

Visionary Parenting

capture a God-sized vision for your family

by Dr. Rob Rienow



Welcome to Visionary Parenting! You are about to begin a journey that God wants to use to transform your family. Whether you are going through this experience on CD, DVD, or at a live conference, this guide will help you keep your notes and thoughts in one place.

For each of the eight sessions you will find an outline for you to take notes, followed by an action worksheet. The action worksheets will provide you with questions to discuss with those going through the study with you, and will help you focus on putting into practice the things you learn in the sessions.

The journey of parenting is unlike any other! God has called you to it, and He has great plans for you, your children, and your family.

God's Love,

Rob and Amy Rienow
Visionary Family Ministries
www.VisionaryFam.com

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Session 1 – God’s Vision for the Family

I. Upside down priorities

II. Vision – Strategy - Action

III. What is the purpose of family?

IV. The Great Commandment – Matthew 22:35-38

V. The Great Commandment – Old Testament – Deuteronomy 6:5-8

A. The centrality of the heart.

B. Mission #1.

C. God’s primary plan of evangelism and discipleship.

D. God created the family to be a _____ center.

E. The biblical purpose of parenting and grand-parenting is to impress the hearts of our children with a _____.

V. Where do we begin? (verses 7-9)

Four Power-Packed Spiritual Moments

A.

B.

C.

D.

VI. Prepare for spiritual battle!

A. God never calls us to do anything that He does not also empower us to do.

B. It starts in our hearts...turning our hearts to God, and turning our hearts to our children (Malachi 4:4-6 and Luke 1:17).

Additional Notes:

Visionary Parenting Worksheet One Vision Exercise

During this week ahead, find time to sit down with your spouse, or with a close Christian friend if you are not married, and discuss and complete this "vision exercise."

Part 1 - God's Vision for My Child:

(As much as possible, use the Bible to lead you in this exercise. In the Bible, God reveals His character, perfectly modeled in His Son Jesus, and calls us to follow His example.)

God's vision for _____ (your child's name) is that he/she be:

God's vision for _____ is that he/she becomes:

God's vision for _____ is that he/she believes:

God's vision for _____ is that he/she:

(This is the place for your own action words. You may write things like "makes a difference in the world," "leads others to Jesus," "saves sexuality for marriage," etc.)

Part 2 – What are we, as parents, currently doing to intentionally and strategically develop these things in our child’s life?

Part 3 – What specific things can we begin to do, not do, or change, that would more directly encourage these things in our child?

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Session 2 – A Vision for Multi-Generational Faithfulness

Principle #1: Generational connection matters to God. (Genesis 5)

Principle #2: Generational connection is a powerful influence in creating faith in children.

- a. Psalm 78.
- b. “The God of your fathers.”
- c. Following the biblical example of “generational talk” in our homes.

Principle #3: Our present actions as parents have significant impact on the generations to come.

- a. Sinful patterns spread in family trees (Exodus 20:4-5).
- b. God blesses the generations of faithful parents (Exodus 20:4-5).

Principle #4: Generational faithfulness is built upon honoring our parents and grandparents.

- a. Our elders have lost value in modern society.

- b. The fifth commandment: A lifelong calling.

- c. Honoring and caring for those who have gone before (1 Timothy 5:3-8).

- d. Action steps for creating a culture of honor in your family.
 - 1. Put grandparents at places of honor.

 - 2. Bring your children to their grandparents for instruction and stories.

 - 3. Talk specifically with your children so that they will see that God has a multi-generational vision for their lives.

 - 4. Recognize your calling.

Additional notes:

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Session 3 – A Vision of a God-Filled Normal Life

Your regular family schedule is one of the most powerful “shapers” of your child’s heart, character, and worldview.

Principle #1: Who we are at home is who we really are.

Principle #2: A child’s heart is impressed by experiencing the character of his/her parents.

Principle #3: A child’s view of God is formed through the character of his/her parents.

Principle #4: A child’s heart learns what is important through the family schedule.

The “lost practice” of Sabbath – Isaiah 58, Exodus 20.

Possible signs of a God-filled normal life.

A. Talk about normal life from a spiritual perspective.

"God really blessed me today at work. The problem I was having with my boss really took a turn for the better."

"I am so sorry that your friend made fun of you like that. That would really hurt my feelings. Why do you think God is letting this happen?"

"It doesn't make me happy to have to give you this punishment. But I am responsible before God to teach and train you to do what is right. So if I didn't discipline you, I would be disobedient to God."

B. Exchange and seek prayer requests frequently.

"Kids, would you please pray for me today? I am really anxious about this meeting I have at work. I need your prayers."

"Kids, what is one thing I can pray for you today?"

C. Spend visible time in prayer and Bible study.

D. Talk about movies and music from a spiritual perspective.

E. Emphasize prayer as a non-crisis activity.

F. Pray easily and quickly for sickness and injuries.

G. Family worship.

Visionary Parenting Worksheet 3 **A Vision for a God-Filled Normal Life**

Take time to consider these questions with your spouse or, if you are single, with a close Christian friend.

1. What are the core spiritual values that you want to see take root in the heart of your child?

2. What are specific steps that you can take to create or to modify your family schedule to cultivate these values?

3. What is an area of your private/personal life that God wants to change/develop in you so that you can be a more effective spouse/parent? What are you going to do about that?

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Session 4 – A Vision for a Safe Home

I. Physical safety is only the beginning.

II. Our Heavenly Father actively works to create peace, protection, and security for His children (2 Thessalonians 3:16).

III. The sources, dangers, and remedies for fear (Psalm 32:7).

Principle #1: Unconditional acceptance creates security.

Principle #2: Family forgiveness creates security.

Hebrews 12:15, Colossians 3:13

Principle #3: The practice of parental blessing creates security and peace in the hearts of our children.

Genesis 1:28, Genesis 48:15-16, Numbers 6:22-26

Principle #4: The power of heart connection.

Visionary Parenting Worksheet 4 A Vision for a Safe Home

Take time to consider these questions with your spouse or, if you are single, with a close Christian friend.

1. How can your family grow in your practice of biblical forgiveness?
2. Go to the beginning and end of each New Testament letter, and see if you can find examples of “blessings.” Write these down on 3x5 cards. Begin to use them to bless your children. As you find other examples in the rest of the Bible, add those cards to your collection. Once you have developed a pattern of blessing your children from the Biblical blessings, begin to use your own words as you bless them.
3. How can you bless each of your children with a “personalized blessing?” Help each other put this into practice.
4. Are there areas of concern that you have regarding the physical, emotional, or spiritual safety for your children that you have not shared with your spouse or trusted family member? Do you believe your spouse or another family member is hurting or neglecting the children physically, emotionally, or spiritually? Look for an appropriate time to raise those concerns. If the discussion heats to an argument or results in a stalemate, be sure to seek the help of an outside counselor.
5. What could you do to increase the “heart connection” between you and your children?
6. Talk about your heart struggles with “performance orientation.” Do you feel more or less valuable based on your performance? This may be a subtle area of brokenness in our lives.

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Session 5 – A Vision For a Biblical Fatherhood

I. Men and Women – Equal and Different.

II. First role: Ministry to our wives (Ephesians 5:25-26).

A. Love.

B. Serve.

C. Lead.

III. Second role: Train and instruct our children in the Lord (Ephesians 6:1-4).

A. Do not exasperate.

B. Spiritual training.

C. Spiritual instruction.

IV. Starting places for the renovation of a father

A. Repentance.

B. Simple obedience.

C. Gather other men around you to encourage you.

Additional notes:

Visionary Parenting Worksheet 5 A Vision for Biblical Fatherhood

Take time to consider these questions with your spouse, or if you are single, with a close Christian friend.

1. Evaluate yourself carefully on your responsibilities to your wife.

How mature is your love for her? Use 1 Corinthians 13 as your measure.

How mature is your service to her? Consider both your heart and your actions.

How mature is your spiritual leadership in her life?

2. Evaluate yourself carefully on your responsibilities to your children.

How faithful are you being to God's directive in Deuteronomy 6 to talk with your kids about spiritual things at the four key points in the day?

What is your current "spiritual training plan" with your kids (if any)?

What is your current "spiritual instruction plan" with your kids (if any)?

3. Review the notes from our last section on "renovating the heart." Is your heart, as a man and as a father, in need of renovation? Where is God calling you to start?

4. Consider taking a step of faith and 1) going to a current small group of men you meet with and raise the accountability in this area of your life or 2) contacting a pastor to request his help in creating such a group so that you can increasingly succeed in the things that matter most.

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Session 6 – A Vision for Biblical Motherhood

I. Biblical Motherhood starts with a loving relationship with God.

Exodus 20 – the Ten Commandments

2 Kings 17

II. Loving our husbands.

Titus 2:4

A. Created as “helper.”

B. Loving our husbands is a great gift to our children.

III. Loving our children.

A. Is our heart really with them?

B. The noble calling of motherhood.

Additional thoughts:

Visionary Parenting Worksheet 6

A Vision for Biblical Motherhood

Take time to consider these questions with your spouse or with a close Christian friend. If you are single, some of these questions may not apply.

1. Consider the "believers" described in 2 Kings 17. They were, on one hand, worshipping God and, on the other hand, "sacrificing their children." Write any thoughts you have about those historical events.
2. Are you taking any active steps to draw closer in your personal relationship with Christ? If so, what are those steps? If not, what is one thing you might be able to commit to doing in the coming weeks that would deepen your walk with Christ?
3. Why do you think that society has such a negative reaction to the concept of wife as "helper" of her husband as described in Genesis?
4. What was your response when you learned that this biblical term is one of great significance and not subservience?
5. Have you ever considered your responsibility as described in Titus 2, to help wives who are younger than you to love their husbands and children better?
6. If you are married, pray now, and ask God to show you the unique ways that you have been created to help the husband He has given you.
7. Do you feel that you are treating your husband the way that you would like your son to be treated by his future wife?

8. Do you feel that you are treating your husband the way that you want your daughter to treat her future husband?

9. If you are in a situation where someone in your home is dangerous, erratic, dealing with addictions, or violent, please seek help from a pastor, counselor, or family service center.

10. Which fruits of the Spirit (Read Gal 5:22) are most evident in you as you parent? Which are least evident? Chose one that is least evident and pray for 30 days to ask God to help you grow in that area.

11. How do you feel about your calling to motherhood? Do you see it as noble or a burden? Ask God to give you a vision for the noble calling of motherhood and to confirm in your heart that you do not need to find "real life" elsewhere.

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Session 7 - A Vision for Family Worship

I. Biblical foundation for family worship.

- A. The family is God's primary vehicle for evangelism and discipleship
Deuteronomy 6:5ff
- B. Family worship is the engine that powers the family.

II. Historical Foundation.

- A. Family worship in the early church.
- B. Family worship and the Reformation.

III. Principles of family worship.

- A. Family worship is the intersection of right relationship with God and right relationship with family.
- B. Family worship will be a key target of the enemy.
- C. Family worship is the foundation for worship in the family of God (church).

IV. Practice of family worship.

A. Start somewhere.

B. Vary your approach – six “mix and match” elements.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

C. Engage your passion and creativity.

D. Schedule the time well in advance.

E. Consider designing a worship room or worship space in your home.

Recommended Resources:

Free Family Worship Guides – www.visionaryfam.com/families/

Family Time Training - www.famtime.com

The Child’s Story Bible, by Catherine Vos

Truth and Grace Book 1, by Tom Ascol

Visionary Parenting Worksheet 7

A Vision for Family Worship

Take time to consider these questions with your spouse or, if you are single, with a close Christian friend.

1. Did you experience family worship in the home you grew up in? If so, describe the experience.
2. Why do you think that family worship is practiced so little in modern culture?
3. How do you think our communities today would be different if our church leaders held families accountable for family worship and the spiritual training of their children?
4. As you interacted with this message, did you sense God encouraging you to make family worship more of a focus in your home?
5. We talked about “starting somewhere.” What would be a good first step toward family worship in your home? Who can help keep you accountable to doing it?
6. Are there schedule changes that you will need to face in order to make family worship a priority?
7. If you have older children, and family worship has not been a part of your family’s schedule and habits, what will you need to do in order to help prepare their hearts for this new focus?

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Session 8 – A Vision for Discipline that makes Disciples

Principle #1: The purpose of discipline is discipleship.

- A. Proverbs 6:23 and 19:18.
- B. Obedience to parents is a precursor for obedience to God.
- C. Contrasting worldly definitions of discipline.

Principle #2: The ultimate goal of discipline is the impressing of the heart (Deut. 6).

- A. Every action is made up of the “fruit” and the “root.”
- B. The results of focusing only on outward behavior.
- C. David’s example in 1 Kings 1:5.
- D. The need to deal with both the “what” and the “why.”
- E. Dealing with passive rebellion.

Principle #3: Discipline that disciplines is consistent.

A. Children thrive in structure.

B. Inconsistency trains children to be professional whiners.

C. Inconsistency trains children that they can break any rule more than once.

1. The repeated direction...

2. The window for continued disobedience...

3. The empty threat.

(Ephesians 4:6)

4. Consider the “if – then” chart.

Wrap up and prayer

Repentance...

Turning hearts...

Pray for our children, grandchildren, and beyond...

Visionary Parenting Worksheet 8

A Vision for Discipline that Disciples

Take time to consider these questions with your spouse or, if you are single, with a close Christian friend.

1. What was the purpose of the way your parents disciplined you? What was the heart behind their discipline?
2. Which of your character flaws are revealed when your children do things wrong?
3. How do you think it would change your discipline if you approached each situation with the attitude that it was a "discipleship opportunity?"
4. Every behavior has a "what" and a "why." Which of these do you more naturally focus on when you discipline?
5. Do you see passive rebellion in your children? What is your normal response to it?
6. Do you believe that you and your spouse (if married) are on the same page when it comes to responding to "discipleship situations?"
7. If you do not already have an "if – then chart" for your children, take the time right now to begin thinking about things you might put on it.
8. How often do you use your anger as a punishment for your children? Take time right now to confess that to God and repent of that. Ask Him to change your heart.

Visionary Family

MINISTRIES

Thank you so much for being a part of Visionary Parenting! We pray that God used the Scriptures that we shared to change your heart, equip you, and expand your vision for your family!

Please visit us at www.visionaryfam.com for:

- Free audio downloads and podcasts of a wide variety of conference seminars on parenting, marriage, family relationships, and church ministry.
- Free e-books, sample chapters, blogs, and articles on faith, family life, missions, and church life.
- Our free “Visionary Family Ministries” app for your i-device or android which will stream audio, video, and live conferences directly to your device.
- All of our books and DVD curriculums including Visionary Parenting, Visionary Marriage, Never Too Late, and Encouragement for Single Parents.
- Equipping for church leaders on how to build a Bible-driven family ministry in your church.
- Information on scheduling a live Visionary Family Conference in your community.

May God bless your family and your church for generations to come!

God’s Love,

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