



The Mantle of Fatherhood - Malachi 4:5-6

1. Read Psalm 78:1-8 together. Why is it important for there to be intentional spillover of truth to the next generation? Why do you think the scriptures continue to hold fathers responsible for this when there is a father present? Who's responsible in the absence of a godly father?
2. Read Malachi 4:5-6. How do you think the children of God came to a place where children's hearts were turned away from their fathers, and fathers from their children? Do you agree with the notion that, "most, if not all societal ills stem from fatherlessness (or lack of spiritual men)?" Why or why not?
3. Because of the incredible power of fathering, many people have been harmed or even wounded by their earthly fathers. Tragically, abuse, neglect, disapproval or other kinds of physical, emotional or mental harm has come from earthly fathers. Have you had to overcome a "father wound" to believe your Heavenly Father is truly, "good"? If appropriate, share with the group either what you've had to overcome, or what you are currently working through. Pray for one another.
4. Why is it important to see that Father God in heaven preexisted earthly fatherhood, and that fatherhood is bigger than biology? What implications does this have for women, single moms and others who either didn't have a father, or for those who are raising kids without a man's help?
5. In the book of Genesis, we clearly see God's initiative and design for the human race, and for family flourishing. Do you agree that these initiatives are being attacked in our day? Where is this coming from? What can we do to make a recovery of the Biblical family?
6. We can all learn from one another. What successes or failures have you had in an attempt to teach your kids about God? What successes or failures did your parents have while raising you? Remember, not all generational spillover is genetic. How does this also apply to "spiritual parenting" (disciple making)? Share specific strategies and breakthroughs you've had, so others can take note! What works, and what doesn't work?
7. This weekend we looked at "culture daggers" that have been assigned to fatherhood. What were these labels (lies) and are you wearing any of them right now? What are the reversing truths that counteract these lies? Do you need to be reminded of them again tonight? Take a moment and meditate on the below.

World's Lie: Replaceable - God's Truth: Valuable

Men you have a voice too. Your presence matters.

World's Lie: Irrelevant - God's Truth: Necessary

Your role is necessary, you are called with purpose.

World's Lie: Toxic - God's Truth: Positive Influence

You have a tremendous opportunity to make lasting influence in others.

World's Lie: Weak - God's Truth: God's Strength

Be strong in the Lord, in the power of His might.

World's Lie: Passive - God's Truth: Leader

You were created to lead in humility and grace.

World's Lie: Worthless - God's Truth: Worthy

Christ has made you worthy. Wear this mantle with dignity and integrity.

World's Lie: Shamed - God's Truth: Forgiven

Don't wear your shame, wear your redemption.