

# HONOR BEGINS AT HOME

THE  
COURAGEOUS  
BIBLE STUDY

Michael Catt   Stephen Kendrick   Alex Kendrick

*As Developed with*

Travis Agnew

UNFORMATTED SAMPLER  
LifeWay Press®  
Nashville, Tennessee

# Session 3

## Redeeming Your History

If you want to change your future, you must first redeem your past.

**“If possible, on your part, live at peace with everyone”  
(Rom. 12:18).**

## BRIEFING

GETTING THE RUNDOWN FOR THE DAY

### 1. Share the normal packing procedures for your family vacations.

Who does what? When?

How does packing cause silly tension in your home?

Has someone in your family ever packed so much for a trip that the baggage actually became a hindrance? Briefly describe what happened.

Often the journey we are on is hindered not by present obstacles but rather by those events in the past that we have never gotten over. Our past experiences become baggage that can hold us back. Before we can move forward, we must courageously redeem our history.

### Resources Available October 2011

#### Honor Begins at Home: The COURAGEOUS Bible Study

Leader kit (item 005325609)

Member book (item 005371686)

www.lifeway.com | 1-800-458-2772

UNFORMATTED SAMPLER  
NOT FOR RESALE

Published by LifeWay Press® © Copyright 2011 Sherwood Baptist Church. All Rights Reserved. © 2010 Sherwood Pictures Ministry. All Rights Reserved.

Item 005371686

Dewey Decimal Classification: To Come  
Subject Heading: To Come

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are taken from the Holman Christian Standard Bible®, copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission.

Printed in the United States of America

Study themes: Roles and responsibilities, Identity in Christ, Forgiveness and restoration, Walking with integrity, Serving and protecting your family, Winning the hearts of your children, Leaving a legacy, Accountability to God and others

At times perhaps, your attempts to become who God has called you to be may seem sluggish. Maybe the problem is not what you desire to accomplish now but what has already transpired. Figuratively, we need to pull the car over to the side of the road, go to the back, and unpack some of the baggage that is slowing us down.

If we look back, we all will find regrettable moments in our past—some we have caused and others that have happened to us. We cannot overlook them any longer.

**2. Concerning the past, what advice did you receive before starting a family?**

**3. If you could go back and change one thing in your past (something you have done or something that was done to you), what would you change?**

Last week we focused on receiving the forgiveness of Jesus for salvation. Now we will focus on how His forgiveness changes us. We will be going to the back of the car to do the most difficult thing imaginable: unpack all the baggage.

We will be looking at our responsibility when it comes to:

- (1) offering forgiveness to those who have hurt us
- (2) requesting forgiveness from those we have hurt

Only the courageous will proceed.

# STAKEOUT

## INTENSE CONCENTRATION ON THE SUBJECT

### OFFERING FORGIVENESS

**Think about what it means to offer forgiveness while someone reads aloud Matthew 18:21-35.**

Peter's willingness to forgive his brother seven times was not nearly enough, though listeners at the time perceived that number to be radical. The most religious men of the day, the Pharisees, thought that to forgive someone three times was the maximum. Jesus answered Peter's question by giving a higher standard and a vivid word picture of the nature of true forgiveness.

Jesus often taught in parables. In this one in which He compared two debtors, the first man owed his master 10,000 talents. (One talent was roughly the equivalent of 20 years' wages for a common laborer.) In modern times, if a worker earned \$15 an hour, he would make approximately \$30,000 in one year. According to one commentary, a talent's equivalent in our economy roughly equals \$600,000, making this man's debt to the king insurmountable (about \$6 billion).<sup>1</sup> In a shocking move, the king "had compassion" and forgave him of all of his debt.

The second slave owed this freshly forgiven servant 100 denarii. (For perspective, a common laborer in Jesus' day earned about one denarius a day.) While not as much as the first debt, this was still a substantial sum of money—equal to 20 weeks' work, or approximately \$12,000 today.<sup>2</sup> Even after being forgiven of a multi-billion-dollar debt, the first servant was unwilling to forgive a fellow servant's debt of \$12,000.

**4. What parts of this parable remind you of times when people have hurt you?**

---

COURAGEOUS CLIP

---

After watching the *COURAGEOUS* movie clip, “Nathan at Cemetery,” discuss together using activity 5.

**5. In this scene, what justifiable reasons, if any, did Nathan have to hate his father?**

How do you think Nathan’s unwillingness to forgive his father might impact other relationships?

(If willing to share) Has your father (or another family member) ever hurt you in such a way as to leave a huge unpaid debt in your life? Just acknowledging this, even privately, can be important.

The statistics are staggering. The number of people who grow up without the physical or emotional presence of their fathers increases every year.<sup>3</sup>

Most of us have legitimate reason not to want to forgive people who have hurt us. Whether our fathers were good dads or bad, we likely all have been wronged or hurt by them at some time. Jesus taught that these wrongs must be forgiven. In a sense, each of us has someone who probably owes us \$12,000. That’s a real debt that hurts. It has significant impact.

What reason did Nathan give for finally being able to forgive his father?

We cannot forget that for which we have been forgiven—the equivalent of an impossible-to-ever-pay-back \$6 billion debt. The cross changes everything. Christ has every reason not to forgive us, yet He offers freely the forgiveness that cost Him so much. His forgiveness should change how we act and feel and think. Just as we have been forgiven of so much, we must also forgive others (Col. 3:13). We are to forgive without keeping count (Matt. 18:22).

Like Nathan, we need to view God as the rightful Judge of anyone who wrongs us. When we become someone else’s judge, we remain angry, hateful, and bitter. God will judge them justly, and we no longer have to remain bitter. We can release people who have hurt us over to a holy and just God for Him to deal with according to His way and His timing.

**Read Romans 12:17-21.**

Being honorable by not allowing anger and hurt to build enables us to begin to forgive others, release the baggage of past hurts, and move on into the future with the freedom forgiveness provides. Intentionally try this process ... now.

**Read Matthew 18:33-35 again.**

As Nathan's actions in this *COURAGEOUS* scene illustrate, you can pray and fully release your imperfect earthly father from any and all of the deep hurts he may have caused you in the past. You can do that now too. Turn all of your hurts over to God, the only righteous and perfect Judge.

## REQUESTING FORGIVENESS

In addition to forgiving those in your past for mistakes they have made, it is equally vital to request forgiveness from others for the mistakes you have made. Both actions take courage.

**Read 2 Corinthians 7:10.**

In this verse, the apostle Paul explained two types of grief: godly grief and worldly grief.

### 6. How would you distinguish between these two types of grief?

GODLY GRIEF                      versus                      WORLDLY GRIEF

Worldly grief is what we feel when we are sorry we got caught and grieve over the consequences we face. Godly grief is when we are sorry we transgressed against a holy God and hurt Him and others. Just feeling bad about past mistakes is not enough. Guilt doesn't accomplish anything; it merely exposes sin and urges us to action.

If you possess godly grief, you will want to repent (turn around), confess to others how you have wronged them, and then take responsibility for your mistakes. Although Jesus has paid our spiritual debts before God in heaven, we are called to take responsibility for reconciling with those we wrong on earth. We cannot go back and undo the past, but we can do our best now to bring healing and restoration. Then, and only then, can we move forward.

**Read Matthew 5:23-24 again.**

**“So if you are offering your gift on the altar,  
and there you remember that your brother  
has something against you, leave your gift there  
in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled  
to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”  
—Matthew 5:23-24**

In addition to forgiving those who have wronged you, Jesus puts the responsibility in your hands to reach out to those from whom you need forgiveness. His requirement is this: Before you engage in worship, you need to find whomever you might have hurt and do your best to make amends. Then our past mistakes become a powerful witness to others of the wonderful things God has done in our lives, that we would be willing to humble ourselves and demonstrate God's love and care for those we have wronged.

Write down the names of some people who may have something against you for which you need to reconcile. Regardless of what they have done, God wants you to take responsibility for what you have done.

---

 COURAGEOUS CLIP
 

---

After viewing the *COURAGEOUS* movie clip, “David’s Letter,” discuss this clip as a group using activity 7.

### 7. How did David man up and take full responsibility for his past mistakes?

Once David decided to send that letter, what possible outcomes did he have to anticipate?

Based on similar situations or people you know about, how do many men tend to respond to past mistakes?

David took responsibility for someone he had hurt in the past and someone who might still need him. David honored God by asking for forgiveness. He recognized that what he once viewed as a mistake was now a gift God had given him. David laid down his pride and faced his fears in order to courageously do what was right.

*But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Look, I’ll give half of my possessions to the poor, Lord! And if I have extorted anything from anyone, I’ll pay back four times as much!”*

*“Today salvation has come to this house,” Jesus told him, “because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.”*

### **Luke 19:8-10**

The Holy Spirit and supportive friends helped David start this difficult journey. By beginning to let go of his past and its destructive patterns, David helped establish a better scenario for future generations. God is calling us to lay down our pride, face our fears, and take responsibility for our past. Like David, we have the Holy Spirit and one another to support us in this courageous journey.

# 10-4

## HEARING AND ANSWERING THE CALL

*If your group is co-ed, you might consider splitting into separate men's and women's groups now for a time of personal and family application.*

### **COURAGEOUS MEN**

#### OFFERING FORGIVENESS

**8. Do you ever experience feelings of disgust, regret, or anger toward your father? For what?**

How has your father's role in your life shaped you as a father (for good or bad)?

Your father makes a difference in how you parent your own children.

Is there anyone in your past, including your dad, whom you sense the Holy Spirit leading you to forgive right now? How can this group help encourage you? Will you be courageous?

## REQUESTING FORGIVENESS

Generally, one characteristic a child greatly respects about his father is the willingness to admit and apologize for his wrongs or mistakes.

**9. In your home, does anyone deserve a heartfelt apology from you?**

What would be the risk of offering this apology?

What is holding you back?

**10. What courageous steps will you take this week to humbly request forgiveness from those you have wronged? How can this group help you stay accountable?**

# 10-4

## HEARING AND ANSWERING THE CALL

*If your group is co-ed, you might consider splitting into separate men's and women's groups now for a time of personal and family application.*

## COURAGEOUS WOMEN

### OFFERING FORGIVENESS

**8. Do you ever experience feelings of disgust, regret, or anger toward your father? For what?**

How has your father's role in your life shaped the expectation for other men in your life (for good or bad)?

Is there anyone in your past, including your dad, whom you sense the Holy Spirit leading you to forgive right now? How can the group help you offer forgiveness?

## REQUESTING FORGIVENESS

One thing a child greatly respects about his father is a willingness to admit and apologize for his wrong or mistakes.

**9. In your home, who deserves a heartfelt apology from you?**

If someone asked your husband what you thought about his success as the man of the house, how do you think he would answer?

Is there anything for which you need to request your husband's forgiveness in order to help him succeed?

**10. What courageous steps will you take this week to humbly request forgiveness from those you have wronged? How can this group help keep you accountable?**

# TAKE THE WHEEL

## RETAKING LEADERSHIP WITH YOUR FAMILY

*This personal journaling section can be done at the end of group time to ensure all participate but members can also do this application on their own.*

In the area of offering forgiveness, what specific steps will you take this week?

ACTION

TARGET DATE

In the area of requesting forgiveness, what specific steps will you take this week?

ACTION

TARGET DATE

COMMIT TO MEMORY: "If possible, on your part, live at peace with everyone" (Rom. 12:18).

---

### A PRAYER FOR COURAGE THIS WEEK

---

*Dear Father God,*

*Thank You, Lord, for the sacrifice of Your Son. Through Him, You have shown me mercy and removed my sins as far as the east is from the west. You no longer judge me as condemned.*

*I have been wronged. Though the pain I feel is real, I'm asking you to set me free from the chains of any bitterness from my past. Though it is hard, I know that the right thing to do is to forgive my dad and others from my heart. Today, by Your grace, I am choosing to honor You as the true Judge of persons who have hurt me in the past. Therefore, right now, I choose to fully forgive and release \_\_\_\_\_ from the pain caused me. I turn that pain completely over to You.*

*Father, I have also hurt others. Grant me a humble spirit to take responsibility for my mistakes and request forgiveness from those I have wronged. Let them see this change in me and give You the glory for it.*

*I cannot force anyone to respond to my actions, but I am responsible to do my part. Prepare their hearts to forgive me. And help me take courageous steps now to make things right with them as best as I can. Amen.*

Men, this week be sure to read your assigned readings in *The Resolution for Men*.

Women, this week be sure to read your assigned readings in *The Resolution for Women*.