

Small Group Guide: “Family Life - How to Raise Kids in the 21st Century, Part 2”

Opening Question: Share a humorous or memorable advertisement or commercial from your childhood that you still think about today.

Opening Prayer: *Heavenly Father, we gather today with grateful hearts for this opportunity to come together in fellowship. We thank You for Pastor Dan’s message and ask that You open our hearts and minds as we discuss how we can apply these teachings in our lives. May our conversation be filled with insight and encouragement. Amen.*

Key Takeaways:

1. **Investing in Children:** Jesus values children, and investing in them is investing in the kingdom of God.
2. **Understanding and Engaging:** Each stage of a child’s life comes with unique challenges and rewards, requiring us to engage and understand their world.
3. **Modeling Jesus:** Our lives should reflect Jesus in character, values, priorities, and relationships.
4. **The 5 to 1 Ratio:** Encouraging five positive, Christian adult influences in every child’s life helps in their spiritual development.

Discussion Questions:

1. **Read Mark 9:33-37.** How does Jesus’ teaching about welcoming children relate to His message on greatness and servant leadership?
2. Why do you think Pastor Dan emphasized the importance of having five positive adult influences in the life of a child? How can you be one of those influences to the children in our church family?
3. Reflect on the story Pastor Dan shared about his teacher. Do you have a similar story where someone other than your parents significantly impacted your life?
4. Discuss the idea of understanding the world your children or the children around you live in. Why is it important, and how can it change the way you interact with them?
5. **Read Luke 2:52.** Discuss how Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and people. How can we foster these four areas of growth in our family life?
6. Explore this statement: “Most values and character are caught, not taught.” How do we (as adults, parents, etc.) ensure that we’re modeling Christ-like values to the children around us?
7. What steps can you take to align your family priorities with your long-term spiritual goals for yourself and your family?

Practical Applications:

1. Identify at least one child or youth in your church or community who you can intentionally pour into and encourage in their spiritual journey.
2. Engage in a real-life setting that is significant to your child's interests—even if it's unfamiliar or uncomfortable for you.
3. Reflect on your daily actions and behavior, ensuring they model the character and values you wish to pass on to others.
4. Schedule a family meal this week where everyone shares about their day and you pray together, strengthening your family bond and focus on the Lord.
5. Review your current activities as a family and ensure these align with your established spiritual priorities and goals.

Closing Prayer: *Dear Lord, thank You for this time together. We ask for Your guidance as we strive to be positive influences and to lead by example. May we welcome children and others in Your name, recognizing that in doing so, we welcome You into our lives. Please bless each member here with the courage and wisdom to apply the lessons we've learned. Until we meet again, keep us close to You and watch over our families. In Jesus' name, Amen.*