

Your Family, Your Church & the World

Life Group Discussion Guide - Fall 2023

Designed by God - The Origins of Family

Week one - Sept 17

As an ice-breaker, ask your group about their own fathers. Discuss core memories, catchphrases, joys and sorrows. How have our earthly fathers (and father figures) set the stage for our view of our Heavenly Father?

In this session, we will be discussing the triune nature of God, and, in particular, the relationship between the Father and the Son. How significant is it that Jesus referenced God as *Father* more than any other title? 189 times to be exact! Jesus came to show us the Father (**John 17:6,26**), and to provide a way to the Father (**John 14:6-7**).

What did the Father announce about His Son in **Matt 3:7, 17:15**? Who was present to hear these words? What earthly ministry had Jesus accomplished prior to His baptism? Reflect on the pride of a Father for His Son. Have you experienced a similar blessing, approval and acceptance from your earthly father?

Read **John 17:1-5**. Consider the unity between God the Father and God the Son. How can the Son and the Father share in the same glory? What did Jesus accomplish? How did the Father facilitate the redemptive work of the Son?

Beginning this series on Family with a healthy view of God is so important. We need to understand that God dwells in familial community as the triune Godhead. One God in three persons. Perfection in unity, in mission, and in glory. This is where family starts!

Broken by Sin – the fracturing of family bonds

Week Two - Sept 24

One of the initial push backs when discussing family is the dysfunction and disappointment experienced through broken relationships. We wonder if our's is the only family to experience the pain of _____. But, the reality is, every family is broken to a degree. Speaking in human terms, there is no perfect family!

Read **Gen 3:1-19 & 4:1-9** together as a group. Discuss the explosive narrative of these two chapters. What would you say are some of the key ways *OUR* relationships are affected by sin?

Read **Gen 3:15**. This statement is referred to by theologians as the *protoevangelium* ('first gospel') because it is the first indication in Scripture that God would send the Saviour. How would you say the gospel, directed at individual hearts and lives, also relates to God restoring families? List some practical ways you've seen the Gospel at work in broken relationships.

What do you think it means to be your '*brother's keeper*'? (**Gen. 4:9**) Cain asked this question in sarcasm, but is there a deeper meaning to his words? Are there ways in which we are called to be our *brother's keeper*? Do we have a responsibility to one another?

What challenges are you facing personally to see family restoration and health, and how are you attempting to meet those challenges? - This is a great opportunity for confession and prayer as a group. The desire of Life Groups is to *do life* together... Being honest about, and seeking support in our challenges is a key part of doing life together.

Unfriendly Fire – the forces against the family (part 1) **Week Three - Oct. 1**

Life in our world can feel very *anti-family* at times. There seem to be no boundaries when it comes to uprooting the deep seated truths and traditions that families have been built on. Take some time to discuss your own observations of the modern *war on family*. Where are we to look when our view of family is challenged at every turn?

Satan is cunning, crafty, and ruthless. But, have Satan's tactics really changed all that much? Consider the temptation of Eve & Adam in **Gen. 3:1-7**. Note key observances as a group. What or who did Satan want Eve to question? Where was Adam?

Now compare Satan's temptation of Eve with the temptation of Jesus in **Matt. 4:1-11**. Were there similarities in Satan's strategy? How did Jesus respond? Is Jesus' response to temptation accessible and practical for us today?

Read **Gal. 5:16-26**. Why are Satan's lies so appealing? If we know the truth, why would we ever accept his lie?

How are our families affected by embracing Satan's lies? Consider **Rom. 1:18-32**. We can see the impact of sin throughout our society, but especially in our relationships. In what practical ways have you observed the force of sin against the family?

How does embracing God's truth combat the Devil's lie? What are some practical ways we can daily practice the truth with and for our families?