

STUDY GUIDE | 31 LESSONS

DRIVE BY

PARENTING

**BY: TODD FRIEL
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Drive By Parenting: Individual and Group Discussion Guide

This guide is a companion to the 31-part Drive By Parenting audio series available at www.Wretched.org

By Roger and Becky Patterson and family

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MESSAGE FROM TODD



Way to go! This world would be a better place if more parents were like YOU! I am not kidding! Our society is in desperate need of better parents. Have you ever been to Chuck E. Cheese? Let me applaud you for taking the time to invest not only in your children, but in your church and your world. Parenting is that important.

We prepared Drive By Parenting for three reasons:

1. Parenting is hard! Put a group of sinners under one roof and you have a recipe for pain.
2. We are all a little weary from parenting methods that feel like great big to-do lists.
3. We believe what you are about to hear is entirely Biblical.

If your children are pretty good, you will grow in areas you never imagined. And if you are on the edge of disaster (or disaster has already struck), know there is hope. God is big, He is strong, and He can heal your family. More than that, you can even have joy in your home.

We would like to thank you for two things:

1. For trusting us.
2. For making it possible for me to attend Chuck E. Cheese some day without going crazy.

It is our prayer that your family will grow in many ways . . . for generations to come.

STUDY GUIDE & CURRICULUM INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the discussion guide for Drive By Parenting. This guide has been created to help you get the most out of the Drive By Parenting audio lectures. The guide is set up with two components to accompany each lecture:

LECTURE QUESTIONS

The Lecture Questions reinforce the lessons in each lecture. Within the questions, you will find Scripture passages mentioned in the lecture and many of the ideas presented in written form. The questions are intended to help promote transparency within the group or between spouses in order to foster an environment in which wisdom can be shared and true Gospel-centered hope can be discussed. Use the Scripture passages mentioned in the questions to get the Bible open and the words of God injected into the discussion. Check every idea against Scripture.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

Using Scripture passages and other key ideas from the lectures, these questions will ask you to examine your hearts and actions. As with any study, the amount of time, effort, and honesty you put into the personal questions will determine the growth seen by the individual. In many cases, you will be sitting down with your spouse and family members and asking them to give you honest feedback about your actions and attitudes. The Christian life is meant to be lived in community and fellowship, and these questions are intended to promote that in a unique way for each individual.

Many of the Personal Questions will ask you to spend time in discussion with your spouse or children. These can be wonderful times of fellowship with one another and prayer with the Lord. We understand that single parents, divorced parents, or those who are married to unbelievers will face unique challenges in these areas. Consider sharing these questions with a mentor, but apply the intent of the questions to your unique situation, seeking support from your local church body.

It is also highly recommended that you read the book *Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Dr. Tedd Tripp. Many of the ideas presented in the lectures come from that book. In its chapters, you will find expanded discussions of the various topics, as well as illustrations and diagrams referenced in the lectures. If you are leading a group, you may wish to bring the book to the discussions to show any diagrams referenced in the lectures.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE - SMALL GROUP PLAN

START (15 Minutes)

Week 1 → Having familiarized yourself with the guide and the structure of this study, read the welcome letter and introduction provided for you in this guide to the class.

Following Week 1 → Start each session with a review of the Personal Questions from the previous lesson. Ask for examples of encouragement or clarification about the questions or Scripture passages. Here are some helpful questions to get the discussion started:

- In what areas of your life did these questions challenge you the most?
- Share an example from this past week when you applied some of the lecture ideas. What was the result?
- Did you learn something new about yourself, your spouse, or your children that you previously were unaware of? How does that affect your actions going forward?

LISTEN (15 Minutes)

Listen to the audio lecture.

LECTURE QUESTIONS (15-25 Minutes)

Go through the Lecture Questions together. Use them to help one another think through the issues presented. Read the Scripture passages indicated, and make sure all the ideas discussed are grounded in Scripture, not simply feelings and experiences.

CLOSING (5 Minutes)

Close in prayer focusing on specific aspects of the lesson to guide the time.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS (HOMEWORK)

To get the most out of this study, we strongly encourage you to study through the Personal Questions. We cannot stress this enough. Here are two options:

Option 1: Work through the Personal Questions on your own. Write down your thoughts, and study through the Scripture references provided. Be prepared to engage in conversation at the next meeting. When finished, spend time in prayer.

Option 2: Work through the Personal Questions with your spouse. Answer the questions separately. Then, come together to discuss and compare answers. You will find this to be very rewarding. **CHARGE TO HUSBANDS** → When finished, lead your wife in prayer. Pray for your marriage, your children, and the Holy Spirit to grow you through this study.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE - **INDIVIDUAL PLAN**

START

Week 1 → Familiarize yourself with the guide and the structure of this study. Read the welcome letter and introduction provided for you in this guide.

Following Week 1 → Start each session with a review of the Personal Questions from the previous lesson. Assess what you have learned, and ask yourself these helpful questions:

- In what areas of my life did these questions challenge me the most?
- Did I miss any opportunities this week to apply what I've learned? What would I have done differently?
- Have I fully grasped the material from last week's lessons?

Remember not to rush. Let the ideas work in your heart before moving on to the next lecture.

LISTEN

Listen to the audio lecture.

LECTURE QUESTIONS

Go through the Lecture Questions. Use them to help guide you through the issues presented. Also, read the Scripture passages indicated, and make sure all your thoughts and ideas are grounded in Scripture, not simply feelings and experiences.

CLOSING

Close in prayer, focusing on specific aspects of the lesson to guide the time.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS (HOMEWORK)

To get the most out of this study, we strongly encourage you to study through the Personal Questions. We cannot stress this enough. You can work through the Personal Questions immediately following the Lecture Questions, or you can work on them throughout the next week. Regardless of what you decide, make sure you **DO THEM!** Write down your thoughts, and study through the Scripture provided. When finished, spend time in prayer.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE - COUPLES EXERCISE

START

Week 1 → Familiarize yourself with the guide and the structure of this study. Read the welcome letter and introduction provided for you in this guide.

Following Week 1 → Start each session with a review of the Personal Questions from the previous lesson. Assess what you've learned, and ask yourselves these helpful questions:

- In what areas of our lives did these questions challenge us the most?
- Did either of us observe a change in the other's behavior? Give an example.
- Have I fully grasped the material from last week's lessons, or is there something that needs to be revisited?

Remember not to rush. Let the ideas work in your hearts before moving on to the next lecture.

LISTEN

Listen to the audio lecture.

LECTURE QUESTIONS

Husbands, use the Lecture Questions to help guide you and your spouse through the issues presented. Also, read the Scripture passages indicated, and make sure both of your thoughts and ideas are grounded in Scripture, not simply feelings and experiences.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

To get the most out of this study, we strongly encourage you to study through the Personal Questions. We cannot stress this enough. Answer the questions separately. Then, come together to discuss and compare answers. You will find this to be very rewarding.

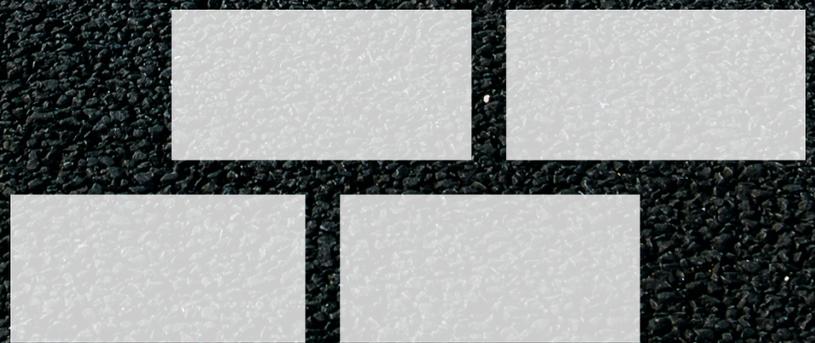
CHARGE TO HUSBANDS

Close your time together by leading your wife in prayer. Pray for your marriage, your children, and the Holy Spirit to grow you through this study.

LAYING

THE FOUNDATION

CHAPTER 1



LECTURE 1

LECTURE QUESTIONS

1. Where can we find hope for any parenting challenges we face?
2. What are most parenting techniques aimed at changing? How has this influenced your parenting in the past? Why isn't this a Gospel-centered approach?
3. How do Proverbs 4:23 and Matthew 15:16–20 help us understand the connection between our heart and our behavior?
4. More than just focusing on the behavior of our children, why is it important to focus on our own hearts as we parent? What role does Jesus play in our heart change?
5. Read Isaiah 53:5–6 and Ephesians 2:1–10. What truths do we find in these passages about who we are and what God has done for us in Christ?
6. What are the parenting goals of the typical couple? What should our ultimate goal be in parenting our children? How do 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Romans 11:36 inform our answer to that question?
7. Change is typically a process, not an event. As we approach this topic, why is it important to consider the amount of time involved in parenting our children?
8. After listening to this lecture, what ideas give you hope for the future? What areas do you hope to grow in the most over this study?

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

1. Describe your approach to parenting in the past. Was it focused on changing exterior behaviors or dealing with the heart issues? How does thinking about the power of the Gospel give you hope for changing any bad habits in you or your children?
2. The system of behavior modification is the best the world has to offer. How does that method compare to a Gospel-centered approach where God causes true heart change in an individual? Come up with an analogy to compare the two.
3. Read Romans 12:1–2. Are there sinful habits in your life that you have tried to overcome by modifying your behavior rather than seeking a change of heart? How successful were your efforts? How successful will your children's change be apart from Christ's help?
4. Read Isaiah 53:5–6 and Ephesians 2:1–10. What truths do we find in these passages about who we are and what God has done for us in Christ? Where do you stand before God? Are your sins forgiven, or does God's wrath abide on you?
5. What have your goals been in parenting your children? How might you need to adjust those goals in light of the truths in the lecture and Malachi 2:14–15?
6. When your child misbehaves in front of others, are you more concerned about your reputation or your child's sin against God? What does your answer reveal about your heart?
7. Take time with your spouse to make a list of the parenting challenges you face. What hope does knowing that God has the ability to change your hearts and your children's hearts give you for dealing with these issues?

LECTURE 2

LECTURE QUESTIONS

1. Read Romans 3:9–20. How does this passage compare to the popular idea of rewarding children to draw out the good in them?
2. Consider the sins of deceit, lying, hatred, selfishness, rebellion, and self-love. How much time have you spent training your children to sin in these ways? What does this tell us about human nature?
3. What distinguishes an authoritarian parent from a shepherding parent?
4. How do we help our children understand their sinful hearts and still offer them hope?
5. Why is it that we tend to bark orders at our children when they are not behaving as we would like them to? How would a Gospel-centered response look different?
6. 1 Peter 5:1–5 is given in the context of a local church, but what principle can we draw from this passage to help us understand the distinction between using our God-given authority as parents versus being an authoritarian?
7. In what ways does a parent represent God's character to children? Whose example are we to follow?
8. How does a child's heart orientation toward God determine how they respond to their environment and the influences in their lives? Is this any different for you?

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

1. Thinking about your own childhood, what parenting methods did your parents employ? Were they focused on heart change or controlling behavior? How does your parenting style compare?
2. Consider the phrase, “The heart of the matter is the matter of the heart.” How would you like this idea to become more integral to your parenting?
3. Knowing that Jesus is referred to as the Shepherd, how does this help you understand how you are called to shepherd your children? (Matthew 9:36; John 10:7–19; Psalm 23)
4. Knowing that every human is made to worship something, what things are you pouring energy and time into on a regular basis? How does this set an example for your children?
5. In light of God’s call to Abraham in Genesis 18:19, what is your role as a parent in relating God’s character to your children?
6. As you think about growing in holiness in your parenting, whom should you be seeking to change in your family?
7. Rather than focusing on the negative aspects of the things influencing your children, how can you use your child’s responses to those influences to help you understand the motivation of their heart (to recognize what they are worshipping in that response)?