



Week Five: My Family

Parentnoid: fear of becoming just like my parents.

In my case this would be a great thing. My folks were well loved and respected by their friends, Church and fellow workers. They went out of their way to do what was right and good and let others see it in them. They really tried to live a Christ centered life. It wasn't until my dad's funeral that I found out all the little extra things he and my Mom had done for so many others in need. They didn't brag about what they had done. Many gifts were given anonymously. Sometimes people would find out and it was then that my Dad would ask the person to keep it between themselves. They never wanted any of the praise and glory they wanted that to go to God. All they asked of the people they had assisted was that if they ever had the chance was to pay it forward. This was well before it was popular to do so and even before the popular book and movie Pay It Forward came out. I can happily say that their upbringing helped shape me into the person I am today.

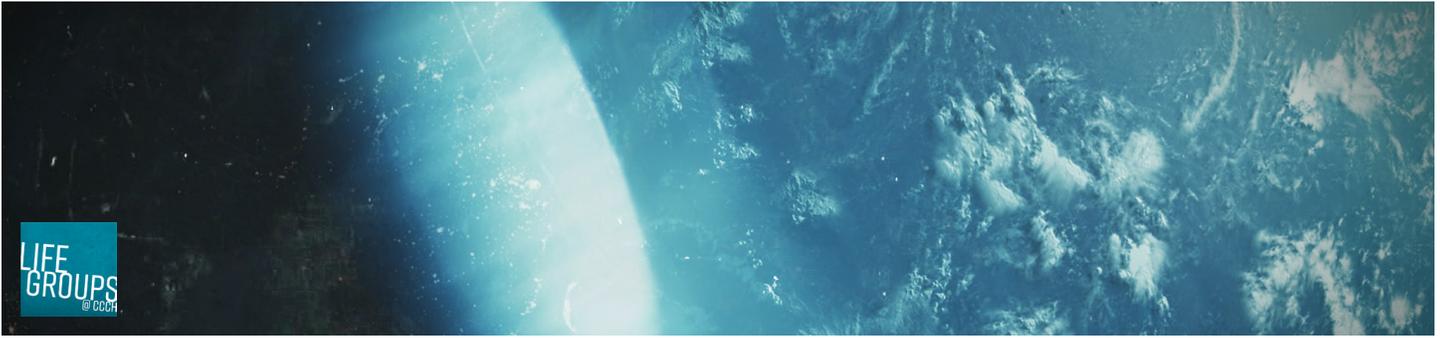
But then again isn't that what Christ had been teaching his disciples all along? Do we look for ways to get the glory or for Christ to get the glory?

Joshua 24:14-15 ¹⁴ "Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. ¹⁵ But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

Who do you and your family serve?

What are areas that you and your family get pulled away from serving the Lord and how can you fix this?

When my children were much younger we made it a point to eat dinner as a family no matter what plans were for the evening. When finished eating out came a family devotional book just one of many over the years that had a short Bible scripture, a message and a closing prayer. Not a night went by that we didn't read out of these books and as our children got older they asked to read and with our open door policy we often had friends of our children over and often they would ask if they could read as well. Our children asked many a friend to attend church and Sunday school with us as a family. Some of these youngsters already belonged to a church and had been baptized and others didn't. I know a few accepted Christ thanks to my children wanting to share Christ in a way they were comfortable with and that was through our dinner time devotion. These youngsters now adults some with families of their own still communicate through social media with our family. I know of at least 1 young man who married and has a couple of children of his own and is in a Christian relationship thanks to a dinner time devotional.



Psalm 103:17-18 ¹⁷ “But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children – ¹⁸ with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.”

Psalm 127:3-5 ³ “Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him. ⁴ Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one’s youth. ⁵ Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court.”

Proverbs 15:30 ³⁰ “Light in a messenger’s eyes brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones.”

God has blessed us beyond our families to our Children’s Children. We need to believe and follow God so that generations to come will follow our lead.

Real love = time. Time is valuable and time is a limited resource.

Do you spend time as a family worshiping God? Outside of Church?

In what ways does your life interfere with time with God and your family?

What could you do better to find time for God and your family?

Ephesians 5:15-17 ¹⁵ “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.”

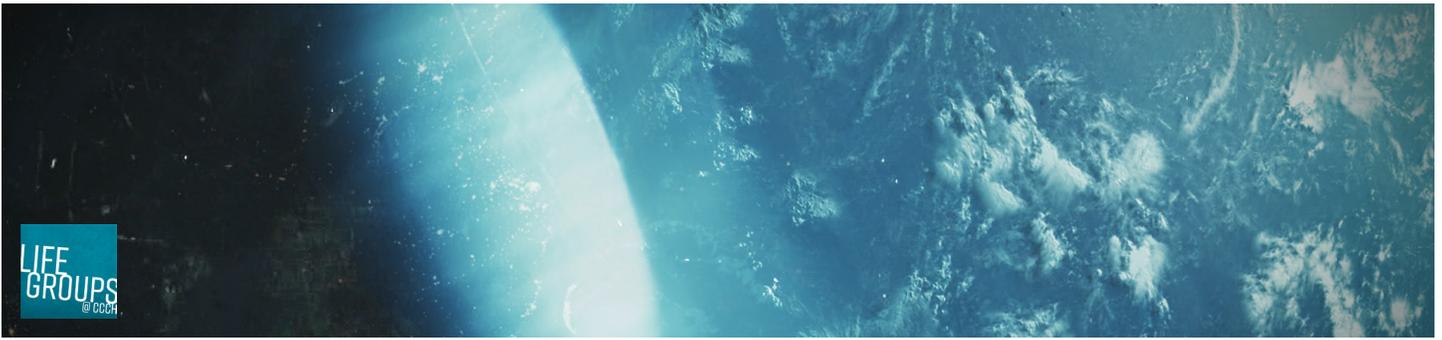
Our fault is our over commitment today and in turn our families suffer. Good becomes bad. We don’t have enough time to do everything for our families to the best of our ability so we take short-cuts. We lack discipline and we just don’t say NO. In turn our relationships within the family suffer even more. We have moved from being a healthy family to a disconnected often angry family and all we have is leftover time to give our family.

How do we fix this problem?

Romans 12:9-10 ⁹ “Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.”

Don’t give your family your leftovers. And don’t expect them to give you their leftovers as well. Be genuine with your time. Parents sometime we have to say NO. Hate forces that disrupt your family. Love what is good for your family.

What are ways you and your family can connect that is good and positive?



Ephesians 6:1-4 ¹ “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² “Honor your father and mother” – which is the first commandment with a promise – ³ “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” ⁴ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

“Our greatest priority as Christian parents is to gradually transfer our Children’s dependence away from us until it rests solely on God.” – Craig Groeschel.

As a family we always need to find ways to balance time so we can let every family member feel important. Just as the Church is not made up of just 1 member but members with a variety of talents and gifts. A balanced family is built on truth, trust, honesty and love just as the Church is.

The Church can’t replace parents but needs to partner with them in the upbringing of our children. We need to love our families because he did first love us.

1 John 4:19 ¹⁹ “We love because he first loved us.”

What are ways that we can show love to our families?