



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Family Matters

1. This week we discussed our core value, Family Focused. This value reminds us that here at Spring Hills we are dedicated to our vision of building generations for Jesus Christ and helping families to grow in healthy ways together. In the sermon I said, "God designed the family with a purpose." Pause and read **Colossians 3:18-21** - **18 Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly. 20 Children, always obey your parents, for this pleases the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not aggravate your children, or they will become discouraged.** From this scripture, what stands out to you?

Here's some help from a Bible commentary: *"In the context of how God intends the family to operate, the "fitting" picture is that of a godly husband who loves his wife and is gentle with her (Colossians 3:19). She, in turn, offers similar kindness to him and supports her husband's role as the leader of the family. The children grow and thrive in this environment and find it easy to follow the leadership of their parents."* How does this description impact how you see Christian marriage?

Another verse on marriage says: **Ephesians 5:33** - **However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.** What are your thoughts on this verse? What do you think is the primary difference between love and respect?

The family is designed by God to bring safety, joy and belonging to every member. Another purpose is to raise children to be emotionally and spiritually healthy. Dr. William Mitchel says, **"According to research, one's initial attitudes about life are formed no later than age nine or ten, and most even earlier. Research also overwhelmingly reveals it is far easier to formulate correct attitudes early in life than to change them in adulthood. That simple fact alone makes the responsibility of the parent loom over all aspects of life."**

How important is healthy parenting? How did your parents do with that? Or not? If you are a parent, how do you feel you are doing? Share some practical ways to parent this way. If your children are parenting, what does their style say about yours?

2. The second point in the sermon on this core value reminded us that family provides the opportunity for great joy and also great pain in life. Share some of the joy your family has brought you. Would you be willing to share some of the pain?

3. The third focus from the message on this core value reminds us that God longs to provide healing, forgiveness, and fresh starts for families. Pause and read **Colossians 3:13-14, Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.** Thinking of the context of your family, what would it look like for you to “bear with each other”? Has anyone in your family ever had to forgive you for anything? Please tell that story.

Being very honest, is there someone in your family that you need to forgive? If so, what is the first step for you to begin that process?

In what ways does your family, immediate or extended need a fresh start? Be specific.

4. The final point in the messages stated, “In Christ, God has created a new family.” In the family that God has created we are instructed to see him as our loving father. **1 John 3:1 - See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!** Thinking of God as our father, John Calvin said: **“By being reconciled to God through Christ’s blamelessness, we may have in heaven instead of a Judge a gracious Father.”** Is it difficult for you to see God as a father or do you more readily see him as a judge?

John Eldredge said: **We aren’t meant to figure life out on our own. God wants to father us. He wants to father us intimately, but we have to be in a posture to receive it, this may be one of the most basic and most crucial ways a person repents.** What are your thoughts on this quote? What do you think is the ‘right posture’?

Being in God’s family also means we should see all other followers of Christ as family. **Hebrews 2:11 So now Jesus and the ones he makes holy have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters.** How does it affect you to think of other Christians as family? Have you ever had a relationship with another believer that felt as close or even closer than your birth family? How are those relationship cultivated?

5. What will you take away from this time? What is the one thing from this sermon or this study that you want to remember and allow to affect your daily life?