The 2009 census of the United States Census Bureau indicates that 5.6 million children lived with at least one stepparent, about 50 percent of US families involve remarriages or re-coupling, and an average of 1,300 new stepfamilies form every day. So more than ever, a family can be composed of people who love and show up for one another with or without biological ties.

You choose to become a stepparent. Becoming a biological parent sometimes does not involve planning, and you can never really know what your children will be like. On the other hand, step parenting reflects a conscious decision to form a family with children whose personalities you didn’t help shape when they were little. They are children who don’t have your genes; there is a lot you don’t know about them physically, emotionally, and psychologically.

Definition of a Blended Family:
A marriage in which one or both spouses bring children into the relationship from a previous relationship.

Takeaway:
It isn’t easy to get over the first person you willingly gave your heart to. You can move on, but often there is residue and feelings lingering somewhere in your spirit for that person. Anytime we have sexual intimacy with another person we become one with them. We create a physical and spiritual bond with them that is profound. Society has trivialized this truth and tried to convince us that sex is just a harmless form of fun and entertainment, but they couldn’t be more wrong. Sex is a sacred and spiritual act before God.

The top five challenges in the blending process:

1. Non-biological parenting

   Marriage has certain laws we must go by:

   A. Marriage has a law of priority
   B. Marriage has a law of pursuit
   C. Marriage has a law of possession

Takeaway:
I would be very slow to marry a person today with a bad credit score. I would make sure the person I was marrying wasn’t deep in debt.

2. Child visitation

3. Lack of emotional and spiritual support
Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way they should go and when they are old, they will not depart from it.

Takeaway:
If you have been divorced and are either still single or if you have remarried and are now in a blended family your goal is for your children to see you as an adult and not a child. Some kids need to say to their mom and dad; “In Jesus name, and with all due respect mom and dad, grow up!”

4. Dealing with tween-agers and their multiple personalities

5. Setting and maintaining the boundaries of step parenting

Five boundaries that must be clearly guarded:

A. Information boundaries
B. Disciplinary boundaries
C. Monetary boundaries
D. Behavioral boundaries
E. Establish equality where there is inequality between the biological and non-biological children

Three closing thoughts to consider:

1. Stepfamilies are created through loss
2. Opposite from first marriages, remarriages form “instant families”
3. Home has changed; make sure the new “place” is a happy place

Acronym for PLACE:
P - Playful
L - Loving
A - Accepting
C - Caring
E - Empathetic