

Family

Week 5 Group Guide | Message by Shawn Johnson

Start

To get things started, let's go around the circle and answer this question:

If you had to play one board game for the rest of your life, what would it be? *(Prepare to defend your answer; this is a lifetime decision you are making!)*

Share

Welcome to our current series "Family."

Driving by almost any neighborhood, we see rows and rows of houses. A house is what we see from the outside, but it's what happens on the inside that makes it a home. Not every house is a home. The people who inhabit it define a home. It is about the family life inside that makes it feel like home.

God's church is not a building; it is the people of God that make up the church. A membership class will not make someone a member. A member is someone who has a relationship with Jesus Christ and is fully engaged in the life God has called them to alongside other believers. It is a family to be a part of, not something we sign up for. Just like any family, we enjoy each other's friendship, encourage one another, argue at times, sit at the table, and apologize and find ways to help serve our brothers and sisters in Christ.

At Red Rocks Church we believe in the family of God. All of us have a place at the table thanks to what Jesus Christ has done for us. We don't build the church; God builds the church and calls us to play a part using our God-given abilities, resources and time to run the one and only race that matters. We get to do Kingdom work and invite others to join the family that they have always been longing for.

The body of Christ, the local church, was designed to be the greatest evangelistic tool on the face of the planet. God, by his word and through the Spirit, created the church, calling sinful people out of darkness and into fellowship with the family of believers. It is what Jesus Christ died and then rose again to establish. The church is the body and Christ is the head of his church. The church is not a religious institution or a denomination, but it is a body of people that have become genuine followers of Christ and have accepted the gospel message into their lives.

This week, Shawn talked again about the church family. Part of being in that family is continually looking to invite others to experience the same thing you have. Inviting people to hear and experience who Jesus is is a crazy great privilege we have as members of the family. Shawn talked about inviting people into that experience. To do that, we need to consider three things:

- ***Pray for Boldness***
- ***Share your Experience***
- ***Invite them to Experience God***

Why can it be so hard and scary to tell someone else about Jesus Christ and share our own stories?

When was the last time you shared your own personal faith story with someone?

Think about the last time you shared your faith. How did it go and how do you think God used that conversation in that person's life or maybe in your own life?

Grow

For lots of us, there have probably been countless times when we wanted to invite someone to come to church with us or opportunities to bring up Jesus, but that overwhelming panic sets in, we feel paralyzed and quietly let the moment pass by. We then get in our cars or on the bus, look out the window and wonder why we can't be braver. Be encouraged today and know that you aren't alone. God is the one who is mighty to save; it is not on you to make that happen.

Be encouraged by this today: God knows that person way better than you do and it is the Holy Spirit that will move that person's heart. That means the pressure is off you! Feel the freedom to fail. You might bring up Jesus and things might get awkward. You might say the wrong verse or not have a great answer for their question, but that doesn't mean God is not powerfully moving. God just asks us to pray, be bold, and talk or ask and leave the rest to Him.

John 1:40-46

In G.L. Borchert's *John 1-11* (Vol. 25A, p. 147) we see Philip's simple response:

Philip's reaction to Nathanael's doubt should be viewed as exemplary because it parallels Jesus' response to the disciples' question in the previous pericope (1:39). That response was, "Come and see," and it points to the fact that Philip did not argue with Nathanael concerning Jesus. Instead, he issued an invitation to join him. In reflecting on this response it is well to remember that in spite of opinions to the contrary, evangelism is not usually advanced much by apologetics because apologetic arguments usually convince those who are generally already convinced or who are at the point of seeking to be convinced. Evangelism usually is advanced best by genuine, concerned, loving proclamation and invitation.

According to this story, do you think Nathanael had his doubts?

Think about when you came to know Jesus. Did someone invite you to a weekend service, a retreat, or to a small group?

If you haven't made a decision to follow Jesus yet, how would you encourage believers on how to best share their faith and/or what is a big turn off when people talk to you about God?

Move

It is amazing to see how the power of an invite can be used by God to change the entire trajectory of someone's life. Philip didn't try to argue with Nathanael about what good things come from Nazareth and prophecy. Of course, there is always a place for apologetics; but in this case, Philip was genuinely concerned for Nathanael and reached out to him. Philip simply invited Nate to come with him and see what changed his life.

Read John 1:47-49

When Nathanael experienced Jesus for himself, what happened?

What did Philip do during this encounter? (The answer is "nothing")

Jesus showed Nathanael that he knew things about him that no one in the world knew. How should this encourage us to pray for boldness and invite someone to come to a weekend service?

Who is one person that comes to mind right now that you need the boldness to invite to come with you?

Pray

As a group, spend some time praying for each other, especially for the struggles that people might be facing today. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

To Go

Matthew 18:20

For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.