Think It Over: This section is about turning what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions, and scriptures are designed to help you take your own next step. If you are leading a group through this guide, don't feel like you have to answer every question. Pick out those questions that will stir up conversation and action among your group.

- What has your experience been with blended families? What has been great and difficult? Explain what the writer of Proverbs 13:12 is getting at. How have you experienced hope in your own life? How can this be applied to family life, especially a blended family?

- A few times a year there is a Child Dedication on a Sunday. Who is the dedication really for? How do parents go about establishing priorities (see Matthew 6:33 CEV)? What does the process look like and what are some of the elements? Genesis 22:12 represents years of growth. How does a person make spiritual growth in their relationship with God a way of life?

- Discuss Ephesians 4:29-32. Why is the process of forgiveness hard? What about when someone doesn't want to be forgiven? Why is it necessary for the children's sake, your sake, and everyone's sake?

- Why are cultivating boundaries crucial for both first families and blended families? What is unique regarding both kinds of families in the area of boundaries? How does marriage sometimes get lost in the complexities of parenting children?

- What are some of the typical unrealistic expectations as one enters a new family? How do they impact feelings, behavior, and choices? Read Colossians 3:13-14 MSG. What are the implications for all Christ followers?

- Read through Blended Family SUCCESS. How does each one apply in some form to all families? How does Psalm 18:20 MSG connect with family life and *all of life?*

Next Steps: What pieces of life do you need to place before God? What is He telling you to do with them? How will you respond? Remember pieces can become peace!

Changing Your Mind: Choose one of the verses listed in the Message Guide and commit it to heart.

SENECA Community Church

If you missed a message, visit www.scc.website
or request a CD at Guest Services.

A first marriage family has a chance

to grow into life together,

while a blended family

is thrown into life together.

➲ Establish your priorities.

Genesis 22:1-14 NIV page 14

12 The angel said, "Don't kill your son or hurt him in any way. Now I can see that you trust God and that you have not kept your son, your only son, from me." *Genesis 22:12 NCV*

33 But more than anything else, put God's work first and do what he wants. Then the other things will be yours as well. *Matthew 6:33 CEV*

➲ Extend forgiveness to your

ex-spouse and their spouse.

29 And never let ugly or hateful words come from your mouth, but instead let your words become beautiful gifts (things that people need) that encourage others; do this by speaking words of grace to help them. *Ephesians 4:29 TPT*

☑ Speak kindly

for the children's sake.

30And don't make the Holy Spirit sad. God gave you his Spirit as proof that you belong to him and that he will keep you safe until the day he makes you free (the day of redemption). 31Never be bitter, angry, or mad. Never shout angrily or say things to hurt others, and any and all malicious thoughts—these are poison.

Ephesians 4:30-31 ERV, NIV, Voice

☑ Remove bitterness

for your own sake.

32Be kind and loving to each other. Forgive each other the same as God forgave you through Christ. *Ephesians 4:31 ERV*

☑ Extend forgiveness

for everyone's sake.

➲ Cultivate proper boundaries.

☑ Which family relationship

is the most important?

31 As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother to get married, and he becomes like one person with his wife."

Ephesians 5:31 CEV

☑ How do you correct the kids?

Check out **This is Us Part 4: Correcting Kids** available online at https://senecacommunitychurch.com/us

☑ Who is your favorite?

3Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him. *Genesis 37:3 NIV page 27*

➲ Be realistic about expectations.

13 Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. 14 And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.

Colossians 3:13–14 MSG

Blended Family SUCCESS

S - Start with Jesus as your center.

U - Understand each person's journey.

C - Confront issues before re-marriage.

C - Commit yourself to prayer.

E - Enlist the help of others.

S - Strategy is determined by child's age.

S - Share your family's goals & dreams.

20GOD made my life complete when I placed all the pieces before him. When I got my act together, he gave me a fresh start.

Psalm 18:20 MSG

Bottom Line:

SUCCESS can bring the

pieces to peace.

Resources for this series include messages from Life Church, North Coast Community Church, and Christ Church of the Valley.

To help you turn what God is saying to you into action steps, consider using the Think It Over section on the back.