

Growth Group Discussion Questions—Jan. 17-23

1. Take a breath. Before we strike up the conversation this time, let's slow it down ("But I have stilled and quieted my soul" –Ps. 131:2). Maybe it's the first quiet moment you've had all day. First, thank God silently for your parents, even if they weren't everything that you wanted or needed them to be. Second, pray that God would help you learn tonight how to have a wiser and godlier impact on your children, or on children that you know. Third, pray for those sitting around you. Your facilitator will close this time after a couple of minutes.

2. Let's jump in. There have been many classic TV and movie dads. Some have been a dream (Bill Cosby), and some have been a nightmare (Darth Vader). If you had to pick one dad from TV or the movies to be your father, who would you choose and why?

3. Dave talked about seven styles of parenting that allow kids to hijack the family. They are: (1) The Rescue Worker; (2) The Airport Controller; (3) The Playing Favorites; (4) The Whatever; (5) The Barney Buddy; (6) The Worry-Wart; and (7) and The Helicopter Style. Do you have first-hand experience with any of these types of *anti*-parenting that you can share? What was the result?

4. Spiritual leadership. Dave made the point that most parents would never allow their children to refuse to attend school, but that many Christian parents cave in when their kids say "no" to church or youth group. Why the difference?

5. Let's re-read one of the greatest parent-child passages ever penned, Eph. 6:1-3. What is God's will for children in relation to their parents? (Notice that there are two separate elements.) Next, what priceless gift do parents give to their children when they parent according to God's "Eph. 6:1-3" plan?

Follow up: According to Prov. 29:17, what two priceless gifts do you give to *yourself* when you commit to discipline your kids in a spirit of love?

6. Dave said that exercising authority and setting boundaries benefit and protect kids. What are practical and loving ways that can parents can take back authority and establish boundaries, even if they've been at the mercy of their kids for a long, long time?

7. Share a time when one of your parents established a boundary or disciplined you effectively. Did you recognize the value of this discipline at the time, shortly afterwards, or only miles down the road?

Family Matters Avoiding Hostile Takeovers By Your Kids

I. Seven Styles Of Parenting That Allows Kids To Take Over The Family.

A. **The Rescue Worker Style** _____ **Allow Kids To Take Over The Family.**

"Wise discipline imparts wisdom; spoiled adolescents embarrass their parents."

Proverbs 29:15 The Message

B. **The Airport Controller Style** _____ **Allows Kids To Take Over The Family.**

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4

Exasperate = to anger, to irritate _____

Not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

1 Peter 5:3

Lording it over = to subdue and master someone, to bring under one's power _____

C. **The Playing Favorites Style** _____ **Allows Kids To Take Control.**

Now Israel (Jacob) loved Joseph more than any of his other sons because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made a richly ornamented robe for him.

Genesis 37:3

When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.

Genesis 37:4

D. **The "Whatever" Style** _____ **Allows Kids To Take Control.**

E. **The Barney Buddy Style** _____ **Allows Kids To Take Control.**

F. **The Worry-Wart Style** _____ **Allows Kids To Take Control.**

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"

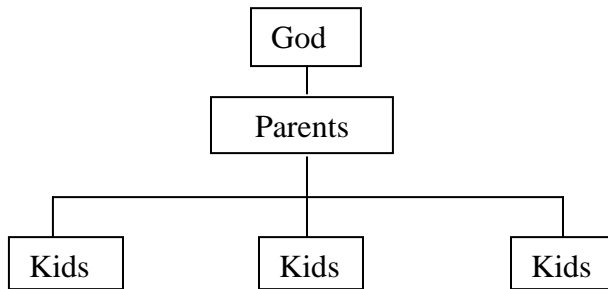
Matthew 6:25-27

G. **The Helicopter Parenting Style** _____ **Allows Kids To Take Control.**

II. How To Reclaim Your Critically Important Role As Parents.

A. **First, Understand And Accept Your God-given Authority** _____.

The Family Flow Chart



Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.

Proverbs 1:8-9

B. **Second, Be The Spiritual Leader God Created You To Be With Apology** _____.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise—"that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

Ephesians 6:1-3

III. Taking Back Control Of Your Family Demands Establishing Boundaries.

A. **Kids Need** _____ **Boundaries.**

B. **Kids Are Protected By** _____ **Boundaries.**

My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

Proverbs 3:1-2

C. **Kids Need Expanding** _____ **Boundaries.**

D. **Kids Will Test** _____ **Boundaries.**

E. **Kids Need Loving Parents** _____ **To Discipline Them When They Go Outside The Boundaries.**

Now Eli was very old: and he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting. He said to them, "Why do you do such things, the evil things that I hear from all these people? No, my sons; for the report is not good which I hear the Lord's people circulating. If one man sins against another, God will mediate for him; but if a man sins against the Lord, who can intercede for him?" But they would not listen to the voice of their father . . .

1 Samuel 2:22-25 NAS

IV. Understand The Definition, Motivation And Application Of Discipline.

A. **The Definition Of Discipline** **is to teach or instruct** _____.

B. **The Motivation Of Discipline** **is love** _____.

My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent His rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those He loves, as a father the son he delights in.

Proverbs 3:11-12

C. **The Application Of Discipline** **is growth** _____.