

# **FIGHTING** for your**FAMILY**



## **DISCUSSION GUIDE**

Dr. Erwin W. Lutzer

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Today's families need direction, hope, and encouragement. This series is intended to address enemies of the home such as the conflict of roles, addictions, entertainment, and more. Best of all, it includes encouragement on how to pray for our children, as well as steps needed to prevent divorce. God will help us take courageous, decisive action—we can refuse to believe the lie that there is no hope for our marriages and our families! In short, these messages are intended to make bad marriages good and good marriages better.

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# FIGHTING FOR YOUR FAMILY

## KEY SCRIPTURES

Genesis 1:26–28

Genesis 2:7

Genesis 2:15

Genesis 3

Psalms 147

Malachi 4:5–6

Matthew 15:21–28

Matthew 18:1–6

Mark 10

Luke 1–2

1 Corinthians 6:12

1 Corinthians 13

Ephesians 4:29–32

Ephesians 5:15

Ephesians 5:25–33

Ephesians 6:1–3

1 Corinthians 4:14–16

1 Thessalonians 4:1–8

1 Timothy 6

Titus 2:11–14

James 4:4

1 John 2:13–17

## RESOURCES

**To watch this series and download the messages or discussion guide:**

Go to [www.moodymedia.org/watchf4f](http://www.moodymedia.org/watchf4f)

**To purchase the entire series:**

For audio CDs, go to [www.moodymedia.org/f4fCD](http://www.moodymedia.org/f4fCD)

For video DVDs, go to [www.moodymedia.org/f4fDVD](http://www.moodymedia.org/f4fDVD)

For more of Dr. Erwin Lutzer's resources, visit [www.moodymedia.org](http://www.moodymedia.org)

# REBUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS

## WEEK ONE

### SYNOPSIS

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In this introductory sermon, Dr. Erwin Lutzer unveils the theme of *Fighting for Your Family* with an investigation of God's original arrangement of creation found in Genesis 1-3. Throughout these chapters we find the proper foundation for marriage and family. Without understanding and integrating God's good intentions and patterns for the family, dysfunction and moral anarchy reign.

#### TALK TIP

If your discussion group is larger than 5 or 6 people, you can break into smaller groups to involve everyone for questions that require action.

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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- What is a family? How does the world around us define "family?"
- What do your family and other families that you know look like?
- If you're comfortable sharing, why does your family look that way?

Now listen to the first part of *Fighting for Your Family* and consider God's original design for the family and how we can start to model that blueprint in our homes.

### DISCUSSION

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Note that fervent, frequent prayer is highlighted at the beginning of the message as a necessary prerequisite for this series.

- How does prayer figure into your life and the weekly routine of your family?
- What are some possible ways to strengthen your family's prayer life?

#### 1. Men and women are created equal.

- What indications of equality arise in the creation narrative?
- What does it mean to be created in the image of God?
- In a global context which often oppresses the value and rights of women, what are some ways in which we can demonstrate equality in our homes?

#### 2. Men and women are each assigned distinct roles.

- What indications of distinction arise in the creation account?
- In what ways has the world undermined masculinity and femininity?
- What role(s) does God assign to men? To women? How can you support each other in these roles?

- In what ways have you seen role distinctions abused or exemplified?

### 3. Men and women join together to become one flesh in marriage.

- What often obstructs spouses from viewing their bodies (needs and desires) as truly one?
- What steps can you take to be more considerate of the needs of the whole rather than merely yourself?
- Have you and your spouse developed good habits of conflict resolution and decision making in order to instill unity? What are they?

### 4. Men and women both need the grace of redemption.

- How do your sinful desires affect your relationship to your spouse? How do you respond to these desires when they flare up?
- It's likely that we all know or have experienced marriages which have been troubled by heartache, divorce, or abuse. What can we say to those who are hurt and bitter?
- Is your family in need of healing or revival? What has today's message encouraged you to do? What actions need to be taken to pursue God's design for your family?

## PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

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Pray for: family unity, harmony, healing, prodigals, reconciliation.

## ASSIGNMENT

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Read 1 Corinthians 13 every day for this week.



# A MOTHER'S HIGH CALLING

## WEEK TWO

### SYNOPSIS

Building on last week's introduction of God's original arrangement of the family in Genesis, we now investigate the prominent role of the mother in family life by looking at Mary, the mother of Jesus. She was given an unusual task, but she models the joys and sorrows of motherhood for us.

#### TALK TIP

You can always pause the message in order to discuss points one at a time.

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Why do you think God made mothers?
- What role did your mother play in your life? Positively? Negatively?
- Mothers: are there ways in which you want to be (or not be) like your mother?
- How has your life affected your mother's? Have you supported her, hurt her, and/or helped her?

### DISCUSSION

#### 1. Motherhood is a calling from God.

- How was Mary's call to motherhood extraordinary?
- How are all mothers like her?
- What can we do to encourage and remind mothers that motherhood is more than a task, but a divine responsibility?

#### 2. Motherhood means dedication to God.

- What does it mean to be "dedicated" to something or someone? Examples?
- How can mothers (and all parents) be dedicated to God in their calling?
- Do you think child dedications are valuable? Why or why not?

#### 3. Motherhood means nurturing children for God.

- What example is given of Mary nurturing Jesus? Why?
- How has your mother been (or not been) a nurturer in your life?
- Since every child is different, what are some nurturing challenges that might be faced in your family? How have you met previous challenges?

- How has God’s nurturing of us as His children affected and shaped your parenting?

**4. Motherhood means suffering with children.**

- What are some examples of Mary’s suffering?
- How would you describe Mary’s response to these troubles?
- Elaborate on times you’ve caused your mother suffering.
- Parents: how have you prepared for suffering?
- What steps could you take this week to alleviate the trials of a mother?

**5. Motherhood means the need for reconciliation/redemption.**

- What are some major mistakes that mothers can make?
- What are your thoughts on working mothers? In instances that you believe are good, how could you (and the church as a whole) support them?
- Are there some wrongs in your parenting journey that require confession and prayer today? What are they? How can we better pray for you and help you?
- If you are struggling (or have struggled) with parenting, does anything stand out from today’s message that instills hope?

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS**

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Pray for: perseverance and encouragement for mothers.

**ASSIGNMENT**

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Reconnect with your mother, a mother-figure, or an undervalued mother you know. Affirm her worth and encourage her.



### SYNOPSIS

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Balancing the recent message on the role of mothers, we now turn to the subject of fatherhood by looking at passages from Genesis and Malachi. Our first father, Adam, failed in Eden because of his passivity. In God's Word, the necessity of the father's active role is displayed for the benefit of our families.

#### TALK TIP

When profitable discussion is occurring, skipping questions in the discussion guide may be beneficial. This guide is intended as a help, not an exact prescription.

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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- How would you describe a perfect father?
- Since no father is perfect, what contributes to paternal problems?
- How involved has your father been in your life?
- Has your father diminished or enhanced you and your family? Why?

### DISCUSSION

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#### 1. Fathers are to lead and initiate.

- What does it look like for a father to lead and initiate? How can it be abused?
- What is the difference between leading and dictating?
- What are some practices that can help men grow in their family leadership?

#### 2. Fathers are to take responsibility for their families.

- Where in the Bible do we see a man's responsibility for the spiritual health of his family?
- What responsibilities are easily neglected by fathers? Why are they neglected?
- How would you advise a father who is neglecting his spiritual responsibility?
- Are there spiritual leadership deficiencies in your father which affect you?

#### 3. Fathers are to provide and protect.

- What are common obstacles to fatherly provision?
- How can we support and encourage men as providers?
- As Pastor Lutzer described fathers as "spiritual gatekeepers," what spiritual issues in your family's life came to mind that need fatherly attention?



- How can fathers be kind protectors when they often seem repressive and harsh?

#### 4. Fathers are to teach and guide.

- In light of your weekly time commitments, where do your priorities lie? How do these priorities teach and guide children, friends, and others? Where are you leading them?
- What habits have you instilled in your home to foster leadership and godly guidance?
- What exemplifies God's demeanor in teaching His children? How can we replicate that in our family teaching times?

#### 5. Fathers are to facilitate reconciliation.

- How have poor father/child relationships damaged others (and yourself)?
- As children, and possibly parents, how have you sought forgiveness from your loved ones even when it was not merited?
- Why is humility so crucial to forgiveness? Fathers: are you being humble? Examples?
- What is the difference between pursuing healing and pursuing holiness? How does this affect our relationship toward God and others?
- In your family troubles, have you predominantly sought healing or holiness?

## PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

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Pray for: holy, humble, and active leadership which leads to healing in our homes.

## ASSIGNMENT

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Read Proverbs 2. Seek to prayerfully reconcile with your fathers, acknowledging their imperfections, accepting the past, and forgiving their wrongs.



# WHAT MARRIAGE IS, AND ISN'T

## WEEK FOUR

### SYNOPSIS

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Marriage is at the core of the family. With Genesis 2:24-25 in hand, Dr. Erwin Lutzer asks, "What is marriage, and what is it not?" To find the answers, we return to the divine blueprint, "the Creator's manual," for humanity in the garden.

#### TALK TIP

As the discussion group leader, it is imperative that you model the type of interaction you wish to elicit. If everyone is responding to questions in a non-personal manner, you may be able to engage them further if you offer a humble, thoughtful, and personal response to a question or two.

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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- Why do you think many well-intentioned marriages end so badly?
- How does the health of a marriage affect the health of a home?
- If marriage is a long journey, where do you turn for marital "course correction?" Why?
- What is the purpose of marriage?

### DISCUSSION

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#### 1. Leaving

- What are some evidences which confirm that loyalties have shifted from one's parents to one's spouse? Why?
- What would you say to a couple struggling to let go of old loyalties? How would you suggest they balance parental investment with marital priority?
- Do your parents tend to be under-involved or over-involved in your marriage? What have you done to adjust and grow in that relationship?
- Have you let go of past attachments? Married couples, jot down the following questions and discuss them together later: "Are we continuing to entertain past attachments through email, Facebook, and work? If so, how are we seeking to overcome these temptations together?"

#### 2. Cleaving

- What are some ways we can display cleaving (committed faithfulness) to our spouses?

- What does committed faithfulness produce?
- Why is trust so valuable? What role does it play in your marriage?
- How can we be more patient and less “fix-it” oriented toward our mates?
- How have trust and patience in your marriage contributed to your sanctification?

### 3. “One flesh” and the sacred covenant

- What is a covenant, and why do marriages involve a covenant?
- How do covenantless “marriages” with “escape hatches” deprive us of avenues for growth? What would you say to someone living in such a situation?
- How do marital covenants encourage faithfulness?
- If we get better marriages from having better hearts, what does a better heart look like?
- In emotional, sexual, and financial topics, what are some difficulties in being honest?
- What would improve your attitude of forgiveness toward your spouse?

## PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

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Pray for: relief for hurting marriages, growth through faithfulness, freedom from past attachments.

## ASSIGNMENT

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**Everyone:** read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 and ask, “What should these verses mean for a person like me who struggles with sexual temptation and sin?”

**Married couples:** hold onto a number of the questions provided tonight (especially concerning leaving and cleaving) and intentionally discuss them in private with prayer and patience.



# TILL DEBT DO US PART

## WEEK FIVE

### SYNOPSIS

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Money can destroy marriages, so in this message Dr. Lutzer offers seven biblical principles to help us avoid marital bankruptcy at the hands of debt and mismanagement. Both couples and singles have to ask some hard questions about their income and expenditures. It's time to transfer our finances and possessions to their rightful Owner!

#### TALK TIP

Posing follow-up questions on the fly during discussion times helps to avoid the dreaded “dead air” moments. If possible, try to avoid “yes or no” type questions, and graciously insert “why,” “where,” and “how” inquiries whenever possible.

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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- Why do you think money is (or is not) evil?
- When you were a child, how did your family's financial situation influence you? What would you change if you could?
- How have you and your spouse prevented or resolved financial disagreements?

### DISCUSSION

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#### 1. God owns everything; we are stewards.

- What behaviors demonstrate that we treat “our stuff” as “God's stuff?”
- How is thankfulness important in this? How can we incorporate thankfulness into our lives?
- If every financial decision is a spiritual decision, what decisions display a lack of spiritual maturity? What conviction have you felt concerning poor financial decisions?

#### 2. Money competes with God for our loyalty and affection.

- Have you faced situations in which money stole your affection? What are some ways in which we can prevent money from competing with God?
- How can someone find the balance between ambition and craving money?

#### 3. How we use our money is a test for future rewards.

- Do you feel comfortable with your current money management? Why or why not? How would you describe your prospects in light of future rewards?

- How can someone prepare and invest now for the world to come? What kind of impact would it have on the world if Christians consistently thought of money in light of eternity?

#### 4. **“Get rich quick” schemes are deceitful and must be avoided.**

- What are avenues of accountability which can help us avoid scams and schemes? Why do we often skirt these and go alone?
- What are some “get rich quick” ideas in our area? How can they be avoided?

#### 5. **The Devil, dirt, and debt are closely related.**

- Why is debt so suffocating?
- How has credit/debt removed the necessity of faith, prayer, and charity from our lives?
- What are some ways we can start living more debt-free?

#### 6. **Contentment is more important than riches.**

- When do you feel content, and how is that standard too high (or possibly too low)?
- What people or things are prompting discontentment in your life? How can that change?

#### 7. **We are to honor God with our “firstfruits.”**

- How does God bless those who are generous and sacrificial?
- What is the difference between “firstfruits” and “leftovers”? Which describes your giving?

## **PRAYER SUGGESTIONS**

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Pray for: perseverance for debtors, accountability for investments.

## **ASSIGNMENT**

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Discuss finances with your spouse and choose one or two non-essential items from your expenditures to remove or reduce in order to invest more in God’s kingdom.



# CHILDREN, GOD'S SPECIAL GIFT

WEEK SIX

## SYNOPSIS

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Today's children face many lies, such as: their value is dependent on their appearance; morals are to be personally chosen; and sexual activity is appropriate at any age as long as it is done "safely." Dr. Lutzer challenges these lies with five principles from God's revealed truth.

### TALK TIP

It may be best to introduce this discussion with a bit of caution. Encourage everyone to discuss their personal experiences, but remind them to tread carefully in discussing other families' children. Group parenting can be trouble.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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- What are some of the joys of having children? What are some of the heartaches?
- Why are children valuable?
- What values are essential to pass along to children?
- What are your goals for the lives of your children?

## DISCUSSION

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### 1. Children need to be assured of love and security.

- Children need love and boundaries. How were these provided in your family?
- What are some additional ways for you to show love and provide boundaries?
- How can we portray boundaries as love rather than repression?

### 2. Children need to a godly lifestyle they can follow.

- Concerning your goals for your children, how are you modeling these in your own life?
- What steps can we take to be more consistent models for our children?
- Are there any models that need to be changed or removed for the sake of your children?

### 3. Children need to be taught to obey authority.

- How can we instill an attitude of obedience in the home?
- What are some issues that frequently demand (and lack) consistency?

- What are your family’s methods for discipline? Why?
- How have you ensured that discipline is exercised appropriately with proper results?

**4. Children need to be taught both law and grace.**

- What are some ways to integrate law into the home?
- What are some ways to integrate grace into the home?
- What is the weakness of law without grace? What is the weakness of grace without law?
- How does an imbalance of law and grace affect a child’s development?
- What are some ways to avoid raising our children as “little Pharisees?”

**5. Children need praying parents.**

- Why are church involvement and moral training not sufficient?
- How does prayer reorient our perspective regarding our children’s salvation?
- How should we view Proverbs 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it?”
- How do we overestimate (or underestimate) our involvement in our child’s spiritual life? How does this affect our stated goals for the lives of our children?
- How can the gospel permeate the life of the home?

**PRAYER SUGGESTIONS** \_\_\_\_\_

Pray for: salvation for children, parenting which involves law, grace, and prayer.

**ASSIGNMENT** \_\_\_\_\_

Intentionally pray for your children and/or children you know. If possible, pray with them (and their parents).



# THE ENEMY INSIDE YOUR HOME

## WEEK SEVEN

### SYNOPSIS

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The battle for our families is fierce because we are opposed by forces outside the home. But there is even greater potential danger within our homes, reaching us through our computers, televisions, tablets, and smart phones. This week we'll discuss a strategy to test the positive and negative potential of these devices.

#### TALK TIP

Keep an eye on everyone in your group. If “John Doe” is staying out of the conversations, you may want to intentionally direct a question toward him; you can soften the blow by saying “John, I’m interested to hear your thoughts on this question.” Remember to try not to draw attention to his previous silence.

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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- What are avenues of entertainment in your home?
- Which avenues would you call profitable? Why?
- What limits have you set?
- What devices (iPad, TV, smartphone) do you allow? When and where?
- What negatives and positives have you experienced because of technology in your home?

### DISCUSSION

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#### 1. Crucial questions

- What strikes you about the statistics that Dr. Lutzer mentioned?
- How can we combat addiction in our homes, both for parents and children?
- What are some ways in which you have lost credibility in setting boundaries?
- How can you recover from “personal paralysis” and stop indulging in unhealthy entertainment?

#### 2. The content test

- What are the messages that entertainment frequently communicates?
- How does covetousness saturate our lives? How has it affected you?
- How have we become “friends with the world” through what we watch?
- Since God tells us not to love the things of this world (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life), what needs to change in your home and in your free time?



- What is your response to sin in your home? Do you trivialize, ignore, or condone sin through your entertainment?

### 3. The control test

- Have you ever stopped certain forms of entertainment? Why or why not?
- When the idea of abstaining from an entertainment activity arose, what came to mind?
- What are common indicators that you have lost control?

### 4. The clock test

- If your life were to end tonight, would you think that your time was well spent? Why?
- How does your entertainment enrich you, your family, and your ministry?
- What does purely wasteful entertainment look like?
- What are constructive ideas for redeeming our time and pursuing heavenly goals?

### 5. The imperatives

- How can we clean up our act for the sake of Christ, our church, and our families?
- What are we teaching our loved ones when we delay cleaning up our act?
- What are some standards that need to be set for our children? How can we model them?
- What avenues of help can be pursued by someone who struggles with entertainment addiction?

## PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

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Pray for: purity, new standards, freedom from addiction.

## ASSIGNMENT

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Do an hour-by-hour inventory of a usual day in your home (children included). Identify and address times and items of entertainment which are excessive or unproductive.



### SYNOPSIS

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Abusers often appear to be kind and charming. Yet because of unresolved issues in their lives, they quickly travel down the road to abuse. The causes of abuse are many and varied. Using the example of King Saul, Dr. Lutzer outlines the attributes of an abuser and shares restorative hope for both the abused and the abuser.

### TALK TIP

If someone in the group is currently in an abusive situation, we strongly suggest that he or she work closely with a pastor or church leader to determine how best to approach the abuser and/or remove themselves from the situation. The National Domestic Violence Hotline, an excellent resource, can be reached at [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org) or 1.800.799.7233.

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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- What can lead people (especially men) to become abusers? Why?
- How has abuse shaped our society? Examples?
- In what ways has the technological age curbed or encouraged abuse?
- What can be done to protect our families from abuse?

### DISCUSSION

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What emotions and desires undergird the psyche of an abuser?

#### 1. Saul's positives

- What were some of Saul's strengths?
- How did you feel when Dr. Lutzer talked about abusers (like Saul) as "gifted?"
- What keeps us from seeing abusers as worthy of forgiveness? Is it fair? Why?
- Is it fair for anyone to be forgiven?

#### 2. Saul's negatives

- What were some of Saul's negatives? Why do you think God selected Saul as king?
- What would you say to someone whose spouse or relative is exhibiting similar behaviors?
- Why is "playing by a different set of rules" such a bad sign?
- Why should victims of abuse flee? Does it help to stay? Why not?

### 3. The path to recovery

- What keeps abused people silent? How can we as the church alleviate those concerns?
- What would you say to someone who is abused and needs to face reality? In contrast, what would you say to the abuser? How can both have hope?
- What steps should an abused person take to ensure a full recovery and healthy living? How can we, the church, be available to aid the abused without hurting them further?
- What steps should a recovering abuser take to ensure a full recovery and healthy living?
- How can we, the church, be available to aid a recovering abuser without condoning their past or demeaning their present? How should the government be honored in this?
- Why is bitterness so debilitating? How can we make our families and marriages more transparent and free of bitterness?
- How does Jesus provide a model for spurning bitterness and embracing forgiveness?

## PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

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Pray for: confession of sin, healing for the broken, humble and involved Christians.

## ASSIGNMENT

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Set aside a specific time for confession this week, praying that the Holy Spirit would bring to mind people who need to be forgiven and incidents which need to be resolved.



# THE POWER OF PRAYING PARENTS

## WEEK NINE

### SYNOPSIS

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Whether a child is like the prodigal son or the self-righteous brother, parents need to pray that the hearts of their children will be turned to the Lord. In this ninth message of *Fighting for Your Family*, Dr. Lutzer details the powerful role of parents as intercessors.

#### TALK TIP

If a pressing family situation arises during discussion, you can interject with a time of prayer right then. Don't wait.

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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- Many of us know or have prodigal children; why are there so many?
- How have you seen parents react to such tragic circumstances? Did it help?
- Are parents to blame for the rebellion of their children? Why or why not? (Dr. Lutzer will address this question in his introduction.)
- What have you learned because of the prodigals in your life?

### DISCUSSION

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#### 1. The Canaanite mother and her demonized child

- Why is the story of the Canaanite mother so remarkable?
- What barriers might we face in interceding for a child?
- What encouragement does the Canaanite mother provide for single parents?
- How should we interpret the silence of God? How does this affect our prayer life?
- What characterizes the Canaanite mother's attitude in her discussion (prayer) with Jesus?
- How can we institute those attitudes into our times of prayer?
- What is the difference between praying with "great faith" and praying without faith?
- What indicates that we are praying with desperation?

#### 2. Praying for prodigals

- Why is it important to ask God to change us before we ask Him to change our children?

- What are common problems that we need to confess to our children?
- How is pride a major issue for churched parents? How can we prevent this pride?
- Why are we unable to impose obedience? How does the prayer “Lord, change their heart...” convey a better way?
- Why do most parents avoid “letting sin run its course?” What consequences can result when parents avoid “tough love?”
- What are some ways we can prepare our homes for the return of a prodigal? What should our relationship with them look like?
- As Dr. Lutzer told the story about his mother’s prayer list, did you feel convicted of your need to pray for your children? What steps do you need to take today?
- What words of comfort would you share with a parent who has been prayerfully struggling over a prodigal relative for years? How can we come alongside families which are longing for a prodigal to return?

## **PRAYER SUGGESTIONS**

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Pray for: return of the prodigal, perseverance for the prayerful, gratitude for those who intercede for us.

## **ASSIGNMENT**

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This week, intentionally integrate a five-step prayer program into your prayer routine for the lost in your family: (1) Change me. (2) They are Yours. (3) Change their hearts. (4) Let sin run its course. (5) I will wait.



# PLAYING FOR KEEPS

## WEEK TEN

### SYNOPSIS

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In our society, there are a number of lies we believe about marriage that revolve around our happiness and fulfillment. As Dr. Lutzer concludes *Fighting for Your Family*, he refocuses our marital priorities, emphasizing our pure, honorable, and sacrificial Christian disposition.

### TALK TIP

For this final session, you can break up the prayer time. Encourage couples to pray separately for their own home and marriage. Singles are welcome to pray together or individually for their future families and the marriages of loved ones.

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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- Why do you think so many marriages are full of conflict?
- Why do you think so many marriages end prematurely?
- What is the purpose of marriage, and how does our culture affect that?
- What are common expectations for men and women when they enter marriage?
- In your case, how did those expectations work out? How did they change?

### DISCUSSION

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#### 1. Three lies about marriage

- Why is happiness not always good for marriage or our spiritual life?
- What is more important than happiness? Why?
- When holiness is valued, who else is valued? Who is humbled?
- Why do people assume that marriage brings fulfillment?
- What is the trouble with romance? What false images have you projected?
- Since love does not necessarily mean that we should get married, what steps should the infatuated take to avoid an unwise marriage or adultery?
- What are some of the consequences of abandoning one's marital vows? Why do so many people look past these outcomes?
- How can we fortify ourselves against abandoning our vows?

## 2. Three characteristics of biblical love

- If we are called to love like Christ loves the Church, how can we make that a daily reality?
- How should this kind of love encourage a Christian in a “loveless” relationship?
- What are some ways husbands can integrate the Word of God into their home?
- How does sexual purity affect one’s love for God and his/her spouse?
- How can spouses honor one another?
- What fleshly desires are obstacles to honoring one another? How can we overcome them?

## 3. Five biblical principles for marriage

- How can we seek God’s glory in difficult marital situations?
- What are the positives of painful times? How do they transform our prayers?
- How can a critical self-examination remedy an attitude of “woundedness?”
- What should a spouse do in response to their mate’s sinful addiction? Why?
- How has destructive criticism affected your upbringing, and how can you keep it out of your marriage and home?
- How can spouses create space for open conversation and confession where judgment and shame are excluded? How have you developed a norm of forgiveness and repentance?

## PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

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Pray for: the exposure of areas of selfishness, confession and repentance between spouses.

## ASSIGNMENT

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Open up, confess, and repent of one sinful act or sinful desire to your loved one, with the intention of pursuing trust and harmony through hard work.













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