

# family matters

forever young

Families come in all different sizes and shapes.  
Likewise, churches come in all different sizes and shapes.  
To a certain degree the family is the church in miniature,  
and the church can be seen as an extended family.  
Healthy families are good for the church,  
and what is good for the church is healthy for families.

## day 1 — READ *Mark 10:13-14* welcoming children

at home • in communities • at church

What is your attitude towards children? Two thousand years ago, children were to be seen and not heard. Jesus helped to change all that. He gave children a value they didn't have previously. There is much we can learn from children. NAME some things that you have learned? LIST some ways that you can value the children you encounter each day?

Let's expand our definition of children to include the church family. When we see each person as a child of God, no matter what age, "children" takes on a new perspective. How do you value the children of God in your church family? Jesus says, "Let the little children come to me." In what ways do you point people to Jesus? In what ways do you seek Jesus?

## day 2 — READ *Deuteronomy 6:1-9* parenting styles

As a child develops self-control, the parent or leader's role moves from *protecting* to *preparing*.

How does each style of parenting/leading prepare or protect a child?  
Which style does Scripture recommend (vs. 7-9)? Why (vs. 2-3)?  
Which style do you parent/lead under most often?  
Who can you talk to about becoming a better parent/leader?

Permissive = Hands off  
Authoritative = Coach

Authoritarian = Drill sergeant  
Neglectful = Absent

## day 3 — READ *Mark 10:13-16* imitating children

concrete • humble • investigative • loving • dependent

As a child of God, how do you tend to be concrete in your relationship with your Father God? What makes you prideful, and how can you become more humble? What are you thirsty for; what are you curious about? How can you open your heart to both receive love from your Father as well as express it back to Him? What does it look like to be dependent on God? JOURNAL your answers.

How can we enter the kingdom of God by receiving it like a child?  
FIND someone to share this question with today.

## day 4 — READ *Matthew 19:14-15* serving children

as a church family • personally

Jesus places His hands on His children and sends them on their way. What a beautiful picture of blessing! THINK about ways that you can bless others, both children and children of God.

## day 5 — READ *Proverbs 1:1-7* next steps

Although we don't have much record of Jesus' early years, the Bible gives plenty of instruction when it comes to parenting/leading. Proverbs is a wonderful book to glean insights from. Even the wise can listen and add to their learning (v. 5). SEEK out a path this week to learn at least one new skill to apply to your parenting/leadership.

- READ Proverbs and FIND instructions to apply to your life.
- VISIT the @home center at Jacob's Well and CHECK out a book.
- ASK someone from JW to coffee. SHARE parenting/leadership tips.
- LOOK into serving in one of the classrooms at JW on the weekend.
- CONSIDER leading a small group.
- RECOGNIZE and PRAY for the children in your life.