

## Small Group Guide: Becoming Children of God

### Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by asking God to speak to each person and help you grow in understanding what it means to be children of God.

### Ice Breaker

Share a characteristic or mannerism you picked up from your father or a father figure in your life. Was it intentional or did it just happen naturally?

### Key Scripture Passages

John 1:12-13

Romans 8:5-17

Galatians 3:22-29

Matthew 5:3-16, 43-48

### Sermon Summary

This Father's Day message explored what it means to become children of God—not through natural birth, but through believing in and receiving Jesus Christ. The sermon emphasized that as God's children, we're called to reflect our Heavenly Father's character, being full of both grace and truth, and living by the Spirit rather than our sinful nature.

### Discussion Questions

#### Understanding Our Identity

The pastor mentioned that "we're all children of God" is partially true but incomplete. What's the difference between being created by God and being adopted as His child? Why does this distinction matter?

Read John 1:12-13. What does it mean to "receive" Christ? Have you had a moment when you consciously received Him, or has it been a gradual journey?

The sermon stated that being a child of God isn't automatic—it requires

believing and receiving. Take a moment for honest self-reflection: Have you truly received Christ, or are you trying to meet God on your own terms?

## Grace and Truth

Jesus was described as "full of grace AND truth" (100% of each, not 50-50).

Where do you tend to lean—toward grace without truth, or truth without grace?

Can you share an example of when you've seen someone balance both well?

How does our culture today struggle with this balance? What does it look like to speak truth graciously in today's world?

## Living by the Spirit

Read Romans 8:5-9. What's the difference between being "controlled by the sinful nature" versus being "controlled by the Spirit"? What does this look like in everyday life?

The pastor asked, "Am I really adopted into the family of God? Have I met God on His terms or am I expecting God to meet me on my terms?" How would you answer this for yourself?

Romans 8:14 says, "Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God." In what areas of your life do you sense the Spirit leading you? Where are you resisting?

## Being Like Our Father

Matthew 5:43-48 calls us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us.

Why is this so difficult?

Who in your life is hardest for you to love right now?

What would it look like to pray for them this week?

The pastor shared the phrase "gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love" as God's character. Which of these attributes do you most need to develop? Which comes most naturally to you?

### Leading Our Families

"The family table is not just for feeding, it's also for leading."

For parents: What are you intentionally teaching your children about faith, suffering, honesty, and living for Christ?

For everyone: Who has spiritually "fed and led" you? How can you do this for someone else?

The sermon mentioned teaching children about suffering and preparing them for it. Why is this important? How does our culture's avoidance of discomfort hurt the next generation?

### Salt and Light

Read Matthew 5:13-16. What does it mean to be "salt and light" in your specific context—your workplace, neighborhood, or family?

The pastor said we shouldn't be ashamed of our faith, but also shouldn't be "showing off." How do you find this balance? Share examples of when you've seen someone do this well.

### The Rich Family Story Reflection

What struck you most about the story of the family that sacrificed to give to the "poor family"—only to discover they were that family?

They went from feeling like millionaires to feeling like "poor white trash" and then back to being "the rich family in church." What does this teach us about:

Our perspective on wealth and poverty?

The joy of sacrificial giving?

True riches in Christ?

"From that day on, I've never been poor again... because of Jesus." How does knowing Christ change how we view our circumstances?

### Key Takeaways

We become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, not by natural birth or human effort.

True Christianity balances grace and truth—being loving without compromising what's right.

Living by the Spirit means surrendering daily control to God rather than following our sinful nature.

We're called to reflect our Heavenly Father's character: gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love.

Our role is to be salt and light—flavoring the world and illuminating the way to Christ without being ashamed.

True riches come from knowing Christ, not from material possessions.

### Practical Applications

This Week, I Will:

Choose 1-2 actions to commit to:

Examine my relationship with God: Set aside time to honestly ask, "Do I have the Spirit of God in me? Am I living by the Spirit or by my own strength?"

Practice grace AND truth: Identify one situation where I need to speak truth more lovingly, or show grace while maintaining biblical standards.

Love an enemy: Choose someone difficult in my life and commit to praying for them daily this week.

Lead at the table: (For parents/mentors) Have an intentional conversation

about faith, suffering, integrity, or Christ's character with a child or someone you're mentoring.

**Be salt and light:** Identify one specific way I can reflect Christ in my workplace, neighborhood, or family this week without being preachy or ashamed.

**Give sacrificially:** Look for an opportunity to give—time, money, or resources—to someone in need, even if it costs me something.

**Reflect on riches:** Journal or meditate on what true wealth means in light of knowing Christ. Thank God for specific spiritual blessings.

### Accountability Question

Who will you share your commitment with, and when will you check in with them about your progress?

### Closing Reflection

Read together Romans 8:15-17: "For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ."

**Silent Reflection (2-3 minutes):** Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you about what it means to be God's child. What is He highlighting for you personally?

### Prayer Time

Pray for each person to truly know their identity as God's child

Pray for the Spirit's power to live out grace and truth

Pray for fathers and father figures to lead well

Pray for specific needs and challenges shared during discussion

Pray for opportunities to be salt and light this week

Before Next Week

Read and reflect on:

Romans 8 (entire chapter)

Matthew 5-7 (The Sermon on the Mount)

Journal about one way you saw God working in your life as His child

"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." - Matthew 5:48