



mom
matters



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PURPOSE

week one

Measuring success as a mom can be tricky. Oftentimes it feels like there are way too many targets (expectations!) from way too many people. This week we'll explore the importance of understanding our purpose so that we can hit the mark.

How we measure success influences our parenting.

- Success is difficult to measure in motherhood.
- Purpose is key in determining success.

Children make very bad report cards.

- Unpredictable
- Uncontrollable

Target determines trajectory (direction/path). Where are we aiming?

- Perfecting our children
- Pleasing God

Where we focus determines *how* we operate.

- Perfecting leads to control.
- Pleasing leads to influence.

The truth is that I cannot control my children's actions and behaviors anyway.

But I can control:

- My attitude
- My perspective
- My words

The key is to have *influence* rather than control.

Stages: control vs. influence

- Toddler
- Elementary-aged
- Teenager

Realigning

- Identify focus - Am I pleasing God or others?
- Ask a friend - Community is key.
- Pray - Lord, this is your child and I need your help.

Our purpose is pleasing God, not perfecting our children.



table talk

week one

What are you currently measuring to determine your success as a mother?

In what areas do you measure yourself against others?

What are some ways you have tried to *control* rather than *influence* your children?

How can getting someone else's perspective be helpful? When might it not be helpful?

What is one thing you would like to work on this week?

Devotional *(week one)*

Day 1

Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Whatever I do as a mom, whether it is tucking my child into bed at night or implementing discipline, I need to do it unto the Lord, giving my best. My purpose as a mom is to glorify God with my words and my actions in all that I do.

Prayer

God, please bring this verse to mind throughout my day. Fill me with your Spirit, your love, and your grace. I pray that I will always be mindful that being a mom has eternal value. Give me eyes to see from your perspective. Amen.

Day 2

Deuteronomy 6:13

*Respect the Lord your **God** and **serve** only him. You must use only his name to make promises.*

In order for us to glorify God in all that we do, we must make him our priority. Because many things pull on our attention and time, we need to focus on **whom** and **what** we are going to serve. As a mom, I need to serve **only** him.

Prayer

God, as I go about my day, show me different ways I can serve only you. I want to be mindful of your presence and commit my day to you. I do not want you to be an afterthought at the end of my day. And I do not want a guilt trip because I haven't talked to you all day. In the morning when I wake up, I want to give you the praise and glory for another day. Thank you, Lord, for wanting to be in a relationship with me. Amen.

Day 3

Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

As a mom, you do many things that go unnoticed and unappreciated. It's hard to keep a positive attitude when you don't believe anyone notices all the extra-special touches you put on so many parts of your family's lives. But take heart...God notices. He knows when you are making the beds—how you tuck those bottom sheets nice and tight so that when your children get in at night, it has a clean feel. He notices the care you take preparing dinner to ensure it is tasty and healthy. God sees you following behind your children, picking up their socks, underwear, and shirts while taking clean clothes to their rooms. Your family may not notice, but God does. He appreciates the love you give to your children, because he knows as you love *his* children, they are more likely to accept *his* love for them. Take heart, moms. God knows! Keep serving and know that your heavenly Father is keeping an account. You will receive your inheritance one day.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I pray I will have a good attitude throughout my day as I serve my family. God, remind me that I am ultimately serving you and that you *do* notice all things. Thank you for loving me, and I pray I will show that love to my children on a daily basis. Amen.

Day 4

Exodus 9:16

But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

Being a mom is hard. So many times I have been brought to the end of myself, realizing that I did not have what it took to finish the job. I am gently reminded in this verse that *I* may not have the power and strength, but God does. He has given me my children for this very purpose—to train them, to teach them, and to love them. God will give me what I need, when I need it. I thank God that he is always the more the *more* I need to accomplish my work.

Prayer

Father, as I go about this day/week/month/year, I pray I will be aware of your presence, obey your commands, and serve you in all that I do. Thank you for wanting a relationship with me and for pursuing me the way you do. I want to follow you, God. Teach me. I am willing to learn. Amen.

Day 5

Proverbs 16:3-4

Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.

We all want to be good moms. Solomon was known to be the wisest man, and he tells us in this verse that if you want your plans to succeed, you need to commit them to the Lord. This week, as you go about your daily activities, whether it's driving the carpool, changing diapers, working a 40-hour week, or squeezing in weekend baseball tournaments, commit those plans to the Lord. If God is at the top of your list, your plans will succeed.

Prayer

God, I commit my desire to be a great mom to you today. I pray you will bless my efforts and go before me in all I do. I pray I will always keep in mind that my success is not attached to my children's actions; rather, success is found in how I respond to them and love them. Thank you, Father, for my children and the blessings they bring to our family. Amen.

Day 6

1 Corinthians 10:31

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

I love that I don't have to be someone big and important to glorify God. I can bring glory to him in my own home, rocking my baby to sleep. I can bring glory to him serving my children dinner or going to the grocery store. How cool is that? I think it's amazing because the world we live in focuses on the rich and famous—two things I will never be. We are reminded in this verse that even the small things in life, like eating or drinking, are important to God and should be important to us too.

We have focused on purpose this week, and this verse reminds us that everything in life has purpose if we glorify God in the process. How do you glorify God while rocking your children to

sleep? You are peaceful, patiently waiting for them to drift off. You can glorify God by serving your family with a good attitude and loving spirit. You can glorify God at the grocery store by giving those around you grace when grace is not deserved. And you can have a smile on your face as you check out. It all matters!

Prayer

God, be with me throughout my day, and remind me that everything matters to you. Give me your love, your grace, your amazing mercy. God, show me how to love others the way you love them. I tend to be impatient and irritable. Take that away and replace it with patience and love. Thank you that the small things matter to you, so I can bring glory to you in my home even while doing laundry. Amen.

BEING A STUDENT OF YOUR CHILD

week two

God has uniquely wired our kids according to his plan for them. This week we'll talk about how we can work *with* their wiring instead of *against* it as we learn the importance of being students of our children.

The key to loving our children well is to truly know them (and ourselves).

Understanding your and your child's temperaments is a great place to start.

- Yellow – playful
- Green - peaceful
- Blue – proper
- Red – powerful

To parent well, we must understand how our children are designed.

- We fight *against* our children when we try to make them into someone they are not.
- We fight *for* our children as we embrace who they are by developing their strengths and coaching their weaknesses.

In fighting for our children, we must be willing to lay down

- Our preferences.
- Our desire to be understood.
- Our reputations.

Being a great student is a lifelong process.

- Accept your child's temperament, no really.
- Adapt/adjust to changes.
- Seek outside help.

*Train up a child in the way he
should go, and when he is old
he will not turn from it.*

(Proverbs 22:6)

Fight *for* your children, not *against* them.

BOOKS:

- Personality Plus for Parents*** by Florence Littauer
The Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman
The Birth Order Book by Kevin Leman

Discover Your Temperament

STEP 1: Circle the word in each row that best describes you.

	COLUMN A	COLUMN B	COLUMN C	COLUMN D
1	TAKES CHANCES	LIKES TO LEAD	LOYAL	HIGH IDEALS
2	RATIONAL	FUN-LOVING	DARING	BALANCED
3	NON-DEMANDING	DEEP/THOUGHTFUL	IMAGINATIVE	SINGLE-MINDED
4	PRODUCTIVE	UNDERSTANDING	DETAILED	LIKES VARIETY
5	UNFLUSTERED	RESERVED	MOTIVATOR	AUTHORITATIVE
6	LOGICAL	ENJOYS NEW THINGS	DECISION-MAKER	MEDIATOR
7	ENERGETIC	OPINIONATED	AVOIDS CONFLICT	PREDICTABLE
8	CONSCIENTIOUS	EXPRESSIVE	LEADER	NURTURING
9	PATIENT	PRACTICAL	FORGIVING	ADVENTUROUS
10	GOAL-DRIVEN	PATIENT	FAITHFUL	LOVES PEOPLE
11	DISLIKES CHANGE	TIDY	PROMOTER	COMPETITIVE
12	PERSISTENT	PLAYFUL	INDEPENDENT	TOLERANT
13	TALKATIVE	ENJOYS CHALLENGES	DEEP RELATIONSHIPS	SENSITIVE
14	CREATIVE	POSITIVE	BRAVE	GOOD LISTENER
15	ACCEPTING	EVALUATES	ENTHUSIASTIC	IMPULSIVE
16	DOER	EASYGOING	LIKES ORDER	OPEN/FRIENDLY
17	STEADY	CAUTIOUS	ENERGETIC	ACHIEVER
18	PERFECTIONIST	ANIMATED	VISIONARY	WILLING

STEP 2: Count the number of words you circled for each color, and record it below.

TOTALS: Red _____ Yellow _____ Green _____ Blue _____

Temperament Profiles

CHOLERIC POWERFUL RED

**BORN LEADER
"GET THINGS DONE" PERSON
VISIONARY
DECISION MAKER**

"I'm a strong leader. I am very task-oriented, and often find myself doing multiple tasks at one time. If I am not in charge, I want to be."

MELANCHOLY PROPER BLUE

**ORGANIZED
DETAIL-ORIENTED
DEEP THINKER**

"I tend to be a quiet person, and I am energized by time alone. I like things functional and efficient, and I appreciate things like agendas, detailed instructions, and strong follow-through."

SANGUINE PLAYFUL YELLOW

**FUN-LOVING
OUTGOING
OPTIMISTIC
LIFE OF THE PARTY**

"I'm the quintessential people person. I enjoy being the center of attention and am energized by being with people. I'm bold and loud in almost everything I do."

PHLEGMATIC PEACEFUL GREEN

**RELAXED
LIKABLE
PEACEABLE
LOW-STRESSED**

"I'm laid back and go with the flow most of the time. I can be different things to different people and respond as needed in different situations."

CHOLERIC **POWERFUL RED**

STRENGTHS

Decisive
Works Well Under Pressure
Production-Oriented
Great Leader

WEAKNESSES

Too Opinionated
Workaholic
Overly Intense
Insensitive

MELANCHOLY **PROPER BLUE**

STRENGTHS

Attention to Detail
Deep and Thoughtful
Compassionate
Organized

WEAKNESSES

Remembers the Negatives
Too Sensitive
Insecure Socially
Needs Structure

SANGUINE **PLAYFUL YELLOW**

STRENGTHS

People Person
Humor
Creative and Colorful
Great Storyteller

WEAKNESSES

Disorganized
Talks Too Much
Distracted Easily
Too Dramatic

PHLEGMATIC **PEACEFUL GREEN**

STRENGTHS

Adaptable
Good Under Pressure
Good Listener
Kind

WEAKNESSES

No Sense of Urgency
Procrastinator
Stubborn
Avoids Conflict



table talk

week two

How were your parents good students of you?

What's one thing you learned about your child's temperament from the color assessment that surprised you?

Where do you feel you might be fighting against your child's design?

How can others help you be a better student of your child?

What is one thing you can apply or work on this week?

Devotional *(week two)*

Day 1

Proverbs 22:6

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

Train up your child in the way he should go—not how you would respond, or what makes you feel comfortable, but the way he should go. You must realize that God designed your children, and he has plans for them. Ask God today to begin to show you how to parent each child in the way he or she was designed. Become a student of your children by learning their ways and not trying to create little versions of you.

Prayer

Father, give me wisdom to train up my child in the way he should go. I tend to parent with what would work for me, but teach me how to view each child individually. Thank you for blessing me with my children; give me what I need to parent them in a godly way. Amen.

Day 2

Matthew 7:12

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.

We lead by example and more so with our children than anyone else. Your children are always watching to see if you are consistent, fair, and loving. The best way to teach your children is to lead by example. If you want to teach them to have compassionate hearts, then you must have a compassionate heart. If you want your children to be generous and thoughtful, then you must display those traits. Ask God to fill you with his loving Spirit, and those traits will flow out of you.

Prayer

Father, fill me with your Spirit. Pour into me so I can, in turn, pour into my family. I want to walk with you and depend on you so your loving ways will flow through me. I cannot give what

I do not have, and I know that I need you in order to love my children the way you love me—*unconditionally*. Thank you for giving love freely. I pray I will grow deeper in my walk with you. Amen.

Day 3

Psalm 139:13

For you created me in my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

God designed each of our children uniquely and individually. No two children are alike; therefore, one size does not fit all. God designed your child's blueprint. Ask him to teach you how to parent that child. This verse teaches us that God knit each of us together; he knows our deepest desires, passions, and inspirations because he created us. If you want to be the best mom you can possibly be, ask God every day to teach you about your child. God knows which discipline will work, what love language your child speaks, and what personality your child has. Seek him. Ask him to guide you.

Prayer

Father, thank you for being the Creator of my children and for making each one unique. I pray I would view my job with excitement and joy. What a privilege that you have given me these children, and I ask that you teach me how to parent them the way they need to be parented. Amen.

Day 4

Jeremiah 29:11

"For I have a plan for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Each of us has a plan for our lives, and God is the director of that plan. You have great influence over your children; use this time to teach them about God's sovereignty. Teach them about God's great love for them and his desire to prosper them, not to harm them. Think about it: if your children can comprehend these truths, what a gift you are giving them. That gift will last a lifetime.

Prayer

Father, thank you for having a plan. You have a plan for my life and my child's life. Thank you for allowing me to play a role in guiding my child's path. God, I pray I will stay close by your side and in tune with you. Help me point my children to you, teaching them of your love for them. Amen.

Day 5

Deuteronomy 4:9

Just make sure you stay alert. Keep close watch over yourselves. Don't forget anything of what you've seen. Don't let your heart wander off. Stay vigilant as long as you live. Teach what you've seen and heard to your children and grandchildren.

Stay alert. Don't be lazy with your parenting. Every new season of life brings new challenges and hopes. Embrace each season, and don't grow weary in your guidance. As your children grow, take what you have learned and apply it to the next season of their lives. Being a student of your children never stops, even as they grow into adulthood. Continue to ask God for his infinite wisdom.

Prayer

Father, I pray I would not grow weary in my role as a mom. I often feel discouraged and wonder if I am doing a good job. God, instill in me confidence in you and endurance to keep pushing forward. I want to stay alert and finish strong; I acknowledge I can only do that through you. Thank you for meeting my every need. Amen.

Day 6

John 10:3-4

The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.

This passage of Scripture is a beautiful picture of how we should parent. Christ is our example. He is the picture of a Good Shepherd. His sheep follow him because he knows them; they in turn listen and follow. If you want to have influence with your children—if you want them to

follow your teaching—the best thing you can do is *study* them. Take the time to invest in them, learning their likes, dislikes, passions, motivations, and disappointments. To be known by your mom is a powerful thing. Don't waste the influence that is at your fingertips.

Prayer

Father, thank you for being my Shepherd and for leading me so well. God, I pray that I will be an excellent student of my children, that I will be open to how you designed them, and that I will work *with* and not *against* you. I pray that I will continue to learn my children's ways. Teach them to listen to my voice. Give me your voice. Amen.

BOUNDARIES

week three

The demands on moms are nonstop and never-ending. At some point, all moms feel overwhelmed and exhausted. One of the best ways to avoid burnout is to establish healthy boundaries. This week, we will learn how to set boundaries that bring freedom.

Boundaries create order and give you control over yourself and your life.

- Every mom needs boundaries. The question is where?
- Knowing where to put boundaries is challenging for moms.

Building healthy boundaries requires a correct understanding of our responsibilities.

- We are responsible *to* our children, not *for* our children.
- We are responsible to love, to care, and to listen.
- We are not responsible for their happiness, mistakes, or perceptions.

Boundaries help your children “carry their own loads.”

- Infants
- Toddlers
- Elementary years
- Teenager years

Boundaries will always frustrate someone.

- Distinguish between real guilt and false guilt.
- Boundaries are easier to implement the earlier you set them.

Setting boundaries is a process.

*For each one should
carry their own load.*

(Galatians 6:5)

Boundaries bring freedom.

BOOKS:

Boundaries with Kids/Teens by John Townsend

Age of Opportunity (Middle School & Up) by Paul David Tripp

Preparing Your Son for Every Man's Battle (Middle School & Up)

by Stephen Arterburn & Fred Stoeker

Preparing Your Daughter for Every Woman's Battle (Middle School & Up) by Shannon Ethridge



Is it easy or hard for you to establish personal boundaries? Why?

In what areas are you reluctant to set boundaries?

How can comparing ourselves to other moms affect our perspectives on boundaries?

What is one way you can help your children “carry their own loads”?

In what area are you willing to establish boundaries this week?

Devotional *(week three)*

Day 1

Galatians 6:5

For each one should carry their own load.

God gives each of us a load to carry. As moms, we can often feel like our loads are too heavy, and we look to our husbands, our moms, or our friends to lighten them. We need to first look to God. He will give us the strength we need to carry what he has placed in our lives. Look to God and ask him to give you what you need each day to carry out his plan. There have been times in my life when I felt my load was too heavy to bear, but when I invited God into my world and asked him for strength, endurance, and courage, he always came through for me. Invite God into your world and ask him to help you carry your load.

Prayer

Father, I pray that every day I live on this earth, I will realize more and more my need for you. I pray that I will be forever dependent on you in every aspect of my life. You have placed me in my circumstances, and you will give me what I need to get through them. Please continually remind me of your faithfulness and your love for me. Amen.

Day 2

Matthew 11:28-30

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Boundaries are hard to maintain on a daily basis. But God tells us we do not have to walk this journey alone. He is with us. If we will choose to share our burdens with God, he will lighten them. Words cannot explain how God does this, because only he knows. But we can thank God for taking our burdens and making them easier to bear.

Prayer

Father, being a mom is one of the hardest yet most fulfilling jobs I have ever had. I want to include you in every part of my journey of motherhood and invite you to bear my burdens with me each step of the way. Thank you for sharing my highs and lows and for your promise to be there for me. I give you all the glory and praise! Amen.

Day 3

Deuteronomy 32:8-9

When the High God gave the nations their stake, gave them their place on Earth, he put each of the peoples within boundaries under the care of divine guardians. But God himself took charge of his people, took Jacob on as his personal concern.

Knowing that God is sovereign and he is in control of everything brings us comfort and peace. In a world that feels out of control, it is reassuring to know that God set up the nations and “gave them their place on Earth, he put each of the peoples within boundaries.” If boundaries are useful in God’s economy, then they should be set into motion in my world. Ultimately, God will take me on as his personal concern, and for that I am grateful.

Prayer

Father, thank you for establishing your own boundaries in our world. Teach me to do the same in my life. I want to be a student of you and mirror all you do. Thank you for loving me so much that I am your personal concern. It is amazing to think the Creator of the universe knows and cares about my life. Thank you, Lord! Amen.

Day 4

Psalms 74:17

It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter.

When I resist setting boundaries, whether it is because I am afraid of others’ reactions or it is my people-pleasing personality setting in, I need to remember that God sets boundaries. God realizes in his wisdom that boundaries are not only helpful, they are necessary. Follow God’s lead.

Prayer

Father, thank you for always guiding and directing my life. I want to learn from you and to become a teachable student. God, I resist setting boundaries for all kinds of reasons. Help me

push past my fear and follow your lead. In all your wisdom and glory, you blaze the trail ahead of me, showing me how to live. Amen.

Day 5

Acts 17:26

From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.

God places boundaries on the nations, on nature, and on men. God appoints our times on this earth; he sets in motion where we end and someone else begins. Boundaries are good, and if they are set in a healthy way, they bring peace and security. Don't be afraid to set boundaries in your life.

Prayer

Father, I give you this day and all that it brings. As I go about my day, show me any areas where I need to set boundaries. Whether it is with my children, my husband, my family, or friends, give me the strength to set appropriate boundaries, and help me to do it in love. Thank you for showing me that boundaries are good and for always leading by example. Amen.

Day 6

Psalms 147:13-14

He strengthens the bars of your gates and blesses your people within you. He grants peace to your borders and satisfies you with the finest of wheat.

Boundaries bring security into our lives. When we set boundaries, our relationships become stronger because we understand where we stop and others begin. In Psalms, we are given a promise from God that he will bring us strength, and he will bring peace to our borders. Accept God's provision and protection in your life, allowing his peace to flow out of you.

Prayer

Father, thank you for bringing your strength into my world, and thank you for giving me peace where I have set my boundaries. I pray that I will be mindful of your presence throughout my day today, and I will offer my praise up to you. Amen.

DISCIPLINE

week four

Discipline is one of the hardest parts of being a mom. There are so many different ideas and ways to parent, it is hard to know what is best. This week we'll talk about how to simplify strategies in order to set ourselves and our kids up for success.

Discipline is hard for a variety of reasons.

- Our children are so cute (especially when little).
- Our children want things their way.
- It seems unending.
- We want to please others.
- Our self-worth is tied up in it at times.

Discipline starts with a mindset: deciding what you *will* and what you *will not* put up with.

Discipline now brings excellence and peace later.

Principles of discipline:

- If it is not unpleasant, it is not a deterrent.
- If it is not consistent, it is confusing.

Enemies of discipline

- Fear
- Inconsistency
- Fatigue
- Anger

Discipline Do's

In the moment:

- Be united.
- Be calm.
- Be clear.
- Reconnect.

Beyond the moment:

- Find the why.
- Reconnect.

Discipline for:

- **Disobedience**
- **Defiance**
- **Dishonesty**

Different stages require different discipline.

Stages of discipline:

- Birth–5: Foundation
- Ages 6–12: Why's Behind the No's
- Ages 13–18: Coaching Years

Pain Now = Peace Later

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

(Hebrews 12:11)

BOOKS:

- Parenting by The Book*** by John Rosemond
- Dare to Discipline*** by James Dobson
- Have a New Kid by Friday*** by Kevin Leman
- How Children Raise Parents*** by Dan B. Allender



What do you find most challenging about discipline?

What are some ways you can reconnect with your child after the discipline?

When is it hardest for you to be consistent?

How can your child's personality and wiring affect your discipline?

What is one thing you can work on this week?

Devotional *(week four)*

Day 1

James 1:5

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given them.

This verse brings a promise with it. If we ask, God will give, and he will give generously without finding fault. In a mom's world, this is a home run. You cannot lose if you follow this verse. As you begin your week practicing some new discipline techniques, start by asking God for wisdom... wisdom in the way you parent... wisdom in knowing when to discipline and when to give grace. Each morning before your feet hit the ground, pray and ask God for wisdom as you go about your day.

Prayer

God, give me wisdom today as I parent my children. Teach me how you knitted my children together and what will work with each one. I want to honor you in all I do, and the first step is acknowledging that you are the Creator and Lord of all. All wisdom comes from you. Thank you for giving me the wisdom I request and for giving it to me generously. Amen.

Day 2

Hebrews 12:11

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

As hard as discipline is to put into practice, and as painful as it can be both for the mom and the child, the end goal must be kept in mind at all times. If the end goal is to raise a child who is well-adjusted, loving, and has a healthy outlook on life, then discipline is not only needed, it is required. This verse in Hebrews tells us that even though discipline is painful, it brings a harvest of righteousness and peace. Do you want to give your children the gifts of righteousness and peace? I would imagine every mom's answer would be yes. Choose to push past the pain of discipline and think of your end goal.

Prayer

Father, give me the strength to discipline my children even though it is hard. Give me discernment to see the ramifications of my children's actions while they are young. I promise, Lord, that I will love my children so much as not to skip over this important part of being a parent. Amen.

Day 3

Proverbs 6:20-23 (The Message)

Good friend, follow your father's good advice; don't wander off from your mother's teachings. Wrap yourself in them from head to foot; wear them like a scarf around your neck. Wherever you walk, they'll guide you; whenever you rest, they'll guard you; when you wake up, they'll tell you what's next. For sound advice is a beacon, good teaching is a light, moral discipline is a life path.

This verse is both encouraging and inspiring. Think about it. We moms have the ability to bring a sense of safety to our children, to give direction to their days, to guard and protect them. What more would you want for your children whom you love so dearly? Push past the thought of *I can't discipline my child because I don't want to break his spirit*. You will not break his spirit; you are giving him a guiding beacon for his life path.

Prayer

Father, thank you for encouraging me as a mom. I pray I will accept your wisdom and embrace it like a warm blanket on a cold night. God, give me courage to discipline my children in love and to fight the fear that they might not love me. Allow my soul to resonate with your wisdom so I may give my children the gift of good teaching. Amen.

Day 4

Proverbs 19:18 (The Message)

Discipline your children while you still have the chance; indulging them destroys them.

As moms, we have short windows of influence in their lives. Use this time wisely. No mom would ever want to destroy her child, but allowing children to do whatever they want, whenever they want invites destruction. Take heart, moms. Discipline them in love and give

them lives full of promise. Set your children up for success for the rest of their lives. What a huge gift you will be giving them.

Prayer

Father, my motherly nature wants to give my children everything they want. Teach me how to provide what they need and help them look to you to provide for their *wants*. Amen.

Day 5

Ephesians 6:4

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Parents should be the safest people children can turn to for help. Don't abuse that privilege by aggravating or exasperating them. Keep in mind that children are learning and growing in their knowledge of life. Do not tease them or make fun of the error of their ways. Always be loving and gentle, building them up as they are learning. Remember, you are the first representation of Christ they will see playing out in their lives.

Prayer

Father, fill me with your loving Spirit so I will not frustrate or aggravate my children. Give me a deep love for my children so that I will want to instill your love in them. I pray that in everything I do, I will point my children to you. Amen.

Day 6

Proverbs 29:17

Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul.

More than anything else, I want to be at peace in my parenting, to know I am doing a good job. The Bible teaches that through discipline I will find this peace, and my children will bring delight to my soul. What an answer to my prayers!

Prayer

Father, I want peace in my parenting, and I want each of my children to be a delight to me. Give me the courage to correct my children when they are making unwise choices. When

CONTENTMENT

week five

Especially with the influence of social media, it is easy to fall into the trap of discontentment. The perfectly posed/constructed posts on facebook set us up for unrealistic comparisons. This week we'll dive into how to navigate these pitfalls so that we can enjoy contentment regardless of our circumstances.

Enemies of contentment/traps of discontentment

- Comparison
- Expectations

Contentment is a choice.

In a season of discontentment:

- Acknowledge the discontentment.
- Ask yourself, "Why am I discontent?"
- Allow God to meet your needs.
- Grieve your loss.
- Give thanks for your story.

We don't get to write our stories, but we can choose what we will do with them.

- Know your story.
- Embrace your story.
- Share your story.

Embrace your story.



What triggers discontentment in you?

Do you feel like you have grieved the parts of your story you wish were different?
Do you need to?

How have you been impacted by someone sharing her story with you?

How can sharing your story help others?

What is one thing you would like to work on this week?

Devotional *(week five)*

Day 1

Philippians 4:11-13, 19

I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength... And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Contentment is learned. We are not born with it; we don't naturally possess it. But through Christ, we can have it. In order to be content, we must begin to look to God and realize that everything comes from him. Be grateful for what God has given you and learn to be joyful in your existing circumstances. Choose thankfulness over discontentment.

Prayer

Father, my natural tendency is to want what others have and to become discontent with what I have. God, please give me a grateful heart. Open my eyes so I will see circumstances through your eyes and not mine. Thank you for meeting all of my needs. Amen.

Day 2

1 Timothy 6:6

But godliness with contentment is great gain.

So many of us try to get ahead in life. We work hard, and we strive in vain to be successful. Sometimes our efforts pay off, and other times we find ourselves coming up short. The Bible teaches us that contentment is found through pursuing God, and when we do, we will be given great gain.

Prayer

Father, I want to know you, and I want to be a good mom. I want to be content with my life, with my possessions, and with my family. Create in me a pure heart. Amen.

Day 3

Proverbs 14:30

A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.

This verse is soothing to my soul. Who doesn't want peace? There is nothing better than sitting at the beach in the late afternoon listening to the soft, gentle break of the waves. As you sit there, your mind slowly drifts away, and you find yourself calm. God tells us in this Scripture that a calm and undisturbed heart is the life and health of the body. Many of us ignore God's teaching and choose the other path—envy, jealousy, and wrath. It's so easy to envy other women, to be jealous of their houses, their husbands, and their relationships with their children. If we allow them, envy and jealousy will begin to eat away at us, and we will become angry and dissatisfied. God teaches us to calm our minds and to be content with where we are. He will work it all out.

Prayer

Father, I want to run far away from envy, jealousy, and anger. Show me how to seek a calm mind. Teach me how to be content with where I am and what I have. I realize it is a choice, but sometimes I feel so drawn to compare myself with others. I need you. I chose you and am grateful for you and your love. Amen.

Day 4

Hebrews 13:5-6

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

It is so easy to compare. Have you ever noticed that you were happy with the way things were until you compared? Maybe you found out your coworker made more money than you, and once you knew the difference, you were not content. You began to feel used, overworked, and underpaid. Your tone changed toward your coworker, and your attitude began to spiral downward. To be free, you must change your mindset and realize "the Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid." If God is in control, he will meet your needs before you even realize you have a need. Trusting God is the way to contentment and happiness.

Prayer

Father, thank you for being my helper, for providing for me, and for never leaving me. Keep my eyes focused on you alone, and when I am tempted to compare what I have with others, provide a way out of that temptation. Amen.

Day 5

Luke 3:14

Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.

This is the second Scripture that talks about not comparing your pay with others. Take heed; listen to what God is telling you. Comparing steals your joy and sows the seeds of jealousy. Resist and run away from the comparison trap; you will always lose.

Prayer

Father, I don't want to compare because I lose either way. I either come away feeling superior, or I feel less than I should. Both thoughts are wrong and are not how you see me. Help me to keep my eyes focused on you alone and to be content with where I am in life. Amen.

Day 6

1 Timothy 6:6 (ERV)

Devotion to God is, in fact, a way for people to be very rich, but only if it makes them satisfied with what they have.

To be satisfied with what you have is a gift from God. The way to satisfaction is to be dedicated to God in all you do. But what does that mean? It means to keep him first in your life, to share your life with him—your dreams, desires, and thoughts. Invite God into every aspect of your life. If you do, satisfaction will follow.

Prayer

Father, you are the Lord of Lords, King of Kings, Creator of the universe, and you want a relationship with me. I invite you into my normal, everyday life. I want to walk with you, sharing my whole day with you—*the good and the bad*. I ask you to give me satisfaction in all I do today, and I pray that I will keep my eyes solely on you. Amen.

TIME MANAGEMENT

week six

Managing time is a challenge in almost every stage of life, but motherhood takes it to a whole new level. This week we will learn how to better manage what can so often feel overwhelming. Motherhood takes time management to a new level of difficulty.

In order to “make the best” of our time, we need to be clear about our priorities.

Establishing the right priorities begins with sorting our calendars into categories.

- **Non-negotiable:** Something that absolutely has to be on your calendar
- **Essential:** Important, but not as important as non-negotiables
- **Bonus:** Icing on the cake

We need to be wise about how we spend our time. Build your calendar around things you know will matter in the long run.

- **God:** Read one verse a day. Pray throughout the day. Involve God in every aspect of your life.
- **Marriage:** Prioritize your husband before your children. Plan trips to get away. Go on dates.
- **Children:** Go on dates with your kids. Do things individually with your children. Sit and listen to your children.
- **Community:** Join a small group.



Where do you see the need to make calendar changes right now?

Is prioritizing hard for you? If so, why?

What is *non-negotiable* for you?

What is easy for you to say no to? What are the hard things for you to say no to?

What is one thing you can change on your calendar this week that would bring you peace?

Devotional *(week six)*

Day 1

Ephesians 5:15-17

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Have you ever thought about what this verse means? We get so caught up in scheduling, planning the week, cleaning, cooking, driving, and working that we can forget to be wise with our time and make the *best* use of the time given to us.

What is the best use of your time? Is it looking at Facebook for an hour, dreaming you had another person's life? Is it cramming your schedule so full of activities for your family that you are never fully available to your children or husband? Is it sitting and watching hours of pointless television that adds nothing to your life but a desire for *more*? It's not that these activities are bad or evil; they aren't. But we need to be wise with our time—a *precious commodity*.

Prayer

Father, as I go about my day, show me how I can be wise with my time. You know my schedule. You know what I *need* to accomplish; help me make the most of this day that you have given me. I pray that I will accomplish what I need to and give myself grace on matters that have to be put on hold. I give you this day, Father. Do with it what you will. Amen.

Day 2

1 Corinthians 7:17

Nevertheless, each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him and to which God has called him.

Where has God placed you? Are you in the infant season, stuck in the house all the time wishing your baby would sleep through the night and begin to interact with you? Are you in the toddler stage, where you wish your child would slow down and not get into everything around

your house? Is your child in the busy years of elementary school, where you feel you are a glorified taxi driver? Or is your child driving himself, and you feel left out?

Whatever stage of life you are in, “retain the place” you find yourself. Realize that there are only 24 hours in a day and not everything will fit. You will have to give up different things in different seasons of life. Your *time* as a mom is valuable. Decide today the most important things to put on your calendar. Whatever you decide, thank God that he has assigned those things to you right now.

Prayer

Father, thank you for calling me to this season. Give me wisdom as I decide what is the most important and which things can be set aside. Open my eyes to see my children the way you see them. Teach me how to parent them the way you want them to be parented. Amen.

Day 3

Galatians 6:7

A man reaps what he sows.

If you are sowing a life that never slows down, you will reap shallow relationships with your children. If you are spending the time, you will reap the benefit of *knowing* each child. As a mom, the sooner you realize you cannot do it all, the sooner you will relax and release the huge burden so many moms carry. Begin to develop the mindset of sowing and reaping. If you are sowing a nonstop pace, don't be surprised when your children grow up and don't have time for you. You reap what you sow. If you don't teach the value of slowing down and resting, then your children will not grow up realizing rest is an important part of life. We get so busy, we forget that there are consequences to our actions. Take some time today to ask God to show you the areas of your life in which you need to slow down. Listen to him and take heart; today is a good day to start a new healthy habit.

Prayer

Father, open my eyes to what you see in my life and give me the courage to act on what you show me. If you urge me to let go of travel ball, give me the courage to release that sport. If you call me to get back into church, give me the desire to make that happen on Sundays. I want to sow good things for my family. I want to reap a beautiful harvest. I can only do that through your direction and strength. Amen.

Day 4

Genesis 2:3

Then God blessed (spoke good of) the seventh day, and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Holy simply means “set apart.” To set aside a day for rest is quite foreign in our fast-paced, drive-thru society. However, our God, in all his glory and majesty, took a day to rest, and he said it was a good thing. Take some time to rest and reflect on the good you are creating. Carve out *consistent* time to rest. Perhaps take a baby step such as deciding you will not do laundry on Sundays. When your family asks you why, tell them, “Rest is good for God, and it is good for me.” Enjoy your rest!

Prayer

God, give me the strength to follow your example of resting. I don't want to be so busy being a mom that I forget to rest and take care of myself. Gently remind me throughout my week to take time to rest, and help me honor you by setting aside a day to reflect on your goodness and provision. Amen.

Day 5

Ecclesiastes 8:6

There is a right time and a right way to do everything. You must decide what you should do, even when it might cause problems.

A mom's life is all about making wise choices. There are only twenty-four hours in a day, and about eight of those are for sleeping. What are you going to do with the other sixteen? You need to decide the wisest use of your family's time. Not everyone will be happy with your decisions. Today, ask God for boldness to stand up for the right use of the time he has given you with your children. Many times, God's ways go against what culture teaches, but his ways are the right ways. Ask God to direct your path.

Prayer

Father, I pray I will have the courage to parent my family in accordance with your ways. Teach me. I want to learn from you. If my decisions cause problems, then give me the strength to stand alone. I want to parent the right way—*your way*. Thank you for guiding me in my journey. Amen.

Day 6

Psalm 127:1

If it is not the Lord who builds a house, the builders are wasting their time. If it is not the Lord who watches over the city, the guards are wasting their time.

Time is too precious to waste. Your job is too important to waste the time God has given you with your children by focusing on things that are of no eternal value. If your work as a mom is not built on God, then all the work you do is a waste. As you close this week, ask yourself two questions: *Is God at the foundation of what I am doing and teaching my children? Does what I am doing have eternal value?* Let the answers of those questions guide your days.

Prayer

Father, I want to build my family on your Word, your principles, and your desires. I do not want my time to be wasted. I am devoted to you and doing my job as a mom to the best of my ability. I always want to include you in everything I do. Teach me. Show me. I am willing to learn. Amen.



