

# LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION

- 1 How have you experienced the influence of family discipleship in shaping your daily decisions and actions?
- 2 Reflect on a specific moment when your family's faith practices impacted your response to a challenging situation.
- 3 In what ways do you see family discipleship contributing to the overall atmosphere and values within your home on a day-to-day basis? Share a personal goal or commitment to strengthen family discipleship practices in your household.

## WE DO LIFE TOGETHER!



SCAN QR

If you haven't been involved in a LIFE Group yet, send us a message us thru Fb, and we will get you connected to a small group.

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# SUNDAY WORD

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Families often face many challenges and pressures from all directions, making it crucial to protect them against these attacks. Through the theme, "Raising Everyday Disciples", we want to make the Word of God a steady presence in homes, providing guidance for families in their journey of faith and daily life. Family discipleship is doing your best to lead your family to become genuine followers of Jesus Christ. If you're a Christian, discipleship is not just something you SHOULD do – it's something you HAVE to do if you want to truly follow Christ. For every Christian parent, this is a super important role. To be a Christian family, you have to be a family that helps each other follow Christ. That means trying your best to be like Jesus and helping others in your family do the same.

Discipleship is about doing what Jesus told us to do and following what Jesus did. Jesus didn't want His way of teaching to be one-of-a-kind; He wanted it to be an example. Jesus asked people to follow Him, live with Him, and learn from Him so that they could help others in the same way. He could have started a school, but instead, He taught by spending time with His followers, trusting in God, loving everyone without giving up, and doing the job He was sent to do. The Great Commission is like a task for us to do the same – to teach people who don't know about Christ, including those in our own families.

## WHEN DID FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP START IN THE BIBLE?

Family discipleship dates back in the Old Testament during Noah's time. After the flood, Noah and his family were the only ones to survive, and the first act they participated in once they left the ark was family worship to God (Genesis 8:18, 20).

Once the world was filled with people again, God chose to move His salvation plan forward through Abraham. God gave Abraham what I would call the first clear directive for family discipleship. We read in Genesis 18:19 - "For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him (NIV)." Through the intentional passing on of truth by Abraham, the next generation would know what it looks like to follow God.

As we read through the Old Testament, God gives the Israelites instructions on how to teach and guide their families. When Moses told them about celebrating Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread every year, these are the expectations: Exodus 12:24-27 - "24 "Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants. 25 When you enter the land that the Lord will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. 26 And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' 27 then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.'" Then the people bowed down and worshiped (NIV)." As God's miraculous work in the past was repeatedly remembered, the next generation's parents were to use this as an opportunity to teach about God.

God becomes even clearer about the importance of Family Discipleship. In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, we read what is probably the most quoted passage regarding Family Discipleship. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 - "4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates." (NIV) Family Discipleship goes beyond simply sharing facts about God with our kids; it's about parents having a real relationship with God. When parents genuinely love God and His teachings, that love should naturally overflow to their children through their everyday lives. Because God made families to be the main thing that shapes how kids grow up, we need to really understand how important our role as parents is. So, let's take the responsibility that God has given us seriously. We should consider it our responsibility to share our faith with the next generation, especially to our family members.

## **FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

Matthew 28:18-20 - "18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (NIV)." When we come to the New Testament, we learn that the goal of every faithful Christian is to be a disciple-maker. Whether you're a parent or not, Jesus' job description for you as a Christian is simple: Make Disciples!

Now, to be a disciple-maker, we must have disciples. Like Paul, we can say, 1 Corinthians 11:1 - "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ (NIV)." Finding someone to disciple can happen in many ways. For example, you can lead someone to Christ and then very naturally become the main Christian influence in their life. You can prayerfully select someone younger in the faith to spend intentional time with. Finding and identifying someone to disciple is the first step to discipling.

As a Christian parent, God has already placed your disciples within your four walls of your home. This is the reason why a primary qualification for men who serve as elders and deacons is that they manage their household well: Titus 1:6 - "An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient (NIV)." This qualification for men in church leadership is necessary so that church leaders can model what God desires every father to be doing.

Moms have a very important role as well. Paul indicates that Timothy's grandmother and mother played a key role in his discipleship. 2 Timothy 1:5 - "I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also (NIV)."

This means that while fathers are primarily responsible to lead by example, both parents are to be actively and intentionally engaged in bringing their children up in the discipline and the instruction of the Lord.

## **PARENTS ARE PRIMARY DISCIPLE-MAKERS**

In both the Old and New Testament (Deuteronomy 6:4; Ephesians 6:4), the Bible presents a case that parents are called to be the most active, intentional, and influential teachers of biblical truth in their children's lives. With the world's push to normalize godless ideologies, we must teach our children with the truth of God's Word. God has ordained that your home be a godly indoctrination camp of biblical truth for the next generation. May we as parents take this call seriously and strive by the grace of God to launch young men and women into the world who stand for truth and live for the glory of God.

If we will not disciple our children, who will disciple them? We must disciple our children now, or it may be too late. Now, maybe you will ask: "How am I supposed to help my kids follow Jesus when I'm struggling in my own relationship with Him?" Or maybe you're not struggling in your relationship with Christ, but you're just having a hard time with life in general. Maybe, it's your job or an illness that is causing your struggles. It could be family or relationship issues that are complicating every facet of life. Struggle is part of our life on this fallen earth and most of us are no stranger to it. Unfortunately, our kids later on, will also experience struggles in life. That's why it's important that we show our kids how to lean on Jesus during the hard times.

All of us have our own struggles. But we shouldn't let those challenges stop us. When we struggle, we must run to Jesus. He loves us more than we can ever imagine. Though we often choose to disobey, He still loves us in our brokenness. That doesn't mean we don't experience hard times or the consequences of our choices. But that doesn't change Jesus' love for us. Our kids aren't perfect, but we still love them though we may be broken over their behavior. How much more does our Heavenly Father love us?

Transparency with our kids is vital to the discipling relationship, even when we're struggling. That doesn't mean that we tell them everything, because not everything is appropriate for them. Transparency is opening up to someone, letting them see the real you. It means being honest and sharing even the stuff we don't want most people to know. It means telling them the truth, even when it hurts.

This is so important for your children because the old saying is true: Children do what we do, not what we say. The more transparent we are with our children, the more opportunity we have to grow in love for one another. And growing in transparency and love gives opportunity for discipleship to occur in the moments we already have with our kids. When we aren't transparent with our kids, they don't learn that struggling is an expected part of life. So when they struggle, they can believe the lie that no one understands. And if they don't know we struggle, they don't learn how to ask for help from us or from the best source we have – our Heavenly Father.

Jesus is our very best safe place. We must learn to depend on Him and show our kids what that process looks like. Through our own struggles, we can grow in our relationship with Jesus and our children, if we will be honest with ourselves and with them.

Children aren't really ours; they belong to God. He gives them to us for a while so we can teach and guide them. It's a special job for parents to show their children how to know and love God. Some parents may feel they can't do it or think it's not that important, but in God's eyes, teaching the next generation about Him is a big and crucial responsibility for every parent. The challenges we face today give families a special chance to follow God's plan. What steps will you take to raise a strong generation of followers of Christ in your family?