also responsible under God.

The first active verb in Matthew 11:28-30 is the word come. Jesus says if you come to Him, you must leave behind your human wisdom and self-sufficiency. Have you ever gotten sick and went to the corner drugstore for a self-prescribed remedy, but nothing seemed to work? That's when you realized you needed to visit a doctor. The reason you go to a doctor is that you know he has information beyond your scope of knowledge. He has diagnostic equipment and an investigative process to analyze the data in order to identify the source of your ailment. He has training, history, understanding, and expertise that extend beyond your knowledge.

God will let you use all of your human ingenuity in seeking to live victoriously. He will also let you fail so that you'll discover that the only way to live as a victorious kingdom disciple is through Him. He says, "Come to Me." That's critical.

Why do you think it's important to come to Christ?

What are some ways you can come to Christ on a regular basis?



Regularly coming to Christ for direction with our desires, thoughts, and needs reminds us of our dependence on Him and the necessity of abiding in Him, as we studied last week. When we begin to falsely believe that any results we get are because of us, we lose focus on the true source of an abundant life.

In contrast, relying on God means putting our processes and outcomes in His hands, where they belong. Another word for the concept of coming to Christ is surrender.

Thursday is the day when the garbage-pickup service comes by our home. And despite the fact that I've lived in the same home for over three decades, I've never had a garbage-pickup person come to my door and ask me where my trash is. It's always on the curb. If I don't take the trash to the curb, I'll have to live with it for another week.

Jesus signed you up to receive trash-pickup service when He died on the cross. But you still need to come. He isn't going to force His rest or His peace on you. He says, "Come to Me" because in order to come to Him, you must leave your worldly wisdom behind.

Jesus says when you come to Him, you can bring your trash with you. Not only do you bring your burdens to the Lord, but you also hand off the pressure that comes from living in a sinful environment under the influence of the world, the flesh, and the devil. You bring it all to Him, as Scripture tells us:

... casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

1 Peter 5:7

When you do that, you'll find both rest and peace for your soul.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for the immediacy of Your presence. Thank You that I'm not going through life on my own but that You're with me to guide me, cover me, and provide for me. I don't have all of the answers, but You do. I come to You for Your promise of rest and peace, Lord, with a heart of humility and gratitude. In Christ's name, amen.

## Day 2

### Take My Yoke

Yesterday we posed the question of how Christians can simultaneously rest and be actively responsible in our roles as disciples. Today's study will address that question in more depth as we examine the second verb in Christ's call in Matthew 11:28-30.

Recall that Jesus said, "Take My yoke upon you" (v. 29). A yoke is a harness that goes around the necks of two oxen so that they can pull a load. Accepting Jesus' yoke is a picture of surrender to Him, but it's also a picture of help because you're not pulling the load alone. Jesus is yoked with you, and He's going to take the lead and the load.

The purpose of yoking two oxen together was threefold.

Yoking created companionship because the oxen were hooked side by side.

Yoking taught surrender because in the agricultural culture of the Bible, an older, stronger ox was often hooked up with a younger ox so that the younger ox learned how to yield to the older ox's lead and do the job correctly. The younger ox had to submit to the experience, size, and strength of the older one. Doing so allowed the younger ox to piggyback on the power and authority of the older one.

Yoking enabled responsibility because the oxen were pulling a plow. The younger ox was able to fulfill its purpose through the wisdom and power of the older ox. Like a car hitched to a tow truck, people who are yoked with Christ can go further than they ever could on their own because they're sharing in His power and authority.

Read Galatians 5:1. What does "yoke of slavery" refer to in this verse?

Describe the difference between the yoke Christ offers and the yoke the world offers.

Many of God's children can't fully enjoy the benefits of living yoked with Christ because we have our own yokes of slavery to the world, to our own flesh, or even to religious legalism, as Galatians 5:1 addressed. We belong to God, but we insist on plowing our own fields, going our own way, and following our own will. We wonder why no power is evident in our lives, and the reason is simple: we don't get the benefits of Christ if we don't yoke with Him.

To take His yoke on you means you willingly choose to go where He says to go, do what He says to do, and adjust your thoughts to what He says to think. You choose to surrender. Your victory as a kingdom disciple entirely depends on your level of surrender. To fully enjoy relief from your burdens, you have to bow your head before Christ and be willing to accept His yoke. As we've seen, you must abide in a relationship with Him and in His Word.

Being yoked with Christ is more than just accumulating information about Him. It involves staying connected to Him. He wants your personal relationship with Him to be not only the most important thing but also an ongoing, continual relationship. An ox doesn't yoke and take a few steps only then to unyoke and take a few more steps on its own. To yoke with Christ is to agree to walk with Him where and how He's leading for the duration of the path.

According to James 1:6-8, wavering in our faith produces a state of being "double-minded" (v. 8). Yoking and then unyoking creates the same result. Describe the result, based on the description in James.

Identify an area of your life in which you may be behaving as though you're double-minded. What steps can take to entirely yoke with Christ in this area?

Read Matthew 6:24. What other masters have you yoked yourself to instead of or in addition to Jesus?

Being yoked with (surrendering to) Christ goes against our natural inclination toward autonomy and independence. It must be something we intentionally set out to do day in and day out, hour in and hour out, minute in and minute out. When we yoke with Him, we'll experience great rewards now and forever. When we don't, we can anticipate unanswered prayer (see Jas. 4:3) and general discord and disharmony in our lives.

Despite the truth of God's Word on this matter, far too many individuals today insist on wearing their own yoke or using their own thinking to navigate through life. One reason this happens is that we think yoking with Christ will be difficult, tiresome, and impossible.

Yet Jesus promises the opposite when we yoke with Him. He's "gentle and humble" (Matt. 11:29), and His yoke is "easy" (v. 30). The Greek word for easy can be translated "well-fitted" or "custom-made." His yoke has been designed with you in mind. It won't be wearisome, confining, or constricting to you. Instead, it will be liberating and freeing.

Read John 8:32. How does reading and meditating on truth allow us to live more freely?

Why does living by the truth make you more willing to yoke yourself to Jesus?

How would taking Jesus' yoke bring you freedom in areas of life in which you feel constrained?

My son Jonathan travels with me a lot when I speak. On one occasion when he was with me, I had requested that we both upgrade to first class, based on my Platinum Flyer award miles. With Platinum status I'm able to upgrade a companion to first class as well. However, on this particular trip I was upgraded while Jonathan remained in coach.

We went to the front desk to ask why I was upgraded but Jonathan wasn't, especially since he's not only a companion but also my son, and we were told that he couldn't be upgraded because he had purchased his ticket separately from mine. His indicator number was different from mine, so he was unable to enjoy the benefits that would have come from being linked with me on that flight.

Yoking with Jesus Christ brings benefits. Not yoking with Him brings loss. The choice is yours. The truth is clear. Will you live all of life as a yoked kingdom disciple, or will you rely on your own wisdom, desires, and flesh for the many decisions you face in life?

Yoking to Jesus is a whole-life commitment, not just one we pick up as we see fit. List areas you're hesitant to give Jesus control of.

In the areas you listed, why are you afraid of losing control? What can Jesus do that you can't?

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, I want to be yoked with You in all I do. Although I've relied on my own instincts for a long time, I ask that You'll give me grace as I seek to further yoke myself with You. Give me glimpses into the benefits of relying on You and show me how to demonstrate surrender to You on a regular basis. In Christ's name, amen.

## **Day 3**

### **Learn from Me**

The third active verb Jesus gives us as an instruction in Matthew 11:28-30 is learn. He says:

Learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart.

Matthew 11:29

The Greek word translated “learn” refers to the concept of discipleship. Jesus disciplines you when you learn from Him. It’s done through an ongoing renewal of your mind as you learn to think like Him (see Rom. 12:2).

This process doesn’t happen instantaneously. It happens one thought at a time. Each time you take a thought captive (see 2 Cor. 10:5) and replace human wisdom with spiritual truth and insight, you’re removing the burden and lessening the load of self-will. You’re becoming more and more a kingdom disciple.

What lessons are you learning as a disciple of Jesus?

How are you taking what you’re learning from Jesus and teaching it to someone else (see Matt. 28:20)?

What are you supposed to be learning as a disciple? Learn how Jesus pulls the plow. Learn how Jesus relates to His Father. Learn how Jesus views sin. Learn how Jesus values others. Learn what Christ’s viewpoint is on a matter. Because we’re commanded to teach others to observe what Jesus commanded, being a disciple means we’re learners and teachers. We receive from Christ and replicate that teaching with others.

Learning from Jesus means studying His words and His ways. We looked at some of His words in the previous question. What do you learn about Jesus' ways by reading John 11:6,15?

What character trait do you learn from Jesus in John 4:7-9?

In what ways can you incorporate these particular words and ways of Jesus into your own lifestyle and character?

Learning from Jesus means replacing human wisdom with spiritual truth. It means learning, accepting, and applying His approach to peace, conquering worry, your value, your identity, your decisions, overcoming temptation, operating in the workplace, showing respect, giving and receiving grace, learning to trust, and handling your money. All of that and more. We're to study His character and emulate it. That's what it means to learn from Him.

Jesus is saying to His disciples today, "Learn My way of doing things. You tried your way, and it just made you weary. Learn My way because My yoke is easy and My burden is light. It's a new way. A new mind. A new character."

What impresses you most about Jesus' character and qualities? Does anyone you know exhibit these qualities of Jesus? In what ways?

What have you learned about following Jesus by observing his or her life?

Learning from someone requires spending time either being in their presence, reading their thoughts, or reading what they've done. Many people who have a favorite biography or autobiography of someone they admire will read it regularly so that through repeated exposure to that person's life, choices, and thoughts, more and more of what they respect about the person rubs off on them.

Reading God's Word, particularly the parts that highlight the character and heart of Christ, enables us to draw closer to who He is and to learn from Him.

Read Hebrews 4:12. In what way does Scripture reading help us learn from Christ?

Even though most believers agree that reading God's Word is something we should do to grow spiritually, why do so few do it regularly?

What strategy can you put in place to dedicate more of your time to the study and reading of God's Word?

Our world has many problems today, and they come in all shapes and sizes. Rest, peace, and joy are increasingly harder to come by. But when you intentionally go to Jesus, yoke with Him, and learn from Him, you'll find rest.

Two foresters entered a competition to discover who could cut down the most trees in a day. One was an older man, and the other was younger. The younger man's strategy was size and strength, but the older man had a different strategy. Every hour he sat down and rested. The younger man noticed what he was doing and mockingly laughed at him. He can't even make it an hour, he thought. I've got this competition won.

While the younger man kept chopping and chopping and chopping, the older man chopped for fifty minutes and rested for ten, chopped for fifty minutes and rested for ten. This went on all day long. At the end of the day, the judge counted the trees. To everyone's surprise, the older man had chopped down twice as many trees as the younger. Everyone was confused, especially since the older man worked considerably less than the other. Then the older man pointed out that when he was resting, he was also sharpening his ax.



When you've got the right thing working for you, you can take a rest. You can relax because God's got it. He can accomplish more in a minute than you ever could in a lifetime. Investing in God's Word allows His Spirit to work in your life. Wouldn't it be wise, then, to rest in His sovereign rule, yoke with Jesus Christ, and model His character in your life?

Read and memorize 1 John 2:6. In order to abide in Christ, what do you first need to do?

What three things can you do this week to walk in Christ's ways?

As a kingdom disciple, remember this one phrase: God's got it. Rest in Him by pursuing an intimate relationship with Christ, learn from Him, and He will do more in you and through you than you could have ever done on your own.

### **Prayer**

Dear Jesus, help me learn from You and live out what I learn in my walking, talking, and thinking. I want to know You more each day and to know what motivates You, excites You, and invites Your compassion. Show me what it means to live my life in an abiding knowledge of You. In Christ's name, amen.

## **Day 4**

### **The Family Is the Foundation**

Before the concept of family was ever introduced, Adam was single. Before any family is created through a marriage, both individuals are single. One area we often fail to focus on in building strong families is building strong singles. A strong single person will contribute to a strong family. A weak single person will contribute to a weak family. Before we ever get family right, we have to get singleness right. Kingdom singles are unmarried persons who undistractedly prioritize their divine calling for the advancement of God's kingdom.

The name Adam refers to that which comes from the ground. God made man from the very ground he came from and the very ground he was appointed to oversee—the place where his managerial responsibilities were to be carried out. For Adam to live as a successful single person, he first had to develop the humility to live life underneath the leadership of the Lord God. As long as he kept that mindset and functioned according to God's rule, he would have the tools to make productive decisions.

The next principle Adam needed to learn before God merged him into a family was that he was to be an overseer. God gave him a job. In addition to his responsibility, though, God also gave him freedom. God permitted Adam to enjoy all the fruit in the garden with one exception: the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Based on these observations, what three characteristics of singleness create the foundation for a kingdom family?

In what ways does a lack of understanding and alignment under God as a kingdom single person negatively affect a family once one is formed?

Read Genesis 2:7-22. What does the title Lord communicate about God?

Clearly, God was establishing the absolute, authoritative nature of His relationship with humankind through the revelation of His character and name. In fact, we know this is His objective because it's the first thing Satan sought to reverse when he later spoke with Eve in Genesis 3. Satan didn't refer to God as Yahweh (Lord God). He removed the name Lord (master, absolute ruler) and said, "Indeed, has God said ...?" (Gen. 3:1). Satan sought to strip God of His place as absolute ruler and authority by omitting the name that connoted His position. As a result, Satan kept the idea of religion (God) while eliminating the order of authority (under God).

Religion without God as the absolute ruler and authority is no threat to Satan. Life with God is much different from life under God. Life under God is kingdom discipleship. Life that seeks its own decisions and will apart from God is religion. In fact, Satan often uses organized religion to keep people from the one true God. Ritual that isn't predicated on an authoritative nature of relationship between God and humankind is simply legalism, and it's the fastest track away from God's purposes of dominion than any other (see Eve's deception in Gen. 3).

Before any family was established, authority was established. Authority is the key component to living as a kingdom disciple and experiencing all Christ came to offer you. In fact, in the very midst of forming the foundation of the family, God reinforced the fact that the foundation of the family was His own rightful authority.

Should a kingdom disciple place the needs or wants of his or her spouse ahead of God's rule and authority? Why or why not?

What happened in the garden when Adam chose to accommodate his wife's desires over God's?

What should Adam have done differently? How do we love and honor a spouse when he or she disagrees with God's view on a matter?

The family's mission is to replicate the image of God by reflecting His Son, Jesus Christ, in history and to carry out His divinely mandated dominion: "Let them rule" (Gen. 1:26). Personal and familial happiness is to be a benefit of a strong family, but it's not the mission. The mission is the reflection and representation of God through the advancement of His kingdom and rule on earth. Happiness becomes the natural benefit when this goal is being actualized.

The problem with families today is that we've transposed the benefit and the goal, so when the benefit, happiness, isn't working out, we quit and move on. Happiness was never God's first concern. Rather, happiness and satisfaction are to be natural outgrowths of fulfilling God's mission.

When we make God's first concern our first concern as His kingdom disciples, we'll experience the benefit that comes with it. But if we focus on the benefit without prioritizing purpose, we may end up losing both the purpose and the benefit.

In what way does honoring God as Lord God emphasize the family's mission?

When happiness is a family's goal and mission, where is God in the decision-making process?

How can happiness be a natural outcome of placing God's rule first?

Family was established to be God's foundational representative institution in society and to provide the opportunity and framework for individuals to collectively carry out God's plan in history. In particular, that plan includes the replication of God's image through Jesus Christ and the implementation of His rule on earth. Through the establishment and replication of the family, the foundation is set for the advancement of God's kingdom rule in society.

How does your family live out God's mission in the world?

If you're a single person, how are you learning to live under God's authority?

If you're a married person, how are you teaching your children to live under God's authority?

### **Prayer**

Father, I want to view the role of family the way You do. Families mirror Your love, unity, and rule on earth as they are in heaven. I pray that my family (or future family) will truly honor You above all else. Draw each family member into a close love relationship with You so that we all earnestly seek to know You fully. In Christ's name, amen.

## Day 5

### Faithfully Reflecting God as a Family

Scripture gives us insight into how we can align our personal lives and our family lives with God's rule. It's in our understanding of God as Lord over all that we find the freedom, authority, and power we're designed to know and live out in His name.

As I mentioned, far too many married couples look for happiness as the goal of marriage. And while happiness is a wonderful outcome of marriage, the ups and downs of everyday life often make it elusive. The best way to pursue the opportunity for happiness in a marriage is to pursue God Himself. He's the author of all good things, so when we align our hearts, minds, and decisions under Him, He does what Scripture says He will do:

Delight yourself in the Lord;

And He will give you the

desires of your heart.

Psalm 37:4

That verse is a formula for pure, lasting happiness in homes, personal lives, and all aspects of life.

What does it mean to "delight yourself in the Lord" in practical ways?

Read 1 John 2:15-17. List three areas that are the opposites of delighting in the Lord. The first one is provided for you. Then list two examples of each.

1. The lust of the flesh:

2.

3.

Delighting in the Lord as a family involves turning from whatever doesn't belong to or originate with Him (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life) while simultaneously turning toward whatever originates with Him.

Read Galatians 5:22-23. What qualities originate with God?

What area of your life could benefit from an increase of any of these qualities?

How can your family be stronger disciples by abiding in and embracing these qualities?

**Kingdom marriage is defined as:**

A covenant union between a man and a woman who commit themselves to functioning in unity under divine authority in order to replicate God's image and expand His rule in the world through both their individual and joint callings

Replicating God's image assumes replicating His character and qualities while also turning away from whatever doesn't reflect Him.

Give a biblical example of a family who reflected the image of God through their actions or choices.

Read Joshua 24:15. Considering God's character, qualities, and rulership in our lives, what does it mean to fully serve the Lord as a family both inside and outside the home?

When Joshua said he and his family would serve the Lord, the concept of service encompassed more than simple obedience to God's revealed statutes. It involved transferring God's statutes and ordinances, as well as the intentions behind them, to the younger generation. That generation in turn was to transfer them to the next generation. Thus, parenting provides the opportunity and channel by which the rule of God permeates the lineage of an entire family line.

In addition to transferring a fear of God and an understanding of His rule to future generations, serving God as a family also means reflecting His character and authority both within and outside the family unit.

Family is crucial to advancing God's kingdom agenda on earth. God so values family that He regularly communicated His plan in history to the nation of Israel in terms of family. He often referred to Himself in familial descriptions like "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."



Likewise, when God expanded His kingdom in the New Testament through the church, He regularly used family terminology like “household of faith,” “brothers,” and “sisters.” The association of the family motif with the advancement of God’s kingdom appears throughout Scripture.

When God chose to redeem the world through the sacrifice of His Son on the cross, He placed Jesus in the context of a family on earth to be raised, to learn, and to grow in wisdom and stature before laying down His life as our Savior (see Luke 2:52). Just as God redeemed the first marriage through the sacrifice of an animal and the covering of their nakedness with animal skins, through redemption in Jesus Christ, families can be restored today when they choose to align themselves under God as His kingdom disciples.

As we maintain the foundation of the family through kingdom husbands and kingdom wives who raise kingdom kids under the lordship of Jesus Christ, we’ll see the expansion of God’s kingdom in the world through our families as it was designed to be. We’ll leave legacies in the lives of our children and grandchildren that will last forever.

### **Prayer**

Lord, I want to lead my family to live under Your lordship and saving grace. Cultivating a family life in which disciples are made and Your truth is taught is where I want to be. Please help me love and sacrificially lead my family toward Jesus. In Christ’s name, amen.