

Christian Parenting Study Group

I. Rationale and Objectives

Pastor Flater approached me with a proposal to lead a Christian Parenting group with the goal of engaging members that may be young parents or new members and who may not currently be involved in any Bible study group. The purpose of the group is to achieve the following three goals:

1. Development and/or deepening of faith of the participants through introspection, discussion and sharing of experiences and thoughts.
2. Familiarization with the Bible through the investigation of and discussion of scripture.
3. Dissemination of and sharing of Christian parenting advice.

To achieve these three goals I have developed a multi-sensory approach. Visual learners are targeted through the reading of printed resources and viewing of parts of movies and videos. Auditory learners are also targeted through listening to movies/videos and through music and discussion. The utilization of food (that I will prepare) as well as the tangible creation of a personal scrapbook targets kinesthetic learners. Additionally, each participant will be given a blank journal to record his/her own feelings and observations as a permanent document for future reflection. I will also be sharing my own personal reflections and learning from two books related to Christian Parenting I am reading (see Section III).

The entire course of study, from September through May is broken into four-week themes. Each theme will include at least one week with food related to the time of year of theme (to be combined with music and movie clips/videos), a week that focuses on discussion of faith, a week that focuses on discovering scripture, and a week devoted to the creation of a scrapbook reflecting the objectives of the group and personal experiences related to HTLC, faith and scripture.

The four-week theme blocks are designed to be flexibly scheduled around any special entire-congregation Sunday School activities (such as Global Fest, etc.). The group will not be scheduled to meet the Sundays immediately after Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year's Day nor on Easter Sunday. Lastly, one Sunday in both autumn and spring have been left open in the event I need to take a week off for personal reasons.

II. Schedule (Theme)

Block One (Values) September 20-October 11 (all dates are tentative to change related to congregational days/personal time).

Week #1: Introductions. Food, music and Faith Talk discussion on values.

Week #2: Beginning of scrapbook (subject: pastimes). Assignment of taking pictures of involvement with HTLC throughout the year.

Week #3: Food, music and video viewing related to the theme of values.
Assignment of journaling of two pages of Scripture Talk: OT 22 (The Lord is God) and NT 4 (Our Father).

Week #4: Sharing of Scripture Talk journals. Sharing is optional based on comfort level, not compulsory.

Block Two (Etchings) October 25-November 15

Week #1: Faith Talk on etchings.

Week #2: Scrapbooking on experiences at HTLC including weddings, confirmations, baptisms, special days, etc.).

Week #3: Food, music and movie week related to etchings. Assignment of Scripture Talk OT 68 (Steadfast love) and NTs 56-57 (I Corinthians-Love is patient).

Week #4: Scripture Talk journal sharing.

Block Three (Actions) November 22-December 20 (no group on November 29)

Week #1: Faith Talk on actions.

Week #2: Scrapbooking on involvement with HTLC/faith outside church.

Week #3: First half screening of "Christmas with the Kranks" and food.

Week #4: Second half screening of "Christmas with the Kranks"

Block Four (Memories) January 10-January 31 (no groups on Dec. 27 or Jan. 3)

Week #1: Faith Talk on memories, sharing of Christmas books.

Week #2: Scrapbooking on memories and the holidays.

Week #3: Food, music and movie week related to memories. Assignment of Scripture Talk OT 35 (If I lift up my soul) and NT 50 (Spirit helps us).

Week #4: Scripture Talk journal sharing.

Block Five (Values) February 7-March 7 (no group on Global Fest Sunday).

Week #1: Faith Talk on Values.

Week #2: Scrapbooking on Sunday School/children's involvement.

Week #3: Food, music and movie week related to values and Global Fest.
Assignment of Scripture Talk OT 71 (Let justice roll) and NT 63 (Baptized into Christ).

Week #4: Scripture Talk journal sharing.

Block Six (Actions) March 14-April 11 (no group on Easter Sunday).

Week #1: Faith Talk on Actions.

Week #2: Scrapbooking on involvement with HTLC/faith outside church (dating from the assignment in Block One).

Week #3: Food, music and movie week related to actions and Easter season.
Assignment of Scripture Talk OT 12 (Remember the Sabbath) and NT 54 (Eat this bread).

Week #4: Scripture Talk journal sharing.

Block Seven (Memories) April 18-May 16 (no group on May 2).

Week #1: Faith Talk on Memories.

Week #2: Scrapbooking on Easter season.

Week #3: Food, music, and movie week related to memories. Assignment of Scripture Talk OT 13 (Honor your mother and father) and NT 69 (Faith is the assurance).

Week #4: Scripture Talk journal sharing.

This schedule leaves open two additional weeks to go until May 30 that could accommodate congregational days or could be used for an additional scrapbooking or a final day for discussion about improvements to the group/food/celebration and plans for a summer group.

III. Resources, Materials and Budget

The following is a list of resources to be utilized by the group and approximate cost based 10 couples/individual participants:

1. Faith Talk-1 copy (HTLC owned)		No charge
2. <u>Growing Compassionate Kids</u> by Jan Johnson-1 copy		\$11.95
3. <u>Making a Home for Faith</u> by Elizabeth F. Caldwell-1 copy		\$14.95
4. <u>Milk and Honey Cooking School</u> by Daphna Flegal and Lee Dell Stickler-1 copy		\$10.00
5. Composition notebook-1 copy/couple or participant 10 @ \$1 ea.		\$10.00
5. Scripture Talk-1 copy/couple (HTLC owned)		No charge
6. Scrapbook and materials- copy/couple	10 @ approx. \$20	\$200.00
7. Food-9 times	9 @ approx. #10	\$90.00
Total		\$336.90

Starter List of Obligations of Christian Parents

1. Baptism and promises made during the baptism
 - a. Teach The Lord's Prayer
 - b. Teach The Apostle's Creed
 - c. Teach The Ten Commandments
2. Bedtime prayers and routines
3. Talking openly of faith with others
4. Attending worship
5. Getting involved
 - a. through a church/place of faith (parents groups, Sunday school, vacation Bible school, ministries, etc.)
 - b. in the community (volunteer organizations, donations, etc.)
6. Living daily lives in accordance with Christian teachings
 - a. love
 - b. compassion
 - c. helping and sharing with others
 - d. be humble and not jealous
 - e. do not judge

Christian Parents Discussion Group Midterm Evaluation

1. How enjoyable do you find the group? Please circle one number.

1	2	3	4	5
Not enjoyable		Somewhat enjoyable		Very enjoyable

2. How educational has the experience been for you?

1	2	3	4	5
Not educational		Somewhat educational		Very educational

3. What has been your favorite type of activity in the group? Please select one.

- Discussion about personal faith.
- Creating scrapbooks about faith.
- Watching videos/listening to music related to faith.
- Eating Biblical food.
- Bible study and learning about scripture.
- Open discussion with other parents about any topics.

4. Has this been a worthwhile experience for you so far? Please circle one.

Yes No

5. Are you interested in continuing the group next year (fall of 2010)?

Yes No

6. What suggestions for improvement would you like to see in the future?

List of Resources I've Used

- I. Books
 - A. Milk and Honey Cooking School by Daphna Flegal and LeeDell Stickler
 - B. Frogs without Legs Can't Hear by David W. Anderson and Paul Hill
 - C. Making a Home for Faith by Elizabeth Caldwell
 - D. Growing Compassionate Kids by Jan Johnson
 - E. Spark Bible
 - F. Master Builder's Bible for Men
- II. Resources
 - A. Scripture Talk
 - B. Faith Talk
 - C. The Lutheran Handbook and Workbook
 - D. Church library
- III. Publications and Online Resources
 - A. Vibrant Faith Ministries (formerly the Youth & Family Institute) catalogues and website
 - B. Cokesburg catalogue
 - C. Upper Room Ministries catalogue
 - D. Lutheran Brotherhood & Search Institute catalogue
 - E. Augsburg Fortress catalogues
 - F. Quotations from Joel and Victoria Osteen
 - G. Splash pages for toddlers
 - H. Inspirational emails
- IV. Events
 - A. Workshops
 - B. Conventions
 - C. Conferences
- V. Music
 - A. Christian Children's CDs by various artists
 - B. "Pride" by U2
 - C. "Secret of Life" by Faith Hill
 - D. "Another Day in Paradise" by Phil Collins
 - E. "Better Days" by The Goo Goo Dolls
 - F. "They Dance Alone (Gueca Solo) by Sting
 - G. "Jesus He Knows Me" by Genesis
- VI. Movies and Video Resources (either in entirety or clips)
 - A. "It's a Wonderful Life"
 - B. "Christmas with the Kranks"
 - C. "Christmas Vacation"
 - D. "Mr. Mom"
 - E. "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade"
 - F. "Schindler's List"
 - G. "Hotel Rwanda"
 - H. "To Kill a Mockingbird"
 - I. "Veggie Tales"
 - J. Episodes of the children's show "Franklin"
 - K. "Rainbow Fish"
 - L. "Winnie the Pooh's Sharing and Caring"

GOD CREATED CHILDREN (AND IN THE PROCESS GRANDCHILDREN)

To those of us who have children in our lives, whether they are our own, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, or students... here is something to make you chuckle. Whenever your children are out of control, you can take comfort from the thought that even God's omnipotence did not extend to His own children. After creating heaven and earth, God created Adam and Eve. And the first thing he said was 'DON'T!'

'Don't what?' Adam replied.

'Don't eat the forbidden fruit..' God said.

'Forbidden fruit? We have forbidden fruit? Hey Eve..we have forbidden fruit!'

'No Way!'

'Yes way!'

'Do NOT eat the fruit!' said God.

'Why?'

'Because I am your Father and I said so!' God replied, wondering why He hadn't stopped creation after making the elephants. A few minutes later, God saw His children having an apple break and He was ticked! 'Didn't I tell you not to eat the fruit?' God asked.

'Uh huh,' Adam replied.

'Then why did you?' said the Father.

'I don't know,' said Eve.

'She started it!' Adam said.

'Did not!'

'Did too!'

'DID NOT!'

Having had it with the two of them, God's punishment was that Adam and Eve should have children of their own. Thus the pattern was set and it has never changed. If you have persistently and lovingly tried to give children wisdom and they haven't taken it, don't be hard on yourself. If God had trouble raising children, what makes you think it would be a piece of cake for you?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT!

1. You spend the first two years of their life teaching them to walk and talk. Then you spend the next sixteen telling them to sit down and shut up.
2. Grandchildren are God's reward for not killing your own children.
3. Mothers of teens now know why some animals eat their young.
4. Children seldom misquote you. In fact, they usually repeat word for word what you shouldn't have said.
5. The main purpose of holding children's parties is to remind yourself that there are children more awful than your own.
6. We childproofed our homes, but they are still getting in.

ADVICE FOR THE DAY: Be nice to your kids. They will choose your nursing home one day.

AND FINALLY: IF YOU HAVE A LOT OF TENSION AND YOU GET A HEADACHE, DO WHAT IT SAYS ON THE ASPIRIN BOTTLE: 'TAKE TWO ASPIRIN' AND 'KEEP AWAY FROM CHILDREN'!!!!

