

STUDY GUIDE



Generations

**FOLLOWING JESUS
AS A FAMILY**



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SESSION 1

Your Family and God's
Plan for the World PART 1



I. Welcome and introduction.

Tell to the coming
generation the
glorious deeds of
the Lord!

PSALM 78:4

II. The current state of passing faith to the next generation.

III. Three theological foundations

A. God created families to be _____
centers

B. The _____ of parenting and grand-
parenting is to impress the hearts of children with a
love for God.

C. God created the family as a vital engine of _____ through the power of multi-generational faithfulness.

IV. Family ministry through the Bible—Old Testament

A. The first commandment. Genesis 1:28

B. God saves a family. Genesis 6:5, Genesis 9:1

C. Abraham's mission. Genesis 18:18–19

D. The first commandment for human relationships.
Ex. 20:12

E. The Great Commandment. Deut. 6:5–7

F. Marriage and the Kingdom. Deut. 7:3–4

G. Moses' final plea. Deut. 32:44–47

**GOD WANTS
TO USE YOUR
FAMILY TO MAKE
A DIFFERENCE IN
THE WORLD FOR
CHRIST.**

- H. The tragic era of the Judges. Judges 2:10–12

- I. Multigenerational vision in the Psalms. Psalm 78: 1–8

- J. Heart connection in Proverbs. Proverbs 23:26

- K. Marriage and the generations. Malachi 2:12–16

- L. The final words of the Old Testament. Malachi 4:4–6

- V. Conclusion and prayer.

Questions for Reflection/Discussion

1. In the beginning of this message, Rob shared a story of the “greatest miracle” he had ever seen. What was that miracle? What miracles are you praying for in your family?
2. When you were growing up, what role did your parents or grandparents play in your spiritual formation?
3. In what way does the family function as an “engine of world evangelization”? What is the connection to Genesis 1:28?
4. Which of the Scriptures in this message had the greatest impact on you? Why?
5. Which of the Scriptures in this message would you like to go back and study in more depth?

For the promise is
for you and for your
children and for
all who are far off,
everyone whom the
Lord our God calls
to Himself.

ACTS 2:39

6. Rob shared how early in his family life, his heart was more “at work” than it was “at home”. In what ways could you relate to his story?
7. If you have children or grandchildren, what is your most important mission and purpose as a parent or grandparent? (Deuteronomy 6:5–7)
8. Why is Deuteronomy 6:5–7 called the “Greatest Commandment” in the Bible? How does it connect to God’s plan for the family?
9. How does the fifth commandment to honor our parents connect to God’s plan to reach the world?
10. How is your family doing at this moment with taking time to pray and read the Bible together? What is one small way you could grow in your “family worship time” in the month ahead?
11. Considering Deuteronomy 7:3–4 and Malachi 2:12–16, why is marriage so important when it comes to God’s plan to fill the earth with His people?

**GOD HAS THE
POWER TO HEAL
BROKEN FAMILY
RELATIONSHIPS.**

12. In your church, is there a crisis of faith among the youth and young adults? Is there any correlation between the younger generation of Judges 2:10–12 and the younger generation today?
13. What does it mean for parents and children to have a “heart connection”? Why is this so important? Are there some action steps you can take to build a closer heart connection within your family?



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D. Leaving family behind? Matthew 8:19–22

E. Hating your family? Luke 14:25–27

F. The multi-generational Great Commission.
Matthew 28:19–20

G. The launch of the early church. Acts 2:38–39

H. Fathers called to be spiritual leaders. Ephesians 6:4

I. A prerequisite for ministry in the church. 1 Timothy 3:4,
Titus 1:6

J. No greater joy. 3 John 4

IV. Conclusion and prayer

**GOD CREATED
THE CHURCH
AND THE FAMILY
TO PARTNER
TOGETHER TO
ADVANCE THE
GOSPEL.**

Questions for Reflection/Discussion

1. Which of the Scriptures in this message did God use to impact you the most?
2. Why are our family relationships often more difficult than other relationships?
3. What does it mean to call our families, “discipleship centers”? Would you use that label to describe the family in which you grew up?
4. What is the connection between Malachi 4:4–6 and Luke 1:16–17? Why do you think God chose those as the connection between the testaments?

5. **How can churches and families be more effective in partnering together to advance the Gospel through the generations?**

6. **Read Mark 10:13–16. Why is Jesus so indignant? What does this passage tell us about the importance of single adults in the church in regards to passing faith to the next generation?**

7. **How does the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20) connect with Genesis 1:28?**

8. **What might a “Great Commission” family look like?**

9. **What do we learn about the promise of the Gospel message in Acts 2:38–39?**

10. In the early church, why was a man's Christian ministry at home examined if he wanted to serve in leadership in the church? (1 Timothy 3:4, Titus 1:6)
11. In what ways might God be calling you to increase your spiritual ministry toward your children or family members?



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I. The “ball and chain” of unforgiveness.

II. The history of David and Shimei.

2 Samuel 16:5–12

2 Samuel 19:15–23

1 Kings 2:1-4, 8–10

**KNOWING HOW
MUCH GOD HAS
FORGIVEN US IS
ESSENTIAL FOR
CHOOSING TO
FORGIVE OTHERS.**

III. Avoiding the “root of bitterness.”

**“See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.”
(Hebrews 12:15)**

IV. Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you.

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” (Colossians 3:12-13)

V. Three phases of biblical forgiveness.

A. Forgiveness with your will.

B. Forgiveness with your heart.

C. Reconciliation.

VI. Closing prayers.

Questions for Reflection/Discussion

- 1. How does unforgiveness act like a “ball and chain”? In what ways have you experienced this “ball and chain” of unforgiveness?**
- 2. When you were growing up, how did your family deal with conflict and hurt feelings?**

3. What do we learn about bitterness and unforgiveness from the story of David and Shimei? (See 2 Sam. 16:5-12; 2 Sam. 19:15-23; 1 Kings 2:1-4, 8-10)
4. Why doesn't "time heal all wounds"? What happens if "roots of bitterness" are ignored or left alone?
5. Have you seen situations in which roots of bitterness have grown up to "cause trouble" and "defile many" within your family?
6. How does God compare our forgiveness of others with His forgiveness of us?
7. In your opinion, why is forgiveness so difficult?
8. What is "Forgiveness with your will"? How is it different than "forgiveness with your heart"?
9. Is there someone in your life that you need to forgive?

The anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

JAMES 1:20

10. Is it possible for God to bring you to a place of total forgiveness toward someone (to be free of all anger and hatred toward them), and yet for the relationship to never be reconciled?

11. Depending on the depth of pain and hurt involved, this process of forgiving someone can be long and difficult. You need help along the way. Who can support you in prayer through this process of forgiveness?

12. Is there a relationship in your family that needs a miraculous reconciliation? Pray for God to accomplish that miracle!



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I. The foundation of the family

A. The New Testament promise of “brothers and sisters.”

B. Love as brothers. (1 Peter 3:8)

C. Sibling unity is good and pleasant. (Psalm 133:1)

**Behold, how good
and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell
together in unity.**

PSALM 133:1

II. Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-9)

A. Satan wants spiritual competition—God wants spiritual connection.

B. Create opportunities for sibling prayer.

III. Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Genesis 6–9)

- A. Satan wants siblings to work separately to help themselves—God wants siblings to work together to help the family.

- B. Create opportunities for your children to serve together.

IV. Lot's daughters (Genesis 19:30–38)

- A. Satan wants siblings to encourage each other to sin—God wants siblings to encourage each other toward righteousness.

- B. Deliver strong consequences when a sibling leads another sibling into sin.

V. Jacob and Esau

A. Satan wants siblings bitter and estranged, God wants siblings to reconcile quickly.

B. Work through daily conflict. (Ephesians 4:26)

VI. Joseph and his brothers

A. Satan wants siblings filled with jealousy and violence, God wants siblings filled with forgiveness.

B. Practice biblical forgiveness.

Four stages of forgiveness:

1. Confess—"I _____ you"

2. Acknowledge—"I was wrong"

**FORGIVENESS
CAN TRANSFORM
A FAMILY FOR
GENERATIONS.**

3. Express regret—"I feel bad"
4. Ask for forgiveness—"Will you forgive me?"

VII. Conclusion—Siblings together for the Kingdom of God

Questions for Reflection/Discussion

1. If you have a brother or sister, how would you describe your relationship with them?
2. Why do you think that God compares relationships within the church to sibling relationships? (1 Peter 3:8)
3. Did you ever pray with your brother or sister when you were growing up? Why or why not?

4. Have you seen the effects of favoritism in your family or extended family?

5. How can you encourage sibling prayer among your own children or grand-children (or even adult children) today?

6. How can you create opportunities for your children or grand-children to serve together?

7. Why is it so important to work through sibling conflict on a daily basis? (Ephesians 4:26)

8. In your home growing up, how were problems resolved? How well did your family practice biblical forgiveness?

9. Consider the four stages of forgiveness. Which of these four stages need the most attention in your family?
 1. Confess - "I _____ you"
 2. Acknowledge - "I was wrong"
 3. Express regret - "I am sorry. I feel bad that I hurt you."
 4. Ask for forgiveness - "Will you forgive me?"

10. Do you have an adult sibling you need to work through this process of forgiveness with?
11. God used Moses, Aaron and Miriam for a kingdom mission (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy). Has it ever crossed your mind that God might have a kingdom mission for you and your siblings? Or for your children and their siblings? Would you be willing to start praying for God, if He has a shared sibling mission for you or your children, to reveal that to you?



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I. “Across a crowded room”—Rob’s story of how he met his wife

II. God’s purposes for marriage:

A. The spiritual transformation of one another

B. Raising godly children

III. Men and women—equal and different (Genesis 1:26–27, 2:18–25)

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

MATTHEW 19:5

IV. God's call to husbands (Ephesians 5:25-26)

Call #1:

Call #2:

Call #3:

V. God's call to wives

Call #1:
(Genesis 2:18)

Call #2:
(Ephesians 5:22)

Husbands, love
your wives just as
Christ loved the
church.

EPHESIANS 5:25

Call #3:
(Ephesians 5:33)

VI. A vision for multi-generational faith

Questions for Reflection/Discussion

1. Describe the relationship between your mother and your father. How did their relationship impact your faith and life?
2. In your opinion, how is marriage viewed in our culture today? How do these views line up with what God has said about marriage in the Bible?
3. Which of the Scriptures in this message were most impactful for you? Why?

For husbands:

4. The first job description for a husband is to love his wife. God defines love in 1 Corinthians 13. Circle three aspects of loving your wife you want God to increase in your life. Why did you choose these three?

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

5. God calls a husband to serve his wife like Jesus served the church. What are the greatest obstacles to being a servant in your marriage?
6. How are you doing initiating prayer, reading the Bible, and having spiritual conversations with your wife? What is one small step you can take in these areas of spiritual leadership?
7. Who can you reach out to for help and encouragement in your mission of loving, serving, and leading your wife?

For wives:

8. What part of the teaching portion on respect was most helpful or challenging for you?
9. What are some specific ways that you can help your husband become a more godly man?
10. How can you grow in providing more encouragement for your husband?
11. Who can you reach out to for help and encouragement to respect, help, and submit to your husband?

**THE MARRIAGE
RELATIONSHIP IS
A REFLECTION OF
CHRIST'S LOVE
FOR HIS CHURCH.**

Prayer is the single greatest investment you can make in your marriage. Consider praying along the following lines:

1. Husbands—pray for God to turn your heart to your wife, and for help in loving, serving and leading her spiritually.
2. Wives—pray for God to turn your heart to your husband, and for help in respecting, helping, and submitting to him spiritually.

3. Together—pray for God to heal any brokenness that currently exists in your marriage.

4. Together—pray for spiritual protection and unity for your marriage.



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I. Upside down priorities.

II. The delegation disaster.

III. The Great Commandment. Deuteronomy 6:5-7

A. Love for God and His Word.

B. God's primary plan of evangelism and discipleship.

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

**GOD CALLS
PARENTS TO BE
THE PRIMARY
SPIRITUAL
TRAINERS OF
THEIR CHILDREN.**

D. The centrality of the heart and home.

IV. Four power-packed “talk” moments.

A. When you sit at home.

B. When you walk along the road.

C. When you lie down.

D. When you get up.

V. Get ready for spiritual battle.

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

B. It starts in our heart.

**GOD WANTS TO
USE YOU TO PASS
FAITH IN JESUS
TO THE FUTURE
GENERATIONS OF
YOUR FAMILY.**

Questions for Reflection/Discussion

1. What role did your parents or grandparents play in shaping your faith?
2. What is “delegation parenting”? In what situations might delegation be helpful? In what situations might it be harmful?

3. It is easy for parents and grandparents to put all their focus on helping their children develop academically, athletically, and socially while neglecting their spiritual development. Why do think this is?

4. What are the four “talk moments” God has given us to spiritually connect with our children and grand-children? (Deuteronomy 6:7)
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.

5. Did you grow up in a home that practiced “family worship”? If so, what was it like? What does “family worship” look like in your home today?

6. What is one way that you could increase your attention on the Lord during “transition times” or “drive time”?

7. When you were growing up, did you talk to God or read your Bible before you went to bed?

8. What would be one thing you could do to help your family give more attention to God in the last moments of the day?

9. In what ways do you face spiritual battle and opposition in your family relationships?

10. What is one small step you can take this week to increase “family worship” in your home?



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SESSION 7

A Sacred Trust: Encouragement for Moms



I. A faithful mother “laughs at the time to come.”
(Proverbs 31:25)

A. She trusts the providence of God.

B. Jesus as the door for the sheep. (John 10:7)

C. Faith-filled prayers.

II. “Strength and dignity are her clothing.” (Proverbs 31:25)

**GOD HAS OUR
FUTURE IN HIS
HANDS. HE IS
WORTHY OF OUR
TRUST.**

III. "She opens her mouth with wisdom." (Proverbs 31:26)

A. Faith comes by hearing God's Word.

B. The teaching of kindness.

IV. The ministry of motherhood.

A. Matthew 25.

B. A sacred trust.

Questions for Reflection/Discussion

1. **What spiritual impact, positive or negative, did your mother or grandmother have on your life?**
2. **In our culture today, how is motherhood portrayed? In what ways do you see the spirit of the world and of Satan attacking God's purpose for wives and moms?**
2. **Read John 10:7. How does this verse provide encouragement for all followers of Jesus? How does that encouragement connect with being a mother?**
3. **What is the providence of God? Why is trusting God's providence essential in our walk with Jesus?**
4. **What would be one specific way you could increase your prayer time during the coming week?**

5. **What does it mean for a woman to be clothed in dignity? (Proverbs 31:25)**

6. **Is there a relationship between speaking with wisdom and speaking with kindness?**

7. **Which Scripture from this message made the greatest impact on you? Why?**

8. **Which Scripture from this message would you like to spend more time reading and studying? Why?**

9. **Life is busy! What are some practical ways you can add more Scripture and prayer into your schedule?**

10. **Review Matthew 25:35-45. How does this passage apply to the ministry of motherhood?**

11. Husbands, what are specific ways that you can give more encouragement to your wife for her ministry to the family?

12. What was your response to the quote from Charles Spurgeon? In what ways does it change your perspective on what it means to be a mother or grandmother?

O dear mothers, you have a very sacred trust reposed in you by God! He hath in effect said to you, "Take this child and nurse it for Me, and I will give thee thy wages." You are called to equip the future man of God, that he may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. If God spares you, you may live to hear that pretty boy speak to thousands, and you will have the sweet reflection in your heart that the quiet teachings of the nursery led the man to love his God and serve Him. Those who think that a woman detained at home by her little family is doing nothing, think the reverse of what is true. Scarcely can the godly mother quit her home for a place of worship, but dream not that she is lost to the work of the church; far from it, she is doing the best possible service for her Lord. Mothers, the godly training of your offspring is your first and most pressing duty. Christian women, by teaching children the Holy Scriptures, are as much fulfilling their part for the Lord, as Moses in judging Israel, or Solomon in building the temple.



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I. A Tale of Two Fathers

II. The history of Manasseh. (2 Chronicles 33)

A. At twelve years old.

B. He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.

C. Worshipping idols and teaching others to do the same.

D. God's judgment—and incredible mercy.

E. Repentance—and a new man!

**NO ONE IS SO
LOST THAT GOD
CANNOT FIND
THEM. NO ONE IS
SO BROKEN THAT
GOD CANNOT
HEAL THEM.**

III. The history of Josiah. (2 Chronicles 34)

A. At eight years old.

B. He walked in the way of David.

C. He continued his grandfather's mission.

IV. We reap what we sow. (Galatians 6:1)

V. "The turn-around" generation.

VI. Never Too Late.

Questions for Reflection/Discussion

**REPENTANCE CAN
TRANSFORM THE
GENERATIONS OF
A FAMILY.**

1. What are some fond memories you have of your father or grandfather? What are some more challenging memories?
2. What are some aspects of your father or grandfather's life and character you want to emulate?
3. What are some aspects of your father or grandfather's life and character you want to leave behind?
4. Consider Manasseh's repentance, and God's mercy for him, even after all of his evil deeds. How does this affect your view of God's mercy?
5. If God's mercy can extend to Manasseh, how much more can His mercy extend to those people in your life who seem so far from God? Who does this encourage you to pray for today?

6. **Spiritual legacies, for good or for bad, are passed through the generations. How would you describe the spiritual legacy that you received?**

7. **What is your action plan to pass a more faithful spiritual legacy to the future generations of your family?**

8. **The Pilgrim William Bradford once wrote:**

“Last and not least, they cherished a great hope and inward zeal of laying good foundations, or at least making some ways toward it, for the propagation and advance of the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in the remote parts of the world, even though they should be but stepping stones to others in the performance of so great a work.”

In what sense is your life a “stepping stone to others”?

9. Are you the “turnaround generation” in your family? Ask God to give you endurance and multi-generational vision so that more of your family members will follow Jesus.

10. The story of Manasseh shows us that it’s “never too late” to repent and change course, as an individual, or as a family. What changes are you praying for in your life right now?



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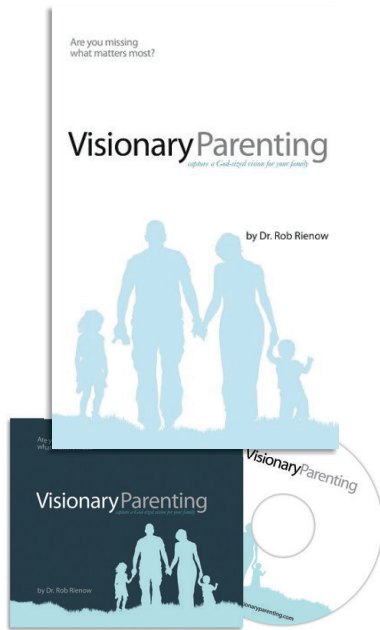
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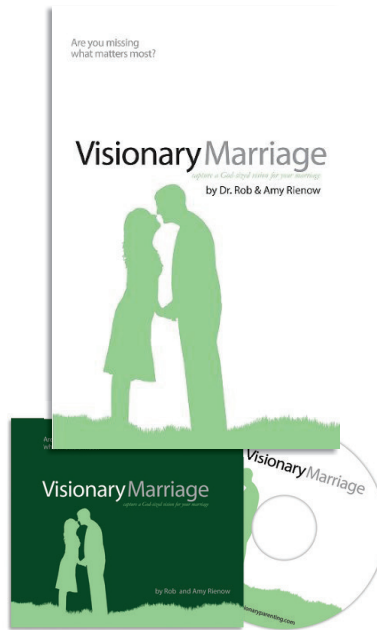
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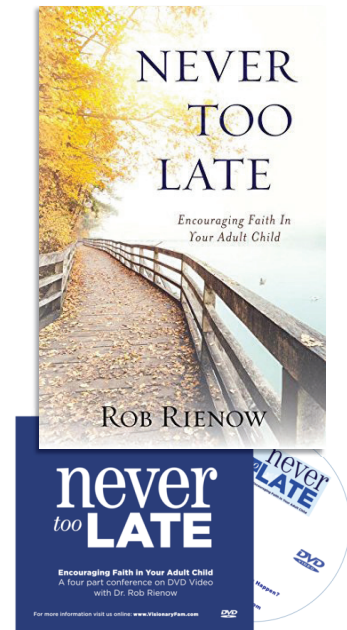
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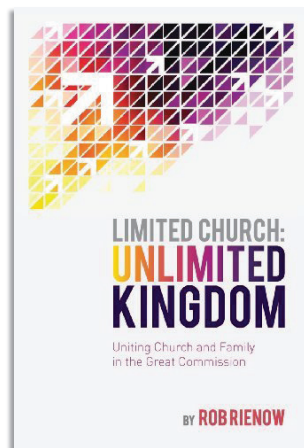
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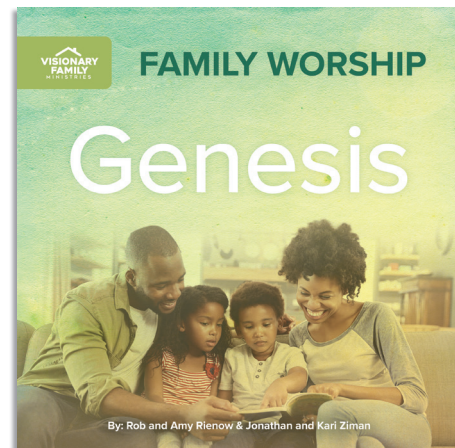
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Book and Video Bible Study



Never Too Late
Book and Video Bible Study



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Uniting Church and Family in the
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*A comprehensive guide for building
family ministry in the church.*



Family Worship: Genesis
*A fun, do-able guide to help your family pray
and experience God's Word together.*

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