

## Lead Yourself

### Lesson 2-2: Your Family

#### Discussion Guide – Confidentiality Reminder

#### One Word Check-in

#### Update – Personal, Business, Leadership

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*“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity.” Psalm 133:1 (NIV)*

**Building strong family relationships will provide more joy than any financial accomplishment or work achievement.** Chaplains who minister to ill patients attest that as people near the end of their lives, they want to be surrounded by people they love and not by material things. Regrets at the end of life are usually about unresolved family brokenness, and not about a missed promotion at work, a bigger house or a nicer car. The end of life shifts everything into proper perspective; don’t waste the time you have now to live with this perspective in mind. Start now by leading your family well.

Many of us will have to navigate marital problems, parenting difficult children and caring for aging parents (sometimes all at once). There are steps we can take to help insulate our family relationships to weather these inevitable storms. We cannot control when the difficulties arise, only our response to them. There is no magic formula to manage family dynamics successfully, but authors, researchers and counselors have consistently found certain characteristics in healthy families:

- **They hold a deep commitment to each other.** Friends may come and go at different stages of our lives, but members of strong families show love to each other regardless of circumstances.
- **They spend time together.** Shared activities over an extended period of time build bonds that are not easily broken.
- **They communicate with each other.** Communications are both broad and deep. No subject is off limits, no matter how mundane or important it might be.
- **They speak difficult truth in love.** Family members are willing to have difficult conversations with grace and love.
- **They appreciate each other and they are not afraid to verbalize this.** They affirm other family members for who they are, and they encourage them for what they do.
- **They look out for each other, not just themselves.** This is crucial when difficulties arise; members of a healthy family know they have advocates who will fight for their best interest.
- **They work to resolve conflicts quickly and constructively.** Small offenses are kept from growing into larger issues when family members own their mistakes, ask for forgiveness and are willing to forgive others when they fall short.
- **They share a spiritual commitment.** God’s Word is a timeless blueprint for building strong marriages, raising godly children and pursuing healthy family relationships.

#### **Shared Experiences:**

- Can you describe a time when your family life was a blessing to you and to others? What made this season of family life special?
- Can someone describe your family life growing up and how that has influenced your life today, both good and bad?
- Please share how you are or are not leading the emotional and spiritual health of your children?
- What is a current family tradition or shared activity that is creating memories for your family?
- Do you know the love language of your spouse? Your children? Your parents?
- Is there a relationship in your family that is strained or broken? What action can you take to move towards restoration?
- Can you always have a conversation with your children? Can you always have a conversation with your parents?

**Bottom line:** Investing in your marriage and family will bring joy to you and your family. You will never regret building healthy family relationships; at some point, they will be your greatest treasure.

#### One Word Check-out

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### **Dig Deeper**

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Want to learn more?

- *Podcast:* [Family Life Today](#) with Dave and Ann Wilson
- *Podcast:* [The 3 R's of Parenting - Part 1](#) with Guest John Rosemond | Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk
- *Video:* [What I Wish I'd Known Before Marriage](#) by Gary Chapman
- *Book:* [Parenting by The Book: Biblical Wisdom for Raising Your Child](#) by John Rosemond
- *Book:* [The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts](#) by Gary Chapman
- *Book:* [The 5 Love Languages of Children: The Secret to Loving Children Effectively](#) by Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell
- *Book:* [The New Strong-Willed Child](#) by Dr. James Dobson