SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

This Is Who You Are: You Are Family

Ephesians 5:21-6:9

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BIG IDEA	**Peak family life is when Jesus is the center of your home.**
BIG QUESTION	**What would change in your closest relationships if Jesus truly set the direction and grace always moved first?**

Opening Conversation

What was one written or unwritten rule in your home growing up? How did it shape the culture of your family?

Sermon Outline

I. CENTERED - Let Jesus Set the Direction

1. Jesus Is the Ultimate Authority

- In marriage, parenting, and work, Paul places every person under Jesus. Our roles may differ, but no one is outside His authority (5:21-6:9).

2. Jesus Determines the Method

- Christlike authority is sacrificial, nurturing, honest, and aimed at the good of others - not control, intimidation, or simply getting our own way.

II. FAMILY - Follow Jesus in the Relationships Closest to You

1. Marriage: Love and Respect Reflect Christ

- Mutual submission sets the tone. Husbands are called to self-giving love; wives to respect and support. Neither uses this passage as a weapon (5:21-33).

2. Parenting: Form Disciples, Not Just Behavior

- Children obey "in the Lord," while parents nurture without exasperating. The goal is not merely well-behaved children, but children learning what following Jesus looks like (6:1-4).

III. RESPONSIBLE - Your Obedience Is Yours to Give

1. Faithfulness Is Not Conditional

- We are responsible for our obedience to Jesus even when a spouse, child, parent, coworker, boss, or employee does not respond as we hope.

2. Grace Includes Truth and Boundaries

- Following Jesus does not mean tolerating abuse or remaining in danger. Grace can include accountability, hard conversations, wise boundaries, and seeking help.

IV. GRACE-FORWARD - Give What Jesus Calls You to Give

1. Stop Keeping Score

- Grace moves beyond "I will do my part if you do yours." We love, honor, apologize, forgive, serve, and lead because Jesus first gave Himself for us.

2. Go First

- Look for one way to move grace forward: initiate a conversation, apologize without excuses, show patience, act kindly without recognition, or treat a coworker with compassion.

HEAD Questions - Understanding the Text

1. Why is Ephesians 5:21 important for understanding the relationships Paul addresses in the rest of the passage?
2. How does Paul reshape the idea of authority in marriage, parenting, and work by putting Jesus at the center?
3. What does the sermon mean by being "Grace-Forward," and how is that different from a transactional relationship?
4. How does Christ's love for the Church in Ephesians 5:25-32 provide the foundation for everything Paul asks of us?

HEART Questions - Personal Reflection

1. In which relationship is it hardest for you to let Jesus set the direction instead of trying to get your own way?
2. Where are you most tempted to keep score - waiting for someone else to change, apologize, serve, or go first?
3. When you have authority or influence, do people experience you as Christlike, nurturing, and gracious? Why or why not?

HANDS Questions - Faithful Response

1. What is one specific way you can move grace forward in your home, family, or workplace this week?
2. Is there a conversation, apology, act of kindness, boundary, or step toward help that Jesus may be calling you to initiate?
3. How can you use the authority, responsibility, or influence God has entrusted to you in a way that more clearly reflects Jesus?

Closing Reflection

Christian family life is not about perfect relationships or perfect rules. It is about allowing Jesus to become the center and letting His grace reshape how we use authority, handle conflict, serve, forgive, and love. We can move grace forward because Christ first moved toward us.

PRAY: Ask Jesus to center your relationships, expose where you keep score, and help you move grace forward from the grace you have received.