

The Children Are Important

Children of all ages in a blended family are the key factor that makes blended families different from nuclear families. Some have called blended families “ready made” families, as all the components of a family are there.

But the children are often not ready to be “made” – to be a part of this new dynamic in their life.

Remarriage represents a change that not everyone involved ever asked for or wanted. Hence, those who do not embrace the change are usually considered the “problem.”

Important to God

God wants – and will help – your family to blend and become a real, loving, healthy, peace-filled family.

He loves beyond measure, and beyond our understanding.

He loves each member of your family the same.

He sees potential in you and your spouse.

He has a plan for your marriage and family.

He sees potential in your children.

He also sees the hurt in the children’s heart - from the broken nuclear home, from neglect (or perceived neglect) by one or both parents, from their shattered dreams, from strife and harsh statements between parents that they love dearly, from past and present harsh words, from stepparents who ignore them or discipline them harshly, or from numerous other sources.

We believe God’s goal is for the children in the blended family to find their healing in that new home. If they do not find it in your home, where else will they find it?

Important to Your Spouse

Your spouse with children is most likely aware of the hurt that their children are feeling. In fact, many parents walk in guilt about their children now being children-of-divorce.

Your spouse and their child were “one” before you married them. Your wedding vows do not cancel, nullify, or circumvent the parent-child relationship.

The reality is that when you marry a person with children, you also marry their children. They are a package and cannot – and should not – be separated. The new spouse needs to embrace all new members of the family with equal fervency. Only then do you truly and completely love your spouse.

A Vital Link

A family can be compared to a chain, where each link represents each family member. What binds the links together is unconditional love and acceptance. When one link is missing, or abandoned, or wounded, the whole family is wounded or broken.

“Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him.” Psalm 127:3

The children in the new family are not “extra baggage,” “along for the ride,” or “someone else’s problem.”

Families in which there is no consistent effort by the spouses to bond with the new family members will never become the fulfilling family that God intended. Often, one or both parents in the new home become frustrated in the attempts to bond with the other family members. So they retreat to living as two single parents under one roof – each taking care of only their natural children. Not God’s plan!

Each child is a vital link that makes your new family complete. Excluding – or disconnecting from - one or more “problem” children breaks the link, breaks the heart of the natural parent, and breaks the family.

Age Does Not Matter

Adult children do not outgrow a family. People do not grow up and decide that they are no longer a member of their family. The relationship dynamic changes, but they are still a part.

Spouses in a remarriage need to include their spouse's adult children as part of the new family. Those relationships need to be developed, the same as if they were young children. Even if they decline, they should be invited to all family functions and be kept informed about other family members.

Embracing – Not Making

We cannot change people – of any age. I'm sure you know that by now.

But we can love them. We can choose them – to be a part of our world, even if they resist. (Did not – and does not - our Heavenly Father do that for you and I – even when we resist?)

Embracing someone requires action. Love requires action – at any age.

Taking Care of Your New Family

- Plant good seeds every day, through acts of loving, caring, encouraging, motivating, serving, and communicating with your family members.
- Expect nothing in return. Just “know” that seeds always – eventually – produce a harvest, when there has been continual water and nourishment applied.
- Do not measure your success (in bonding) by the results you expect. Measure your success by the number of good seeds you plant in the hearts of your new family members each day.
- All people gravitate to the place where they find unconditional love and acceptance. So do not stop loving them, or they will believe it was not genuine. Share VOWS with your new children!
- Prayer for each family member is vital to the success of your family. God's ability starts where our ability stops. Here is how prayer works:
 - Prayer gives you a new view (God's view of people and circumstances);
 - The new view gives you a new attitude of consistent, genuine love;
 - The new attitude creates new actions of love (seed planting);
 - Your new actions create new reactions (from those around you).

Pray for:

- ✓ your new spouse, and how to make your marriage stronger,
- ✓ that difficult child,
- ✓ the one you have a personality conflict with,
- ✓ your children's future spouse (now - while they are young),
- ✓ you to see them and love them the way God does,
- ✓ God to give you favor with your new children,
- ✓ fresh ideas to display your commitment to them,
- ✓ yourself to be a consistent positive influence to all people in your family,
- ✓ a spirit of kindness and gentleness in you,
- ✓ each child to find their healing in and through your new home.

Imagine all your family linked together into a circular chain – connected one to another by acceptance. See it. Believe it will happen in your effort– and God's Breath! HE is on your side!

Families are built – linked - one genuine relationship at a time!

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