

Session Four

What Scripture Teaches Us About Human Relationships

With this session we begin to expand our view of the domestic church as we dive into the beginning of Scripture. As creatures made God's image and likeness, we were made to exist in a close and loving relationship with a God who accompanies us, provides, and loves us endlessly. Through this divine love, we are called to love others, starting with our family, but expanding towards all those around us.

Let's Read Scripture

On *The Heart of the Family's* website, play Video One and Video Two.

Genesis: 2:4-25

This is the story of the heavens and the earth at their creation...the LORD God formed the man out of the dust of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. The LORD God then took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it... The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suited to him. So the LORD God formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each living creature was then its name. The man gave names to all the tame animals, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be a helper suited to the man. So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called 'woman,' for out of man this one has been taken." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body. The man and his wife were both naked, yet they felt no shame.

Let's Reflect

After you play the second video, invite each family member to take a moment to think about their responses to these reflection questions.

- Of all the relationships you have right now, which is the most positive and healthy relationship, and what makes it special?
- We heard that sin fractures our relationships, and that Jesus Christ is the one who restores us to be in communion with God and one another. What is one thing you know about Christ, and what is one thing you would like to learn more about him?

Let's Pray

After you share your responses, play Video Three of this session and pray along as a family. For this prayer, repeat the bold text, and pause the video after we pray for each relationship, so that each person may share what this handout indicates.

Almighty God, you formed Adam from the dust and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

Let our hearts draw near to you, to trust you, and to seek you today and always.

Pause the video, then share the following. When everyone has shared, continue the video.

Families, share one thing each of you can do to improve your relationship with God.

Heavenly Father, you declared that it was “not good for man to be alone,”

And created us all with equal dignity and beauty that we may be as brothers and sisters.

Pause the video, then share the following. When everyone has shared, continue the video.

Please share the names of people you want to pray for.

Creator God, you commanded us “to till and keep” the gift of your creation.

Help us protect this world, and to appreciate the beauty of your handiwork.

Pause the video, then share the following. When everyone has shared, continue the video.

Families share one thing you each love the most about the natural world.

In Christ, you have reconciled all things to you, oh Lord. May you continue to nurture in our lives the never-ending love by which you call us to you.

Holy Family of Nazareth,

Pray for us.

Let's Act

The first activity of this session builds on the idea that when we turn ourselves outwards, we learn to love people, not as we want to love them, but as they need to be loved.

1. Take a piece of paper and create a table like the one below with boxes big enough for you to write. Create one row for each family member.
2. Write the names of your family members on the first column. One name per row.
3. Next to their name, write down how you think they like to be loved—for example, maybe next to your mom's name, you can write that you think she likes to be loved by receiving flowers. You will fill out this column in secret! Don't show your table to anyone yet.
4. When everyone is done filling out the first two columns, go around sharing your answers, but (here's the important thing) after you've shared, you will listen attentively as each person says how they actually like to be loved. You can write what they say in the final column, and make a personal commitment to love your family as they need to be loved.

Family member	How <i>I think</i> they like to be loved.	How they actually like to be loved.

Family confession day. In the confessional, we encounter God's mercy and love for each of us. Today, assign someone in your family to research confession days and times in your parish, and make an agreement to attend together to receive this sacrament within the next month.

Who will research confession days and times at your parish?

Write the day and time you family can attend confession:

1. Before you go to confession: Reflect on your actions, thoughts, and words since your last confession. Did you fall short of loving God and loving those around you?
2. When you go to confess: You will make the sign of the Cross, and you can say something similar to "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned." With a humble heart desiring God's mercy, confess all your sins to the priest. The priest may give you council, and will propose an act of penance: a prayer or an action.
3. When indicated, pray the Act of Contrition. Your parish may have a prayer printed at the confessional, or you can use the following prayer:

O my God,
I am heartily sorry for having offended you,
and I detest all my sins because of your just punishments,
but most of all because they offend you, my God,
who are all good and deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace,
to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.

Amen.

4. To conclude, the priest will pronounce the words of absolution, to which you will respond "Amen."