

# Family Is God's Idea for People to Flourish

**Dear Facilitator:** This lesson begins in Genesis 2 and 3 where God created the world and established a vision for humanity to flourish. This vision presents individuals, families, and communities flourishing in all aspects of life, particularly as they are in a relationship with God and others.

This lesson introduces the importance of family as a place for people to flourish. We'll also focus on another area that is vital for human prosperity, the area of work. Both of these areas of life, family and work, offer ways for people to have dignity, provide a sense of belonging, and contribute in meaningful ways.

Since this is the first session, you might want to help your families feel comfortable with one another by doing an activity that introduces each family member.

It's helpful for you to know what we hope to accomplish through this lesson.


Participants will:

1. Explain that God created humanity to flourish, focusing on the areas of family and work as places of flourishing and belonging.
2. Demonstrate the importance of getting to know and understand each family member.

We are praying that God will help you as you prepare the lesson. We hope that the families in your group will grow together in God's love to become a source of friendship and support for one another.

*Blessings*

# Welcome 5 minutes

 **Say:** We are so glad that you have joined us, and we want you to know that God loves you, and so do we! Your presence here speaks volumes about how much you value your family.

During the next few weeks, we will learn more about how God has created us to flourish, particularly in our families and work. These two areas of life are central to God's purposes to make things new (or redeem), bringing wholeness to all aspects of the brokenness in our world that entered through the fall of humankind. We also know from Scripture that God is "Father" (a family title and role) and "Creator" (a work role), and these reflect aspects of His identity. Who we are as families, how we support one another in our relationships, and what we should hope for in the future are all part of God's purposes. What we do in our work, the ways we work, and the outcomes of our work are all part of God's unique purposes for each of us. God established families and work as good things where people can grow, belong, and flourish.

Over the coming weeks, we will learn how to nurture our families into loving units where each family member belongs and grows. Extended family, and those who are invited by parents, are encouraged to come alongside to support your family's growth.


 **Say:** Today's teaching objectives are to:

1. Explain that God created the idea of family.
2. Demonstrate the importance of getting to know, and understand each family member.


# Introduction 5 minutes

God originated the ideas of family and work in the very first book of the Bible—the book of Genesis. When God worked to create Adam and Eve, He created the first family and put them in just the right place to live, work, and flourish. In the second and third chapters of Genesis, we find the description of God’s idea of family and how it all started. In Genesis, God spoke and the heavens and earth were created and Adam & Eve worked alongside each other in fulfilling God’s original intentions for the world. As we read further, we see that even though problems arose in families and with work (e.g. Cain and Abel), God’s grace was faithful in redeeming families and establishing patterns for humanity to work.

God still extends His grace to us today and wants us to understand that He loves us and our families, whatever situation we may find ourselves in.

 **Share:** Share an example of how you or someone you know experienced God’s grace and provision for a family. As you share, explain how this provision happened—was it through a gift, because of a job, the encouraging words of a friend, etc? Recognizing the ways in which God provides gifts and provision in our lives is an important way to encourage ourselves and others.

## Family & Table Talk 20 minutes

 **Say:** As we eat this meal, we’d like you to discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like about your family and why?
2. Who are some of the people you consider part of your family, and why?

*After the meal, children are dismissed to their group.*

*As you begin this portion of the evening, explain that each time you will start with the overview and then the lesson time.*

*Notes*

<i>40 minutes</i>	
<h1>Parent Training</h1>	
<i>Identity</i>	<b>FAMILY IS GOD'S IDEA</b>

I've often wondered if there is a way to be a great parent in training my children. God started the first family and gave parents the job of training and teaching their children. This may seem like an overwhelming job since none of our children came with instructions.

Parenting isn't always easy, but you are here because you care deeply about your families and want to do your very best! As parents, we appreciate our children and want to spend time with them. This includes learning and living according to the Scriptures, showing our children examples of how to live together in our families, how to be excellent in our work, and make a positive difference in our family and community.

As parents, it is very important to get to know our children and understand their unique qualities and personalities.

We can know our children better by spending time with them, encouraging

them, and communicating with them. We can also ask God and others to help us along the way.

In a few minutes, we will share examples of how we can spend time, encourage, and talk to our children.

Family is God's idea!

As we think about teaching and training our children, let's start by talking about the joys and challenges of parenting. Ask parents to write down one joy and one challenge related to parenting. Have them share their answers with the group at their table (or with the whole group if you have 15 or fewer participants).

The joys and challenges of parenting help us discover ways to better understand and know our children. Again, we can do this by spending time with them, encouraging them, and talking with them.

## DISCUSS

Let's discuss a few questions and discover insights from you as parents on how these might help you get to know your children better.

(This activity will help parents connect as they share their parenting joys and challenges with other parents. As you listen to the responses, point out that these are opportunities to get to know your children better. Write the ideas on a chalkboard/whiteboard.)

- If you could set up a perfect day with your kids, what would you do?
- What is something about your kids that makes you proud of them?
- What ways could you reduce interruptions when you are with your children?
- What are some ways you could spend time with your child that would allow you to intentionally focus on a deeper conversation about a topic they're interested in?
- In what ways do you feel your parenting and work currently reflect God's redeeming work in the world to your children?
- What words would you use to praise efforts and identify success in your children?

You created a great list of practical ideas to know and encourage your children. This week, study your children, try the activities, enlist others to help you, and remember, "Family is God's idea!"



## Scripture SUPPORT

### **Proverbs 9:10**

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

### **Jeremiah 1:5**

*Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.*

### **Genesis 2:18**

*The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone."*

### **Genesis 1:28**

*God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number."*

### **Psalms 127:3**

*Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.*

### **Proverbs 22:6**

*Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.*

### **Exodus 20:12**

*Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.*

## SUMMARY

We covered a lot of material today during our short time together. Our objectives were to:

1. Explain that God created the idea of family.
2. Demonstrate the importance of getting to know and understand each family member.

Use the closing time to ask participants for their feedback about the evening. Below are a couple of questions that may be used or adjusted to fit the evening. Different learning styles need to be able to summarize, give feedback, or share ideas. You will begin next week's session by asking participants to share something they've tried or what made a positive difference in their families during the week.

Encourage parents to be wise builders and role models.

Children may be invited back to the session to end the evening with worship and or prayer for each family.

To end our lesson, please answer the following:

1. Who has an insight about something you've learned or want to try?
2. What impressed you about your role as a parent and God's idea of families?

## QUOTE TO SHARE

"Children are remarkably perceptive. Their eyes ever observe, their ears ever listen, and their minds ever process the messages they absorb. If they see us patiently providing a happy home atmosphere for family members, they will imitate that attitude for the rest of their lives. The wise parent realizes that every day the building blocks are being laid for the child's future."

Ages 4-16

40 minutes

# Student Training

*Identity*

**FAMILY IS GOD'S IDEA**

## Objectives

- Help children to be aware of why they were created.
- Help children be aware of the reason God created family.
- Help children be aware of the blessings and benefits of belonging in a family.
- Help children be aware of the roles and responsibilities of family members.

We will have some fun spending time together and learning about why God created us and our families.

Family are the people who love you, protect you, and support you while you grow to be the person God created you to be.

God worked to create the entire universe and everything in it! He wanted to make a wonderful place for people to live and flourish. He planned to create people who would love Him, worship Him, and serve Him by demonstrating His love by being good stewards over the earth and its people. This includes how we live in our families and what we do or work at. In this way, people partner with God in making the world a better place for everyone.

God decided He would bless the earth by putting a special gift inside each child to make the world a better place.

When God finished creating the heavens and earth, He was very pleased! He knew it was a perfect place to live for the people He created.

Then He created a man and named him Adam. After God created Adam, God said it was not good for Adam to be alone.

(Genesis 2:18). Adam needed someone to love him, support him, and care for him.

So, God created Adam's wife, Eve, so that they could be a family. God was so excited about His creation. He said it was very good! Adam and Eve became the first two

people to form a family. God gave Adam and Eve the responsibility to have many children and to fill the earth with people.

He wanted Adam and Eve to teach them to love and honor Him (Genesis 1:28) and God soon blessed them with two sons to add to their family (Psalm 127:3).

God forewarned Adam and Eve that they would sometimes experience problems and challenges in addition to the good times they experienced as a family. He told them that with the love and support of family, they would be able to solve problems, overcome obstacles, and make it through those difficult times.

Look around the room. Just think... God created everyone in this room for a specific reason and purpose!

He thought about you before you were even in your mother's womb (Jeremiah 1:5). He needed you to be born to bring a special gift to the world that only you could bring. Therefore, He put that gift inside of you, created you, and caused you to be born. God's plan for you is to have a loving relationship with Him and to grow into a healthy, wise, and compassionate person who shows His love and serves Him by using the gift He placed inside of you.

Just like with Adam, God didn't want you to be alone. He knew you would need people in your life to love you, support you, and care for you... your family! He knew you needed to be in a nurturing environment where you could discover your gift, begin to develop it, and use it to be a blessing to others. You needed parents to teach you the necessary information and lessons you would need to know to grow up to become who God wants you to be (Proverbs 22:6).

Families are close to God's heart! Because God loves us so much, He made sure each of us would belong to a family. He designed all families to be different, and every person's family was selected especially for them.



## DISCUSS

- Lead children in a discussion about why they were created.
- Lead children in a discussion about why God gave us families.
- Talk about what it would be like if we didn't belong to a family.
- Talk about what we like about belonging to a family.
- Talk about parent and children's roles and responsibilities in their family.
- Talk about how children can be a blessing to their parents and others.



## Activities

Activities are age appropriate. One is for young children. Another is focused on ages 4-11. The third is for older children ages 12-16.

### YOUNG CHILDREN

Have them draw a picture of their family and tell you something they like about their family.

### AGES 4-11

#### Materials

Paper

Pencils, markers, and crayons

#### Have children view YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/TqulKel9qDE>

(If not possible, do activity without video.)

- Have children write a free verse poem about their family.
- Have each child write three to five sentences about something they like about their family.
- After they have written their sentences, put them in the best-sounding order.
- Write the sentences to form a poem, "What I like About My Family".
- Have them share their poems.

*Notes*

*Notes*

## AGES 12-16

### Materials

Paper

Pencils, markers, and crayons

### Have children view YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/TqulKel9qDE>

(If not possible, do activity without video.)

- Have children work in a group to write a rap song about what they like about their family.
- First, have children collaborate to write four to six lines about “What I Like About My Family”.
- Next, have children put the lines in the best order.
- Finally, have the children tap the beat on the table top, adding the words.




**CHALLENGE QUESTION**

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO BE A BLESSING  
TO YOUR PARENTS AND TO OTHERS  
IN YOUR FAMILY?

**CHALLENGE COMMITMENT**

WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO DO TO WORK  
ON THE CHALLENGE QUESTION  
THIS WEEK?

	<b>AFFIRMATION</b> <i>Have children repeat:</i>
	<i>I was created to be a blessing!</i>