

Parenting in the 21st Century



WEEK ONE

MON 9/27

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Matthew 6:33
- ✓ THOUGHT Seek God first. "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." [NIV] When we seek the things of God above all else, it reorders our lives and changes our perspective of what could be. Pray this breath prayer:
- ✓ PRAYER As you inhale say, "Almighty God," and as you exhale say, "I put you first." Repeat this often today and throughout your week.

NOTES: _____

TUES 9/28

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Psalm 16:11
- ✓ THOUGHT God's way brings joy! "You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand." [NIV] When we strive to live the way God has shown us in the life of Christ, we find joy. It doesn't mean things will be easy, but our joy comes from knowing that we are always loved and accepted.
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, keep me focused on the immeasurable love you have shown me. I want to live a joyful life that isn't tossed and turned by temporary circumstances. I look to you to be my steady anchor. Amen

NOTES: _____

WED 9/29

- ✓ SCRIPTURE 1 John 5:20
- ✓ THOUGHT Jesus is the key. "We know that God's Son has come and has given us understanding to know the one who is true. We are in the one who is true by being in his Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." [CEB] As we get to know Jesus better, we understand the things that were important to him and how he interacted with the people in his life. When we understand that, we understand more about who God is.
- ✓ PRAYER Gracious God, I want to grow in the way that I interact with my family and friends. Help me understand the ways of Jesus more deeply so that I can be a source of love and peace for the people I care about. Amen.

NOTES: _____

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WEEK ONE

THURS 9/30

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Psalm 31:19
- ✓ THOUGHT Honor God with your time. "How great is the goodness that you've reserved for those who honor you, that you commit to those who take refuge in you—in the sight of everyone!" [CEB] When we honor God in our families, God's goodness will be abundant. We honor God as we spend time learning and growing spiritually. What is one thing you can do today to honor God with your loved ones?
- ✓ PRAYER Holy God, I know that you are good. Show me one way today that I can lead my loved ones in creating a deeper spiritual connection with you. Amen.

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FRI 10/1

- ✓ SCRIPTURE 2 Corinthians 5:17
- ✓ THOUGHT Create new habits! "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" [NIV] What is one thing in your family or close relationships that you wish were different? God can help make things new!
- ✓ PRAYER Lord, it is hard to look honestly at some of the difficult relationship patterns that I am experiencing. Be my guide as I open up my mind to new ways of thinking and behaving. Amen.

NOTES: _____

SAT 10/2

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Luke 6:38
- ✓ THOUGHT Invest in those you love. "Give, and it will be given to you. A good portion—packed down, firmly shaken, and overflowing—will fall into your lap. The portion you give will determine the portion you receive in return." [CEB] When you make an effort to lovingly lead those in your sphere of influence, reward will come. It may not seem obvious right now, but trust that God will work through your efforts.
- ✓ PRAYER Gracious God, I need your strength to commit to the long process of leading and mentoring others. It can be hard when results aren't immediate, but help me to keep investing in the relationships that you have blessed me with. Amen.

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GROUP GUIDE

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

- ✓ **BIG IDEA** **Ideal can seem out of reach, and it sometimes feels easier to put it out of sight. Part of being a parent or caregiver is to point our children toward the ideal, while at the same time navigating what is real.**

- ✓ **READ** **John 1:9-14**

- ✓ **DISCUSS**
 - As a parent or person of influence, what is something you want to emulate or not emulate from your family of origin?

 - We are all responsible for influencing younger generations whether we have children or not. Share with the group about someone outside of your biological family who had a positive impact on your life.

 - In what areas could you do a better job of striving for the ideal, even when knowing what's "real" may prevent it? In other words, have you given up on reaching the ideal in any area?

 - Read John 1:9-14. What stands out to you, particularly in verse 14? "The Word became flesh and made his home among us. We have seen his glory, glory like that of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." [CEB]

 - Jesus was the full embodiment of grace *and* truth. He never watered down the truth, but freely offered grace. Would you say you need to extend more grace or truth toward others (especially kids if you have them)? Discuss how an imbalance between the two might have a negative impact on a family's dynamic.

- ✓ **Pray** **God, help us to prepare the younger generations for the future by casting a compelling vision of what your love can mean in their lives. We know your ways are perfect, and we ask for your guidance and strength as we strive to be good role models. Amen.**