

Sermon Title: How to Develop a Tight-Knit Family

Series Title: Family Matters Series

Sermon by Pastor Tom Harrington

Week of April 25, 2010

Sermon Based Small Group Discussion Guide

Big Idea: 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.

Icebreaker

Sermon Text: *Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and 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." (John 10:24-30)*

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 10:24-30

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

Read Psalm 23

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.

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.

Prayer Requests and Praises: