



BUILDING THRIVING FAMILIES: Overview

Pastor Derek Sanford

July 2023

This series identifies some of the issues today's diverse families face and offers sound Biblical principles that will help us to get back to the basics. While you may not be able to instantly correct every nuance of a complex family situation, you can take healthy steps that will position you to enter the fight for a thriving family.

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|--------|-----------------------------|
| Week 1 | Family: Back to the Basics |
| Week 2 | The Enemies in Every Home |
| Week 3 | A Celebration of Singleness |
| Week 4 | A Promise for Parents |
| Week 5 | The Miracle of Marriage |

Since there are a lot of amazing resources already available to us, we wanted to encourage your groups to choose a RightNow Media* (rightnowmedia.org) option that would best fit with your group's dynamics to go deeper than the sermons are able to. LifeGroup Leader Guides and reading plans (YouVersion and pdf format) will be available for the first three sermons of the series. Here are some additional suggestions based on the sermon themes for weeks 3-5.

[*If you need a RightNow Media account, you can sign up for *free* access at <https://whoisgrace.com/read/> and look for the orange banner at the bottom of the page.]

Singleness

[The Single Dilemma](#)

[Thrive](#)

Parenting

[The Art of Parenting](#)

[It Starts at Home](#)

[Screen Sanity](#)

Marriage

[You and Me Forever](#)

[Love Talk](#)

[His Needs, Her Needs](#)



BUILDING THRIVING FAMILIES: Family: Back to the Basics

Pastor Derek

July 2, 2023

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Ask everyone to share a favorite family memory from their childhood (not limited to immediate family but including extended family).

Scripture:

- Derek defined the family as a multi-generational team on mission. Share your reactions to that definition. Do you see aspects of that definition in your own family?
- What surprised you about Derek's sermon? How does it change your perspective to know that "nuclear family" is a concept from the 1950s and not the biblical model?

READ [Genesis 1:26-30](#)

- What was God's plan for the very first family?

READ [Genesis 12:1-3](#)

- What was God's blessing and mission for Abraham's family?
- How would that be accomplished? (who, what, where, when)
- Brainstorm some Old Testament families and look up their stories. (Leader, you can prepare 1-2 in advance. Consider looking at: Naomi's family in the book of Ruth and David's family in [2 Samuel 7:8-16](#), 1 Kings 1)
- Consider these families in light of Derek's definition (multigenerational, team, mission)
- In what ways were these families broken? In what ways were they advancing God's mission?

Prayer: Pray for your families!

Next Steps:

- Continue to Reflect on your family and ask:
 - Are we exposed to multi-generational influences?
 - Are we functioning as a team?
 - Do we have clarity around our mission?
- Encourage your group to use the "Praying for My Family" reading plans featured on YouVersion for those who have set Grace as "my church." PDF copies are also available at whoisgrace.com/READ.
- Sermon resources: [Take Back Your Family](#) (book by Jefferson Bethke), Dads Building Teams (podcast by Jefferson Bethke and Jeremy Pryor)



BUILDING THRIVING FAMILIES: The Enemies in Every Home

Pastor Derek

July 9, 2023

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement:

How have you or someone in your family recently stood firm in a spiritual attack against your family?
If you walked through the reading plan, what impact did praying for your family have on you?

Scripture:

READ [2 Corinthians 11:14](#); [1 Peter 5:8](#); [John 8:44](#); [2 Corinthians 4:4](#)

- What do we learn about who Satan is and what he does from these verses?
- How have you seen his schemes play out in your family?
- What does it look like to balance awareness of Satan's schemes and taking ownership of our own part in difficult situations in our families?

READ [Ephesians 6:10-20](#) and this explanation of each part of the armor of God from Cru.org: [What is the Armor of God?](#)

- What does it look like to "stand against the schemes of the devil" in everyday life?
- How does each part of the armor impact our ability to stand?
- How can you apply the armor of God to your family this week?

Next Steps: What is Satan's main scheme directed at your family right now? How can you prepare better to stand firm in faith?

Prayer: Break into pairs and pray through the armor of God and ask for protection for your families from the schemes of the enemy.



BUILDING THRIVING FAMILIES: A Celebration of Singleness

Pastor Derek

July 16, 2023

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Singleness in church can often feel very lonely and isolating. Being a single Christian is often seen as the space before marriage happens, when in actuality it is time God uses to strengthen our connection and relationship with Him. Encourage someone in the group to share their real and raw experience as a single Christian in today's church.

Scripture:

READ [1 Corinthians 7](#)

1. Some spiritual benefits of being single (7:32-35)

Discuss the spiritual benefits from the sermon with your group. As a single person, share with the group the highs and lows of each. As a non-single, share with the group your perspective. What similarities and differences did you discuss? Did anything surprise you in the discussion?

2. Some pitfalls of being single (7:8-9), (7:23)

The pitfalls of being single are also pitfalls that every person faces. How do these pitfalls look different in a single Christian world than the world of a non-single Christians? How many similarities did you find through this discussion?

3. A word to our singles (7:37-40)

How can you live fully in the now God has placed you, with joy, contentment, strength, and patience? What is needed from The Church to do this well? How can you, as a single Christian or a non-single Christian, help create a "family feeling" in The Church for all?

4. A word to our church (22:23-30)

How can we, as the church, welcome and include all people without restrictions? What is one thing we can do differently in how we approach and interact with others who are single in the church? Single Christians, how can you receive the love and care of others differently, when you are struggling with the path you are on?

Prayer: Spend a few minutes in these 4 parts of prayer: Praising God for his faithful love. Confession of sin. Thanking God for the Church. Asking God to give us greater love for one another- kindness, encouragement, care, sensitivity, etc.

Next Steps: Being a single Christian has many different meanings. It may mean you are unmarried. Or divorced. Or widowed. Maybe you are a single parent or a young adult trying to figure out how to date



well within your faith. Maybe you are married and walking through the good and hard parts of that relationship within the scope of faith. Whichever part of the journey you are on, there are a few next steps you can take.

1. Find community. Community is as diversely wide as it is deep. Sit with people on the same journey as you and those walking a different one. Ask questions and truly listen and hear the stories each person shares and the space they are sitting in.

Choose an area to improve- listening, welcoming, inviting, accepting-whatever it may be. Then, practice it. Pray over it, asking God to keep teaching you something new in this journey. Journal about it. And thank God for the opportunity to love His people on every path or journey we come across.

*Look for the whosigrace YouVersion reading plan, "In the Waiting."