

session 6 study guide

walking in your parents' shoes

starter

THE PARENT QUIZ: Fill in the following statements about you and your family.

	Mom	Dad
My personality is more like . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I look most like . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My faith is more like . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I grow up, I'll probably be more like . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My communication style is more like my . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



*A house is made of
wood and stone;
A home is made of
love alone.*

What I can count on the most from my family is _____

Our family changed a lot when _____

My main contribution to my family is _____

One way our family could be more together is _____

The family member I am concerned about the most is _____

The most difficult thing for me to do with my family is _____

Three words that best describe my family are _____

To me, the most important thing about my family is _____

One goal I would like our family to reach is _____

message

Have you ever realized that your parents are actually (*gasp*) people? That they have dreams, hopes, wishes, fears and goals of their own? Have you ever stepped into your parents' shoes? What is it like to be the mom or dad of *you*?

Whenever we understand a person, our relationship with that person is always strengthened and our communication with him or her is always improved. The ultimate example of this is found in the life of Jesus. In Philippians 2:1-11, Paul writes about the incredible steps that Jesus took to step into our shoes in order to understand our earthly lives. As you read this passage, consider the following questions: (1) What did Jesus choose to do in order to understand the human condition? (2) Why would Jesus choose to do this?

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

dig

1. According to this passage, what should drive us to become like-minded with Jesus?

2. What did Jesus do in order to walk in our shoes?

3. Why would He do this?

4. What kinds of things did Jesus experience as a result of walking in our shoes? Was it easy or hard for Him to do?

5. What benefits can come from walking in someone else's shoes?

6. In what ways can you “walk” in your parents’ shoes?

apply

1. Take a moment and imagine life walking in the shoes of your mom or dad. Answer these questions from the perspective of either one of your parents (circle which parent you are answering for). Later, ask them for their answers. Do your responses match up?

Three words to describe my life are . . .

(Mom/Dad) _____

I worry the most about . . .

(Mom/Dad) _____

Things that make me the happiest are . . .

(Mom/Dad) _____

One of my current goals is . . .

(Mom/Dad) _____

2. So, why do parents act the way they do? One reason is because they have been influenced by their own upbringing. Some parents had a strict upbringing, while others grew up with few rules. Some felt smothered by their parents, while others had parents who were barely visible. Some appreciated their upbringing, while others are determined not to

raise their kids in the same way. How your parents were raised likely has an impact on how they are raising you. So, what kind of upbringing did your parents have?

3. Another reason parents act the way they do is because you didn't come with a manual. DVD players, cars and even house plants all come with directions on how to use and care for them, but when you popped out, no one handed your parents a manual full of answers. Parenting is a difficult job, so your parents are constantly in the process of trying to figure it—and you—out. Given this, if you could give your parents some advice on parenting, what would it be?

3. Parenting can also be scary. Your parents may never tell you this directly, but they are probably a little scared when it comes to raising you. They were teenagers once, and they

know how easy it is to blow it. They, too, once thought they were invincible and immune to danger. And though it's hard to believe, they probably understand some of the pressures in your life because they faced them too. What are your parents the most afraid that you will do?

Check those statements that best apply:

- ☐ My parents worry way more than they need to.
- ☐ I'm glad my parents worry about me. It lets me know they care.
- ☐ There are some things I'm involved in that scare me.
- ☐ My parents would worry a lot more if they knew the whole story.
- ☐ My parents tell me their concerns, but also trust me to make good decisions.
- ☐ My parents are worried about _____
when they should be worried about _____.
- ☐ If I were in my parents' shoes, I would be worried about me too.

4. Parents also act the way they do because they are in the protection business. Remember, there is only one of you—no replacements available—so parents often express their care and concern in overprotective ways. One way to ease your parents' fears is to earn their trust.

How would you rank your parents on the following Overprotective Scale?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I could probably use
a few more rules

I'm being
smothered!

What are specific things you can do to earn the trust of your parents?

Some parents aren't protective enough. What kinds of guidance would you like your parents to give you?

5. Finally, parents have their own life issues. Just like the teen-age years of identity crisis, your parents can have an identity crisis of their own. Parents are often worried about their jobs, their looks, their health, the future, finances, their relationships and their own parents (your grandparents)! Think about this for a moment. What are three possible issues your parents may be dealing with right now?

1.

2.

3.

reflect

1. If you were your parents, would you say that you are easy or difficult to parent? Why?

2. By taking some time to “walk in their shoes,” did you have any new revelations about your parents?

3. Imagine you are writing a manual for a younger brother or sister on how to have a good relationship with your parents. What three pieces of advice would you pass on?

1.

2.

3.

4. What is one parenting skill or technique you think your parents do a good job at?

5. What is one parenting skill or technique you think your parents could improve on?

6. How can you raise godly teenagers? What kind of guidelines, rules and advice would the perfect parents provide? Create a brief parenting rulebook about how to raise godly teenagers in the space below.

meditation



Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom.
Though it cost all you have, get understanding.

PROVERBS 4:7