



**Sermon Based Small Group
Leader Discussion Guide**

Sermon Title: How to Develop a Tight-Knit Family (Week One of Three)

Series Title: Family Matters Series

**Sermon by Pastor Tom Harrington
Week of April 25, 2010**

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Icebreaker	<p>Growing up, what were some of your favorite T.V. shows, books, or movies that featured family life? Did they highlight healthy models of loving families or quirky, dysfunctional families that made you feel better about your own?</p>
Session Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to studying and participating in Family Matters Series. • Pray for God’s work in transforming our relationships.
Sermon Text John 10:22-30	<p><i>Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter; Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."</i></p>

Digging Deeper

Learning more about the lesson

MedLine Plus, an online resource, notes this about the modern definition of “family”:

There are many different kinds of families. Some have two parents, while others have a single parent. Sometimes there is no parent and grandparents raise grandchildren. Some children live in foster families, adoptive families, or in stepfamilies. Families are much more than groups of people who share the same genes or the same address. They should be a source of support and encouragement.

1. Along the same lines, in what “kind” of family did you grow up and are you a part of, now?
2. II Cor. 13:14 says, “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” What does this verse suggest to you about God’s nature, what he values, and how he interacts with us?
3. The sermon this week, “How to Develop a Tight-Knit Family”, started by examining the relationships between Jesus and the Father to each other. It then moved on to the relationship between Jesus and the Father to us. What do these relationships teach us about how we are to relate to others, specifically, within our own family?
4. Think of a specific time when you felt that you made a special connection with a family member. Was it intentional or did it “just happen”? Where were you?

Reread John 10:22-30

1. List all phrases that mention ways God relates to us.
2. List all phrases that refer to ways we relate to God.

	<p>Read Psalm 23</p> <p><i>The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which of the characteristics of a close-knit family, listed above, do you note in these verses? 2. Our Lord richly provides for each and every need in our life. Do any of these verses resonate with you? Do they bring to mind any areas of life that you or your family members need the Good Shepherd to intercede on your behalf? If comfortable, share with the group, and request prayer support. <p>Facilitator Tip: <i>Please don't feel pressured to answer every question.</i></p>
<p>Taking it Home</p>	<p>How will I live it? Apply it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is keenly interested in the health of the family. Through Jesus' relationship to the Father, and God's relationship with us, we have a model for how we are to relate to one another. • Memorize Scripture: <i>John 10:27 NIV</i> • <i>Practical Steps:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eat dinner together as a family for seven days in a row. 2. Take your wife on a dialogue date (no movie, guys). 3. Read your kids a classic book (Twain's a good start). 4. Memorize the Twenty-third Psalm as a family. 5. Give each family member a hug for twenty-one days in a row (that's how long the experts say it takes to develop a habit). 6. Pick a night of the week in which the television will remain unplugged. 7. Go out for a non-fast food dinner as a family. 8. Pray for your spouse and children every day.
<p>Looking Ahead</p>	<p>How can I prepare for the next Small Group meeting?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Discussion Questions from Week #2 Sermon for the next week small group meeting • Complete "Assessing My Relationship" pretest. We will take the following assessment test at the beginning and end of the series, to see how far God has brought us. Note: the assessment was included as a bulletin insert on Sunday.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to meet with your small group these next three weeks • Commit to go to church each weekend during this study
Prayer Focus	<p>How can I connect with God and others through prayer?</p> <p>During the Family Matters Series, our objective is to engage the members of Northwest (and others) to...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) improve relationships with God and others; 2) engage in small group discussions; and , 3) implement practical steps to experience relational breakthroughs. <p>Take a few moments to pray for these three areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage members to share any prayer requests or praise reports. Use Small Group Prayer and Praise Report to track prayer requests and praise reports. <p><i>Facilitator Tip: Some people are comfortable praying out loud, while others prefer to pray silently. Either is okay. The point is to connect people to God and with each other in a loving, supportive environment.</i></p>
Updates	<p>Announcements from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care Coordinator Outreach Coordinator Social Coordinator

Leader: Please note the additional resources on the church website that are available concerning the topic of family life. There are helpful evaluations and lists of resources about family life.