

What Are My Family Values?

What values help determine the way you live your life? What values do you desire to pass on to your children?

Our decisions are driven by what we value. Each person is governed by their “core values”, but many have never taken the time to actually identify and articulate those core values. Family values are the character qualities we commit to living-out in our family, and the characteristics we desire to pass-on to our children.

If you desire to leave a Godly legacy for your family, you must determine what that means. Think of it this way, if you were an archer aiming to hit the bullseye of a target, it would be pretty important to know where that target is located, right? Without knowing what/where the target is, you have about a 0% chance of hitting the target. Maybe you could get lucky in archery, but when it comes to leaving a Godly legacy, nobody does that on accident.

Family values are like the target you’re aiming to hit.

What Godly characteristics are you most passionate about instilling in your family? What target are you all, collectively, aiming at and hoping to hit?

Answering these questions will help ensure that you are leaving a Godly legacy through your family, and to accomplish this you must first identify and articulate your family values. That’s the goal of this worksheet!

Important Note: Values are more caught than taught. Don’t misunderstand, it’s very important to TEACH values, but if they are not reinforced by ACTION, your actions will re-teach what you REALLY value. For example, if you say that one of your core values is “My family comes before my job,” but your family sees you consistently working longer hours than expected and you are rarely present when you are home, they’ll learn that your real core value is, “My work is more important than my family.”

Please note that this exercise will take about an hour to complete. If you are married, complete Part One of this worksheet individually and then move on to Part Two with your spouse.

Part One: What Do I Value?

(Complete this part of the exercise individually.)

A. Take 10 minutes and consider what characteristics you hope your children possess. List as many characteristics as you can. Don't reference anything to try to come up with ideas (that will come later). Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to spark ideas and give you direction.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

(Once you are done, move on to exercise B. Continue to do this individually.)

B. Take 10 minutes and look over the list below. These are Godly values that we see spelled-out in Scripture. These are the characteristics that God values, which He desires to see in His children. Where do you see connections or intersections between the characteristics you listed above and the Biblical Values listed below? Circle the Biblical Values on this page that connect with the characteristics you listed above. Also, feel free to circle any of them that jump off the page at you, even if there is not a direct connection to what you came up with above. Take time to read the Bible verses connected to the values you circle. Once you're done, move on to section C.

Important Note: If you are passionate about a characteristic you listed above, but you do not see a connection to the list below, take time to look through God's Word to ensure that it is a value that God would affirm you instill in your children. If so, list it in the "Other" category with a Scripture reference that affirms the value.

Biblical Values

Faith (Heb. 11:6)

Love (Matt. 22:37-40)

Childlikeness (Matt. 18:3-5)

Biblical Worldview (Heb. 4:12)

Tenderheartedness (Ephesians 4:32)

Hunger for Righteousness (Matthew 5:6)

Fear of God (Proverbs 9:10)

Dependence on God (Psalm 62:5-7)

Forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32)

Hopefulness (Isaiah 40:28-31)

Obedience (1 Samuel 15:22)

Respect (1 Peter 2:17)

Graciousness (Psalm 145:8)

Compassion (Colossians 3:12)

Mercy (Colossians 3:13)

Thoughtfulness (Philippians 2:3-4)

Kindness (Proverbs 11:17)

Others:

Generosity (1 Timothy 6:17-19)

Work Ethic (Colossians 3:23-24)

Service (Mark 9:35)

Selflessness (Philippians 2:3-4)

Learning (Psalm 25:4)

Self-Control (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Honesty (Proverbs 12:22)

Patience (Galatians 6:9)

Loyalty (Proverbs 17:17)

Joy (Romans 15:13)

Gentleness (Proverbs 15:1)

Justice (Micah 6:8)

Humility (Proverbs 11:2)

Integrity (Psalm 15:2,4)

Community (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Courage (2 Timothy 1:7)

Perseverance (James 1:2-4)

Others:

C. Out of all the values you circled (or added) above, designate your top seven core values in order of priority (1 being the most important):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

D. Take 5 minutes and reflect on your lifestyle and how you spend your time. How well does your life reflect the five core values you have listed above? If you'd like, pull out your calendar and see how your calendar reflects your values. Be specific and feel free to write down any insight you have gained below:

Part Two: What Does Our Family Value?

(Complete this section with your spouse. If you are a single parent/guardian, skip to section E.)

A. Take 10 minutes and discuss your top seven core values together. In what areas do you see overlap and agreement in your values? Are there any areas of disagreement? If so, dig into that conversation. Talk about how you need one another for balance.

B. Take 15 minutes and develop a unified Seven Core Family Values list (in order of priority). This may mean eliminating some values, but that's ok. You're deciding what is MOST important to your family, that is not to say that other things don't matter or are not important.

Write your Top Seven Family Values below, with the Scripture reference that is connected to the value:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

C. Discuss how you can teach and model these values to your children. If applicable, it would be a good idea to get out your calendars and schedule family nights/times in the next couple months to talk about these family values, what they mean, and how you all can live them out as a family. Just remember, it's one thing to SAY it, but the goal is to actually LIVE it!

D. Close in prayer together, confessing any failures in the area of living out these values and asking God to enable you, and your family, to live according to your family's core values.

E. Take time with the Lord in prayer and reflection. Ask yourself... How can I teach and model these values for my family? If applicable, it would be a good idea to get out your calendar and schedule family nights/times in the next couple months to talk about these family values, what they mean, and how you all can live them out as a family. **Just remember, it's one thing to SAY it, but the goal is to actually LIVE it!**

Finally, don't try to instill your family values on your own! Share your experience with this exercise, and your list of Seven Core Family Values, with a trusted friend or family member and ask them to hold you accountable as you begin to live-out these family values.