

This Is Us: Part 1

Small Group Questions: Five Dysfunctions of a Family

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Read

Genesis 25:21–28, 26, and 27:41; Ephesians 4:25 –27 and 6:4; Psalms 72:12–14; and 1 John 1:8–9

Reflect

In the book of Genesis, Isaac and Rebekah’s family exhibit multiple examples of dysfunction that affect generations. They form family coalitions, keep secrets and lie, and leave conflicts to fester. Of the five dysfunctions listed below, which hits closest to home, and why?

Pastor Greg explains five dysfunctions of a family:

1. Favoritism: Who was the favored child in your family? What are the reasons you believe this?
 - a. Has it ever been addressed? If so, how? If not, how has this affected family dynamics over the years?
2. Deception: Does your family have secrets? How might you be projecting an image that isn’t true?
 - a. What are/were the reasons given to keep certain things secret?
 - b. Can you pinpoint where the dysfunction might have begun? How might it be generational?
 - c. Although Isaac receives great promises from the Lord, he still fears the Philistines and says that Rebekah is his sister. How has deception become a way of life for his family? Where did it begin?
3. Control: Do you have difficulty with boundaries, determining what you’re responsible for and what you’re not? How have you been affected by someone crossing boundaries?
4. Inability to resolve conflict. How does your family tend to resolve conflict? Or does it?
 - i. What prevents resolution? How does your family communicate during conflicts, directly or indirectly? (Blaming, confronting, or avoiding?)
5. Broken relationships: Do you have a family member you avoid, or don’t speak to? Why?

What Does a Functional Family (Good Enough) Look Like?

1. Safe: Do you feel loved and valued? Why or why not?
2. Open: Can you talk openly and share opinions in your family?

What is Your Next Step?

1. Admit my brokenness. Can you admit that your family isn’t perfect and suffers dysfunction?
 - a. Can you admit your own brokenness?
2. Ask God for his help and direction.
 - a. Have you asked God to help you? Why or why not?
3. Get around people who appear to be doing family well.
 - a. Where has God led you...to a counselor, books, or mentors?
 - b. Who can you follow as good examples?
 - c. What dysfunction do you recognize in your family? Do you accept the challenge to break the cycle? Which of these steps above do you need to take next?

Respond: Where is God leading you? How can your small group support you?