

Facilitator:

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Give a five-minute review of the sermon using Peppy's sermon notes.

Facilitator:

Please don't feel you have to cover every question. They become increasingly deeper and more thoughtful toward the end. It may help to highlight questions you want to be sure to cover, depending on the dynamics of your group and the time available. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

CONNECT Group study questions, selected Scriptures

Title: Effective Parenting in a Defective World

A novel I read years ago had a father and son among its characters. The boy was continually getting into trouble, which frustrated his father and gave rise to this line that I'll probably never forget: "He's a good boy. He takes instruction well; I just can't think of enough things to tell him not to do." —Ferrol Sams, *Run with the Horsemen*

Question: We tend to raise our children the way we were raised, or we may have reason to raise them differently. Share with the group your recollections about growing up and how you were trained as a child. What has changed since? How has our society changed the way children are raised since you were a child?

Question: How in this defective world can you be an effective parent? That's the question Peppy asked us to ponder. What was your answer before you heard Sunday's sermon? Read Malachi 2:15— "*Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth.*" How has the charge to give God godly offspring changed the way you would be an effective parent?

Question: When we talk about godliness and holiness all sorts of images come to mind—not all of them very attractive. Peppy helped us understand

true godliness when he said we are to “reflect who God is in who we are.” Read Romans 8:28-29—*“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.”* How do we avoid being one of those wavy fun-house mirrors when we reflect God in us. How can we be confident that the image we reflect is “conformed to the image of his Son?”

Question: You’ve heard the saying: “Don’t do as I do; do as I say.” How is this contrary to the strategy of modeling? Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-16—*“I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.”* What does Paul mean when he said he became their father in Christ? To whom are you a father or mother in Christ?

Meditation: We all have characteristics worthy of being imitated. What would you not want to see imitated by your child or by someone you are disciplining? Read Luke 6:40—A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher. Who is your teacher? Whom do you teach?