

Note: The following four exercises are found on pages 3 – 4 of your Genogram Workbook.

GENERATIONAL PATTERNS

Exercise 1: Key Events

- Fill out the four boxes of key events:
- In “Trauma” write in any traumatic moments in your own life - the death of a parent or sibling, a divorce, growing up in poverty (or wealth), a childhood disease or accident, moving every two years in an Army family, etc. You’re looking for key events that shaped you in ways you might not yet have realized. For example, people who grew up frequently moving (say, in an Army family or an expat family), often have difficulties with relational intimacy later in life. Making those connections is the first step toward freedom.
- In “Redemptive Moments” write in any redemptive moments in your own life - getting saved in high school, getting into your dream college, your parent getting sober, moving to a new city or school where you discovered something you loved, a best friend, etc. You’re looking for key events that Jesus has used for good in your life.
- In the second column, do the exact same thing, but for your family going back 3-4 generations. Under “Trauma”, put things like the premature death of a grandparent, a family scandal, an illegitimate child, etc. Under redemptive moments, put things like an ancestor coming to follow Jesus, or immigrating to America, etc.
- Remember: you’re trying to identify key events that have made you who you are.

Exercise 2: Generational Sins

- List out any generational sins in your life and in your family going back 3-4 generations. For example, things like alcoholism, anger, adultery, abuse, etc.
- If you feel safe, this can be a very healthy conversation to have with a sibling, parent, or grandparent.
- Spend some time in prayer over each sin you write down on the list. Ask the Father, “What do you want to say to me about that?”
- When you finish your list, before you move on, ask the Father, “Are there any generational sins I’m missing here?”
- Pause for a moment and remember the death of Jesus on your behalf, to “forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1v9)

Exercise 3: Generational Brokenness

- List out any generational brokenness in your life and in your family going back 3-4 generations.
- “Brokenness” is a much larger category that includes anything outside of what God intended in the beginning. For example, things like premature death, disease, infertility, miscarriages, addiction, obesity, mental illness, eating disorders or unhealthy relationships with food, poverty, wealth, cult practices such as Freemasonry or Scientology, etc.
- Spend some time in prayer over each item on the list. Ask the Father, “Is there anything I need to know about this?”
- When you finish your list, before you move on, ask the Father, “Is there any generational brokenness I’m missing here?”

- Pause for a moment and remember this line from Paul's letter to the Romans: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8v28)

Exercise 4: Generational Sins and Brokenness That I Carry Forward

- Now it's time to put it all together. This will be the most difficult exercise so far, but also the most important.
- Look over your lists of generational sins and brokenness. Write down anything that you carry forward in your own life.
- Spend some time in prayer over each item on the list. You might need to spend some time asking God for forgiveness or asking for grace to change.
- Ask the Father, "Is there anything you want to say about these sins in my life and family line?" Remember, conviction is from the Holy Spirit, but shame and guilt are never from God. Silence the voices of shame and guilt in your heart and mind. Open yourself up to the voice of the Holy Spirit, who has direct access to your interior world.
- Pause for a moment and sit in this declaration of God's name from Exodus: "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation." Realize that the number one description of God's character is "compassionate." Sit in the reality that God's baseline emotion toward you is mercy.
- If you're up for it, share this list with your Community or a close friend that you trust. Don't go on this journey alone!

Exercise 1: Relational Patterns

- Pull out your genogram workbook from last week. Settle into a comfortable, quiet place, and put away any other distractions.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your mind and heart, and give your peace through this exercise.
- Review your genogram, then turn to pg. 5 and fill in the following relational patterns using the key provided.
- Separation, divorce, remarriage, abandonment, adoption, relational enmeshment, codependency, emotional unavailability, sexual relationships, living together, sexism, cutoffs, cutoffs repaired, closeness distant relationships, sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse.
- Take a few minutes and identify and write down any relational patterns you've discovered. Listed below are a few examples of what to look for:
 - Patterns of births, deaths, natural crisis
 - Patterns of closeness and distance
 - Patterns of emotional availability, codependency, and depth
 - Patterns of emotional cut-offs or enmeshment
 - Patterns of dominance or submission
- At this point be mindful about the emotions you are feeling. Invite and allow the Holy Spirit to help you identify and process these emotions.

- Journal: Take a few minutes to write how doing this exercise has emotionally impacted you.
- Pray: ask God to comfort you, protect you, and continue to help you make connections between your past and present.

• **Exercise 2: Attachment Theory**

- Read through each of the listed attachment styles on page 6.
- Take a few minutes and pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you review the attachment styles listed.
- Check the box that you feel applies to and describes your relational default.
- Please note these are not prescriptive. Do your best to identify the style that best fits you.
- If you're married or dating seriously, talk through your findings with your spouse or significant other.
- If you want to go deeper on this exercise, see a therapist or couples counselor.

Exercise 3: Evil for Good

- Locate the third box of week 2 in your genogram workbook on page 6, read and respond to the following question: What evil things in your life and family history has God used for good? And how?
- Answering and thinking through this question should foster a spirit of gratitude. Take a minute or two to thank God for his ability to heal, transform and deliver.
- If you want, re-read the story of Joseph from the end of Genesis. Meditate on Genesis 50v19-21. Look for parallels to your own story.

GENERATIONAL SCRIPTS

Step 1: Messages I received from my Father or paternal caretaker

- Pull out your Genogram Workbook from last week. Settle into a comfortable, quiet place, and put away any other distractions. Turn to page 7.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to lead and guide your mind and heart, and to give you discernment and insight throughout this exercise.
- Jot down the messages you received about life from your father or a paternal caretaker. (e.g. "Failure is not an option" or "Life isn't easy or fair, but it is good.")
- Jot down the messages you received about yourself from your father or paternal caretaker. (e.g. "You're lazy" or "You are beautiful just the way you are")
- Next, ask the Holy Spirit to show you a memory that might give you insight into the messages your father or paternal caretaker passed on to you about life.
- What is the message you received based on that memory?
- Ask the Holy Spirit if there are any other memories he wants to show you.
- Now ask the Holy Spirit to show you a memory that might give you insight into the messages your father or paternal caretaker passed on to you about yourself – this includes your worth, value, place, competencies, failures, successes, etc.
- Ask the Holy Spirit if there are any other memories he wants to show you.

Step 2: Messages I received from my Mother or maternal caretaker

- Jot down the messages you received about life from your mother or a maternal caretaker. (e.g. “No one will ever care about you more than you care for yourself” or “Money is the key to a happy life”)
- List the messages you received about yourself from your Mother or maternal caretaker. (e.g. “Your weight is the barometer for your beauty” or “You are special”)
- Next, ask the Holy Spirit to show you a memory that might give you insight into the messages your mother or maternal caretaker passed on to you about life.
- What is the message you received based on that memory?
- Ask the Holy Spirit if there are any other memories he wants to show you.
- Now ask the Holy Spirit to show you a memory that might give you insight into the messages your Mother or maternal caretaker passed on to you about yourself – this includes your worth, value, place, competencies, failures, successes, etc.
- Ask the Holy Spirit if there are any other memories he wants to show you.

Step 3: Messages I received from key life events

- Jot down key life events that have shaped or impacted you. (e.g. divorce, death, loss, abuse, financial stress, etc.)
- List the messages you received from these key life events (e.g. “You’re all alone” or “Money is security”)
- Next, ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your mind any other key life events that you may have missed or forgotten. If there are more, be sure to record the messages you received. (e.g. “No one is safe.”)

Step 4: Cumulative Messages I Believe (beliefs may or may not be true)

- Take a few minutes and read through the messages you have listed.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the messages you believe. Don’t be afraid to wait on the Holy Spirit.
- List the messages you are believing.
- Now, ask the Holy Spirit to show you whether those messages are true or not true.
- Some may be easy to identify, but others may not. Don’t rush this – take time and allow the Holy Spirit to show you the truth.
- Next to each of the messages you’ve listed, mark whether they are true or not true.
- Spend a few minutes praying over the messages you have marked “not true”
- Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the truth related to that specific message.
- Take a few more minutes and write down the truth he reveals.
- Now, ask him to exchange the old, untrue, narrative scripts with the truth he revealed.
- Close your time by thanking God for his help and truth.

GENERATIONAL BLESSINGS

A key task in our apprenticeship to Jesus is to identify the patterns that we inherited from our family of origin, but then to decide which patterns we need to stop, start, and/or continue. But especially, the goal this week is to identify the “blessing” or “heritage” that you carry from your family line, if there is one. To celebrate it. Thank God for it. And then make sure it lives on in the next generation.

Exercise 1: Stop

- Write out any patterns, scripts, traditions, and values from your family of origin that you want to break.
- Think over the last three weeks of exercises and glean the highlights.

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Exercise 2: Start

- Write out any patterns, scripts, traditions, and values that you want to start with your generation.
- It might be a simple script like, “The family that plays together, stays together.” Or a fun tradition like always cutting down a Christmas tree the day after Thanksgiving. Or it might be a value for community or generosity or the practice of Sabbath. Anything goes here. Dream a little. Then see those dreams become reality.

Exercise 3: Continue

- Write out any patterns, scripts, traditions, and values from your family of origin that you want to carry forward to the next generation - your children, or just children you are in relationship with through family, community, church, etc.
 - If you can't identify a blessing from your family line due to the emotional pain of your story, don't let it ruin you. The future is wide open before you. Let the Father start a new family line through your story. Take this time to pray in that direction.
 - This is a key part of the practice. It's essential that we identify the blessing of our family line, thank God for it, and carry it forward.