

**BRINGING
PEACE & HARMONY
— TO THE —
BLENDED FAMILY**

*WHERE EVERYBODY
FEELS AT HOME*

DR. KEVIN LEMAN

WORKBOOK

W O R K B O O K



BRINGING PEACE & HARMONY TO THE BLENDED FAMILY

WHERE EVERYBODY FEELS AT HOME

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Lesson 2

WITH THESE KIDS I THEE WED

What to Do When You're Including More than Two!

SCRIPTURE

*"...But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."
--Joshua 24:15*

LESSON OUTLINE

- I. How to establish a “den” where the “cubs” feel _____**
 - A. The blend must happen first with mom and dad.
 - B. Expect a full range of emotions, e.g., anger, guilt, jealousy, love, etc.
 - C. Set realistic expectations. (Expectations – Reality = Disillusionment)
 - D. Recognize that blending families is an ongoing process.

- II. Learn what kids want and need from the new family.**
 - A. Move into a “_____” zone—“our” house. Don’t move into his or her house.
 - B. Accept and respect your mate’s children.
 - C. Develop mutual determination or a _____-to-_____ relationship with your spouse.
 - D. Create the appearance of being in one accord, even if you disagree. Disagree behind closed doors.
 - E. Maintain order in the home.

- III. Who disciplines whose kids in the blended family?**
 - A. Mom disciplines her kids.
 - B. Dad disciplines his kids.

IV. How shoulder-to-shoulder determination overcomes land mines in the drive to survive

- A. Use “Knee” power. Pray!
- B. Use “No” power. Avoid letting guilt keep you from disciplining your children.

V. Practical ways to solve problems before they become too hot to handle

- A. Understand that a wife can love her husband in a blended family only to the extent that she feels her “cubs” are safe and secure in the “den.”
- B. Make room for other family relationships, such as grandparents.
- C. Children gain security from _____.
 - 1. Decide which traditions to carry forward.
 - 2. Develop new traditions.
- D. Deal with anger and other emotions during regular family meetings.
- E. Do not “trash talk” your ex-spouse.

<i>DISCUSSION GUIDE</i>

1. *Oliver had his own room before his mom married “that man” after she divorced Oliver’s father. Oliver is a first grader who now must share a room with his new stepbrother, Alan. Alan is a second grader and was an only child. His mom died with cancer about two years ago. Oliver always left the bathroom light on at night. Alan can’t sleep with a light on, so bedtime brings conflict each night. If you were Oliver’s parents, what might you do to make Oliver and Alan feel safe and comfortable in their new home?*

2. Think about barriers you think might prevent your children from feeling safe in their blended home. Jot your ideas below and share with other participants.

3. Most blended families realize they are beginning a new journey under less than ideal circumstances. However, you can live above your circumstances by allowing God to work in your life through your circumstances. Read the following passages from the life of Joseph who came from a dysfunctional and disintegrated family, but whom God

used to preserve the nation of Israel. Jot down a brief description of Joseph's circumstance in the second column. You may not have time to identify all the passages during the session, but share one or two with the group. Complete or review the other passages during the coming week.

Scripture	Joseph's circumstance	Anger, Jealousy, Guilt, or Love
Genesis 37:3-4		
Genesis 37: 5-11		
Genesis 37:20		
Genesis 39:7-20		
Genesis 43:16-18		
Genesis 43:16-18		
Genesis 43:29-30		
Genesis 45:4-15		

- Identify which emotion(s), or mortar of the foundation of the blended family, you see at work in each of Joseph's circumstances. Discuss your choices with the group. Write your answers in the third column of the chart above.
- Do the math: Expectations – Reality = Disillusionment. Dr. Leman reminded us in the first lesson to expect anger, guilt, jealousy, and love in blended families. Discuss ways your family may have experienced these feelings.

ANGER _____

GUILT _____

JEALOUSLY _____

LOVE _____

6. We know that children gather strength from feeling secure and from practicing familiar traditions. Fill in the traditions your previous family brought with you to your present family. Notice the two rows for your own traditional events, such as the annual cookout for Dad's office at the lake.

Holiday or Event	Established Traditions	New Traditions
Christmas		
Easter		
Thanksgiving		
Birthdays		
Vacations		
Other:		
Other:		

7. Brainstorm ways you can develop new traditions for each holiday or event. Keep in mind you are not deciding to change them now, you are just brainstorming other possible ways of celebrating together as a family. List your ideas under the New Traditions column.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

8. Dr. Leman suggests that blended families schedule meetings once a week in the beginning. What are some areas that should be discussed?

9. Suggest ways you can move from sharing biblical examples (like Joseph) to personal examples of anger, guilt, jealousy, and love. Jot down your ideas. Share one with the group.

10. If your family is blending, who specifically is in the blender? Dr. Leman suggests mom and dad must blend first, but there are likely other relatives involved. During the coming week, sketch a diagram of your family tree. Begin with a circle in the middle representing you. Consider involving your spouse and children in tracing your genealogy.

Remember, blending must begin with mom and dad if you really want to bring peace and harmony to your family. Share the commitment Joshua made as he declared, “...*But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*” Continue to ask Christ to lead you as you steer your family toward calm waters.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”
--John 15:12

