

The Four Priorities Chapter 17

Book by John Tolson

Facilitator Guide by Reclamation Church

Chapter 17: The Parenting Gift of Protection

Note to facilitator: Chapters 17-19 are dedicated to parenting. We encourage you *not* to skip these chapters, even if the person you disciple is not a parent. Read these chapters from the standpoint of being a child. The author says on page 171 that understanding the content of these chapters “helps to explain **why we think, respond, feel, and behave** as we do.” There might be helpful information about your *experiences growing up* that can add value to the discussion.

The timelines below are only a guide, as well as the questions to ask. Make this your own and go where the Holy Spirit leads you. Take your time and, when needed, break this chapter into several meetings.

**Open
(10 min.)**

Spend a few minutes each week catching up with one another, then share prayer requests.

Do: Open in prayer.

**Recap
(5 min.)**

Briefly give a summary of your meeting last week. We discussed:

- How to show care for your spouse, or any person with whom you have a relationship.
 - How to be intentional in courting your spouse, if you are married. Also, how to court the person you are in a relationship with.
 - What were your results from the Five Love Languages free online assessment? What did they express about your primary method of feeling loved and valued?
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**Father's role
pgs. 171-173
(15 min.)**

Say: Let's briefly discuss our own experience of being raised with or without a father present in our lives.

- Both of you share what your experience/relationship was like and the feelings that followed (whether positive or negative).
- Whether or not you had a positive fatherly influence, how did it shape the person you are today?
- Why do you think the statistics of 85% of youths in prison who grew up in homes without the father being present are so high?



Coping with a negative or absent fatherly influence (15 min.)

Say: For those who have experienced a negative or absent fatherly influence in the home, steps toward healing are needed. In this chapter, the author identifies 4 steps.

Discuss your findings from this portion of the chapter.

- Expressing feelings. (gaining closure)
 - Confessing your own faults.
 - Forgiving your father.
 - Commit to your own relationship going forward (or discuss the importance of setting healthy boundaries).
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3 Gifts every parent can offer, pgs 173-176 (15 min.)

Say: Each parent can and should offer the gifts of protection, identity, and confidence. For the remainder of this lesson, we will discuss the first gift of protection.

Discuss your findings from each section of the reading and then ask the questions that follow below:

- A sense of belonging - discuss findings
How did you have or not have a sense of belonging in your family?
- Appropriate boundaries - discuss findings
Ask:
 - Why are rules important and helpful?
 - How did you experience rules (living without freedom or without boundaries) in your family?
- Moral framework - discuss findings
 - Why might it be more important to focus more on one's character, rather than on one's reputation?
- Emotional connection - discuss findings
 - How did having any of the 5 mentioned emotional connections impact you as a child?

Take Action (30 min.)

Read through and discuss the questions at the end of the chapter.



RECLAMATION
— CHURCH —

Close
(5 min.)

Homework:

- Read Chapter 18 (and referenced scriptures in the Bible) and come prepared with questions you might have from this chapter, as well as completing the end-of-chapter questions.

Thank the person you are discipling for being open and transparent with you about their very personal, private experiences growing up. This information is their personal information and should *never* be shared with anyone else.

Close in prayer.