

## Dear Jesus, Welcome Home!

Topical

What would happen if we all captured a God-sized vision for our family? God has a purpose and a plan for the family. The family is God's master plan for discipleship and evangelism. These principles will help us to live out God's purpose for the family.

### #1: THE FAMILY IS WHERE WE LEARN TO GLORIFY GOD AND LIVE FOR HIM.

*Has not the one God made you? You belong to him in body and spirit. And what does the one God seek? Godly offspring.* Malachi 2:15a (New International Version)

*God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."* Genesis 1:28 (NIV)

- The primary purpose of our lives and the lives of our families is to glorify God.

*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.* Genesis 1:27 (NIV)

*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.<sup>5</sup> Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.<sup>6</sup> These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.<sup>7</sup> Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.<sup>8</sup> Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.<sup>9</sup> Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.* Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NIV)

- The Christian family is God's best evangelistic tool for reaching a lost world!

### #2: THE FAMILY IS WHERE WE LEARN TO LOVE GOD AND ONE ANOTHER.

- Love and nurturing take time and the family is where we learn what that looks like.

*Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children.<sup>2</sup> Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.* Ephesians 5:1-2 (New Living Translation)

- We were created to love God.

*Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.* Deuteronomy 6:5 (NIV)

### #3: THE FAMILY IS WHERE WE LEARN ABOUT VALUES AND CHARACTER.

- The family is God's master plan for discipleship.

*These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.<sup>7</sup> Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.* Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NIV)

- Parents: Your job assignment from God is to bring your children to an experiential faith in Jesus Christ!

*Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.* Proverbs 22:6 (New American Standard Bible)

- To our forefathers, faith was an experience.
- To our fathers, faith was an inheritance.
- To us, faith is a convenience.
- To our children, faith is a nuisance.

God has a better way!

- Application (a few suggestions):

- Begin by praying together as a family and inviting Jesus into your home.
- Make a family commitment this year for family devotions and worship.
- As a family, decide on a family purpose statement or a family purpose.
- Partner with children and youth ministry in the spiritual development of your children.
- Become a spiritual father or mother for the next generation.
- Participate in the Family Times here at Lighthouse.
- Devote yourselves to a family resource over the next few months.
- Attend the family conference in April/May.

*I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.* Genesis 17:7 (NIV)

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,<sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.* Ephesians 3:20-21 (NIV)