



# FAMILY MERIDIAN

**August 5 Webinar: Secrets of the 7 Generation Family, Phil Clemens & Lonnie Gienger.\***

## **What Are the Traits of a Successful 7 Generation Family?**

- They know the family story. They know who they are.
- They are clear on their values and live them out.
- They understand trust is important within the family, and reinforce that through words and actions.
- They are clear on the direction they want to go as a family and move in that direction.
- Each successive generation is empowered to design their own destiny, building on the strengths and values of the prior generations.
- They value family unity and affirm each family member, but don't endorse behavior contrary to family values.
- They intentionally nurture good relationships amongst all members of the family, regardless of differences.
- They make sure spouses of family members, and adopted children, feel like family by blood.

## **How Did They Develop the Traits of a Successful 7 Generation Family?**

- **They know the family story.** They know who they are. Capture and tell the family story through interviewing family members. Provide easy access to videos and books telling the family story. Ask questions such as, "How did our great grandfather start the business?" Don't tell only the hero stories. Tell the whole story, warts and all, to communicate that success is possible even with struggles and imperfection.
- **They are clear on their values and live them out.** Discover through stories how the family's values came about. What values drove the family to believe in their ability to create something worthwhile? What anchored them, keeping them from being destroyed when the storms came? Retell the stories over and over and over to reinforce the values.
- **They understand trust is important within the family, and reinforce that through words and actions.** Seek to know the expectations of family members, and consider how those expectations can be incorporated into how the family lives out their values. Make it clear if it isn't possible to include certain expectations within how the family interacts and deploys their resources.
- **They are clear on the direction they want to go as a family and move in that direction.** They establish a family compass - mission, vision, purpose, values. This provides direction. Then they frequently reassess, how are we doing related to our family compass? Where do we need to make course corrections?

\* Notes generously provided by Jim Dean.

- Each successive generation is empowered to design their own destiny, building on the strengths and values of the prior generations. They engage in open communication about honoring differing values and priorities amongst immediate family sub-units, while refusing to compromise the larger family's values with their family's actions and words.
- **They value family unity and affirm each family member, but don't endorse behavior contrary to family values.** They are clear about family values but recognize not everyone in the family will enthusiastically endorse all of the family values. With love they affirm each family member, while not endorsing behavior that goes against family values.
- **They intentionally nurture good relationships amongst all members of the family, regardless of differences.** They look for ways to connect and enjoy being together. If there is not a good relationship with adult children, they look for and act on ways to rebuild the relationship. They are persistent until the relationship is restored, no matter how long it takes.
- **They make sure spouses of family members, and adopted children, feel like family by blood.** They embrace family unity and affirm everyone, making sure to include spouses of family members, and those who are adopted, in all gatherings and family discussions.

