



Group Discussion Guide
January 27, 2019
Build Strong *FAMILY* Together

BUILD STRONG *FAMILY* Together may cause you to think of a home with a Mom and Dad and some kids. We are talking about *Family* that is a large extended Family, a variety of aspects of Family that God provides to meet the needs of his people, and the needs of those who don't yet know him.

Going again to Ephesians 2:19-22, followers of Jesus are described as a “household”, a family. Another word picture used is found in Galatians 4:4-8 where our inclusion into God’s family is described as an “adoption.” As Jesus taught us to pray, he said the best way to address God is as “Father.”

- How easy or natural is it for you to think of God as your Father? In what ways does that resonate with you? If you struggle with that image, do you mind sharing why?

In Romans 12:9-17 and I Corinthians 12:24-26, Paul describes how the members of a church family should care for one another.

- Can you share a time when our church family, or perhaps another church family in your past, came around you in a time of need and provided exactly what was needed at the moment?
- What are ways that we can ensure that new people coming in to Parkside catch that sense of family acceptance?
- What needs to happen soon after arrival for a new person or family to feel invited into the family of Parkside?

Ephesians 5:21-6:4 is instructive as to the attitudes and behaviors that make for a strong family life at home. It all starts with the health of the relationship between Mom and Dad.

- The words *be subject to* or *submit to* are used to describe an overall mutual attitude that should be present in a marriage [vs.21]. They are then applied specifically to the preferred attitude of a wife toward her husband. How would you go about explaining this command to one of your unbelieving friends who would find this to be out of time and even offensive? Perhaps you struggle with it too?

- Describe as many practical ways as you can, that a husband can “love his wife as Christ loved the church.”
- What are the ways that you have tried to bring your children up in the training and discipline of the Lord? Perhaps you struggle and are not clear on how you would go about being the spiritual mentor for your kids?

Bart described the combative nature of our present culture in which people are inclined and encouraged to draw battle lines between each other. He further presented the challenge that the church should be the place where people can come and find a healthy family atmosphere in which people are inclined to love and respect each other, where people are accepted and respected unconditionally.

- Under what conditions do you find it difficult to accept new people coming to our church family?
- Any behaviors that make it difficult to look past to see the person? Any viewpoints contrary to yours that immediately set up a tension within you?
- Do you have any experiences to share of when you were able to overlook a barrier and extend a friendly family-like acceptance to someone in the church that is quite different from you?

Moving Forward:

Name some practical ways that you as an individual and that your whole group can enhance and add to the healthy family atmosphere of Parkside. Spend some family time in your group, sharing your needs and concerns and praying together about those things. Perhaps there are needs that can be met, even before you leave this gathering.