

Parenting in the 21st Century



WEEK TWO

MON 10/4

- ✓ SCRIPTURE John 15:5
- ✓ THOUGHT We need Christ! "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." [NIV] Growing fruit takes time and patience. We can be tempted to try to do things our way or become frustrated when we don't see fruit quickly. Knowing and trusting the ways of Christ is key to living a fruitful life.
- ✓ PRAYER God, help me to begin this week with a fresh start. Be my source of life. Amen.

NOTES: _____

TUES 10/5

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Philippians 4:6
- ✓ THOUGHT God is faithful. "Don't be anxious about anything; rather, bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers and petitions, along with giving thanks." [CEB] We are instructed to let God know about the things that worry us and at the same time, we are told to give thanks. Remembering God's faithfulness in the past can help us hope for what is to come.
- ✓ PRAYER Faithful God, when things don't go according to my plan, I sometimes get overwhelmed with worry. Remind me of all the ways you have taken care of me in the past. I give my concerns to you today. Amen.

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WED 10/6

- ✓ SCRIPTURE 1 Corinthians 11:1
- ✓ THOUGHT Influence with your actions! "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." [NIV] As we guide those around us, we must remember that our actions speak more loudly than our words. Take a moment to consider any areas of your life you might need to adjust so that your behavior sends the same message as your words.
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, give me the courage to recognize and change the parts of my life that aren't sending the right messages to the people in my circles of influence. Thank you for giving me the perfect example in the way that Christ loved others. Amen.

NOTES: _____

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WEEK TWO

THURS 10/7

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Romans 15:5-7
- ✓ THOUGHT Patient encouragement brings us together. "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." [NIV] Even when others aren't following the way we think they should go, we can offer encouragement and acceptance.
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, help me to be an encourager even when it feels like things aren't going the way they should. Thank you for accepting me even when I fail. Amen.

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FRI 10/8

- ✓ SCRIPTURE 2 Chronicles 15:7
- ✓ THOUGHT Good work won't be wasted. "But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded." [NIV] At times, it is hard work to love well. True love requires sacrifice. Spend some time in prayer about a relationship that feels like work right now.
- ✓ PRAYER Lord, I need your encouragement to keep working on a difficult relationship. When I feel ready to give up, please be my strength and remind me of Christ's enduring love. Amen.

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SAT 10/9

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Matthew 5:16
- ✓ THOUGHT Be the light! "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." [NIV] You have a grand opportunity to be a light in your family. What practical thing can you do today that would encourage those closest to you?
- ✓ PRAYER Gracious God, help me listen to your voice today so that I can be on the lookout for ways to bless my family. I want to see them through your eyes and love them with your perfect love. Amen.

NOTES: _____

GROUP GUIDE

- ✓ **PRAYER** **God, we acknowledge that you are already here. May our hearts be open to your presence and direction. Amen.**

- ✓ **BIG IDEA** **Caregivers dream of a future where the kids they have raised become adults and still want to come home regularly to visit. There are things we can do to lay the foundation for that dream to become a reality!**

- ✓ **READ** **1 Corinthians 13:4-6**

- ✓ **DISCUSS**
 - As you read the passage, which of these characteristics of love stands out to you? Why?

 - Who do you know that represents these characteristics well?

 - A caregiver's behavior (not advice) determines if their child wants to be like them once they are free to choose for themselves. Does that statement resonate with you more as a caregiver or as a son/daughter?

 - Raising children has the potential to bring out the ego in us, the fear in us, the insecurity in us, the anger in us, and the ugly in us. Which one of these do you relate to most? If you aren't a parent, consider this statement regarding how you were raised.

 - Where did your caregivers fall on the following continuum: patient or pushy? Did anyone "exasperate" you in their effort to get you to excel?

 - Where do you fall on the "patient-to-pushy" continuum in your close relationships? Share ideas about how to grow in the area of offering patient love to those around you.

- ✓ **Pray** **Loving God, we praise you for being gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and rich in love. We confess that, too often, we grow impatient when things don't go according to our plans or when people don't behave the way we think they should. Help us remember the ways you patiently love us as we try to be patient with those around us.**