

## Family Study Guide

### Sermon #5

#### Proverbs & the Family — “Connecting to Your Child’s Heart”

**Big Idea:** Parents connect with their children’s hearts when they intentionally seek to understand, nurture, and guide their children to be who God is shaping them to become.

**Goal for this study:** To help children understand their identity, their unique gifts and talents, and their purpose in God.

#### 1. Open with Prayer

Father, thank you for the time you have given us as a family to worship you together and reflect on the blessings we enjoy in our home. Help our home be filled with your love and kindness as we learn wisdom together. Amen

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#### 2. Read God’s Word Together

##### Read:

*Proverbs 4:23 - Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.*

##### A Simple Explanation for Children

*Mary and Joseph Lose Jesus*

#### Jesus in the Temple

One of the scariest things for a parent is losing sight of their child. A child might wander away in a grocery store, or a busy crowd might make it hard to see them.

When a parent suddenly realizes, “I can’t find my child,” it can feel very frightening. Parents love their children deeply, and God gives them a special desire to protect and care for them.

## **The Story**

Something like this happened to Joseph, Mary, and Jesus when Jesus was 12 years old. Their family had traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast, a special celebration that Jewish families attended every year.

On the return trip, many families walked back to Nazareth together, a journey that could take three or four days. Traveling in a group made the journey easier. Men talked with other men, while women and children walked nearby. Older children often gathered together to laugh, play, and talk as they followed the group.

Mary and Joseph thought Jesus was somewhere among the other children and travelers. But they did not know that Jesus had stayed behind in Jerusalem.

After anxiously searching, Mary and Joseph finally found Jesus in the Temple three days later. He was listening to the teachers and asking them questions.

When Mary and Joseph told Him how worried they had been, Jesus answered, “Didn’t you know I must be about my Father’s business?”

## **What Jesus Was Teaching**

Jesus’ answer showed that He knew who He was and why God had sent Him. Although Jesus was God, He was also fully human. In His humanity, He knew He was the Son of God and that God had called Him to a special purpose. God calls each of us to a special purpose in some way. Even though you have parents who love and care for you, God is your Father who loves and cares for you even more.

## **What God Wants You to Remember**

God wants you to know some things deep in your heart. These things should never leave you, no matter where you go or what you do in life.

1. You belong to God. You were created in His image, and He has a plan and purpose for your life that is greater than anything else.
2. You can always talk to Mom and Dad about anything you are feeling inside, even if you are not sure how to talk about it.
3. God created you unique from any other person, and He placed gifts and talents in you that will develop as you grow older and help you discover your purpose.
4. Your parents are in your life to raise, teach, and care for you, and to make sure you grow up knowing who you are and how to walk in God’s plan for your life.

### 3. Family Illustration

A family can be a lot like a garden, and parents are like gardeners. Do you know what a gardener does? A gardener plants a seed, waters it, gives it sunlight, and protects it from weeds. He doesn't yank on the plant to make it grow. He can't make the roots go deeper or the leaves unfold. But he creates the right environment, and over time the plant becomes what it was created to be. Mary and Joseph did just that. They gave Jesus a home full of love, faith, and obedience. They prepared him for the purpose the father had for him. We prepare the soil, but God brings the growth. He alone fulfills the purpose in our children.

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### 4. Discussion Questions

#### For Younger Children (3–6)

- How do you know your parents love and care for you?
- What is one special thing God made you good at?
- Who can you talk to when something is on your heart?

#### For Older Children (7–12)

- Why do you think Jesus said He needed to be about His Father's business?
- What gifts, talents, or interests do you see God growing in you?

#### Parent Discussion

- What is one way we can better listen to what is happening in our child's heart?
- How can we encourage our child's gifts without trying to force growth?
- What habit can we practice this week to guide our child with love, wisdom, and patience?

### 5. Family Application

Choose ONE simple thing to practice this week:

- Thank God for one way our parents love and protect us.
- Think about how God created you with gifts and talents to serve Him and others.
- Always know it is good to talk to mom and dad about anything you feel on the inside you not sure how to say.

#### Remind your children:

Jesus is the perfect person, and He invites us to follow Him. But don't worry, you don't have to be perfect to follow. What matters is your faithfulness.

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### 6. Closing Prayer

Father, thank you for giving us a home where we can be loved and learn about You. Help us this week to trust You in everything we do and to remember the wise things we learn from our parents so we can better love You and live a life of blessing. Amen

