

NOVEMBER

SYSTEMS FOR SHARING HOUSEHOLD TASKS

PRIMER



homeroom

MARRIAGE & FAMILY MENTORING MEMBERSHIP

Rare is the family that doesn't constantly struggle with sharing household tasks.

That certainly includes the Pryor Household.

We live in a complex environment.

We run multiple businesses and ministries out of our house in addition to living with pets, teenagers and grandparents.

Sometimes things breakdown but for the most part it works well.

When it works this is largely due to a patchwork of household systems we've implemented and steadily improved as things got more complex.

When it breaks down this is due to a flaw in one of our household systems.

In this month's activation guide we'll take you step-by-step toward creating systems of your own for whatever is breaking down but before we go there we need to discuss the two things that will destroy any effort at household system creating:

- 1. Misunderstanding the problem**
- 2. The belief that families should be system-free zones**

Both begin with shifting one's mindset.

First, we must understand the nature of the problem with household tasks.

It has a technical name, "The Tragedy of the Commons".

In college I lived in a house with four other guys and while we kept our rooms neat and clean our kitchen was a perpetual disaster.

When no one feels ownership over an area it becomes a realm of chaos.

One system in our house is that every room belongs to someone. When it comes to keeping things clean we hold nothing in common. There is always a specific person account-

able for every space.

Second, modern western households have an intuition that families and systems don't go together.

We fall in love, get married, combine every aspect of our lives and have kids. We call this starting a family but what does that mean? We tend to see this as merely a set of relationships. That's why when things break down in the home we feel hurt and get angry at one another instead of work together to build better systems.

But in reality when you get married you start a mini-organization.

We are not honest about this in our culture.

We instead act like we're lovers who happen to be roommates.

Families in ancient times knew better.

No one tries to start a system-free business or a system-free team but most people live in system-free families and this is an invitation to chaos.

One of the worst results of this system-free thinking is that all the work repeatedly falls on the same person until they become overwhelmed and feel taken for granted.

Well designed systems force responsibility to be shared and hold other family members accountable.

The result is a household of peace.

Are you ready to bring greater peace and order into your home?

Here are some questions to consider as we prepare to build household systems.

On a scale of 1-10 how orderly do you feel our household is currently?

How convinced are you that households need well-designed systems?

What do each of you tend to think is the root of the problem when something isn't working in the household? Do you see any flaws in your intuitions around that root cause?

Discuss one thing from this Primer that stood out to you the most.

Give yourself a lot of grace in this process. You likely did not see this done with excellence in your family of origin.

But for the sake of God's Kingdom and your own sanity we must learn to create households of peace.