

# NAVIGATING FAMILY PRIORITIES

PARENT  
GROUP  
SERIES

#4 SPENDING LIFE

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# PARENT GROUP SERIES

## GENERAL OVERVIEW

Families, more than ever, are caught in a continual battle of prioritizing and scheduling their lives. There is a never-ending struggle with the families of our ministries as they try to balance God, church, and your ministry with the pressure of extra-curricular activities, academics and social life.

Our American society has continued to push children and teens to the brink in order to be in first place in everything. Moms and Dads have also been swept up in the pressure to achieve. Stress levels are running high as more and more homes are cracking under the pressure of parent's careers and children's packed lives.

This 4-part study is for parents to refocus their attentions and intentions back on what should be first place in their home, God and His kingdom. Each stand-alone but connected study will be based around one of the key sections of Matthew 6. The key over-arching verse of the whole study will be Matthew 6:33

*"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."*

# STUDY #4

## OVERVIEW

### *Spending Life*

This lesson will continue the conversation about treasures in context to their money, possessions and spending. This lesson will also be studying worry and anxiety.

The key section of Matthew 6 for this lesson will be verses 24-32. In this section of the scripture, parents will be studying the "Two Masters" and "Do Not Worry" passage.

This fourth seminar will be a challenge to parent's values and emotions when it comes to money, spending and having enough.

# STUDY OBJECTIVES

## WHAT

*Helping parents step back and examine the priorities of their family. Challenging parents to reprioritize their lives around Christ and His kingdom and not around earthly things.*

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## WHY

*Families are living over-scheduled, stress-filled lives, chasing down the "American Dream" and "Keeping up with the Jones." Instead, they should be "Seeking First the Kingdom of God..."*

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## HOW

*Systematically teaching through Matthew 6, examining the topics and instructions in Big Group times. Breaking out into Small Group times to share, discuss and pray. Taking Home what is learned and discussed in each study with their family to work to plan, ask and seek to apply.*

# HINTS & HELPS

## TEACHING, TALKING AND TIMING

This study is set up as a set of 4 seminars. This means that each lesson can be taught as a stand-alone study or as a multi-event curriculum. These studies may also work as part of monthly parent meetings or quarterly parent nights. Do not feel like you must limit the study to just one meeting. For example, study #2 will be covering the "Lord's Prayer". The lesson covers a large amount of information, and honestly may take you 2 different times to cover.

Each topic is a big topic and issue and can possibly take two meetings to teach. Make sure you are taking the time to answer all questions parents might have. It can be easy to focus on providing the lesson and miss time for discussion. Yet, if a parent has come to engage on a specific topic because they have an interest in that topic, then they want information; but they also need a place to wrestle with the difficulties of raising their children.

Feel free to adjust, as we have provided more than enough content per study along with an extra suggested passage to "Get Deeper". In addition, the study is geared toward parents who regularly attend church in some way. If you are gearing this towards parents who come from a more unchurched background, then feel free to adapt it how you see fit, as this is more of a Bible study formatted series. You know the parents coming and can easily make these lessons more of your own.

Be aware of “the one.” There is always the one person in the room who wants to dominate the conversation. Gently and respectfully make sure all parents have an opportunity to share their thoughts, questions and concerns.

## **NOT EVERYONE WILL AGREE**

The concepts in these lessons are made to both inform and create open dialogue. When covering the topic of priorities, including examining things like “sports” involvement, this may stir up some differing views. There are different parenting styles, engagement and belief systems in play. Be respectful and honor each person in the room. Make sure you are sifting out the difference between Biblical truth and opinion on a topic, and share the difference when speaking. Help parents know that what works for their family will not always work for another, and

## **PARENT EXPECTATIONS & COMMUNICATION**

Often times, when you set out to offer trainings and lessons for parents you may unintentionally believe, “Some parents just won't engage.” It's true that no matter what you do there will always be some parents who don't come to anything you offer. However, expect every parent, every time. When you change your attitude to one of anticipation, then the approach you take to inviting parents, prepping for lessons and teaching takes on a whole new light.

... It might sound corny, but whether 2 or 20 parents show up, it matters to that one that you are totally in.

Communicate clearly what the series is that you are offering and how it will benefit them. Avoid vague ideas like, "It will help you be a better parent." Instead, communicate the specific way this will help them understand their student better and feel better connected. We have included a sample letter for you to use. Feel free to cut and paste into an email or a physical mailing, or use it as inspiration for your own letter you will write to parents.

## **COME PREPARED**

Lessons are intentionally made in an easy to follow format. To teach them should not take a lot of preparation. It's important, however, to take a look and read through the curriculum to know if you will need internet access for media clip, copies or any other materials for your presentation.

## GROUP TIME #4

## SPENDING LIFE

## OBJECTIVES

- Parents will be challenged to re-evaluate their money, materials and matters of their heart.
- Parents will study God's perspective on money, possession and anxiety/worry.
- Parents at the end of this lesson will have a Godly understanding of how their family should view money and material possessions, and be able to deal in a healthy way with negative emotions.

## FOCUS

*View money as a tool given to us by God to be used to take care of our family.*

## MAIN SCRIPTURE

*"...No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money..."*  
Matthew 6:24-33

SETUP/  
PREPARATION

*Find or purchase a piggy bank.  
Have small slips of paper and pens available.*

## GROUP TIME #4

## BIG GROUP

## GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

*Have everyone stand up and find 2 people they have never met or have not talked to yet. Share one thing about your family that someone may not know.*

## GET STARTED

*Have someone open the time in prayer.*

*Give every person a slip of paper and a pen.*

## Q&amp;A TIME

*Think about all the expenses and things you spend money on to take care of your family.*

*Write a couple of those things down on your paper.*

*When you are done come up and put them in the piggy bank.*

## IN THE WORD

*Make sure everyone has a Bible or a device with a Bible on it. Have everyone start off looking up Matthew 6:24-33. Read the verse aloud.*

# WHO IS YOUR MASTER?

*"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."*

*Matthew 24*

## Q&A TIME

*Ask the following questions of the group:*

*By a show of hands, how many parents in here stress about money?*

*What is your biggest expense when it comes to your child/children?*

*What are some of the things you wrote down on your paper that you put into our piggy bank?*

## READ

*But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."*

*1 Cor. 9: 24-27*



*We live in a materialistic and money-driven world. Our children are surrounded by the "American Dream" of needing, wanting, and keeping up. Are you raising your children to be content?*



*Navigating Family Priorities" means putting God first and viewing money as a tool and not the other way around, that money is first place priority and God is used as a tool to use to get it.*

# TRUST GOD, DON'T WORRY

*Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear...- Look at the birds of the air; your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?*

*Matthew 6:25-31*

## Q&A TIME

Ask the following questions of the group:

**Are you a worrier?**  
How many people in here would admit to being a worrier?

**Parents of girls:**  
how many have heard the phrase "I Don't Have Anything to Wear!"

**What's the difference**  
between anxiety, worry and fear?

## READ

*"...Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

*Phil 4: 4-7*



The number #1 fight in a home, family and marriage is money. The #1 fastest growing mental health issue among children is anxiety. Of all people Christians, Christ-followers should know better than to be anxious,



Navigating Family Priorities" is about knowing that fear and faith are opposites, that worry will not solve anything. We can live by faith in God to provide.

# RUNNING AFTER GOD

*For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.*

*Matthew 6:32-34*

## Q&A TIME

Ask the following questions of the group:

<p><i>What is your child/children's must have item?"</i></p> <p><i>The thing they want but think they 'need'?</i></p>	<p><i>Did you get it for them?</i></p> <p><i>Was it worth it?</i></p>	<p><i>Was there ever a birthday or Christmas that you went looking for a certain gift and couldn't find it? What was it? How long did it take you to find it? Or did you ever find it?</i></p>
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## REFLECT

### READ

*Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life."*

*:1 Tim. 6:17-19*



*How much money or stuff would you need to feel like you had 'enough'?*

### TIP

*Navigating Family Priorities" is about focusing on being rich in good deeds and eternal things. We spend our time, talent and money on things that matter to God.*

## DIGGING DEEPER

## THE SERVING LIFE

## ADDITIONAL STUDY

*"Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full..."*

*Matt. 6:1-4*

## REFLECTION

*"Navigating Family Priorities" is being willing to share and serve others that don't have as much as we do, not to be seen or be thanked, but simply to put God and others first!*

*How is your attitude toward money? What is/are your child/children's perspective on money?*

*When it comes to your family's spending, to you feel like your child/children have a healthy spiritual perspective.*

*Do you feel like your child/children understands the difference between a 'need' and a 'want'?*

## TRY

*Godly parents need to have a healthy, Godly perspective on their "spending life" and need to teach it to their family. Unhealthy view of money, spending and possessions will lead to feelings of greed or need? The desire for more or the emotional worry not having enough.*

# SMALL GROUP #4

*Have everyone break-up into small groups of 8-10, allowing parents to choose for themselves each week how they want to divide up and whether they want to have the same groups each week.*

## SHARE AND DISCUSS

- *Introduction: (if you are in a different group) Quickly go around and introduce yourself and your family. How many kids do you have and what ages? What is your child's favorite possession?*
- *Fun: Growing up what was something that everybody your age had that you begged your parents for?*
- *What is your biggest frustration about the material driven world that our children are growing up in, in our country?*
- *Do you give your child/children allowance? Share with the group about your family's "house rules" for allowance? How much do you give? How often do you give it? Is it earned? What age did you start? Is there any rule or guidelines for how your kids spend/use/save/tithe it?*
- *How have you seen money become a master people's lives? (personally or in our world)*
- *Do you or your children struggle with anxiety or worry? What brings it on?*
- *How has your faith, spiritual life, and your church helped you deal with your anxiety, worries, and fears?*
- *Re-Read and Review the Key Passage: Matt. 6:33, as a Group. Over the last couple weeks how has this verse encouraged or challenged you and your family?*

RELATIONSHIPS

## PRAY

*Take some time as a group to pray for each other about putting God first in our families.*

# TAKE HOME #4

*PLAN: Sit down as a family, and figure up a few things:*

## PLAN

*As a family sit down and list out your monthly budget. Allow your children to see your bills and income. Talk to them about spending, saving, and tithing/giving. Come up with a budget for them, based on their allowance or other ways they earn money.*

## ASK

*Allow them to ask questions about money then ask them about ways you family could spend less/save money. Come up with some ideas based on your budget.*

*If your family comes up with a way to save money or commits to cut back on something, ask them to think and pray about a way to your family could give that money to someone in need. (\*Read Matt. 6:1-4, together)*

## APPLY

*Write out Matthew 6:33, and post it somewhere around the house for everyone to see, as a continual reminder to put God first in everything.*

**THANK YOU**

FOR DOWNLOADING THIS MINISTRY RESOURCE