

Session 5

Review previous homework assignment.

Opener (See Appendix C – Drama 1)

Act out, or read and discuss this scene

A stepmother is concerned about her new 5-year-old son riding his bike in the street. Dad is unconcerned because he thinks his son is responsible enough. His response becomes a heated discussion between them. The stepmother is made to feel that her maternal instincts are not important in this family, and that her opinion does not matter.

They decide to sit and work together on mutual guidelines for “their son”. They begin to write out a new set of rules acceptable to both spouses.

Points from the situation:

1. Two sets of rules
2. Two opinions: One thing about opinions --- everyone has one.
3. Both could have valid opinions and good reasons
4. Sounds like an argument – agitation. Why?
5. Perception is your reality.
6. Good solution? Why?

Working together, being willing to see each other’s viewpoint, and writing down a workable solution is a step to becoming one in mind.

Chapter 4 Divisions Within Families

I. You have an adversary!

Your adversary is not your spouse - or your stepchildren! It is not even your former spouse!

Read and discuss the following two scriptures:

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” 1 Peter 5:8

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” Ephesians 6:12

Spiritual battles cannot be fought and won in the flesh.

Here are two steps to get on the offensive and fight for your family:

1. Applying God’s Principles
Read and discuss Psalm 127: 1_____
2. Developing the Character of Christ in yourself. (Galatians 5:22-23)
Love Patience Faithfulness
Joy Kindness Gentleness
Peace Goodness Self-control

II. Divisions Within Families

“...every city or household divided against itself will not stand.” Matthew 12: 25b

Divisions are Satan’s strategy – he looks for that place.

Divisions creep in subtly --- you may not be aware of them. Divisions have the same process as erosion; they start as very small hairline cracks.

His rules vs. _____ rules
_____ children vs. her children

Review some symptoms of issues (Book pgs 72-73) that reveal divisions in Blended Families.

Write down the two most dominant divisions that you perceive in your new home:

WIFE

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

HUSBAND

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

(It is OK if husband and wife answers do not match.)

If you have identified some divisions, *do not think or feel defeat!* It is important that together you identified the key divisions within your family.

If you have not done so already, acknowledge how your spouse is feeling!

You *must* resolve divisions. If not settled - or as long as they are not settled – they will breed harsh words, offenses, and disrespect.

III. Finding Solutions that Work

Review each of the items below (Book pgs 74-105), and the advice under each subject. Write down any useful advice that you find for the divisions you previously listed:

a. Order and Respect for the New Parent (Book pgs 74-83) _____

Manipulation occurs in all homes, but in Blended Families the child often challenges or attacks the new parent.

Review and discuss God’s Order within the marriage and family (Book pgs 75-78).

Ask your spouse the three questions on pg 76, and listen closely to their answer. _____

Respect is a two-way process. You receive what you give.

Review how people validate themselves (Book pgs 81-83) and discuss the Action Steps.

b. “Step” Syndrome (Book pgs 83-87) _____

c. “You Discipline Yours, I’ll Discipline Mine” (Book pgs 87-89) _____

d. Earning the Right to Discipline (Book pgs 89-95) _____

f. Favoritism (Book pgs 95-97) _____

e. Submission After Independence (Book pgs 97-99) _____

g. Child Wants Biological Parents Back Together (Book pgs 99-100) _____

Almost every child of divorce has a dream to see their natural parents back together, even after one or both are remarried. And they may hold on to that dream for years. "The Parent Trap" movies do not depict reality.

h. Child Wants to Live with the Other Biological Parent (Book pgs 100-102) _____

- 1) Child misses other parent
- 2) Child may not accept or feel accepted by stepparent.

i. Your Spouse's Need for Security (Book pgs 102-105) _____

- Intimidated by your relationship with former spouse.
- Making your house your spouse's home.
- Extended family issues.

Based on any divisions that you identified, develop a strategy to overcome and remove each division, using the recommended action steps. Together with your spouse, write down the Action Steps for each division you identified:

God has a strategy for your family! He wants love and grace to flow freely in your home. He wants all members to accept, respect and embrace each other!

Do not be overwhelmed with the task before you. You, your spouse and God are more than enough to achieve greatness in your family!

"Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass." (Psalm 37:4-5)

HOMEWORK:

1. To help identify divisions in your family, answer the following questions:

a.) What do you disagree about?

HUSBAND _____

WIFE _____

b.) What do you argue about?

WIFE _____

HUSBAND _____

c.) Is there friction between family members?

HUSBAND _____

WIFE _____

d.) What would you like to see changed in your family?

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WIFE _____
HUSBAND _____

e.) Write down any other divisions identified when you reviewed the symptoms on Book pgs 72-73.

HUSBAND _____

WIFE _____

2. Pray together, lifting up your spouse and your family needs. Pray over the divisions you identified.
3. Pray over the Action Steps you and your spouse wrote to address each division. Be intentional and follow through with your Steps.
4. Plan a family day or night together. Make every effort to have all family members there.
5. Read Chapter 5 of the Book for next week.