

# FAMILY

# DIGGING DEEPER

THE ONE WHERE I DEAL WITH MY PAST

APRIL 14

**God desires for us to unlearn unhealthy patterns and behaviors we saw or experienced, so that we do not repeat them.**

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own, and get together with your running partner, life group, or friends and family to talk through what you are learning.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the places (who are the people) in your life where (with whom) you feel like you are pursued, accepted, loved, and belong?
2. Read **Exodus 34:4-7**.  
Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say?):
  - What do you notice and what are you curious about?Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean?)
  - What do you learn about humanity?
  - What do you learn about God?Now make some applications (what's my response?)
  - How are you encouraged, challenged, or convicted by this passage?
  - What should be our response to this passage?
3. Read **2 Corinthians 5:17**. In the message we heard that our sins can be forgiven and yet the family that formed us still remains in us, so we have to look back in order to move forward.
  - A. Have you ever done this with your family of origin (look back at your growing up years to consider what messages, experiences, hurts have affected how you live now as an adult)? If so, how was that process and what did you learn?
  - B. In what ways can you see the "new creation" that is talked about in your life?
4. Even if you have done some work to look back, take some time to work through a Genogram (see below). It will take a while to complete, but once you do, be sure to share what you find with a trusted community.

# KEY SCRIPTURE

**Exodus 34:4-7** So Moses chiseled out two stone tablets like the first ones and went up Mount Sinai early in the morning, as the Lord had commanded him; and he carried the two stone tablets in his hands. Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

## PRAYER

This week take some time to pray for what has come up for you from the message and/or your group discussion.

- Did a past relationship come to mind? Did that person hurt or negatively impact you?
  - Ask for God's healing in that situation.
  - Ask God to help you forgive them.
  - Eventually the hope would be that you could even more to a place where you could bless that person and pray for their flourishing.
- Any family habits/ addictions come up?
  - Ask for God's help to break off those habits/ addictions.
  - Ask God for clear next steps and help to be free.
- Do you believe what Exodus 34 says about God's character, "the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin."
  - Thank God for the ways you've experienced these character traits that are true of Him.
  - Ask God to show you any of these traits that you need to see in your life right now.

## TAKE A NEXT STEP

1. Work through the Genogram this week then share your results with trusted community. There will be ah ha moments, hurt that you'll feel, and next steps that will emerge.
2. Get connected with the Family of God here at Gateway. Join a Belong Event coming up in the next few weeks: [gatewaychurch.com/events](http://gatewaychurch.com/events)

## FOR THE PARENTS

Hey, families! Here's a look at what we're covering with your kids so you can help them continue to grow at home during the week.

### THIS WEEK

This week we will be learning about how Jesus goes after those who are lost.

**THE BIBLE:** "I have hidden your Word in my heart that I might not sin against you." Psalm 119:11

**THE MESSAGE:** If you don't have a friendship with God, this lesson might be just the thing God is using to help you stop being lost. Don't wait another day! Every person is important to God, including you. If you want to start a friendship with God, talk to your mom or dad, or even your small group leader to pray with you to accept Jesus as your Savior. You will no longer be like that little lost sheep.

**THE BIG IDEA: God's Story Is Written For Me!**

**ASK THIS**

Because sometimes you and your kid need a conversation-starter that isn't, "So . . . how was church?"

- Who does the lost sheep represent?
- Why is it so important to share Jesus' story with others?

**REMEMBER THIS**

God is always working in your life to bring you closer to Him. Sometimes God brings you a friend who tells you about Jesus. Sometimes God has a neighbor invite you to church. Sometimes God gives you a relative who loves Jesus and shows you how great that relationship is. No matter how God does it, He comes looking for you - just like that shepherd in our story. Why does He do that? Because He loves you so much and wants you to know how important you are to Him.

**NEXT WEEK**

Next week we learn how a tiny seed of faith can make a huge difference in our lives.

# Your Family Genogram



A genogram is a visual tool to document the history and dynamics of our family relationships, and their impact on us, over three to four generations. Constructing a genogram helps us examine unhealthy patterns from the past that we bring into our present leadership as well as our relationship to Jesus and others. It will take you beyond a conceptual or motivational level to a place of practical application.

**Directions:** If you're ready to take a life-changing step, you can watch an online video and access the "Genogram Your Family" tool at: [www.emotionallyhealthy.org/genogram](http://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/genogram). We've also provided you with this worksheet (on back) to help you get started. This will help you discover previously unexplored areas of your life and shadow.

When you explore your past with a genogram, you expose your shadow to the light of Jesus. Then by God's grace, you can break its power over you and integrate its hidden treasures into your life.

## Sample Questions to Ask in Constructing Your Genogram

The following questions are ones we ask to help people get beneath the surface and identify how the past might be impacting the present. As you read through the questions, try to consider them especially from the perspective you had as a child between the ages of eight to twelve.

1. Describe each family member in your household with three adjectives and identify their relationship to you (parent, caregiver, grandparent, sibling, etc.).
2. Describe your parents' (or caretakers') marriage(s) as well as your grandparents' marriage(s).
3. How were conflict, anger, and tensions handled in your extended family over two or three generations?
4. Were there any family "secrets" (such as an unwed pregnancy, incest, mental illness, or financial scandal, etc.)?
5. What was considered "success" in your family?
6. How did ethnicity or race shape you and your family?
7. How would you describe the relationships between family members (conflicted, detached, enmeshed, abusive)?
8. Were there any heroes/heroines in the family? Any villains or favorites? Why were these individuals singled out in this way?
9. What generational patterns or themes do you recognize (addictions, affairs, abuse, divorce, mental- illness, abortions, children born out of wedlock, etc.)?
10. What traumatic losses has your family experienced? (For example, sudden death, prolonged illness, stillbirth/miscarriage, bankruptcy, divorce?)
11. What insights (one or two) are you becoming aware of that help you to make sense of how your family of origin, or others, impacted who you are today?
12. What are one or two specific ways this may be impacting your life?

Excerpt From: Peter Scazzero. "The Emotionally Healthy Leader." iBooks. <https://itun.es/us/NYN4.l>

*(Worksheet on back)*

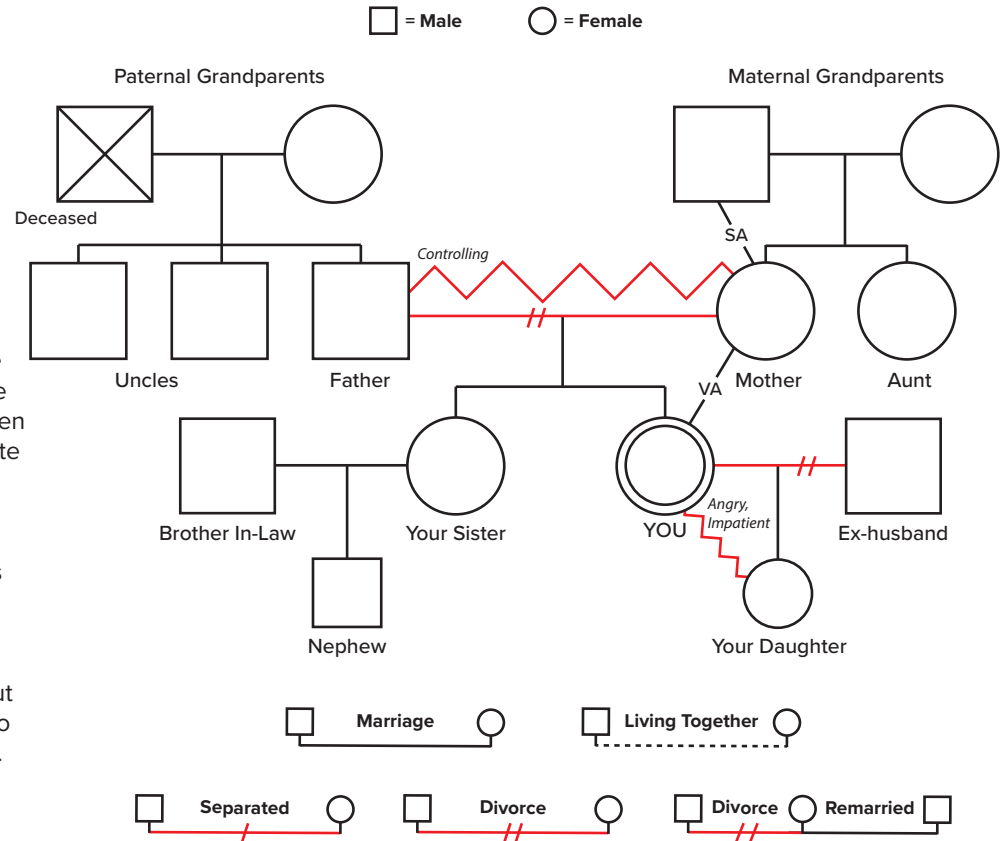
# Build Your Family Genogram



## Genogram Instructions:

- Start by outlining your family, using the template as an example. Draw several generations, going back to your grandparents and any children.
- Take note of who is married, who is divorced, and who may be living together outside of marriage. Is anyone widowed? What about separation, or forced separation?
- Learn the emotional relationships. Are members of a union loving? Do members get along? Is there conflict or enmeshment? Use the representative symbols, so you can see generational patterns.
- Dig deeper and mark the messages or good “blessings” that passed down. Thank God for them, as your family passed on what God intended, and you want to do the same.
- Use the key of “Notable problems” to mark patterns in each generation. This is just a start; there may be other issues not in the key—write those in. Write negative messages, lies, or sin-patterns that were “curses” commonly heard, such as “you’re worthless,” “don’t trust anyone,” or “financial success is everything.” You can go even further and differentiate between physical and emotional components. The template has some examples of other patterns to think through.
- Once you've completed the genogram, look carefully to see what patterns can be identified. There may be hereditary patterns or particular psychological tendencies that are very noticeable when grouped together in this way.
- Once finished, look for patterns. Thank God for the blessings, and remember that God does not force us to live in the sin patterns of our parents (Psalm 79:8), but you can only turn from what you recognize. Also remember Jesus’ words: “Come to me all who are weary and heavy burdened and I will give you rest...learn from me... my burden is light.” So God is not “burdening you” with this but wants to unburden you. Meditate on that, and daily ask Him to teach you to live in His reality (truth).

## GENOGRAM EXAMPLE



Relationship	Relational Dynamics	Symbol
Conflicted	A consistent pattern where issues do not get resolved between people.	
Cut Offs	People in the family stop talking to one another or avoid contact.	
Distant/Poor	Low or minimal emotional connection between family members.	
Enmeshment	Pressure is created for family members to think, feel and act alike. There is low tolerance for people to be separate, to disagree, or be different.	

Notable Problems Code		
SU = Suicide	ED = Eating Disorder	PI = Physical Illness (chronic)
SA = Sexual Abuse	SD = Sexual Dysfunction	MI = Mental Illness
PA = Physical Abuse	ID = Infant / Child Death	DP = Depression
VA = Verbal Abuse	IM = Miscarriage	FA = Fear / Anxiety
AB = Addictive Behavior (sex, work, gambling, etc)	IX = Abortion	UF = Unforgiveness (bitter root, judgement)
AA = Addictive Substances (alcohol, drugs, food, etc.)	UG = Unresolved Grief	AD = Adultery
	CR = Criminal Activity	OC = Occult / Satanic Activity