



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

FAM / Week 4

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SERIES SUMMARY

A four-week series on family.

WEEK 1: Loving your family is how your faith can make an impact.

WEEK 2: Your family doesn't have to be perfect for God to use it.

WEEK 3: When your family changes, God is with you.

WEEK 4: Sometimes friends are more like family.

SCRIPTURE

And Jonathan made a solemn pact with David, because he loved him as he loved himself (1 Samuel 18:3 NLT).

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- Sometimes we're so close to our friends that they feel more like they're part of our family.
- Tell a personal story about a friend who is like family.

TENSION

- Sometimes our family situation is different than what we feel is "normal." Maybe that's because...
- We don't have the kind of family everyone else has.
- The family we have isn't the family we want.
- We don't have a family (or we don't live with the family we came from).

- When our family doesn't fit what we think the ideal family should be, we can feel alone.

TRUTH

- If you feel that your family is different, you're not alone.
- In the Bible, we read about two friends, David and Jonathan, who didn't have typical home lives. David didn't live with his family, and Johnathan was the son of a king who was trying to kill David. David and Johnathan, however, were the kind of friends that were like fam. They helped each other, stuck with each other, and protected each other. (1 Samuel 18:3)
- Sometimes friends are more like family.
- As a church, we're the family of God. We support and encourage each other because God calls us to do just that. He created us to do life with each other, like a fam.
- No matter your situation, you have a family in this ministry to walk through life with.

APPLICATION

- If you feel like you have friends that are like family, let them know that you appreciate them.
- If you don't feel like you have friends that are like fam, bring more people into your circle. Identify one person that you can include in more parts of your life.
- Sometimes friends are more like family.

LANDING

- The church and your Small Group can be like your family; a place where you can be safe, be heard, be known, and be loved.
- Who is a friend in your life that could be part of your fam?

THINK ABOUT THIS

This week will be key for those of your students in unique family situations. Those who are adopted, living in foster care, surrounded by dysfunction, being raised by someone other than their parents, spending most of their family time with friends—this message will be especially important for them. Not only are you creating space for them to open up about unique family dynamics or situations they may be in, you're also giving them the reassurance that they're not alone in feeling this way about their family. And on top of that, you're giving them a place to belong and connect to a family within your student ministry. That is all huge for a middle schooler in this phase!

INTERACTIVE: LIKE FAMILY

OVERVIEW

For this Interactive, you'll show a clip from *Frozen II* to give an example of how sometimes, our friends can be like family.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A clip from the movie, *Frozen II*, that depicts the characters' close friendships. We recommend playing the scene where they sing the song, "Some Things Never Change," because it shows the many types of friendships depicted in the movie. If you don't want to play this clip due to length, consider showing your students the scene where the characters play charades.
 - A computer and screen large enough for everyone to watch the movie clip.
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TEACHING SCRIPT

FAM / Week 4

PRELUDE SOCIAL WORSHIP STORY GROUPS HOME

BOTTOM LINE

SOMETIMES FRIENDS ARE MORE LIKE FAMILY.

INTRODUCTION

6 MINUTES

Hey everyone! Before we get started today, I want to show you a clip from a movie I love.

INTERACTIVE: Like Family

This is where you'll show a clip from "Frozen II" to give an example of how sometimes, our friends can be like family.

So, what does *Frozen II* have to do with our talk today? Well, let me ask you this: How many of you have a best friend? One that's like the friends we just saw in that movie? Somebody who knows all your secrets? Somebody you spend all your free time with? Somebody who lets you play all their video games first or borrow your clothes before they even wear them? Somebody you can call when you're in trouble or feeling down? Somebody who sees your family fight? Somebody who helps themselves to food in your house? Somebody who is on your family text thread?

A friend like that? Well, sometimes they feel more like family, don't they? And the friends in *Frozen II* that we just saw? They're definitely each other's fam.

TELL A PERSONAL STORY

Tell a story from your own life that illustrates the following thoughts or ideas . . .

- Talk about a close friend in your own life who is more like family. If you can, make this a person you met or knew as a middle schooler or teenager.
 - Maybe it's someone you've known since childhood, a kid from your neighborhood, or someone you met at church.
 - The goal is to set up the idea that there can be people in our lives who we feel as close to as our own families.
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TENSION

3 MINUTES

For the last few weeks, we've been in this series about family called *Fam*. And each week, we've spent time talking about different things about our families that impact our lives, for better or for worse. And while family is a really important thing to talk about, I know that for some of you, this whole series may feel a little off. You've been here the last few weeks, and all you've thought about is the fact that your family situation is different.

For some of you, this is because you feel like **you don't have the kind of family everyone else has**. Maybe you only have one parent in your life. Maybe your dad is a mess, and you aren't allowed to see him. Or your mom left, and you have no idea where she is. Or maybe you're adopted, and even though that's awesome, you feel like it makes your family different. *[Feel free to add examples that you think your specific students need to hear.]*

For others of you, you're struggling because **the family you have isn't the family you want**. You wish your mom didn't work all the time and that she spent more time with you. Or you wish your dad would care a little bit more about what's going on in your life. Maybe you wish your older siblings weren't so mean. Or maybe that you actually had siblings to begin with. Maybe your family is dealing with secrets people don't even know about—things like addiction, or abuse, or cheating, or divorce. And when you see families in your neighborhood or go to your friends' houses, all you can think is, *Man, I wish my family was more like them. I kind of even wish they were my family.*

Or maybe you struggle to talk about family because **you don't have one**. Sure, you came from a family of some kind, but for whatever reason, you're not with them anymore. Maybe your parents passed away when you were younger. Or maybe they got into trouble, and they can't take care of you anymore. Or maybe you've never met them at all. You've been in someone else's care for as long as you can remember. And because of any of those reasons, you live with an aunt and uncle, or grandparents, or neighbors, or foster parents, or friends. And even though you may have adults in your life who care about you, you still struggle because you know they aren't the fam you came from. They aren't the fam you thought you'd have. The kind everybody else seems to have.

The truth is, talking about family can be hard because for so many of us, **family doesn't look the way we thought it would look**. We think other families are so perfect, or so much better, or have it all together. But for whatever reason, that's not the kind of family we got. And honestly, that can make us feel completely and totally alone.

TRUTH

3 MINUTES

If you're feeling that way about your family situation right now, let me just stop and encourage you with this: **You're not the only one**. In fact, that's a feeling a lot of us have felt about our families. Not just today, but even thousands of years ago!

In the Bible, there's actually a story about two guys who were dealing with complicated family situations that I think can help us here.

These two guys were named **David and Jonathan**, and neither of them had typical home lives. David didn't live with his family. He left them when he was called to work for Saul, the King of Israel. And who was Saul? Well, he was actually Jonathan's dad.

As they lived and worked together, Jonathan and David became close friends. Now at first, this was no big deal because Saul, Jonathan's dad, loved David. But over time, things changed. As King, Saul wanted to be seen as the greatest, most powerful, and most beloved leader in Israel. But David's popularity started to grow. And to make matters worse, God actually appointed David to be the next king; a plan Saul didn't love. As a result, Saul actually began to hate David—and I mean, *really* hate him. So much so that Saul plotted to kill David. To save himself, David had to flee and go into hiding, narrowly avoiding being murdered by Saul a few times!

See what I mean? **Both Jonathan and David were in family situations they didn't necessarily want or expect.** David lived apart from his family, and Jonathan was dealing with a dad who was actually trying to murder his best friend! That might be enough to leave both guys feeling completely and totally alone.

But you know what? Because they had each other, they didn't. These two guys formed a friendship that was more like a brotherhood. They were the kind of friends who helped each other out, stuck with each other no matter what, and protected each other. The kind of friends who become like fam.

The Bible describes their friendship like this:

And Jonathan made a solemn pact with David, because he loved him as he loved himself (1 Samuel 18:3 NLT).

I love the story of Jonathan and David for a lot of reasons, but the main one is because I think it shows us this: **Sometimes friends are more like family.**

Like we said, not all families look the same. And sometimes, like for Jonathan and David, you find yourself in a situation where other people in your life feel more like family than the people you're actually related to. Your friends, their parents, a coach, a teacher, your Small Group Leader, even the other members of your Small Group—sometimes God puts people in our lives to act like family.

Maybe you don't realize this, but that's even part of what we do each week here at church. We act as the family of God. We support and encourage each other, because that's what God calls us to do. **He created us to do life with each other, like a family.** Even when He was on Earth, Jesus had friends who became like family. His disciples—the men who were His closest friends and followers—became the people He did everything with. They were as close as family, and as believers, they became part of the family of God.

And it's the same thing God offers us. Whether this is the first time you've ever been here or you attend every single week, I want you to know that **you have family here.** At *[insert your youth group name]*, you have people who will support, love, and encourage you.

Maybe your family at home is awesome. Or maybe your family doesn't look the way you hoped it would. Maybe you have no family at all. No matter what your situation is, you have this family—the family of God—to walk with you through this life.

APPLICATION

1 MINUTE

Maybe you're sitting here thinking, *Yes totally! I know exactly who the people in my life are that love and treat me like family. I know who makes up my fam outside my family.* If that's you, great! One of the best things you can do this week is **let that person or people know that you appreciate them.** Shoot them a text, write them a note, or give them a shout-out online. Thank them for making you feel like fam, and let them know you want to do the same for them. You want to be their fam, too!

Or maybe you're sitting here thinking, *That all sounds great, and I wish I had those people in my life. But honestly, I don't feel like I know who they are or where I'd find them.* If that's you, then I'd say this: **Bring more people into your circle.** Think bigger than just the people you're close to right now. Think about who else is speaking into your life. Someone older than you or close to you who you can trust. Maybe it's a teacher, coach, a friend's parent, or your Small Group Leader. Maybe there are a few people in your Small Group who you know you can lean on or trust to be your fam. **Identify at least one person who you know could be like family, and include them in more parts of your life.** Spend time with them, ask them to hang out, open up to them about what's going on in your life. (Hint: Your Small Group Leader is a great person to invite!) I promise you that it's worth it. Because bringing more people into your life will expand your fam. And **sometimes friends are more like family.**

LANDING

1 MINUTE

One of the best parts about following Jesus is that we gain a family. The church and your Small Group become like a second home; a place where we can be safe, be heard, be known, and be loved. That's how God designed it to be! He knew that life wouldn't always be easy. That we would need each other. That we'd need a fam here within these four walls. Our hope is that you find *[insert youth group name]* and your Small Group to be that for you. A place where you can belong and be loved. A place where you find your fam.

Because **sometimes friends are more like family.**

Now as you go to Small Group, I want you to think about this question: **Who is a friend in your life that could be part of your fam?**



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
