



HABITS OF EFFECTIVE FAMILIES

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Ground Rules

1. Be respectful of one another
2. Listen without interrupting
3. Allow yourself to feel
4. All questions are OK
5. Be confidential
6. Be open-minded
7. Participate with honest
8. Focus on the positive
9. Keep a prayerful attitude

Elements

- Covenant
- Grace
- Empowering
- Intimacy

Covenant in the Bible

“But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark – you and your sons and your wife and your sons’ wives with you.”

Genesis 6:18 (NIV)

“On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates.’”

Genesis 15:18 (NIV)

Meaning of Covenant

Berith (Hebrew) – Agreement or arrangement

Diatheke (Greek) – Last will and testament, decree, or agreement

Webster's – Covenant

1 – Formal, solemn, binding agreement

2a – A written agreement or promise

Covenant of Love

- Based on unconditional commitment
- Unilateral (one-way) or bilateral (two-way)
- Contract agreement alone will miss out on the greater dimensions of covenant love

Grace in the Bible

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God-not by works so that no one can boast.”

Ephesians 2:8, 9 (NIV)

“But if you do not forgive men of their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

Matthew 6:15 (NIV)

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ”

Matthew 6:15 (NIV)

Grace of Forgiveness

- Family relations as designed by God to be lived in an atmosphere of grace, not law
- Family based on law – perfection demanded
- In an atmosphere of grace family members act responsibly out of love and consideration for one another
- Family members living in grace will accept law in the form of order and responsibility in relationships

Empowerment in the Bible

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”

John 1:12 (KJV)

“Love is patient, love is kind, it does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.”

1 Corinthians 13: 4-6 (NIV)

Empowering Service

- Biblical model for the use of power
- Active intentional process of enabling someone to acquire power
- Person who is empowered has gained power
- Process of helping another recognize their strengths and potentials
- Ultimate goal is to release child to full potential

Intimacy in the Bible

“As they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”

Genesis 2:25 (KJV)

“There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.”

1 John 4:18 (NIV)

To Know or Be Known

- Human beings have the capacity to be intimate
- Adam and Eve had the ability to be themselves without any pretense
- Shame is born out of fear of being known intimately
- Based upon trust and commitment (1 John 4:16, 18)
- Unconditional love modeled by Jesus Christ

Summary

- Commitment is to be based upon a mature covenant
- Family life is to be established and maintained within an atmosphere of grace
- The resources of family members are to be used to empower rather than control one another
- Intimacy is based on a knowing that leads to caring, understanding, communication, and communion with others

The Promise of Success

*“I can do everything through
Him who gives me strength.”*

Philippians 4:13 (NIV)

Resources

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