

## Small Group Guide: FAMILY LIFE - What Healthy Families Do Differently (Part 2)

**Opening Question** When you were a kid, what was one “family rule” or habit in your home that you now look back on and laugh about?

**Opening Prayer** *Lord, thank you for bringing us together. We're grateful for our families, our friendships, and this Community Group. As we talk about Pastor Dan's message, help us to hear what you want to say to each of us. Give us wisdom about our relationships, especially at home, and show us how to grow in love, patience, and faith. We invite your Spirit to lead our time together. In Jesus' name, amen.*

### Key Takeaways from the Sermon

#### **Healthy families don't happen by accident.**

We don't drift into a great marriage, godly character, or strong family life. We must be intentional and have a plan.

#### **We are in a spiritual battle for our homes.**

Like Nehemiah's wall (Nehemiah 4:14), we are called to “fight for” our brothers, sisters, children, spouses, and homes—without living in fear, remembering that God is great and awesome.

#### **Wisdom and understanding are the foundation.**

*Wisdom* = knowing what to say.

*Understanding* = knowing when to say it (or not say it).

Our relationships, including family life, are only as strong as this foundation (Proverbs 24:3).

#### **People have a unique “bent” given by God.**

Proverbs 22:6 is about understanding a child's unique temperament, gifts, and motivations, and “training” them according to their God-given wiring—according to their “bent”. This principle also applies to other relationships.

#### **Healthy families teach five key things:**

1. How to handle **feelings** in a healthy, godly way.
2. How to handle **conflict** through resolution, not just compromise.
3. How to handle **loss** with resilience, faith, and perseverance.
4. **Biblical values** that counter cultural lies about worth, success, and identity.
5. **Good habits** and choices that form godly character over time.

#### **We lead primarily by example, not by lectures.**

The loudest sermon we preach is our lifestyle (John 13:14–15). What our kids and others see often shapes them more than what they *hear*.

#### **God's model: discipline, not punishment.**

Punishment is about **penalty** for the past, fueled by anger, and produces fear.

Discipline is about **growth** for the future, motivated by love, and produces security (Hebrews 12:6). We should discipline calmly, quickly, and sparingly—not out of anger or nagging.

#### **Healthy families serve God by serving others.**

We're called to “spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24). A godly family legacy looks like Acts 10:2—devoted to God, generous, prayerful, and serving others.

## Discussion Questions

- 1. Read Nehemiah 4:14.** What does it look like *today* to “fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes”?
  - In what ways can we do that without living in fear of culture, but in confidence in a “great and awesome” God?
- 2. Read Proverbs 24:3.** In your experience, how does “wisdom” (what to say) and “understanding” (when to say it) change the tone of family or close relationships?
  - Where do you see a need for more wisdom or understanding in relationships around you?
- 3. Read Proverbs 22:6** (and optionally the Amplified translation idea: “in keeping with his individual gift or bent”).
  - How does viewing children, family members, or even coworkers as having a unique “bent” given by God change the way we encourage, correct, or lead them? (*see 4th Sermon Takeaway above...*)
  - What are some practical ways we can become better students of the people God has placed in our lives?
- 4. Read Hebrews 12:6.** How does understanding the difference between punishment and discipline change how you view God’s work in your life?
  - How might that same difference positively shape the way we correct or coach others (kids, grandkids, team members, etc.)?
- 5. Read Hebrews 10:24.** What are some real-life examples of “spurring one another on toward love and good deeds” in a family or close community?
- 6. Handling feelings, conflict, and loss, etc.:** Pastor Dan mentioned that healthy families teach how to handle feelings, conflict, and loss, Biblical values, and good habits. (*see 5th Sermon Takeaway above...*)
  - Which of those three do you think is most often *avoided* or mishandled in homes today, and why?
  - What is one healthy pattern you’ve seen (or wish you had seen) for dealing with that area?
- 7. Modeling vs. saying:** Pastor Dan said, “It’s not taught; it’s caught,” and that “do as I say, not as I do” doesn’t work.
  - What is one Christlike quality (e.g., patience, generosity, humility, prayer) that you’d like to model more consistently in front of those closest to you? What small step this week could help you actually model that?
- 8. Building a godly family legacy:** In Acts 10:2, Cornelius and his whole family are remembered as God-fearing, generous, and prayerful.
  - If someone wrote one sentence about your family or close community 20 years from now, what would you hope it says?
  - What is one intentional change or commitment that could move you closer to that kind of legacy?

## **Practical Applications** (Choose one or two.)

### 1. **Practice one “wisdom + understanding” conversation.**

This week, intentionally pause before a potentially tense conversation.

Ask: “Lord, what should I say?” (wisdom)

Then: “Lord, is this the right time and tone?” (understanding)

Adjust your words or timing accordingly.

### 2. **Identify one person’s “bent.”**

Choose one person (child, spouse, friend, coworker) and pray: “God, help me understand how you wired them.”

Write down what seems to motivate them, discourage them, and how they best receive encouragement.

Adjust how you relate to them in one small way this week.

### 3. **Model healthy conflict resolution.**

If conflict arises this week, aim for resolution, not just “winning” or “compromise.”

Listen fully, state your feelings calmly, avoid “you always/you never” language, and aim for a shared solution you both can own.

### 4. **Replace punishment with loving discipline.**

The next time you need to correct someone (at home or elsewhere), check your heart first:

If you’re angry, pause until you’re calm.

Clarify the goal: “How can I help this person grow?”

Respond in a way that builds security and learning, not fear.

### 5. **Serve together as a household or group.**

As a family or Community Group, pick one simple act of service:

Serve at church, encourage a neighbor, bring a meal to someone in need, or support a local ministry.

Use it as a way to “spur one another on toward love and good deeds” and to model that serving others is how we serve God.

## **Memory Verse for This Week**

Joshua 24:15b (NKJV)

*“But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”*

**Closing Prayer** *Heavenly Father, thank you for the truth we’ve talked about and the relationships you’ve entrusted to us. Help us to be intentional, not to drift. Give us wisdom in what we say, understanding in when we say it, and love in how we treat the people around us. Strengthen our homes and our friendships, and let our families be places where you are honored and others are served. As for us and our households, we choose to serve you. In Jesus’ name, amen.*