**Blended Families: Living Together In Harmony**

Psalms 127:1-5

**Key Truth:** Blended families are challenging but they can achieve happy and harmonious relationships in the family.

**Some good and not so good stories of blended families in the Bible:**

1. Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael and Issac – Envy and

 Jealousy.

2. Jacob, Leah and Rachel – Sibling favoritism.

3. King David and his many wives – total dysfunction.

4. Mary and Joseph – Loving and healthy relationship.

**How to blend the family well:**

1. Take responsibility for the decision you made to marry

 someone who already had kids.

2. Accept the child as your own. Ephesians 2:11-13

3. Love the other child’s parent and try as much as possible

 to get along for the sake of the child. Romans 12:16-18

 A. Never let them hear you say anything negative about

 their other parent. Ephesians 4:29-32

4. Don’t play favorites within the siblings. Genesis 37:3-4

5. Grow up – 1 Corinthians 13:11-13, Galatians 5:22-24

6. Seek out spiritual counsel and wisdom. Proverbs 15:22

7. Have clear boundaries and communication regarding

 discipline.

**Taking It Beyond the Walls:** Commit to having a loving relationship with all the children. Speak love and encouraging words as much as possible. Rely upon God’s strength to show love even when it’s hard.

**CONNECTION GROUP HOMEWORK**

Looking back at your notes from this week’s teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

How many of you grew up or are currently in blended families? What were some of the challenges you faced or are currently now facing?

Why is it important to think long and hard before getting into a relationship when kids are involved from either side?

Read Matthew 1:18-23: Blended families can operate just like an unblended family, how it that possible?

Read Genesis 37:3-4: Why was Jacob at fault for the tension between the siblings? In what ways could things have been done differently?

Studies show that the word “step child” is not favored among children. What can be some negative connotation associated with that word?

Read Colossians 1:28: Why is spiritual maturity for the parents paramount to the success of blended families?

What is your relationship with the parent of the other children?

Is it positive or negative? What role can you play in making it better?