

Hope City

Discussion Guide

September 6, 2026

This Is family

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Main Idea

God never intended for us to follow Jesus alone. Through faith in Christ, we are saved, given a new identity, and welcomed into God's family. The family of faith helps us grow, carry life's burdens, confront what is holding us back, and become the people God created us to be. No matter our past, struggles, status, or present circumstances, there is a place for us in God's house. We all need Jesus, and we all need family.

Anchor Verse: *"Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith."*

Galatians 6:10 NLT

Read: Galatians 6:1–10 (NLT)

1. BELIEVE: YOU ARE MEANT TO BE HERE

Following Jesus begins with believing—not only believing who Jesus is, but also believing what He says about us. Through faith in Christ, we are no longer strangers, outsiders, or spiritual orphans. God knows our names, chose us, and made us members of His family. Our stories and past mistakes should not cause us to run away from the church; they should remind us why we need to run toward Jesus and healthy Christian community. When we understand the family we belong to, it changes how we see ourselves, other people, and our future.

Scripture: Romans 10:10; Ephesians 2:19–20; Psalm 42:4

Discussion: What Have you ever felt like an outsider in church or another important area of your life? What contributed to that feeling?

What does it mean to you personally that God knows your name and wants you in His family?

How can your past tempt you to run away from Christian community instead of running toward it?
How should believing that you belong to God begin to change your behavior, confidence, and relationships?

2. BECOME: GOD HAS MORE FOR YOU

In Mark 11, Jesus approached a fig tree that appeared healthy because it was covered in leaves, but it had no fruit. The tree looked alive from a distance, yet its outward appearance did not match its actual condition. God does not want us to settle for the appearance of spiritual life while remaining empty, isolated, or wounded beneath the surface. The family of faith helps us recognize our fruit, confront unhealthy patterns, speak the truth in love, and carry one another's burdens. When we stay connected to Jesus and honest Christian community, God can heal what is hurting and help us become who He created us to be.

Scripture: Mark 11:12–14, 20–22; Romans 12:9; Galatians 6:2

Discussion: What is the difference between appearing spiritually healthy and actually producing spiritual fruit?

Which fruit would you like to see God develop more fully in your life?

Why can isolation make spiritual growth, healing, and freedom more difficult?

Is there an area where you have been pretending everything is fine instead of allowing trusted people to help you?

What lie or stronghold might be keeping you from becoming the person God says you can be?

3. BELONG: THIS IS FAMILY

Belonging to the family of faith means more than attending a church service. It means developing relationships in which people can know us, encourage us, challenge us, pray for us, and help carry our burdens. It also means accepting the responsibility to show that same love and support to others. God uses His family to restore dignity, rekindle hope, and remind people that they do not have to fight life's battles alone. When we join a group, serve, worship, and walk with other believers, we move from simply attending church to becoming part of a spiritual family.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 2:8 (MSG); Galatians 6:9–10

Discussion: What is the difference between attending a church and truly belonging to a church family?

Who has helped carry one of your burdens during a difficult season?

What makes it difficult for people to let others know when they are hurting?

Do you currently have people who know you well enough to encourage, challenge, and pray for you?

What practical step could help you become more connected to the family of faith?

SUMMARY

God created us for a relationship with Him and relationships with His people. Through Jesus, we are saved and welcomed into God's family, where we can grow, heal, serve, and help others do the same. The church will not be perfect because it is made of imperfect people, but it is still God's chosen family of faith. In this family, burdens are shared, truth is spoken in love, spiritual fruit is developed, and burned-out lives can find fresh hope. We are called to believe that we are meant to be here, become who God created us to be, and belong to the family He has given us.

CALL TO ACTION

Consider where you are in the journey of **believing, becoming, and belonging**.

If you have not placed your faith in Jesus, begin by believing in Him and receiving the new life He offers.

If you know Jesus but have become spiritually isolated, choose one practical way to reconnect with God's family. Attend consistently, join a group, begin serving, or have an honest conversation with someone you trust.

If you are already connected, identify someone whose burden you can help carry this week. Send an encouraging message, offer practical help, pray with that person, or simply make time to listen.

Pray:

"God, thank You for knowing my name and welcoming me into Your family. Help me believe what You say about me, become the person You created me to be, and belong fully to the family of faith. Give me the courage to be honest about where I need help and the compassion to carry the burdens of others. Use my life to help people find hope and experience Your love. In Jesus' name, amen."

GROUP LEADER RESOURCE

Game: Common Ground Countdown

Purpose:

This game helps group members discover connections they may not immediately see. It reinforces the truth that a spiritual family can include people with different stories who are brought together through shared faith and meaningful relationships.

What You Need:

Paper, pens, and a timer.

How to Play:

Divide the group into teams of three to five people.

Give each team three minutes to identify as many things as possible that every person on the team has in common. They cannot use obvious answers such as “We attend Hope City,” “We are in this room,” or “We are wearing clothes.”

Encourage teams to discover more specific connections, such as:

- Everyone has lived in another city.
- Everyone enjoys the same kind of food.
- Everyone has served in ministry.
- Everyone is the oldest, youngest, or middle child.
- Everyone has experienced an answered prayer.
- Everyone has had to begin again after a difficult season.

When time expires, each team reads its list. Teams earn one point for every connection that is true for everyone on their team. If another team has the same answer, both teams must cross it off. The team with the most unique shared connections wins.

Transition to Discussion:

Say:

“We often enter a room noticing how different we are. Family begins to form when we slow down, learn one another’s stories, and discover that we have more in common than we realized. God’s family is not built because everyone has the same background. It is built because Jesus brings different people together and teaches them how to love, support, and grow with one another.”

Leader Closing Question:

What helps a group of people move from simply meeting together to becoming a genuine spiritual family?