

PICTURE PERFECT

REFRAMING YOUR FAMILY STORY

Picture Perfect Series

Small Group Material

Leader Guide

Part 4 - "Our Frame Is Too Small"

November 19th, 2017

Bottom Line: *The family is the unifying system by which we live as His people under His authority for His purposes.*

Study Verses: *Ephesians 1:13-14, Ephesians 2:19-22, Hebrews 3:3-6, Hebrews 2:11*

Define The Win: *Participants would see how their family story fits into the larger redemptive story God is telling through His church. They would recognize how God's picture of the family is much bigger than the one we as humans typically hold. Group members would be able to articulate what they've learned through this series and how they will apply it to their lives.*

Key Points

- *Redemption is not our work, but God's work as He fits us together for His purposes.*
- *The reason for God's order isn't to support our lifestyle. It is setup for His purposes and we are invited in and given authority.*
- *Idolatry is broken by embracing God's authority over our lives and in our lives.*
- *What God is redeeming is the relationship between He and His people as we dwell together.*
- *The purposes of God in our lives aren't isolated or independent. They are intended to impact and influence others.*

- Your purpose is a small part of God's larger purpose that continues toward completion in the generations that come.
- We each bring ourselves together to become the place where God dwells.
- He provides us with opportunities to influence, input and contribute to a family much bigger than ourselves.

ENCOUNTER

- Your purpose is a small part of God's larger purpose that continues toward completion in the generations that come. How should this statement reframe the way you approach your own family story?
- Read Hebrews 2:11. Do you believe what has unfolded in your life and family story inhibits you from making an impact and being part of the bigger story God is telling through His family (the church)? Why or why not? How do your actions and mindset line up with your answer?
- Idolatry is broken by embracing God's authority over our lives and in our lives. How can one make an idol out of themselves or their family story? Where does idolatry exist in your heart?

FORMATION

- Read Ephesians 1:13-14. What does redemption look like? How are the concepts of identity, authority and legacy redeemed in the family?
- Read Ephesians 2:19-22. In what ways is our concept of a "family" smaller than what God intended? How should this passage influence the way we treat and care for others?
- Read Hebrews 3:3-6. How does this passage speak to you and your family being a brick in the house that God is building?

EXPRESSION

- Every individual and family is given a brick that is part of the house God is building. How would you describe your brick? How does your answer make you feel?
- How can your brick support the weight of another person or family? Who needs to know they are part of a larger family?
- What has been the greatest insight you've received during the "Picture Perfect" series? Why did this point stand out and how will it shape you moving forward?

LEADER INSIGHT: Even though it seems like an oxymoron, we tend to think of the family from a very individualistic mindset. Our attention, focus and concern is either centered on ourselves or just the individuals who live underneath our roof. We do everything in our power to make sure they are well-mannered, well-fed, well-taught and well-adjusted. Not only does this mindset cause us to potentially elevate our family unit to idol status, it misses the mark of what God intended.

The family is much bigger than we realize, which means the redemptive story God is telling is too. The purposes of God in our lives aren't isolated or independent. They are intended to impact and influence others. Our purpose is a small part of God's larger purpose for the family that continues toward completion in the generations that come.

In essence, each family is given a brick. What we do with this brick is up to us. We can look at our lives and our family story and feel shame, hurt, anger or embarrassment. This might lead us to believe our brick doesn't matter or that it's insignificant. When we reflect on our past or our current situation, we can believe the lie that our brick is an odd shape and couldn't possibly fit. As a result, we take our brick and go home or we shatter it into a million pieces.

But, there is another way. We can look at the brick we are holding in our hands and realize it is critical to the foundation God is building. The truth is we each bring our lives together to become the place where God dwells. Scripture speaks of the church being a family and uses the imagery of a house's foundation to describe it. We shouldn't be ashamed of our family story because God accepts us and has the power to redeem all things.

When we don't add our brick to the foundation God is building, someone or some other family isn't as supported and encouraged as they need to be. What God is redeeming is the relationship between He and His people as we dwell together. He provides us with opportunities to influence, input and contribute to a family much bigger than ourselves.