

HOUSEHOLDS OF FAITH PARTICIPANT STUDY GUIDE



SESSION 1: WHY HOUSEHOLDS MATTER

3 Biblical Themes Related to Households

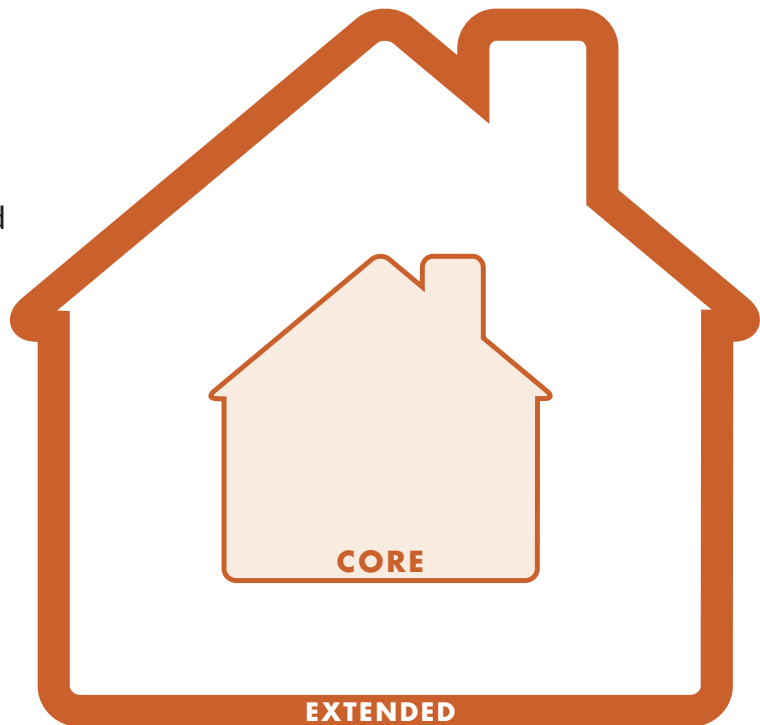
Reflect on these biblical themes from the presentation: (1) God sees households; (2) Households often rise and fall together; (3) God works through households. Which theme is most surprising to you? What questions do these themes raise for you? Which have you seen the most evidence of in your own household?

Old and New Testament Households

Now that you've seen a bit of what the Old and New Testaments have to say about households, discuss how your perception of a "household" has shifted.

Mapping My Household

Create your own "household map."
In the inner house image, list who is in your core household. Then use the larger, outer house image to reflect on who is in your extended household—those people who are connected to your core household in a meaningful way.



When complete, compare household maps with one another, and discuss answers to these questions:

- **What are the similarities?**
- **What are the differences?**
- **How did this exercise help you to view your household in a more biblical way?**

Now that you have mapped your whole household, consider the three biblical themes in this new light:

1. God sees households: *Given the strengths and weaknesses of your household, how might God want to grow your household?*

2. Households often rise and fall together: *How would you characterize your own influence on those in your household?*

3. God works through households: *How might God want to use your household for His kingdom purposes?*

SESSION 2: CHRISTIAN HOUSEHOLDS TODAY

Christian Households Today

How have you seen the dynamics of households change over your lifetime? What type of household do you currently live in?

Singles and Households

Are there any single adults living alone whom you consider part of your extended household? How are they involved in the routines of your home? Are there any who could be part of your extended household? What would it be like to invite them into the life of your home?

Household Routines

What are some of the routines or rituals, spiritual or not, that are important to your household?

Spiritually Vibrant Households

Fill out, and discuss initial responses to, The Vibrancy Inventory (on the next page).

As you discuss your results, please note that your specific results do not have to be shared with others; feel free to keep the particular numbers private.

How do you feel about the spiritual vibrancy of your household?

What about the results surprised you? What didn't surprise you?


VIBRANCY INVENTORY

This inventory is designed to give you a chance to reflect upon your household and its current level of vibrancy. You will read 20 statements that correspond to different vibrancy habits within households. For each statement, reflect on how often the core members of your household (those who live under the same roof with you) participate in that activity together.


First, mark how often “some of” your core household members participate in the activity together (daily = 4, weekly = 3, monthly = 2, rarely = 1, never=0). Next, mark how often “all of” your core household members participate in each activity.

Remember, the purpose of this survey is not to grade your household. Instead, it’s to honestly reflect on the habits of your household and consider how God might be calling you to increase your spiritual vibrancy. While household schedules often shift and change over time, for this survey consider these habits during your current season of life.


In each box, write the number that corresponds with the frequency with which your household participates in each activity. Then, add up all the numbers in each category, and write the total below.

Apply Spiritual Disciplines 

1. We pray together.
2. We read the Bible, or do devotions or devotional reading together.
3. We attend corporate worship together.
4. As individuals, we pray and/or read the Bible.
5. As individuals, we attend a religious small group or Bible study.

Extend Hospitality 

1. We enjoy having close friends and family over for dinner.
2. Close friends and family have deep conversations with us.
3. We ask close friends and family for help.
4. We invite new people to our house.
5. We warmly engage with people who visit us unannounced.

Engage in Spiritual Conversations 

1. We talk about God and/or faith together.
2. We teach one another about faith and faith traditions.
3. We teach one another about the Bible.
4. We talk about our feelings with one another.
5. We share meaningful, relational, quality time together.

Catalysts for Vibrancy (Food and Fun) 

1. We eat meals together (at home or out).
2. We watch TV/movies together.
3. We play games and/or sports together.
4. We read books together.
5. We go on walks or hikes together.

SOME OF US				
DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	RARELY	NEVER
4	3	2	1	0
Total =				
4	3	2	1	0
Total =				
4	3	2	1	0
Total =				
4	3	2	1	0
Total =				

ALL OF US				
DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	RARELY	NEVER
4	3	2	1	0
Total =				
4	3	2	1	0
Total =				
4	3	2	1	0
Total =				

SESSION 3: WHAT DO SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOUSEHOLDS LOOK LIKE?

Applying Spiritual Disciplines

Talk about next steps, practical things you can do to grow in applying spiritual disciplines in your home. Write down any additional thoughts you have, including which specific practice you might want to grow in, ideas for growth, etc. This is just a first step in the process.

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2. We read the Bible, or do devotions, or do devotional reading together.
3. We attend corporate worship together.
4. As individuals, we pray and/or read the Bible.
5. As individuals, we attend a religious small group or Bible study.

Extending Hospitality

Write down any additional thoughts you have, including which specific practice you might want to grow in, ideas for growth, etc. This is just a first step in the process.

1. We enjoy having close friends and family over for dinner.
2. Close friends and family have deep conversations with us.
3. We ask close friends and family for help (e.g., advice, childcare, borrowing items, etc.).
4. We invite new people to our house.
5. We warmly engage with people who visit us unannounced.

Engaging in Spiritual Conversations

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SESSION 4: WHAT IS SPIRITUAL COACHING?

A Key Ingredient

What do you think of when you hear the term “spiritual coach”? How would you define spiritual coaching? Is anyone qualified to be a spiritual coach in your household? What do you think are the qualifications?

What Is Spiritual Coaching Anyway?

Discuss the definition: “Spiritual coaching is simply taking the initiative to intentionally nurture the faith of your household by promoting the three vibrant household characteristics. This nurturing happens through modeling, instructing, and encouraging in both every day and planned moments.”

Developing a Coaching Posture

LHM developed a helpful tool that equips Christians to become EAGER spiritual conversationalists. Go to lhm.org/eager to learn more about the EAGER profile, EAGER inventory, and the online course.

Considering the definition of a spiritual coach, who has filled that role in your life at various times—modeling, instructing, and encouraging—in both every day and planned moments?

Evaluating Your Household

Now that you have learned more about the vibrancy characteristics, is there anything you would change in your evaluation of your household? Make those changes now to your Inventory.

Planning Appropriate Moments

Look through the list of activities on the Vibrant Households Activities list that could help your own household grow more spiritually vibrant. As you scan through the activities, choose 3-4 to focus on. Then consider how each activity could be pursued in a planned moment in *your* household. Finally, choose one step forward, one thing you can do in your household that builds vibrancy, and fill out the *Our Vibrant Next Step* card.

Coaching in the Moment

How does focusing on God and not our fears influence the way we approach spiritual coaching?

How could applying these three suggestions—focus on God, don't interrogate, and be available—help you to provide healthy spiritual coaching in your household?



APPLYING SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

First Steps:

- Evaluate your church attendance. Consider ways you can increase your attendance at worship. Make a goal of attending at least 2 times a month as a household.
- Find an age-appropriate devotion book and read at mealtime or bedtime with the household.
- Use a Bible reading app or start a Bible reading plan as a household.
- Find a church that has an education hour for everyone in the household.
- Download mealtime or dinnertime prayers and pray as a household.
- Start the practice of praying as a household at bedtime.

Next Steps:

- Join a small group or Bible study through your local congregation.
- Read "**Treasury of Daily Prayer.**"
- Put simple prayer topics on "prayer sticks" for nightly prayer with household members.
- Buy a new Bible and place it somewhere prominent in your home.
- Find a helpful everyday liturgy that your household could read together before a meal or celebration or trip. Visit everymomentholy.com to find some.
- Memorize a short Psalm or prayer from Scripture and pray it at mealtime or at bedtime.
- Use a highlighter or dry-erase marker to write a new verse from the Bible on your bathroom mirrors each week.

Out-of-the-Box Step:

- For one week, start each day as a household with breakfast, devotion/Bible reading, and prayer.
- Choose a special verse from the Bible as a family and order a large plaque or sign or piece of art with the verse on it that you can hang in a visible place in your home.



EXTEND HOSPITALITY

First Steps:

- Organize a “family dinner” that includes extended household members.
- The next time you need an item for a recipe, ask one of your neighbors or extended household members.
- Organize a game night or movie night and invite extended household members, friends, and/or neighbors.
- Make a list of people you know who might be encouraged by spending time with your household, including neighbors, church friends, or friends of your children.

Next Steps:

- Create a prayer list of people outside your home/family that your household prays for on a regular basis.
- Offer to host a small group gathering or Bible study group.
- Invite one new person/family to your house that has never been there before.
- Buy a guest book and have all guests sign in and leave a message. Keep the book somewhere prominent where you are often reminded of your past guests.
- Have everyone in your household bake some cookies or treats and bring them over to someone else’s house to bless them.
- Buy a larger table and commit to having it filled with people at least once a month.

Out-of-the-Box Step:

- For one month, invite a non-family member over to a weekly family dinner night. Let each person in your household take a turn inviting.



ENGAGING IN SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

First Steps:

- Attend a Bible study or small group and participate in the discussion.
- Take a household member to coffee and talk about a Bible study, devotional reading, or sermon you've thought about.
- Go around the dinner table and ask each person to share a highlight and lowlight of their day.
- Put away devices and use "car time" as conversation time about something meaningful, maybe asking, "What does God think of _____?"
- Walk the dog together and have a meaningful conversation during the walk.
- Ask members of your household for prayer requests and have a follow-up conversation on what you prayed for.

Next Steps:

- Have a conversation around the table about why we go to church, why we read the Bible, why we pray, or why we believe in Jesus.
- Think of a particular verse from Scripture for each member of your household and share it personally with each one of them.
- Use The Vibrant Conversations Deck to spur on spiritual conversations around the dinner table or in the car (lhm.org/households).
- Take LHM Learn courses: "Then and Now," "Eager to Share," and "Prepared to Respond" (lhm.org/conversations).
- Pray each day for a week that God would open doors for conversation with your household members.
- Take a member of your household out to eat, just the two of you, and see where the conversation goes during the meal.
- Gather some craft supplies and have everyone create a simple piece of art that visualizes how God has been working in their life lately.
- Get some Spiritual Conversation Curve Cards (lhm.org/curve) and spend time together filling them out as a family.

Out-of-the-Box Step:

- Go on an overnight trip with your household members that facilitates meaningful, relational, quality time together.
- Invite a spiritually mature Christian over for a meal and ask them to share about their faith during the meal.

OUR VIBRANT NEXT STEP

Complete the following goal statement to solidify your plan:

In order to grow as a Vibrant Household and better

_____ ,
VIBRANT CHARACTERISTIC

with God's help, we plan to _____
ACTIVITY

over the next _____
TIME FRAME

with help from _____ .
ACCOUNTABILITY PERSON

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Vibrant Households

APPLY
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DISCIPLINES



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ENGAGE IN
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