

CREW Bible Study

Message – What To Do When You Don't Know What To Do - - Week 1

- **BOTTOM LINE:** Pay attention to how you affect your family.
- **GOAL:** To help students begin to see the role they play in their family dynamic, and to encourage students to behave in a way that elevates others in their family over themselves.
- **SCRIPTURE:**
 - *He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had: We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it." His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said. – Genesis 37:6-8*
 - *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! – Philippians 2:3-8*

MESSAGE

What's something you do at home that you wouldn't do, or don't do, somewhere else?

- You belt out the lyrics to Broadway tunes at home, but you wouldn't dare sing in front of anyone else.
- You leave the dishes for your mom or dad to clean up at home, but you help clear the table and load the dishwasher at a friend's house.
- You yell at your brother and tease him constantly, but would never treat your teammates that way.

If we're really honest with ourselves, we all tend to live in two different worlds. There's your life in the outside world of school, work, sports, scouts, church and other activities. And then there's your life at home. And thanks to the COVID pandemic, we've all spent a lot more time in our lives at home lately.

But why is it that we might act in two completely different ways depending on where we are? Well, we tend to think of home as “our” world and everybody else is just living in it. Whether we realize it or not, we can be pretty self-centered at home.

- We want what *we* like for dinner.
- We want to watch *our* show on Netflix.
- We don’t want to play a family board game because *we* think that’s lame.

But this isn’t nearly true anywhere else.

- You wouldn’t go to a friend’s house for dinner and be like, “UGH, lasagne? I HATE lasagne!”
- You would never tell your coach you’re just *not* doing drills today because you don’t feel like it.

Right?

Even if we know we can get away with a bit of an attitude with people in other environments, it’s typically never to the level that we go to at home. Home is where things get real. It can be our safe place to be the *real*est version of ourselves. Because the people we live with will (hopefully) still love us even when we’re being rude, ridiculous, or obnoxious.

But while home might be the safest place to be real, and that is a good thing, it’s also often the safest place for us to be the *worst* version of ourselves. Most of the things we think, say and do come in response to this question: “How does what is happening right now affect me?” When what is happening affects *your* environment, it can cause issues.

How do you react when your plans are impacted by what your sister is doing? Or by what your parents say?

The ways you react and respond cause others in your family to react and respond. And if it’s a negative reaction and response, it can set off a cycle of tension and attitude. It can change the whole vibe in the house.

There’s a story in the Bible about a family that lived through this exact situation. It’s the story of Joseph. Maybe you’ve heard his story before – it’s the one with the brothers and the coat?

Joseph was a part of a very big family. He had 11 brothers. And among all of the brothers, Joseph’s Dad liked him best. He was the favorite. Joseph’s Dad even gave Joseph this amazing gift of a really awesome coat made of colorful fabric. He never gave a gift like that to any of the other sons. And it made Joseph’s brothers incredibly jealous. Honestly, they were more than just jealous. They despised him.

One day, Joseph shared with his family a series of dreams he had. Hear this in Genesis 37:6-7:

Joseph said to his brothers, "Listen to this dream I had: We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it."

Now, this wasn't your typical dream, and the brothers knew it. The dream wasn't about grain, it was about power. The brothers assumed Joseph was sending them a message by sharing the dream, like he was saying, "Hey guys, listen to this! I think – uh, actually I KNOW – that I'm going to be way more powerful than you one day. And when that day comes, you will all worship *me!*"

The story goes on.....

His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he said.

What do you think the vibe was in that house? Tense for sure!

But consider this: Sometimes we are hyper-aware of how things affect us, and not really aware of how anybody else is being affected.

Joseph was hyper-aware that his brothers hated him. He didn't like being picked on and beaten up. But he wasn't seeing how much his Dad favored him. He liked being the center of his Dad's attention, but he wasn't aware that it took attention away from everyone else. He wasn't aware that the gift of the coat was such a huge deal because it represented just how much Joseph was favored by his Dad. But it was a huge deal.

And the brothers were hyper-aware of how much their Dad *loved* Joseph and favored him. And they were hyper-aware that their Dad always made him the center of attention. But they weren't aware that it wasn't Joseph's fault that their Dad played favorites. And the Dad didn't do anything to change it.

The truth is, the bad vibe was there. The tension was there. And it was left to grow. And in the next few weeks, we'll hear more of this story and the drama that became of it.

For now, the point is this: Joseph's family drama isn't all that different from our own. Whether you're the favorite one, the first-born, the last-born, the middle-one, the quiet-one, the smart-one, the artistic-one – whatever-one – the truth is the same: there is a role you play in your family. Pay attention to what that role is and how your words and your actions affect everyone else because they contribute to the tone and vibe in your house.

Here's two things to consider:

Pay attention to how you see yourself. Do you act like you're better than everyone else in the house? *Even sometimes?* Do you act like whatever your needs are, they are way more important than whatever anyone else has in mind? Pay attention. That might be the *real* you, but it's certainly not the *best* you.

Pay attention to how the ways you act affect others. If you're acting like you're better than everyone else in the house, it's probably making them feel like they need to prove you wrong. Take an honest look at yourself and the ways others are reacting to you. Pay attention to what you can change to create a more peaceful vibe.

What is the tone or vibe in your house? Be hyper-aware of the role you play in that.

FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What's something you do at home that you wouldn't do, or don't do, somewhere else?
2. If you were one of Joseph's brothers, how would you describe Joseph? If you were Joseph, how would you describe your brothers?
3. Think of a time where you were in the middle of a family conflict. How could seeing things from someone else's perspective have caused that situation to go differently?
4. Read Philippians 2:3-8. How is choosing to see someone else's perspective over your own valuing others above yourself?
5. What are some reasons why this passage could be more difficult to live out with our families than with others?
6. What are some situations where being unselfish with your family is difficult? (use of the remote or the charger, who does chores, etc.) How could you react and respond differently?
7. List the roles you play in your family such as first-born, musical-one, messy-one, etc. Do you "wear" any of these titles as a badge of honor? Any that you wish you didn't have? Do people in your house remind you of your title? How does that make you feel?
8. When a conflict happens at home, what are some ways you can consider someone else's perspective before acting out of your own interests? How can you pay more attention to all angles of the situation?