

AUGUST 2024

“PLANNING A FAMILY GARDEN”



Memory Verse:

2 Peter 3:18

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”



WELCOME TO GROWING FAMILIES!

We hope you enjoy the ideas that we share with you but go at your own pace. Let God lead you into spending life-giving time together with your family. Your enthusiasm as parents will help your children participate more readily. We pray the resources will become a conduit to sacred time in God's presence. The family table is a great place to start.

Some of our suggestions in the monthly bags and on the website will work well with your family and some may not. Please try the suggestions at least once during the month. Multiple times is better for learning and remembering content, but Ephesians 6:4 comes to mind: “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” Children and adults participate more fully when learning is experienced as play. Everyone in your family have a chance to process your experience each month during small group time at our monthly meeting. You can share what worked in your family and what did not. Bring the whole family to the Sunday evening monthly meeting and don't forget to wear your Growing Families t-shirts too. May this be an enriching season for everyone and may your family grow in the grace and knowledge of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH:

- ***Check out the website at growingfamilies.asburyseminary.edu.***

On the first day of each month, new resources will appear on the website. We will also deliver to your doorstep a bag of discipleship tools designed for your family. Use your checklist inside your monthly bag to help you keep track of what you have completed.

FORMATION VIDEO:



PARENTS:

Watch the video this week, titled Planning your Family Garden.

- There are other videos for you to watch before the program begins on September 1. When you visit the website, they will be clearly marked.
- You may want to show the children the “Play as Discipleship” video They might find it funny!

SOMETHING TO DO AS A FAMILY:



FAMILY:

Let’s explore the analogy of your family as a garden. Enjoy your family time, use your imagination, and play together. This conversation is a good way to notice how your children process spiritual truths.

Family Garden Conversation

You don’t have to discuss every question. This can be continued over the week or you can stop when the children catch on or become bored with the garden theme. Children have a coloring sheet they can color while you discuss the topic. You will find it in the garden bag along with crayons.

1. Ask each family member to picture your family as a garden. Give them a few minutes to think about what that would look like. Then, ask them to describe the garden. In their picture, are your family members the gardeners, the seeds, or the plants? Wait for answers. Read Genesis 2:8, Who was the first gardener? Now read Genesis 2:15. Who was the gardener in this passage? God wants to work with us and help us care for our family garden too. Ask each family member “can you think of different ways we care for each other”?
2. How do we help our family grow closer to each other and God? Examples: We play together, read our bible, talk to God, and attend church.
3. What seeds do we plant in our garden? Tomato seeds grow tomatoes, and a seed of love grows love. What attitudes and actions do we want to grow in our family garden? Examples: love, kindness, mercy, fun, happy people, loving God, etc.
4. All gardens have pests that can harm the plants. Name a pest that could nibble away at the growth in our family garden. Examples: too much time on screens, busyness, arguing and fighting, or not enough sleep.
5. How could we build a strong fence to help our family grow and keep out things that may harm the garden? Example: Setting healthy boundaries such as saying no to too many activities, checking on each other to make sure no one’s feelings got hurt, keeping a family calendar of events, keeping promises to each other.
6. People love to share what they grow in their gardens. How could we share what God is helping us grow in our family?

SOMETHING TO DO AS A FAMILY (CONTINUED):

The following examples are some ways to continue our conversations about Growing Families this month.

YOUTH AND OLDER CHILDREN'S CONVERSATIONS:

You may want to record these responses in your journal.

1. Think of another family you respect. What seeds do they plant in their family? How are they an example for you?
2. What is one thing we want to work on in our family garden this year?
3. Discuss each family member's expectations for the Growing Families program.
4. Listen to Carrie Underwood sing about a Garden on her album *Denim and Rhinestones* 2023. This is available on the August materials page on the website. Ask your child/children which lyrics made them want to please God through their life.

YOUNGER CHILDREN'S CONVERSATIONS

1. Use the planning your garden coloring sheet while you discuss the topic.
2. After attending the pizza party, what are the children excited about in this program?
3. What is something they may be concerned about?

THE GARDEN CONTRACT

Invite everyone in the family to sign the garden contract (in your bag).
Hang this in your home as a reminder of your promise.

CLOSE IN PRAYER AS A FAMILY.

PARENTING/MARRIAGE VIDEO:



PARENTS:

Watch the video this week, titled *Centered Family Life*.

- Our August video from the School of Counseling is taught by Dr. Steve Stratton, Professor of Counseling and Pastoral Care. His topic is *Centered Family Life*. His question to parents is, "Are you living in scarcity or abundance?" You will readily see Dr. Stratton's heart for Seminary families and we hope you will implement some of his sound advice.