
Session: Family Crests

Description

Part of stewardship is considering the needs of others. As a culture, we sometimes assume that someone else will take care of the problem. We may point our fingers at the government, charities or churches and ask why those girls spend their days walking for dirty water, instead of looking inward and asking ourselves that question. We sometimes need a little nudge.

My pastor recently shared a personal story of a nudge that he admitted he wasn't too proud of. When he was first married, he drove a newer car with air conditioning and all the whistles and bells. His wife drove a 1970's Volkswagon bug with zero whistles and bells and definitely no air conditioning. They were living in Texas at the time – 90's in the summer with close to 100% humidity.

Each day, his wife, dressed in her business suit, drove her old car to work at her white-collar job doing accounting for an oil company, and the young man (now pastor) drove his new car to his construction job. One day someone with a little more age and wisdom lovingly put their arm around his shoulder and asked, "You work construction, why aren't you letting your wife drive the nicer, air-conditioned car to work?". This had never occurred to the young man. It also hadn't occurred to him that his actions demonstrated to his wife, without using words, the value he placed on her.

Sometimes our habits are so woven into our way of being in the world that we need someone to come alongside and show us a different way. In order to develop empathy, caring, and awareness of others, it is necessary to develop ourselves. I'm not just speaking to the parents here. My millennial children have taught me more of these lessons than I can count.

The question for all of us isn't, "How do we get *them* to do *our* thing?" The question is, "How do we, together, discover and create ever more loving ways to share the world's God-given spiritual and material resources with *each other*?"

We tend to do what we believe.

Who are you as a family?

This week, you will have the opportunity to design a family crest or emblem based on your values. It may be that one of your family values is stewardship or helping others. If so, this will appear on your crest. In addition to creativity and collaboration, this activity will build a stronger sense of family identity.

Materials Needed

Cardboard, poster board or paper, markers, colors or paints. Your list of four core values.

Handouts

One Blank family crest sample for each family member plus one extra for brainstorming, Family Crest Brainstorm Sample, Family Crest Sample

What's on our family crest?

Read aloud the quote or scripture

"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children." *Native American Proverb*

Questions for discussion (10 minutes)

1. What do you think this proverb means? Does it have anything to do with stewardship? What are some examples you've seen of bad stewardship? (Littering for example.)
2. What does generosity mean to you? What inspires you to be generous? Does generosity always require a sacrifice?
3. Is God generous? Explain. Is God ever not generous? Explain.
4. What does generosity have to do with justice? Why do you think there is poverty in the world? What does God have to do with this if anything?
5. Are there different types of poverty?

Rule of life activity

1. Re-visit your four Core Family Values. Does everyone still agree? Do any need to change? If so, make those changes.
 2. Read this out loud: A family crest is a visual representation of who you are as a family. It's a sort of visual legacy that you can share with the world, telling them who you are and what you stand for.
 3. First, print the Family Crest Samples to get an idea of what a crest could look like and make sure to have your four Core Family Values handy (from Session Five). You do not need to use these blank samples when it comes time to make your crest. Your crest can look any way you want it to.
 4. To begin, take one of the blank family crests and a pencil. Many crests are divided into four parts and you have four Core Family Values. In each of the four quadrants, in small letters, write one of your Core Family Values.
 5. Now as a family, brainstorm **images** that could represent each of your family's four Core Values. Write a list of those images in each quadrant under that Core Family Value. Make sure that each family member gets a chance to speak. (see Family Crest Brainstorming Sample)
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6. Now discuss the images and decide on the ones you want to keep and the ones you want to eliminate. You can have as many as you want, you'll just have to fit them into your design.
7. After you've agreed on the images, give each family member a blank family crest.
8. Each person in the family will be working on **one section of the crest**. In order to include everyone, and to collaborate, you will all be working at the same time. At the end you'll cut out each family member's portion and tape or glue them together to make one crest.
9. Decide together which family member will work on which portion of the crest. If you have more than four in your family someone might work on the title or create designs around the outside. If you have only two, each person might be responsible for two of the four quadrants. (see Finished Family Crest Sample)
10. Next, each family member gets to create their portion of the family crest based on the images you all chose. Be creative! Feel free to create this any way you wish. (10 minutes) You can finish it later if you run out of time.
11. At the end of 10 minutes each person shares their portion of the family crest, describing why they chose the colors and design that they did.
12. Now cut out each family member's contribution and tape them together or glue them together on another blank piece of paper. If you can, make color copies. Hang your family crest on a wall, or your refrigerator.

Examen

How did it go? Debrief highs and lows

1. Each person shares their favorite part of the conversation / activity and why.
2. Each person shares their least favorite part and why.
3. Did you do a Serving/Giving activity last week? How did it go?

Practice

STEWARDSHIP



Serving /giving ideas for any time this week: Choose one or create your own. These can be done individually or as a group. You will be sharing your serving experience in the next session.

- Write a thank-you letter to a member of the military service. There are organizations online that can help you find someone to write to.
- Make a sacrificial (meaning you will probably have to give something up to make this gift) financial gift this week to a person, or the charity of your choice.
- Buy or pick some flowers and take them to your favorite barista or grocery store clerk and say thank you.
- Go through the books in your house and donate some to your local library.
- Sponsor a child with a charity organization.