

HEALTHY-ER FAMILY

DISCUSSION GUIDE 1

ABOUT THIS SERIES

If you could change one thing to have a healthier family, what would it be?

Whether you're starting a new family, or you're in a family now, during our series called "Healthy-er Family" you'll look through a Biblical lens to rethink what a healthy family looks like and leave behind some of the unhealthy expectations we can have of a family.

You can't make your family perfect, but here's how you can make it healthy-er.

ITEMS NEEDED

☐ Bibles ☐ Small Group Expectations sheet ☐ Contact list

☐ Nametags (optional) ☐ Marker for nametags (also optional)

CHECKLIST BEFORE YOUR GROUP ARRIVES

☐ Pray for your group ☐ Read through the Discussion Guide ☐ Refreshments (optional)
☐ Clean meeting area ☐ Clean bathroom ☐ Crack the front door

OPENING (10 MIN)

After a general welcome, say: Hey, everyone, welcome to the first meeting of our Small Group!

The main goal of Small Groups at St. Mark is to meet new people from the church. Yes, we'll dig deeper into God's Word and yes, we'll discover God's power for our lives, but what makes Small Groups special are the new relationships we form. It's why one of our vision statements is to be "a church that grows smaller as we grow larger." So, thank you guys for helping us live that out and joining a Small Group. You are going to be blessed by these new friendships.

That being said, let's get to know each other by going in a circle and answering—

WHAT'S YOUR NAME, WHAT YOU DO FOR WORK, AND HOW LONG YOU'VE BEEN GOING TO ST. MARK?

After a discussion, say: Two things I'm going to pass around. One is a contact sheet with your email and cell, if the info is correct, put a check mark next to it.

The second is a Small Group Expectations sheet for you to sign. It's just establishing what we value in the group—we will have fun with each other, we will be open with one another, we will be respectful of one another, we will not gossip, we will take turns speaking, we will disagree with respect, and we will be changed by each other.

Let me pray and then I'll pass these two sheets around.

OPENING PRAYER (1 MIN)

Host, lead the group in prayer, thanking God for the group and asking God to bless your time together today and this year in the Small Group.

HEALTHY-ER FAMILY (3-5 MIN)

After a prayer, say: As you heard this last Sunday, we're starting a 4-week series in church called "Healthy-er Family". Whether you're starting a new family, or you're in a family now, during our series called "Healthy-er Family" we'll look through a Biblical lens to rethink what a healthy family looks like and leave behind some of the unhealthy expectations we can have of a family.

LET'S GO IN A CIRCLE—WHO ARE THE OTHER PEOPLE YOU SHARE A HOME WITH RIGHT NOW?**HEALTHY-ER FOUNDATION (10-15 MIN)**

After a discussion, say: Whatever you're working with, you know your home isn't always perfect, but it can always be healthy-er, starting with a healthy-er foundation.

In Ephesians 2:20, the Apostle Paul says a healthy church and a healthy family are, "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone." The phrase "the foundation of the apostles and the prophets" is a long way of saying "the Bible". Meaning, God wants his Word to be the foundation for your family.

Let's see why the Word of God might be a good foundation for a family. I'll assign a list of verses, once you find it, read it aloud, and then we'll answer the question—

WHAT QUALITY OR ATTRIBUTE DOES THIS VERSE ASSIGN TO THE WORD OF GOD?

JOHN 17:17
PSALM 12:6

JOHN 1:1
PSALM 18:30

1 THESSALONIANS 2:13
ISAIAH 40:6-8

2 TIMOTHY 3:16
PSALM 119:105

After a discussion, say: In summary, the Word of God is perfect and permanent. There are a lot of good things we can make to be our foundation, but they aren't perfect. There are a lot of temporary things we can build our life upon, but they aren't permanent.

WHAT ARE SOME GOOD-BUT-NOT-GREAT THINGS THAT YOU SEE FAMILIES MAKE A FOUNDATION FOR THEM?**WHAT'S UNWISE ABOUT THESE FOUNDATIONS? IN OTHER WORDS, HOW MIGHT IT FALL APART, OR WHAT'S FRAGILE ABOUT IT?**

After a discussion, say: It's one thing to say that the Word of God is the foundation of a family, it's quite another to actually make it foundational. That is, for a family to touch, connect, and readily and regularly read the Word of God with each other as a family.

LET'S HELP EACH OTHER—WHAT ARE SOME IDEAS ON HOW TO MAKE GOD'S WORD SOMETHING YOU REGULARLY READ TOGETHER WITH YOUR FAMILY?

After a discussion, say: My encouragement to you is to figure out how your family can read God's Word together in a way that's both practical and realistic. Because when you do, you are taking a step towards a *Healthy-er Family*.

CLOSING PRAYER (5 – 7 MIN)

Small Groups at St. Mark end with prayer. I'll pray for us tonight but first—

ARE THERE ANY OTHER PRAYER REQUESTS?

Host, after taking prayer requests, close the group in prayer.