

Parenting with a Purpose Study Guide

Session 1 - Our Children Are Our Neighbors

Key Takeaways

1. **Children are our closest neighbors** - The Great Commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself" applies first to those under our own roof
2. **God chose you specifically** for your specific children - He doesn't make mistakes
3. **All Scripture speaks to parenting** when we view our children as neighbors
4. **Intentionality is essential** - We don't just survive each day and end up with disciples; it requires purposeful planning
5. **Our obedience matters more than outcomes** - We trust God with the results

Discussion Questions

Section 1: Children as Neighbors

1. **How does viewing your children as "neighbors" change the way you think about daily interactions with them?** (feeding, correcting, listening, serving)
2. **Read James 1:19 together:** "Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger."
 - Which part of this verse is hardest for you in parenting? Why?
 - Share an example of when slowing down to listen made a difference with your child.

Section 2: God's Specific Design

3. **The sermon emphasized that "God chose you specifically for your specific children."**
 - How does this truth encourage you in difficult parenting moments?
 - What unique qualities do you bring to parenting that your child needs?
 - What qualities in your child challenge you most? How might God be using that for both of your growth?

Section 3: Modeling Faith

4. **How do you currently talk about God in your home?**
 - Is it normal and natural, or does it feel forced or awkward?

- What would it look like to invite your children into your spiritual life more authentically?

5. **The sermon mentioned letting children see us read Scripture and pray.**

- What barriers keep you from this kind of modeling?
- What's one practical way you could make your faith more visible to your children this week?

Section 4: Intentional Discipleship

- 6. **The Hudsons gave examples of being intentional about sports teams, music, hunting, etc.**
- What are you already intentionally teaching your children (even if you didn't realize it)?
- How can you apply that same intentionality to spiritual formation?

7. **Pick one spiritual goal for your child** (examples: loves God's Word, talks to God naturally, includes others, handles conflict well):

- What does that goal look like for your child's current age?
- What are 2-3 action steps you could take this month toward that goal?

Practical Application

Individual Reflection

1. **What is one area where I need to view my child more as a "neighbor to love" rather than a "problem to fix"?**
2. **What is one intentional step I can take this week to disciple my child spiritually?**

Examples from the lesson:

- Start the day with prayer and Scripture (even 5 minutes)
- Ask "Who made you?" and "Does God make mistakes?"
- Read a Bible story or devotional together
- Listen to Scripture in the car
- Talk about what God is teaching you
- Pray with your child about something specific they're facing

Think & Pray

- One specific thing they want to be intentional about this week
- One prayer request related to their parenting

Scripture Memory Challenge

Philippians 2:3-4 - "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

Challenge: Memorize this verse as a family this week and discuss how it applies to how you treat each other at home.

Prayer Prompts

Spend time in prayer using these prompts (allow silence between each):

1. **Thank the Lord** for the specific children He has given you
2. **Be transparent** about a current parenting struggle (new or recurring)
3. **Ask the Lord** to show you the gift in your child's personality traits that He wants to use
4. **Pray for endurance** to parent faithfully when no one else sees
5. **Surrender your home and parenting** freshly to the Lord

Before Next Week

- **Daily Practice:** Start each day with even 5 minutes of prayer and Scripture
- **Weekly Goal:** Implement one intentional spiritual practice with your children
- **Reflection:** Journal about one moment where you saw your child as your "neighbor to love"
- **Preparation:** Come ready to share how your intentional step went

"Of all the parents in the world, He chose you for your child. For this season. He doesn't make mistakes."