

6

GOD-HONORING PARENTING 3

3

The Power of Parental Influence: For Better or For Worse

ASSIGNMENTS

- **TRUTH** – Please recommend that parents in your JG read one of these books as an optional reading assignment:
 - *Shepherding Your Child's Heart*, by Tedd Tripp.
 - *Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens*, by Paul David Tripp.
 - *Grace Based Parenting*, by Dr. Tim Kimmel.
 - *How Children Raise Parents: The Art of Listening to Your Family*, by Dr. Dan Allender.
 - *Don't Make Me Count to Three*, by Ginger Plowman.
- **MISSION** – This week your JG's mission assignment was to think about one person on their prayer lists and evaluate where this person is spiritually. The goal of this assignment is to get your JG thinking and planning specifically to share the gospel with that person. This exercise will encourage each JG member to be taking positive steps to initiate an opportunity to offer The Answer and the Life Issues booklets to that person. Ask a few of your JG members to share their evaluations during your group meeting.
- Complete *Semester II Spiritual Assessment* and hand in to you.

EXERCISES

- Review the memory verse of the week and talk about how it relates to the **TRUTH** section.

DISCUSSIONS

- **TRUTH** – You can discuss any of the **IN BIBLE** questions you would like to address, but be sure to allow more time for discussion of the **EQUIPPING** section. Here are some tips that may help:
 - **1 KINGS 22:51-53** – Ahaziah "...walked in the way of his father [Ahab] and in the way of his mother [Jezebel] and in the way of Jeroboam" (verse 52). This means that he lived and reigned as Ahab and Jezebel had influenced him, practicing all sorts of wickedness and idolatry. They directly influenced him to live a life of rebellion against the Lord. But Ahaziah was also indirectly influenced by an earlier king: Jeroboam, who was the first king of the northern Israelite kingdom which rebelled

against Solomon's son, Rehoboam. Jeroboam is notorious for introducing the worship of two golden calves to ensure that his people would not worship at the Temple in Jerusalem and perchance long to be reunited with the southern kingdom, over which David's descendants reigned. He declared, *"Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt"* (1 Kings 12:29). The declaration that Ahaziah walked in the way of Jeroboam means that he also encouraged Israel to worship the golden calves.

a proactive approach to influencing their children by what they teach and model. However, don't let your JG take this proverb deterministically. A proverb only summarizes what is typical of life. It doesn't guarantee a negative (or positive) outcome. The grace of God is still at work in their children and can overcome any obstacles in their path, even those that are left by parents. Encourage your JG to trust God to make them the parents He wants them to be, and to trust their children's lives to the God of all grace.

- **PROVERBS 22:6** – This proverb is a warning against a passive approach to parenting. Children who are left to their own way, typically don't stray from the path they set for themselves. It is also true that children tend to reflect the influence of their parents (good or bad, active or passive) for their entire lives. Parents should be sobered by this truth, as they consider that their virtues and their baggage will tend to rub off on their children even if it is not intentionally taught. Therefore, parents should adopt
- **EPHESIANS 6:1-4** – An example of unjustly frustrating children is to increase their responsibilities without a requisite increase in privileges. Another example is relating to children from a performance motivation, i.e. requiring good performance in order to receive love and favor. Besides destroying the parent/child relationship, these kinds of frustrations can also destroy a child's faith as they project their anger onto God.
- **2 TIMOTHY 1:1-5** – This passage is an example that the faith of a mother can influence a child to be attracted to Christ, apparently, even in the absence of the same influence from a father. You may need to emphasize that this is an example, not a promise for every family.
- **TRUTH** – Allow your JG to discuss any of the issues that influence the culture of the home and any of the 8 principles for building a Christ-centered home. Your JG may also want to discuss other principles they may consider important. Just be sure to marry this discussion with the practical application and goal setting of the **EQUIPPING** section.

- **EQUIPPING** – Spend the majority of your group time discussing ways to apply the principles contained in this material. It’s important for your JG to learn how to massage truth to make it usable. Challenge your JG to come up with *specific applications to their own experience as a parent and specific goals for which they could be held accountable*. For example, “Last week you shared that you were going to do x application so that you would reach x goal. How are you progressing? Are you getting closer to your goal?” The natural tendency is to get a little lazy about applications and goal setting. (After all, growth and change requires our effort, even when God is at work in us.) So, really challenge your JG to not blow this exercise off. Remind them of the importance of their goal – to influence their children with an attractive, Christ-centered life.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY** – Allow time for smaller groups of two or three to ask accountability questions and pray for one another.
- **MISSION** – Invite a few of your JG members to share what they wrote in the **Mission Activity Log**. Challenge your JG to make at least one entry in their log and be prepared to discuss it during your meetings. You should also challenge them to consider pairing with an accountability partner to track their progress in missional living for the next 30 days. Of course, they will be more inclined to accept this challenge if you lead by example.