

## A Missing Piece to Your Family



Can you remember how you felt when you laid down the final piece of a puzzle; the great joy and an overwhelming sense of accomplishment when the puzzle was completed?

When starting an endeavor to complete a puzzle with others, it took time, patience, perseverance, and collaboration to look at each individual piece and see how it should fit with the overall image.

There are different approaches to completing a puzzle. One way is to dump out the pieces from the box, start assembling the puzzle, and hope it will all come together correctly.

Another is to take a systematic and intentional approach. First, the box top is an important part of the puzzle. It is difficult to fit together the individual pieces and expect to create a beautiful image without knowing what it should look like when completed. Next, to make sure everything stays organized, you categorize the puzzle pieces in a systematic order, making sure that corner and edge groups are kept separate from the center pieces so the puzzle's framework can be built first to hold all the pieces in place. Finally, as you

construct the puzzle, you often reference the box top to remind you how each individual piece fits in the picture according to the box top.

Family leadership is remarkably like puzzle building. For family leaders to build their families with an ideal outcome in mind, they too should follow a systematic plan. This can be accomplished in three ways:

### **1. Look at the Box Top**

Family leaders need to spend time looking at the bigger picture for the family to know how the finished image will look. The family leader must be able to see the ideal outcome, have the proper mindset to achieve that outcome, and know what all the pieces are to achieve it. To gain the bigger picture perspective, family leaders should answer the following questions:

Imagine 50 years from now, after you have passed away:

- How would you like to see your family interact and communicate with each other?
- What would you like to see them doing together, and how often?
- What is important about this to you as the family leader?
- What is important about this to your family members?

### **2. Layout the Pieces**

Once the bigger picture is in mind, it is important to identify the family leader's role and responsibilities to know what they need to do, say, and become so the family members can consider their participation for their own reasons and not just the family leader's ideals.

As a family, they need to lay out the pieces of the family leader's ideal outcome which will help keep the family members focused on the long-term family vision. Together they should identify what needs to happen to achieve that outcome.

### **3. Enjoy the journey**

The process of becoming a successful family with a unified vision is not a single event; it is a process over a long period of time. It is a journey that is full of enriched memories of working together with one vision in mind. A journey that is full of shared experiences of challenges, family fun, and family development. It is a journey where each member is left feeling something bigger and more beautiful has been created by working together as a family.

Neglecting to do and say things without intentionality and keeping the big picture in mind is the missing piece to a family that wants to establish unity, continuity, and sustainable culture.