

# SMALL GROUP GUIDE

# WHAT'S THE POINT?

A MESSAGE FOR MOMS & PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEM

## MOTHER'S DAY || **WHAT'S THE POINT?**

Happy Mother's Day! So many moms feel lost, don't they? It's so easy to get lost in the diapers, the dishes, and the sleepless nights. Later in life, it's easy to get lost in the bad attitudes and eye-rolling. And let's not forget it's easy to feel unseen as the unpaid Uber driver, private chef, and family physician. It's easy to lose the point of this whole thing. It's easy to decide to move away to a deserted island and put your phone on "Do Not Ever Disturb" mode.

If you ever feel discouraged, it's helpful to remind yourself of the meaning behind your movement. Discouragement wants you to feel unheard, unseen, and unappreciated. How do we allow discouragement to die? We remind ourselves why. We remember the purpose behind all the sleepless nights, long drives, and chores.

We want to offer practical encouragement to all of the amazing moms out there. So, for today, let's strive to answer the most important question of motherhood—what's the point? What's the point of this whole parenting thing? Is it just to ensure they stay alive for their first eighteen years? Is it to raise happy kids? Is it to raise healthy kids? Is it to raise the best athletes possible? What's the point of this whole thing?

Fortunately for us, the Bible gives us some valuable context in Psalm 127. Let's read it together.

### **READ: Psalm 127:3-4**

Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth.

When you think of Mother's Day, you probably think of flowers, meals at local restaurants, and moms matching their daughters for the big photo. However, that is not the kind of imagery used in this psalm attributed to Solomon. The wise king teaches that your children are like...sharp projectiles. He uses the metaphor of an arrow, which was the most common type of weapon used in that era.

Parenting can feel like a battle, can't it? It can feel like we're constantly getting it wrong and just hoping for the best. We question if we're doing enough, if we're doing it right, if our kids will turn out okay. However, that's not the expectation the Bible puts on you. It simply says your child is like an arrow—they're moving in their own direction. What is

our job, then? To launch them well and ensure our little arrows are ready for their big journey.

In Psalm 127, the poet explains that children are a heritage from God and are like “arrows in the hands of a warrior.” That’s right, mom. You are a warrior. Your dedication to raising godly children is your version of spiritual warfare, so let’s explore this illustration further.

An arrow needs four parts to function correctly. Any design flaws result in arrows falling to the ground or veering far off course. Just like an arrow has four main parts, so do our children.

**The Arrowhead** – This is the tip of the arrow designed to hit the target. In parenting terms, this is like the values and character traits we want to instill in our children. We need to be intentional and deliberate about what we want our children to aim for in life.

**The Shaft** – This is the long stick part of the arrow that connects the arrowhead to the fletching. (We’ll get to that in a minute.) The shaft represents our role as parents—we are responsible for guiding and directing our children toward their target. A well-constructed shaft allows arrows to travel far and fast. As parents, we need to provide our kids with guidance and structure to ensure they go far.

**The Fletching** – This is the device featuring feathers or fans at the back of an arrow that help stabilize it during its flight through the air. In parenting terms, this can represent our child’s support system—their family, friends, teachers, and pastors—who all play a role in helping them stay on course toward their target.

**The Knock** – This is where you attach your arrow to your bow before launching it toward its destination. In parenting, the knock represents your moments with your child. This is where you connect them to their spiritual power and pull them back to give them the strength to propel ahead.

Here’s a question we seldom think about. What’s the point of an arrow? (No pun intended.) The point of arrows is to allow a warrior to launch them far beyond where the warrior can go. Warriors launch arrows to do a job they cannot do themselves.

What's the point of the whole mom thing? To ensure your little arrows get launched well. The whole point of motherhood is to create, fashion, and mold your little arrows. Then, we launch them into the world to do a specific task we cannot do on our own.

This makes me think of a famously amazing mom. Her name was Susanna. Susanna Wesley was a great example for us in creating and then launching her children like arrows. She lived in the 17th and early 18th centuries and raised ten children. Yes, you heard that right. Susanna raised ten kids—enough to make an entire two-team basketball game.

Susanna, being a devout believer, decided to homeschool because she could not find any schools that meet her spiritual standards. She was a pioneer, too. In the early 18th century, most girls were not educated the same as boys, but that was not the case for the Wesley daughters! All 10 of Susanna Wesley's children were educated the exact same way at home—including her seven daughters.

Their educational regimen was intense, to say the least. Her kids studied six hours a day, six days a week. They memorized prayers. They learned Latin and Greek. They were expected to write research papers and present data. It was more than mere studies, though. They were also taught to respect their fellow siblings and the servants who worked for them.

We should all look up to Susanna, both the dads and the moms in the room. She was so dedicated to her children's education that she became a curriculum writer. She couldn't find any textbooks to her liking, so she just wrote her own books. Her first textbook was on the universe and how it pointed to God. She also wrote a textbook on the Apostles' Creed. Then, she wrote another on the Ten Commandments. Talk about taking motherhood seriously!

Now, Susanna did not merely teach her children. She led by example. She observed a strict regimen of daily devotional time that her son, John, later explained was a major source of encouragement for him. He documented that his mother spent over an hour with Jesus every day from the time she was 17 until she passed at 72.

Simply put, Susanna took her job as a mom seriously, and it worked out well. Two of her children, John and Charles, started the Wesleyan movement, which later became

the Methodist Church—a movement that launched hundreds of denominations all over the world.

Susanna understood her purpose as a mom to create, mold, and launch her arrows. She aimed to launch her children to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to a place in time that she herself could not go.

While all of this sounds amazing, please do not misunderstand what we are saying. Our job as moms is to create, mold, and launch our arrows. However, after they're launched, our job is essentially over. Our job is to launch our arrows, not to carry them to the target and place them within the bullseye.

It's easy for parents to put too much pressure on themselves. It's completely understandable, too. We want to carry our children's faith all the way home. We want to ensure they hit their mark. I get that. I want to do that, too, but it's impossible. Our job is to launch them in the right direction, not to carry them to their destination.

After we launch our kids, we need to surrender their journey to Jesus. Each soul must come to Christ personally and individually. As moms, all we can do is introduce our kids to Jesus and educate them about Jesus. Then, we launch them into the world to make their mark.

So, what's the point of this whole crazy, loud, messy, joyful, amazing thing called motherhood? The Apostle Paul summed it up well in one of his pastoral letters. When talking to his protege, Timothy, Paul explained, "I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also" (2 Timothy 1:5).

Paul saw the faith of the women in Timothy's upbringing alive and well in his ministry. When Timothy loved people, he was doing what he'd learned from his mom. When Timothy served people, he was mirroring his grandmother. When Timothy taught, he was remembering lessons taught to him by these matriarchs.

We can all attest to the amazing gift that is the mothers and mother figures in our lives. They nurture us. They care for us. They fight for us. They protect us. They teach, disciple, and show love in a way that allows their arrows to soar far and fast. Never

underestimate the profound impact of a godly mother. The faith you share outlives you and outlasts you.

## TALK IT OUT

*Go through these questions with your circle. Be honest. Be open. Talk through the tough stuff.*

Ice Breaker: Go around your circle and share this week's highs and lows. What was the best part of your week, and the lowest part of your week?

Q1: What stuck out to you the most from today's message?

Q2: Share a special memory about your mom or a mother figure in your life.

Q3: What does Psalm 127 compare children to, and what can we learn from this imagery? How does this metaphor look different than normal parenting methods?

Q4: In what ways can you provide guidance and structure to support others in reaching their goals?

Q5: "Our job is to launch them in the right direction, not carry them to their destination." How can this be challenging for parents? What advice can we share to help with this process?

**APPLICATION:** Name one practical way you can honor and show gratitude for a mother figure in your life. Then, do that this week.

## READING PLAN

*READ THESE PASSAGES IN ORDER EVERY DAY*

Proverbs 31:25-26

Proverbs 31:28

Isaiah 66:13

Titus 2:3-5

Proverbs 6:20-22

1 Samuel 1:27-28

2 Timothy 1:5

Do the following with each passage:

ASK– God to connect with you here. In prayer, start by slowing down and inviting God to be present. Begin with focus and openness to see what God has for you today.

READ– the selected section of Scripture slowly. Take note of the words and phrases that intrigue you, reading them a second time if necessary.

REFLECT– on what grabs you. How does this passage personally relate to your own life and experiences?

RESPOND– to the Scripture. Speak directly to God about what's on your mind and heart. Look for ways to live out what you've uncovered.