

## **Let's Talk Church:**

### **We are Family**

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Our experience of family will influence how we define family. That is why it is easy to misunderstand the concept of family. The following explains God's way of family:

**Psalm 68:6 (NIV) "God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land"**

#### **1. GOD PLACES GREAT VALUE ON LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE**

**1.1.** The cross was there to destroy religion and reconcile family.

**Matthew 22:37-40 (TPT) "Jesus answered him, "Love the Lord your God with every passion of your heart, with all the energy of your being, and with every thought that is within you.' This is the great and supreme commandment. And the second is like it in importance: 'You must love your friend in the same way you love yourself.'"**

**1 Peter 4:8 "Above all, have fervent and unfailing love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins [it overlooks unkindness and unselfishly seeks the best for others]."**

#### **2. GOD'S WAY OF FAMILY IS RELATIONAL**

**2.1.** Families are led in an organic way and not in an organizational way.

**2.2.** God inspires us to be better; He doesn't bully us into staying inline.

**Romans 7:7-8 (AMP) "What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, if it had not been for the Law, I would not have recognized sin. For I would not have known [for example] about coveting [what belongs to another, and would have had no sense of guilt] if the Law had not [repeatedly] said, "You shall not covet." <sup>8</sup> But sin, finding an opportunity through the commandment [to express itself] produced in me every kind of coveting and selfish desire. For without the Law sin is dead [the recognition of sin is inactive].**

**2.3.** God does believe in discipline and values because He is our Father and He wants us to be safe and flourish.

**Hebrews 12:7-11 (AMP) "You must submit to [correction for the purpose of] discipline; God is dealing with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? Now if you are exempt from correction and without discipline, in which all [of**

God's children] share, then you are illegitimate children and not sons [at all]. Moreover, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us, and we submitted and respected them [for training us]; shall we not much more willingly submit to the Father of spirits, and live [by learning from His discipline]? For our earthly fathers disciplined us for only a short time as seemed best to them; but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. For the time being no discipline brings joy, but seems sad and painful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness [right standing with God and a lifestyle and attitude that seeks conformity to God's will and purpose]."

### **3. IF GOD IS RELATIONAL THEN WE ARE RELATIONAL**

- 3.1. Church is messy because family is messy.
- 3.2. God places us in a Church family with all kinds of different people and that can become messy.

### **4. IT TAKES TIME TO UNDERSTAND AND COMMIT TO CHURCH**

- 4.1. It takes time to understand this relational way of Church.
- 4.2. One has to get to know people by joining a small group and serving.
- 4.3. It takes time, effort and commitment to build relationships.

### **5. WHY DO PEOPLE STILL GET HURT IN CHURCH?**

- 5.1. Some people who join Church have an orphan spirit and can confuse discipline with rejection.
- 5.2. It is easy to confuse hurt and offence. People think that they have been hurt by the Church when they are actually offended by the Church.
- 5.3. Real hurt does happen in Church, because there are Church leaders who take advantage of their position. If you find yourself in this situation speak up, Church should be a safe space.

**Sermon Discussion Guide**  
**We are family**

**OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.**

1. How has your experience of family influenced the way you feel about Church family?
2. Do you experience Church as relational or do you experience it as organizational?  
Why do you experience it in that way?
3. Have you ever been hurt in Church? How did that experience influence the way you view Church?