

## ME & MY REAL FAMILY #1 – A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

*Sermon by Todd Lester*

May 14, 2017

### WHY A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION IS IMPORTANT

Ephesians 6:4, Hosea 4:6, Psalm 78:5-6

### WHAT EVERY CHILD NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT GOD

Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV) – The Lord's Prayer

#### 1. GOD WANTS AN \_\_\_\_\_ WITH ME

Matthew 6:9 (solves the problem of \_\_\_\_\_)

Our heavenly Father is c\_\_\_\_\_, c\_\_\_\_\_, c\_\_\_\_\_, and c\_\_\_\_\_.

#### 2. GOD'S NAME DESERVES \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9b (solves the problem of \_\_\_\_\_)

#### 3. GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ME IS PART OF A \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:10 (solves the problem of \_\_\_\_\_)

#### 4. GOD CAN MEET ALL MY \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:11 (solves the problem of \_\_\_\_\_)

#### 5. GOD FORGIVES ME SO I CAN \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:12 (solves the problem of \_\_\_\_\_)

Twin emotions: \_\_\_\_\_ (I've hurt others)

& \_\_\_\_\_ (others have hurt me)

#### 6. GOD WILL HELP ME \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:13a, 1 John 2:15-16, 1 Corinthians 10:13

(solves the problem of \_\_\_\_\_)

#### 7. GOD WILL PROTECT ME FROM \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:13b (solves the problem of \_\_\_\_\_)

#### 8. THERE'S MORE TO LIFE THAN THE \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:13c, Lamentations 3:24

(solves the problem of \_\_\_\_\_)

## Family Tree

Use the diagram below to sketch out some significant people in your family tree. Consider labeling (with colours or symbols) some of the positive or negative influences relatives may have had (or continue to have?) on your life.



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Discover a plan for your family that not only follows God's design but also brings contentment and a sense of purpose. This new sermon series, Me and My Real Family, is for anyone who wants a biblical pattern for building and strengthening a family and avoiding the pitfalls that tear families apart. This week's message focuses on the basic discipleship principles you need to teach to your children for them to fully develop spiritually.

### ***WHY A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION IS IMPORTANT***

Ephesians 6:4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.

Hosea 4:6 My people are being destroyed because they don't know me ... Since you have forgotten the laws of your God, I will forget to bless your children.

Psalms 78:5-6 He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children, so the next generation might know them— even the children not yet born— and they in turn will teach their own children.

### ***WHAT EVERY CHILD NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT GOD***

Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV) – The Lord's Prayer

#### **1. GOD WANTS AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH ME**

(solves the problem of insecurity)

Matthew 6:9 Our Father which art in heaven....

Our heavenly Father is caring, close, consistent, and capable.

#### **2. GOD'S NAME DESERVES MY HONOUR**

(solves the problem of identity)

Matthew 6:9b ... hallowed be Thy name.

#### **3. GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ME IS PART OF A LARGER PLAN**

(solves the problem of significance)

Matthew 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

#### **4. GOD CAN MEET ALL MY NEEDS**

(solves the problem of worry)

Matthew 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread ...

#### **5. GOD FORGIVES ME SO I CAN FORGIVE OTHERS**

(solves the problem of shame)

Matthew 6:12 ... and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

#### **6. GOD WILL HELP ME DO WHAT'S RIGHT**

(solves the problem of confidence)

Matthew 6:13a And lead us not into temptation...

1 John 2:15-16 Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything

we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world.

1 Corinthians 10:13 The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.

#### **7. GOD WILL PROTECT ME FROM EVIL**

Matthew 6:13b ... but deliver us from evil.

#### **8. THERE'S MORE TO LIFE THAN THE HERE AND NOW**

Matthew 6:13c For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Lamentations 3:24 I say to myself, "The Lord is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!"

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## Icebreaker/Introduction

The 'My Family Tree' activity gets people thinking about things for which they are thankful. Read the instructions together and then give some time for your group to fill in some of the petals (say they don't have to fill every space – unless they want to!). Then share some of your answers together. Did anything surprise them about this exercise?

Ask if there was anything from this week's message that stood out – either a point that was made which really resonated with them, or perhaps a question or difficulty that came up for them.

## WHY A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION IS IMPORTANT

**Focuses on Ephesians 6:4, Hosea 4:6, Psalm 78:5-6**

Todd said that studies show a caring adult makes a huge impact on a child, and it doesn't necessarily have to be a parent. Who else in your life, besides your parents, helped to shape you? What children do you have in your life that you could influence for good? Discuss Todd's point that laying a spiritual foundation for children is not the job of the church (ie. the children's pastor or the student ministries pastor). Would you agree? What role does the church play then? Why do people tend to look to these 'professionals' as being responsible for the spiritual growth of children?

Read **Psalm 78:5-6**. Do you ever think about the (spiritual) impact or legacy your decisions may have on future generations? What ancestors do you have that have influenced you or your family (for good or bad)?

## WHAT EVERY CHILD NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT GOD

Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV) – The Lord's Prayer

**1. GOD WANTS AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH ME** (addresses the problem of insecurity)

**Focuses on Matthew 6:9** Our heavenly Father is caring, close, consistent, and capable.

Todd said that when Jesus told us to address God as our Father that he was introducing a new and radical way to think of God. What are some ways that people portrayed God up to that point? What are some other ways people view God even now?

Todd pointed out that our culture creates insecurity through comparison and competition. How does knowing that God loves me unconditionally help to combat that thinking?

**2. GOD'S NAME DESERVES MY HONOUR** (addresses the problem of identity)

**Focuses on Matthew 6:9b**

Does swearing bother you? Is there a difference between saying the 'F' word for example and using God's name as an exclamation point? Todd seemed to say that swearing really should bother us. Why?

What are some ways that we can bring honour to God's name?

**3. GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ME IS PART OF A LARGER PLAN** (addresses the problem of significance)

**Focuses on Matthew 6:10**

What are some practical ways to teach children that they are not the centre of the family/universe? (eg. encourage them to think about others, stories that give a wider view/big picture of family or history)

Todd said that this perspective helps answer the big questions in life (like 'why am I here?' or 'does my life have significance?') How could we briefly summarize this idea of a 'larger plan'?

**4. GOD CAN MEET ALL MY NEEDS** (addresses the problem of worry)

**Focuses on Matthew 6:11**

Discuss Todd's recommendation to have a child pray about something they want/need instead of just giving it to them. What are some other ways to teach children to depend on God? How can we help our children remember all of the good gifts God gives to us (eg. our health, our friends, nature, family)?

**5. GOD FORGIVES ME SO I CAN FORGIVE OTHERS** (addresses the problem of shame)

**Focuses on Matthew 6:12** Twin emotions: guilt (I've hurt others) & resentment (others have hurt me)

Would you agree that the biggest problems in life (for both children and adults) are relational? What are other significant problems?

Do you think children expect perfection of themselves?

How have you modelled asking for and accepting forgiveness?

**6. GOD WILL HELP ME DO WHAT'S RIGHT** (addresses the problem of willfulness)

**Focuses on Matthew 6:13a, 1 John 2:15-16, 1 Corinthians 10:13**

Todd said that God will give us the strength or power to overcome temptation. Can you share an example of this? How does it work practically in day to day life and how can we teach this to our children?

**7. GOD WILL PROTECT ME FROM EVIL** (addresses the problem of fear)

**Focuses on Matthew 6:13b**

How do we balance trusting in God's protection of our children with teaching them safe practices? (ie. our role in providing protection)

**8. THERE'S MORE TO LIFE THAN THE HERE AND NOW** (addresses the problem of impulsiveness)

**Focuses on Matthew 6:13c, Lamentations 3:24**

Do you think Todd is talking about eternity here? When is it time to talk to children about heaven/death? What are your experiences with this?

Could Todd also be referring to the physical (here & now) vs. spiritual (unseen) worlds? What are some good strategies for helping children see that God is with them at all times?

Could the above 8 points also apply to what Every Adult Need to Know About God? What would change about these ideas?

Todd focused on what children need to know about God? What else do they need besides knowledge?